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A STUDY IN MAGIC AND RELIGION

THIRD EDITION

PART I

THE MAGIC ART

AND THE EVOLUTION OF KINGS

VOL. II

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THE MAGIC ART

AND THE EVOLUTION OF KINGS

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER VIII.—DEPARTMENTAL KINGS OF NATURE . . . . . Pp. 1-6

The King of the Wood at Nemi probably a departmental king of nature, pp. 1 *sq.* ; Kings of Rain in Africa, 2 *sq.* ; Kings of Fire and Water in Cambodia, 3-6.

CHAPTER IX.—THE WORSHIP OF TREES . Pp. 7-58

§ 1. *Tree-spirits*, pp. 7-45.—Great forests of ancient Europe, 7 *sq.* ; tree-worship practised by all Aryan races in Europe, 9-11 ; trees regarded as animate, 12-14 ; tree-spirits, sacrifices to trees, 14-17 ; trees sensitive to wounds, 18 ; apologies for cutting down trees, 18-20 ; bleeding trees, 20 ; trees threatened to make them bear fruit, 20-22 ; attempts to deceive spirits of trees and plants, 22-24 ; trees married to each other, 24-28 ; trees in blossom and rice in bloom treated like pregnant women, 28 *sq.* ; trees tenanted by the souls of the dead, 29-33 ; trees as the abode, not the body, of spirits, 33 *sq.* ; ceremonies at felling trees, 34-39 ; propitiating tree-spirits in house-timber, 39 *sq.* ; sacred trees the abode of spirits, 40-43 ; sacred groves, 43-45.

§ 2. *Beneficent Powers of Tree-spirits*, pp. 45-58.—Tree-spirit develops into anthropomorphic deity of the woods, 45 ; tree-spirits give rain and sunshine, 46 *sq.* ; tree-spirits make crops to grow, 47 ; the Harvest May and kindred customs, 47-49 ; tree-spirits make herds and women fruitful, 50-52 ; green boughs protect against witchcraft, 52-55 ; influence of tree-spirits on cattle among the Wends, Esthonians, and Circassians, 55 *sq.* ; tree-spirits grant offspring or easy delivery to women, 56-58.

CHAPTER X.—RELICS OF TREE-WORSHIP IN MODERN EUROPE . . . Pp. 59-96

May-trees in Europe, especially England, 59 *sq.*; May-garlands in England, 60-63; May customs in France, Germany, and Greece, 63 *sq.*; Whitsuntide customs in Russia, 64; May-trees in Germany and Sweden, 64 *sq.*; Midsummer trees and poles in Sweden, 65 *sq.*; village May-poles in England and Germany, 66-71; tree-spirit detached from tree and represented in human form, Esthonian tale, 71-73; tree-spirit represented simultaneously in vegetable and human form, 73 *sq.*; the Little May Rose, 74; the *Walber*, 75; Green George, 75 *sq.*; double representation of tree-spirit by tree and man among the Oraons, 76 *sq.*; double representation of harvest-goddess Gauri, 77 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt's conclusions, 78 *sq.*; tree-spirit or vegetation-spirit represented by a person alone, 79; leaf-clad mummers (Green George, Little Leaf Man, Jack-in-the-Green, etc.), 79-84; leaf-clad mummers called Kings or Queens (King and Queen of May, Whitsuntide King, etc.), 84-91; Whitsuntide Bridegroom and Bride, 91 *sq.*; Midsummer Bridegroom and Bride, 92; the Forsaken Bridegroom or Bride, 92-94; St. Bride in Scotland and the Isle of Man, 94 *sq.*; May Bride or Whitsuntide Bride, 95 *sq.*

CHAPTER XI.—THE INFLUENCE OF THE SEXES ON VEGETATION . . . Pp. 97-119

The marriage of the King and Queen of May intended to promote the growth of vegetation by homoeopathic magic, 97 *sq.*; intercourse of the sexes practised to make the crops grow and fruit-trees to bear fruit, 98-101; parents of twins supposed to fertilise the bananas in Uganda, 101-103; relics of similar customs in Europe, 103 *sq.*; continence practised in order to make the crops grow, 104-107; incest and illicit love supposed to blight the fruits of the earth by causing drought or excessive rain, 107-113; traces of similar beliefs as to the blighting effect of adultery and incest among the ancient Jews, Greeks, Romans, and Irish, 114-116; possible influence of such beliefs on the institution of the forbidden degrees of kinship, 116 *sq.*; explanation of the seeming contradiction of the foregoing customs, 117; indirect benefit to humanity of some of these superstitions, 117-119.

CHAPTER XII.—THE SACRED MARRIAGE . Pp. 120-170

§ 1. *Diana as a Goddess of Fertility*, pp. 120-129.—Dramatic marriages of gods and goddesses as a charm to promote vegetation, 120 *sq.*; Diana as a goddess of the woodlands, 121; sanctity of holy groves in antiquity, 121-123; the breaking of the Golden Bough a solemn rite, not a mere piece of bravado, 123 *sq.*; Diana a goddess of the teeming life of nature

both animal and vegetable, 124; deities of woodlands naturally the patrons of the beasts of the woods, 124 *sq.*; the crowning of hunting dogs on Diana's day a purification for their slaughter of the beasts of the wood, 125-128; as goddess of the moon, especially the yellow harvest moon, Diana a goddess of crops and of childbirth, 128 *sq.*; as a goddess of fertility Diana needed a male partner, 129.

§ 2. *The Marriage of the Gods*, pp. 129-155.—Marriages of the gods in Babylonia and Assyria, 129 *sq.*; marriage of the god Ammon to the Queen of Egypt, 130-135; Apollo and his prophetess at Patara, 135; Artemis and the Essenes at Ephesus, 135 *sq.*; marriage of Dionysus and the Queen at Athens, 136-138; marriage of Zeus and Demeter at Eleusis, 138-140; marriage of Zeus and Hera at Plataea, 140-143; marriage of Zeus and Hera in other parts of Greece, 143; the god Frey and his human wife in Sweden, 143 *sq.*; similar rites in ancient Gaul, 144 *sq.*; marriages of gods to images or living women among uncivilised peoples, 145 *sqq.*; custom of the Wotyaks, 145 *sq.*; custom of the Peruvian Indians, 146; marriage of a woman to the Sun among the Blackfoot Indians, 146 *sq.*; marriage of girls to fishing-nets among the Hurons and Algonquins, 147 *sq.*; marriage of the Sun-god and Earth-goddess among the Oraons, 148 *sq.*; marriage of women to gods in India and Africa, 149 *sq.*; marriage of women to water-gods and crocodiles, 150-152; virgin sacrificed as a bride to the jinnee of the sea in the Maldive Islands, 153-155.

§ 3. *Sacrifices to Water-spirits*, pp. 155-170.—Stories of the Perseus and Andromeda type, 155 *sq.*; water-spirits conceived as serpents or dragons, 156 *sq.*; sacrifices of human beings to water-spirits, 157-159; water-spirits as dispensers of fertility, 159; water-spirits bestow offspring on women, 159-161; love of river-spirits for women in Greek mythology, 161 *sq.*; the Slaying of the Dragon at Furth in Bavaria, 163 *sq.*; St. Romain and the Dragon at Rouen, 164-170.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE KINGS OF ROME AND ALBA . . . . . Pp. 171-194

§ 1. *Numa and Egeria*, pp. 171-173.—Egeria a nymph of water and the oak, perhaps a form of Diana, 171 *sq.*; marriage of Numa and Egeria a reminiscence of the marriage of the King of Rome to a goddess of water and vegetation, 172 *sq.*

§ 2. *The King as Jupiter*, pp. 174-194.—The Roman king personated Jupiter and wore his costume, 174-176; the oak crown as a symbol of divinity, 176 *sq.*; personation of the dead by masked men among the Romans, 176; the kings of Alba as personifications of Jupiter, 178-181; legends of the deaths of Roman kings point to their connexion with the thunder-god, 181-183; local Jupiters in Latium, 183 *sq.*; the oak-groves of ancient Rome, 184-187; Latian Jupiter on the Alban Mount, 187; woods of Latium in antiquity, 187 *sq.*; Latin worship of Jupiter like the Druidical

worship of the oak, 188 *sq.*; sacred marriage of Jupiter and Juno, 189 *sq.*; Janus and Carna, 190 *sq.*; the Flamen Dialis and Flaminica as representatives of Jupiter and Juno, 191 *sq.*; marriage of the Roman king to the oak-goddess, 193 *sq.*

CHAPTER XIV.—THE KING'S FIRE. . Pp. 195-206

Sacred marriage of the Fire-god with a woman, 195; legends of the birth of Latin kings from Vestal Virgins impregnated by the fire, 195-197; Vestal Virgins as wives of the Fire-god, 198 *sq.*; the Vestal fire originally the fire on the king's hearth, 199 *sq.*; the round temple of Vesta a copy of the old round hut of the early Latins, 200-202; rude pottery used in Roman ritual, 202 *sq.*; superstitions as to the making of pottery, 204 *sq.*; sanctity of the storeroom at Rome, 205; the temple of Vesta with its sacred fire a copy of the king's house, 206.

CHAPTER XV.—THE FIRE-DRILL . . Pp. 207-226

Vestal fire at Rome rekindled by the fire-drill, 207; use of the fire-drill by savages, 207 *sqq.*; the fire-sticks regarded by savages as male and female, 208-211; fire-customs of the Herero, 211 *sqq.*; sacred fire among the Herero maintained in the chief's hut by his unmarried daughter, 213-215; the Herero chief as priest of the hearth, 215-217; sacred Herero fire rekindled by fire-sticks, which are regarded as male and female, and are made from the sacred ancestral tree, 217-221; the sacred Herero hearth a special seat of the ancestral spirits, 221 *sq.*; sacred fire-sticks of the Herero represent deceased ancestors, 222-224; sacred fire-boards as family deities among the Koryaks and Chuckchees, 225 *sq.*

CHAPTER XVI.—FATHER JOVE AND MOTHER VESTA . . . . Pp. 227-252

Similarity between the fire-customs of the Herero and the ancient Latins, 227-229; rites performed by the Vestals for the fertility of the earth and the fecundity of cattle, 229; the Vestals as embodiments of Vesta, a mother-goddess of fertility, 229 *sq.*; the domestic fire as a fecundating agent in marriage ritual, 230 *sq.*; newborn children and the domestic fire, 231 *sq.*; reasons for ascribing a procreative virtue to fire, 233-235; fire kindled by friction by human representatives of the Fire-father and Fire-mother, 235 *sq.*; fire kindled by friction by boy and girl or by man and woman, 236-238; human fire-makers sometimes married, sometimes unmarried, 238-240; holy fire and virgins of St. Brigit in Ireland, 240-242; the oaks of Erin, 242 *sq.*; virgin priestesses of fire in ancient Peru and Mexico, 243-246; the *Agnihotris* or fire-priests of the Brahmans, 246-248; kinds of wood employed for fire-sticks in India and ancient Greece, 248-252.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE ORIGIN OF PERPETUAL FIRES . . . . . Pp. 253-265

Custom of perpetual fires probably originated in motives of convenience, 253; races reported to be ignorant of the means of making fire, 253-255; fire probably used by men before they knew how to kindle it, 255-257; savages carry fire with them as a matter of convenience, 257-259; Prometheus the fire-bringer, 260; perpetual fires maintained by chiefs and kings, 260-264; fire extinguished at king's death, 265.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE SUCCESSION TO THE KINGDOM IN ANCIENT LATIUM Pp. 266-323

The sacred functions of Latin kings in general probably the same as those of the Roman kings, 266-268; question of the rule of succession to the Latin kingship, 268; list of Alban kings, 268 *sq.*; list of Roman kings, 269 *sq.*; Latin kingship apparently transmitted in female line to foreign husbands of princesses, 271; miraculous births of kings explained on this hypothesis, 272-274; marriage of princesses to men of inferior rank in Africa, 274-277; traces of female descent of kingship in Greece, 277-279, and in Scandinavia, 279 *sq.*; reminiscence of such descent in popular tales, 280; female descent of kingship among the Picts, the Lydians, the Danes, and the Saxons, 280-283; traces of female kinship or mother-kin among the Aryans, the Picts, and the Etruscans, 283-287; mother-kin may survive in royal families after it has been superseded by father-kin among commoners, 288; the Roman kings plebeians, not patricians, 289; the first consuls at Rome heirs to the throne according to mother-kin, 290 *sq.*; attempt of Tarquin to change the line of succession from the female to the male line, 291 *sq.*; the hereditary principle compatible with the elective principle in succession to the throne, 292; combination of the hereditary with the elective principle in succession to the kingship in Africa and Assam, 292-295; similar combination perhaps in force at Rome, 295 *sq.*; personal qualities required in kings and chiefs, 296-299; succession to the throne determined by a race, 299-301; custom of racing for a bride, 301-305; contests for a bride other than a race, 305-308; the Flight of the King (*Regifugium*) at Rome perhaps a relic of a contest for the kingdom and the hand of a princess, 308-310; confirmation of this theory from the practice of killing a human representative of Saturn at the Saturnalia, 310-312; violent ends of Roman kings, 313; death of Romulus on the *Nonae Caprotinae* (7th July), an old licentious festival like the Saturnalia for the fertilisation of the fig, 313-319; violent deaths of other Roman kings, 320 *sq.*; succession to Latin kingship perhaps decided by single combat, 321; African parallels, 321 *sq.*; Greek and Italian kings may have personated Cronus and Saturn before they personated Zeus and Jupiter, 322 *sq.*

CHAPTER XIX.—ST. GEORGE AND THE PARILIA . . . . . Pp. 324-348

The early Italians a pastoral as well as agricultural people, 324 *sq.*; the shepherds' festival of the Parilia on 21st April, 325-330; intention of the festival to ensure the welfare of the flocks and herds and to guard them against witches and wolves, 330; festival of the same kind still held in Eastern Europe on 23rd April, St. George's Day, 330; precautions taken by the Esthonians against witches and wolves on St. George's Day, when they drive out the cattle to pasture for the first time, 330-332; St. George's Day a pastoral festival in Russia, 332-334, among the Ruthenians, 335, among the Huzuls of the Carpathians, 335 *sq.*; St. George as the patron of horses in Silesia and Bavaria, 336 *sq.*; St. George's Day among the Saxons and Roumanians of Transylvania, 337 *sq.*; St. George's Day a herdsman's festival among the Walachians, Bulgarians, and South Slavs, 338-340; precautions taken against witches and wolves whenever the cattle are driven out to pasture for the first time, as in Prussia and Sweden, 340-342; these parallels illustrate some features of the Parilia, 342 *sq.*; St. George as a personification of trees or vegetation in general, 343 *sq.*; St. George as patron of childbirth and love, 344-346; St. George seems to have displaced an old Aryan god of the spring, such as the Lithuanian Pergrubius, 347 *sq.*

CHAPTER XX.—THE WORSHIP OF THE OAK Pp. 349-375

§ 1. *The Diffusion of the Oak in Europe*, pp. 349-356.—Jupiter the god of the oak, the sky, and thunder, 349; of these attributes the oak is probably primary and the sky and thunder secondary, 349 *sq.*; Europe covered with oak forests in prehistoric times, 350; remains of oaks found in peat-bogs, 350-352; ancient lake dwellings built on oaken piles, 352 *sq.*; evidence of classical writers as to oak forests in antiquity, 353-355; oak-woods in modern Europe, 355 *sq.*

§ 2. *The Aryan God of the Oak and the Thunder*, pp. 356-375.—Aryan worship of the oak and of the god of the oak, 357 *sq.*; Zeus as the god of the oak, the thunder, and the rain in ancient Greece, 358-361; Jupiter as the god of the oak, the thunder, and the rain in ancient Italy, 361 *sq.*; Celtic worship of the oak, 362 *sq.*; Donar and Thor the Teutonic gods of the oak and thunder, 363-365; Perun the god of the oak and thunder among the Slavs, 365; Perkunas the god of the oak and thunder among the Lithuanians, 365-367; Taara the god of the oak and thunder among the Esthonians, 367 *sq.*; Parjanya, the old Indian god of thunder, rain, and fertility, 368 *sq.*; gods of thunder and rain in America, Africa, and the Caucasus, 369 *sq.*; traces of the worship of the oak in modern Europe, 370-372; in the great European god of the oak, the thunder, and the rain, the original element seems to have been the oak, 372-375.

CHAPTER XXI.—DIANUS AND DIANA . Pp. 376-387

Recapitulation: rise of sacred kings endowed with magical or divine powers, 376-378; the King of the Wood at Nemi seems to have personified Jupiter the god of the oak and to have mated with Diana the goddess of the oak, 378-380; Dianus (Janus) and Diana originally dialectically different forms of Jupiter and Juno, 380-383; Janus (Dianus) not originally a god of doors, 383 *sq.*; double-headed figure of Janus (Dianus) derived from a custom of placing him as sentinel at doorways, 384; parallel custom among the negroes of Surinam, 384 *sq.*; originally the King of the Wood at Nemi represented Dianus (Janus), a duplicate form of Jupiter, the god of the oak, the thunder, and the sky, 385-387.

INDEX . . . . . Pp. 389-417

CHAPTER VIII

DEPARTMENTAL KINGS OF NATURE

THE preceding investigation has proved that the same union of sacred functions with a royal title which meets us in the King of the Wood at Nemi, the Sacrificial King at Rome, and the magistrate called the King at Athens, occurs frequently outside the limits of classical antiquity and is a common feature of societies at all stages from barbarism to civilisation. Further, it appears that the royal priest is often a king, not only in name but in fact, swaying the sceptre as well as the crosier. All this confirms the traditional view of the origin of the titular and priestly kings in the republics of ancient Greece and Italy. At least by shewing that the combination of spiritual and temporal power, of which Graeco-Italian tradition preserved the memory, has actually existed in many places, we have obviated any suspicion of improbability that might have attached to the tradition. Therefore we may now fairly ask, May not the King of the Wood have had an origin like that which a probable tradition assigns to the Sacrificial King of Rome and the titular King of Athens? In other words, may not his predecessors in office have been a line of kings whom a republican revolution stripped of their political power, leaving them only their religious functions and the shadow of a crown? There are at least two reasons for answering this question in the negative. One reason is drawn from the abode of the priest of Nemi; the other from his title, the King of the Wood. If his predecessors had been kings in the ordinary sense, he would surely have been found residing, like the fallen kings of Rome and Athens, in

Departmental kings of nature.

the city of which the sceptre had passed from him. This city must have been Aricia, for there was none nearer. But Aricia was three miles off from his forest sanctuary by the lake shore. If he reigned, it was not in the city, but in the greenwood. Again his title, King of the Wood, hardly allows us to suppose that he had ever been a king in the common sense of the word. More likely he was a king of nature, and of a special side of nature, namely, the woods from which he took his title. If we could find instances of what we may call departmental kings of nature, that is of persons supposed to rule over particular elements or aspects of nature, they would probably present a closer analogy to the King of the Wood than the divine kings we have been hitherto considering, whose control of nature is general rather than special. Instances of such departmental kings are not wanting.

Kings of rain in Africa.

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

Among tribes on the outskirts of Abyssinia a similar office exists and has been thus described by an observer.

[1] A. Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, ii. 230.

[2] "Excursion de M. Brun-Rollet dans la région supérieure du Nil," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), IVme Série, iv. (1852) pp. 421-423; *ib.* viii. (1854) pp. 387 *sq.*; Brun-Rollet, *Le Nil Blanc et le Soudan* (Paris, 1855), pp. 227 *sqq.* As to the rain-making chiefs of this region see above, vol. i. pp. 345 *sqq.* As to the distress and privations endured by these

"The priesthood of the Alfai, as he is called by the Barea and Kunama, is a remarkable one; he is believed to be able to make rain. This office formerly existed among the Algeds and appears to be still common to the Nuba negroes. The Alfai of the Barea, who is also consulted by the northern Kunama, lives near Tembadere on a mountain alone with his family. The people bring him tribute in the form of clothes and fruits, and cultivate for him a large field of his own. He is a kind of king, and his office passes by inheritance to his brother or sister's son. He is supposed to conjure down rain and to drive away the locusts. But if he disappoints the people's expectation and a great drought arises in the land, the Alfai is stoned to death, and his nearest relations are obliged to cast the first stone at him. When we passed through the country, the office of Alfai was still held by an old man; but I heard that rain-making had proved too dangerous for him and that he had renounced his office."[1] Priesthood of the Alfai.

In the backwoods of Cambodia live two mysterious sovereigns known as the King of the Fire and the King of the Water. Their fame is spread all over the south of the great Indo-Chinese peninsula; but only a faint echo of it has reached the West. Down to a few years ago no European, so far as is known, had ever seen either of them; and their very existence might have passed for a fable, were it not that till lately communications were regularly maintained between them and the King of Cambodia, who year by year exchanged presents with them. The Cambodian gifts were passed from tribe to tribe till they reached their destination; for no Cambodian would essay the long and perilous journey. The tribe amongst whom the Kings of Fire and Water reside is the Chréais or Jaray, a race with European features but a sallow complexion, inhabiting the forest-clad mountains and high tablelands which separate Cambodia from Annam. Their royal functions are of a purely mystic or spiritual order; they have no political authority; they are simple peasants, living by the sweat of Kings of Fire and Water in Cambodia.

people in the dry season, see E. de Pruyssenaere, "Reisen und Forschungen im Gebiete des Weissen und Blauen Nil," *Petermann's Mittheilungen, Ergänzungsheft* No. 50 (Gotha, 1877), p. 23.

[1] W. Munzinger, *Ostafrikanische Studien* (Schaffhausen, 1864), p. 474.

Kings of Fire and Water in Cambodia.

their brow and the offerings of the faithful. According to one account they live in absolute solitude, never meeting each other and never seeing a human face. They inhabit successively seven towers perched upon seven mountains, and every year they pass from one tower to another. People come furtively and cast within their reach what is needful for their subsistence. The kingship lasts seven years, the time necessary to inhabit all the towers successively; but many die before their time is out. The offices are hereditary in one or (according to others) two royal families, who enjoy high consideration, have revenues assigned to them, and are exempt from the necessity of tilling the ground. But naturally the dignity is not coveted, and when a vacancy occurs, all eligible men (they must be strong and have children) flee and hide themselves. Another account, admitting the reluctance of the hereditary candidates to accept the crown, does not countenance the report of their hermit-like seclusion in the seven towers. For it represents the people as prostrating themselves before the mystic kings whenever they appear in public, it being thought that a terrible hurricane would burst over the country if this mark of homage were omitted. Probably, however, these are mere fables such as commonly shed a glamour of romance over the distant and unknown. A French officer, who had an interview with the redoubtable Fire King in February 1891, found him stretched on a bamboo couch, diligently smoking a long copper pipe, and surrounded by people who paid him no great deference. In spite of his mystic vocation the sorcerer had no charm or talisman about him, and was in no way distinguishable from his fellows except by his tall stature. Another writer reports that the two kings are much feared, because they are supposed to possess the evil eye; hence every one avoids them, and the potentates considerately cough to announce their approach and to allow people to get out of their way. They enjoy extraordinary privileges and immunities, but their authority does not extend beyond the few villages of their neighbourhood. Like many other sacred kings, of whom we shall read in the sequel, the Kings of Fire and Water are not allowed to die a natural death, for that would lower their

reputation. Accordingly when one of them is seriously ill, the elders hold a consultation and if they think he cannot recover they stab him to death. His body is burned and the ashes are piously collected and publicly honoured for five years. Part of them is given to the widow, and she keeps them in an urn, which she must carry on her back when she goes to weep on her husband's grave.

Super-natural powers of the Kings of Fire and Water.

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

Gifts sent by the Kings of Fire and Water to the King of Cambodia.

In return the Kings of Fire and Water sent him a huge wax candle and two calabashes, one full of rice and the other of sesame. The candle bore the impress of the Fire King's middle finger, and was probably thought to contain the seed of fire, which the Cambodian monarch thus received once a year fresh from the Fire King himself

Kings of Fire and Water in Cambodia.

This holy candle was kept for sacred uses. On reaching the capital of Cambodia it was entrusted to the Brahmans, who laid it up beside the regalia, and with the wax made tapers which were burned on the altars on solemn days. As the candle was the special gift of the Fire King, we may conjecture that the rice and sesame were the special gift of the Water King. The latter was doubtless king of rain as well as of water, and the fruits of the earth were boons conferred by him on men. In times of calamity, as during plague, floods, and war, a little of this sacred rice and sesame was scattered on the ground "to appease the wrath of the maleficent spirits." Contrary to the common usage of the country, which is to bury the dead, the bodies of both these mystic monarchs are burnt, but their nails and some of their teeth and bones are religiously preserved as amulets. It is while the corpse is being consumed on the pyre that the kinsmen of the deceased magician flee to the forest and hide themselves for fear of being elevated to the invidious dignity which he has just vacated. The people go and search for them, and the first whose lurking place they discover is made King of Fire or Water.[1]

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

[1] Mgr. Cuénot, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xiii. (1841) p. 143; H. Mouhot, *Travels in the Central Parts of Indo-China* (London, 1864), ii. 35; A. Bastian, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Gebirgsstämme in Kambodia," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, i. (1866) p. 37; J. Moura, *Le Royaume du Cambodge* (Paris, 1883), i. 432-436; E. Aymonier, "Notes sur les coutumes et croyances superstitieuses des Cambodgiens," in *Cochinchine Française: Excursions et reconnaissances*, No. 16 (Saigon, 1883), pp. 172 *sq.*; *id.*, *Notes sur le Laos* (Saigon, 1885), p. 60; Le Capitaine Cupet, "Chez les populations sauvages du Sud de l'Annam," *Tour du monde*, No. 1682, April 1, 1893, pp. 193-204; *id.*, in *Mission Pavie, Indo-Chine 1879-1895, Géographie et voyages*, iii. (Paris, 1900) pp. 297-318; Tournier, *Notice sur le Laos Français* (Hanoi, 1900), pp. 111 *sq.*; A. Lavallée, "Notes ethnographiques sur diverses tribus du Sud-Est de l'Inde-Chine," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, i. (Hanoi, 1901) pp. 303 *sq.* Mgr. Cuénot mentions only the King of Fire. Bastian speaks as if the King of Fire was also the King of Water. Both writers report at second hand.

CHAPTER IX

THE WORSHIP OF TREES

§ 1. *Tree-spirits*

IN the religious history of the Aryan race in Europe the worship of trees has played an important part. Nothing could be more natural. For at the dawn of history Europe was covered with immense primaeval forests, in which the scattered clearings must have appeared like islets in an ocean of green. Down to the first century before our era the Hercynian forest stretched eastward from the Rhine for a distance at once vast and unknown; Germans whom Caesar questioned had travelled for two months through it without reaching the end.[1] Four centuries later it was visited by the Emperor Julian, and the solitude, the gloom, the silence of the forest appear to have made a deep impression on his sensitive nature. He declared that he knew nothing like it in the Roman empire.[2] In our own country the wealds of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex are remnants of the great forest of Anderida, which once clothed the whole of the south-eastern portion of the island. Westward it seems to have stretched till it joined another forest that extended from Hampshire to Devon. In the reign of Henry II. the citizens of London still hunted the wild bull and the boar in the woods of Hampstead. Even under the later Plantagenets the royal forests were sixty-eight in number. In the forest of Arden it was said that down to modern times a squirrel might leap from tree to tree for nearly the whole length of

Great forests of ancient Europe.

[1] Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* vi. 25.

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

Great forests of ancient Europe.

Warwickshire.[1] The excavation of ancient pile-villages in the valley of the Po has shewn that long before the rise and probably the foundation of Rome the north of Italy was covered with dense woods of elms, chestnuts, and especially of oaks.[2] Archaeology is here confirmed by history; for classical writers contain many references to Italian forests which have now disappeared.[3] As late as the fourth century before our era Rome was divided from central Etruria by the dreaded Ciminian forest, which Livy compares to the woods of Germany. No merchant, if we may trust the Roman historian, had ever penetrated its pathless solitudes: and it was deemed a most daring feat when a Roman general, after sending two scouts to explore its intricacies, led his army into the forest and, making his way to a ridge of the wooded mountains, looked down on the rich Etrurian fields spread out below.[4] In Greece beautiful woods of pine, oak, and other trees still linger on the slopes of the high Arcadian mountains, still adorn with their verdure the deep gorge through which the Ladon hurries to join the sacred Alpheus; and were still, down to a few years ago, mirrored in the dark blue waters of the lonely lake of Pheneus; but they are mere fragments of the forests which clothed great tracts in antiquity, and which at a more remote epoch may have spanned the Greek peninsula from sea to sea.[5]

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

[1] Ch. Elton, *Origins of English History* (London, 1882), pp. 3, 106 *sq.*, 224.

[2] W. Helbig, *Die Italiker in der Poebene* (Leipsic, 1879), pp. 25 *sq.*

[3] H. Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde*, i. (Berlin, 1883) pp. 431 *sqq.*

[4] Livy, ix. 36-38. The Ciminian mountains (*Monte Cimino*) are still clothed with dense woods of majestic oaks and chestnuts. Modern writers suppose that Livy has exaggerated the terrors and difficulties of the forest. See G. Dennis, *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*,[3] i. 146-149.

[5] C. Neumann und J. Partsch, *Physikalische Geographie von Griechenland* (Breslau, 1885), pp. 357 *sqq.* I am told that the dark blue waters of the lake of Pheneus, which still reflected the sombre pine-forests of the surrounding mountains when I travelled in Arcadia in the bright unforgetable autumn days of 1895, have since disappeared, the subterranean chasms which drain this basin having been, whether accidentally or artificially, cleared so as to allow the pent-up waters to escape. The acres which the peasants have thereby added to their fields will hardly console future travellers for the loss of the watery mirror, which was one of the most beautiful, as it was one of the rarest, scenes in the parched land of Greece.

oldest sanctuaries were natural woods.[1] However this may be, tree-worship is well attested for all the great European families of the Aryan stock. Amongst the Celts the oak-worship of the Druids is familiar to every one,[2] and their old word for a sanctuary seems to be identical in origin and meaning with the Latin *nemus*, a grove or woodland glade, which still survives in the name of Nemi.[3] Sacred groves were common among the ancient Germans, and tree-worship is hardly extinct amongst their descendants at the present day.[4] How serious that worship was in former times may be gathered from the ferocious penalty appointed by the old German laws for such as dared to peel the bark of a standing tree. The culprit's navel was to be cut out and nailed to the part of the tree which he had peeled, and he was to be driven round and round the tree till all his guts were wound about its trunk.[5] The intention of the punishment clearly was to replace the dead bark by a living substitute taken from the culprit; it was a life for a life, the life of a man for the life of a tree. At Upsala, the old religious capital of Sweden, there was a sacred grove in which every tree was regarded as divine.[6] The heathen Slavs worshipped trees and groves.[7] The Lithuanians were not converted to Christianity till towards the close of the fourteenth century, and amongst them at the date of their conversion the worship of trees was prominent. Some of them revered remarkable oaks and other great shady trees, from which they received oracular responses. Some maintained holy groves about their villages or houses, where even to break a twig would have been a sin. They thought that he who cut a bough in such a grove either died suddenly or was crippled in one of his limbs.[8] Proofs of the prevalence

Tree-worship practised by all the Aryan races in Europe.

[1] J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] i. 53 *sqq.*; O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der indo-germanischen Altertumskunde* (Strasburg, 1901), *s.v.* "Tempel," pp. 855 *sqq.*

[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 249 *sqq.*; Maximus Tyrius, *Dissert.* viii. 8.

[3] O. Schrader, *op. cit.* pp. 857 *sq.*

[4] Tacitus, *Germania*, 9, 39, 40, 43; *id.*, *Annals*, ii. 12, iv. 73; *id.*, *Hist.* iv. 14; J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] pp. 541 *sqq.*; *Bavaria Landes- und Volkeskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 929 *sq.*

[5] J. Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, pp. 519 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus* (Berlin, 1875), pp. 26 *sqq.*

[6] Adam of Bremen, *Descriptio insularum Aquilonis*, 27 (Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. cxlvi. col. 644).

[7] L. Leger, *La Mythologie slave* (Paris, 1901), pp. 73-75, 188-190.

[8] Mathias Michov, "De Sarmatia Asiana atque Europea," in Simon

of tree-worship in ancient Greece and Italy are abundant.[1] In the sanctuary of Aesculapius at Cos, for example, it was forbidden to cut down the cypress-trees under a penalty of a thousand drachms.[2] But nowhere, perhaps, in the ancient world was this antique form of religion better preserved than in the heart of the great metropolis itself. In the Forum, the busy centre of Roman life, the sacred fig-tree of Romulus was worshipped down to the days of the empire, and the withering of its trunk was enough to spread consternation through the city.[3] Again, on the slope of the Palatine Hill grew a cornel-tree which was esteemed one of the most sacred objects in Rome. Whenever the tree appeared to a passer-by to be drooping, he set up a hue and cry which was echoed by the people in the street, and soon a crowd might be seen running helter-skelter from all sides with buckets of water, as if (says Plutarch) they were hastening to put out a fire.[4]

Tree-worship among the Finnish-Ugrian peoples.

Among the tribes of the Finnish-Ugrian stock in Europe the heathen worship was performed for the most part in sacred groves, which were always enclosed with a fence. Such a grove often consisted merely of a glade or clearing with a few trees dotted about, upon which in former times the skins of the sacrificial victims were hung. The central point of the grove, at least among the tribes of the Volga, was the sacred tree, beside which everything else sank into insignificance. Before it the worshippers assembled and the priest offered his prayers, at its roots the victim was sacrificed, and its boughs sometimes served as a pulpit. No wood might be hewn and no branch broken in the grove, and women were generally forbidden to enter it. The

Grynaeus's *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum* (Paris, 1532), pp. 455 *sq.* [wrongly numbered 445, 446]; Martin Cromer, *De origine et rebus gestis Polonorum* (Basel, 1568), p. 241; Fabricius, *Livonicae historiae compendiosa series* (*Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, ii. (Riga and Leipsic, 1848) p. 441).

[1] See C. Bötticher, *Der Baumkultus der Hellenen* (Berlin, 1856); L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 105-114.

[2] *The Classical Review*, xix. (1905) p. 331, referring to an inscription found in Cos some years ago.

[3] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xv. 77; Tacitus, *Ann.* xiii. 58. The fig-tree is represented on Roman coins and on the great marble reliefs which stand in the Forum. See E. Babelon, *Monnaies de la République romaine*, ii. 336 *sq.*; R. Lanciani, *Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome* (London, 1897), p. 258; E. Petersen, *Vom alten Rom* (Leipsic, 1900), pp. 26, 27.

[4] Plutarch, *Romulus*, 20.

Ostyaks and Woguls, two peoples of the Finnish-Ugrian stock in Siberia, had also sacred groves in which nothing might be touched, and where the skins of the sacrificed animals were suspended; but these groves were not enclosed with fences.[1] Near Kuopio, in Finland, there was a famous grove of ancient moss-grown firs, where the people offered sacrifices and practised superstitious customs down to about 1650, when a sturdy veteran of the Thirty Years' War dared to cut it down at the bidding of the pastor. Sacred groves now hardly exist in Finland, but sacred trees to which offerings are brought are still not very uncommon. On some firs the skulls of bears are nailed, apparently that the hunter may have good luck in the chase.[2] The Ostyaks are said never to have passed a sacred tree without shooting an arrow at it as a mark of respect. In many places they hung furs and skins on the holy trees in the forest; but having observed that these furs were often appropriated and carried off by unscrupulous travellers, they adopted the practice of hewing the trunks into great blocks, which they decked with their offerings and preserved in safe places. The custom marks a transition from the worship of trees to the worship of idols carved out of the sacred wood. Within their sacred groves no grass or wood might be cut, no game hunted, no fish caught, not even a draught of water drunk. When they passed them in their canoes, they were careful not to touch the land with the oar, and if the journey through the hallowed ground was long, they laid in a store of water before entering on it, for they would rather suffer extreme thirst than slake it by drinking of the sacred stream. The Ostyaks also regarded as holy any tree on which an eagle had built its nest for several years, and they spared the bird as well as the tree. No greater injury could be done them than to shoot such an eagle or destroy its nest.[3]

But it is necessary to examine in some detail the notions

[1] K. Rhamm, "Der heidnische Gottesdienst des finnischen Stammes," *Globus*, lxvii. (1895) pp. 343, 348. This article is an abstract of a Finnish book *Suomen suvun pakanillinen jumalen palvelus*, by J. Krohn (Helsingfors, 1894).

[2] "Heilige Haine und Bäume der Finnen," *Globus*, lix. (1891) pp. 350 *sq.*

[3] P. S. Pallas, *Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des russischen Reichs* (St. Petersburg, 1771-1776), iii. 60 *sq.*

Trees are regarded by the savage as animate.

on which the worship of trees and plants is based. To the savage the world in general is animate, and trees and plants are no exception to the rule. He thinks that they have souls like his own, and he treats them accordingly. "They say," writes the ancient vegetarian Porphyry, "that primitive men led an unhappy life, for their superstition did not stop at animals but extended even to plants. For why should the slaughter of an ox or a sheep be a greater wrong than the felling of a fir or an oak, seeing that a soul is implanted in these trees also?"[1] Similarly, the Hidatsa Indians of North America believe that every natural object has its spirit, or to speak more properly, its shade. To these shades some consideration or respect is due, but not equally to all. For example, the shade of the cottonwood, the greatest tree in the valley of the Upper Missouri, is supposed to possess an intelligence which, if properly approached, may help the Indians in certain undertakings; but the shades of shrubs and grasses are of little account. When the Missouri, swollen by a freshet in spring, carries away part of its banks and sweeps some tall tree into its current, it is said that the spirit of the tree cries while the roots still cling to the land and until the trunk falls with a splash into the stream. Formerly the Indians considered it wrong to fell one of these giants, and when large logs were needed they made use only of trees which had fallen of themselves. Till lately some of the more credulous old men declared that many of the misfortunes of their people were caused by this modern disregard for the rights of the living cottonwood.[2] The Iroquois believed that each species of tree, shrub, plant, and herb had its own spirit, and to these spirits it was their custom to return thanks.[3] The Wanika of Eastern Africa fancy that every tree, and especially every coco-nut tree, has its spirit; "the destruction of a cocoa-nut tree is regarded as equivalent to matricide, because that tree gives them life and nourishment, as a mother does her child."[4] In the Yasawu islands

[1] Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, i. 6. This was an opinion of the Stoic and Peripatetic philosophy.

[2] Washington Matthews, *Ethnography and Philology of the Hidatsa Indians* (Washington, 1877), pp. 48 *sq.*

[3] L. H. Morgan, *League of the Iroquois* (Rochester, 1851), pp. 162, 164.

[4] J. L. Krapf, *Travels, Researches, and Missionary Labours during an Eighteen Years' Residence in Eastern Africa* (London, 1860), p. 198.

of Fiji a man will never eat a coco-nut without first asking its leave—"May I eat you, my chief?"[1] Among the Thompson Indians of British Columbia young people addressed the following prayer to the sunflower root before they ate the first roots of the season: "I inform thee that I intend to eat thee. Mayest thou always help me to ascend, so that I may always be able to reach the tops of mountains, and may I never be clumsy! I ask this from thee, Sunflower-Root. Thou art the greatest of all in mystery." To omit this prayer would have made the eater of the root lazy, and caused him to sleep long in the morning. We are not told, but may conjecture, that these Indians ascribed to the sunflower the sun's power of climbing above the mountain-tops and of rising betimes in the morning; hence whoever ate of the plant, with all the due formalities, would naturally acquire the same useful properties. It is not so easy to say why women had to observe continence in cooking and digging the root, and why, when they were cooking it, no man might come near the oven.[2] The Dyaks ascribe souls to trees, and do not dare to cut down an old tree. In some places, when an old tree has been blown down, they set it up, smear it with blood, and deck it with flags "to appease the soul of the tree."[3] Siamese monks, believing that there are souls everywhere, and that to destroy anything whatever is forcibly to dispossess a soul, will not break a branch of a tree, "as they will not break the arm of an innocent person."[4] These monks, of course, are Buddhists. But Buddhist animism is not a philosophical theory. It is simply a common savage dogma incorporated in the system of an historical religion. To suppose with Benfey and others that the theories of animism and transmigration current among rude peoples of Asia are derived from Buddhism, is to reverse the facts.

Trees regarded by the savage as animate.

[1] Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to the author dated November 3, 1898.

[2] J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," p. 349 (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. i. part iv.).

[3] C. Hupe, "Over de godsdienst, zeden enz. der Dajakkers," *Tijdschrift voor Neêrlands Indië*, 1846 (Batavia), dl. iii. p. 158.

[4] De la Loubere, *Du royaume de Siam* (Amsterdam, 1691), i. 382. Compare Mgr Bruguière, in *Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, v. (1831) p. 127.

Buddhism in this respect borrowed from savagery, not savagery from Buddhism.[1] According to Chinese belief, the spirits of plants are never shaped like plants but have commonly the form either of human beings or of animals, for example bulls and serpents. Occasionally at the felling of a tree the tree-spirit has been seen to rush out in the shape of a blue bull.[2] In China "to this day the belief in tree-spirits dangerous to man is obviously strong. In southern Fuhkien it deters people from felling any large trees or chopping off heavy branches, for fear the indwelling spirit may become irritated and visit the aggressor or his neighbours with disease and calamity. Especially respected are the green banyan or *ch'îng*, the biggest trees to be found in that part of China. In Amoy some people even show a strong aversion from planting trees, the planters, as soon as the stems have become as thick as their necks, being sure to be throttled by the indwelling spirits. No explanation of this curious superstition was ever given us. It may account to some extent for the almost total neglect of forestry in that part of China, so that hardly any except spontaneous trees grow there."[3]

Particular sorts of trees tenanted by spirits; sacrifices to tree-spirits.

Sometimes it is only particular sorts of trees that are supposed to be tenanted by spirits. At Grbalj in Dalmatia it is said that among great beeches, oaks, and other trees there are some that are endowed with shades or souls, and whoever fells one of them must die on the spot, or at least live an invalid for the rest of his days. If a woodman fears that a tree which he has felled is one of this sort, he must cut off the head of a live hen on the stump of the tree with the very same axe with which he cut down the tree. This will protect him from all harm, even if the tree be one of the animated kind.[4] The silk-cotton trees, which rear their enormous trunks to a stupendous height, far out-topping all the other trees of the forest, are regarded with reverence

Silk-cotton trees in West Africa.

[1] The Buddhist conception of trees as animated often comes out in the *Jātakas*. For examples see H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, pp. 259 *sqq.*; *The Jātaka*, bk. xii. No. 465, vol. iv. pp. 96 *sqq.* (English translation edited by E. B. Cowell).

[2] J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, iv. (Leyden, 1901) pp. 272 *sqq.*

[3] J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, v. (Leyden, 1907) p. 663.

[4] F. S. Krauss, *Volksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven* (Münster i. W., 1890), p. 33.

throughout West Africa, from the Senegal to the Niger, and are believed to be the abode of a god or spirit. Among the Ewe-speaking peoples of the Slave Coast the indwelling god of this giant of the forest goes by the name of Huntin. Trees in which he specially dwells—for it is not every silk-cotton tree that he thus honours — are surrounded by a girdle of palm-leaves; and sacrifices of fowls, and occasionally of human beings, are fastened to the trunk or laid against the foot of the tree. A tree distinguished by a girdle of palm-leaves may not be cut down or injured in any way; and even silk-cotton trees which are not supposed to be animated by Huntin may not be felled unless the woodman first offers a sacrifice of fowls and palm-oil to purge himself of the proposed sacrilege. To omit the sacrifice is an offence which may be punished with death.[1]

Sycamores in ancient Egypt.

Everywhere in Egypt on the borders of the cultivated land, and even at some distance from the valley of the Nile, you meet with fine sycamores standing solitary and thriving as by a miracle in the sandy soil; their living green contrasts strongly with the tawny hue of the surrounding landscape, and their thick impenetrable foliage bids defiance even in summer to the noonday sun. The secret of their verdure is that their roots strike down into rills of water that trickle by unseen sluices from the great river. Of old the Egyptians of every rank esteemed these trees divine, and paid them regular homage. They gave them figs, raisins, cucumbers, vegetables, and water in earthenware pitchers, which charitable folk filled afresh every day. Passers-by slaked their thirst at these pitchers in the sultry hours, and paid for the welcome draught by a short prayer. The spirit that animated these beautiful trees generally lurked unseen, but sometimes he would shew his head or even his whole body outside the trunk, but only to retire into it again.[2] People in Congo set calabashes of palm-wine at the foot of certain trees for the trees to drink when they are thirsty.[3] The

[1] A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast* (London, 1890), pp. 49 *sqq.* Compare *id.*, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast* (London, 1887), pp. 34 *sqq.*; *Missions Catholiques*, ix. (1877) p. 71.

[2] G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines* (Paris, 1895), pp. 121 *sq.*

[3] Merolla, "Voyage to Congo," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 236.

Sacred trees in Africa, Syria, and Patagonia.

Wanika of Eastern Africa pay special honour to the spirits of coco-nut palms in return for the many benefits conferred on them by the trees. To cut down a coco-nut palm is an inexpiable offence, equivalent to matricide. They sacrifice to the tree on many occasions. When a man in gathering the coco-nuts has fallen from the palm, they attribute it to the wrath of the tree-spirit, and resort to the oddest means of appeasing him.[1] The Masai particularly reverence the *subugo* tree, the bark of which has medical properties, and a species of parasitic fig which they call *retete*. The green figs are eaten by boys and girls, and older people propitiate the tree by pouring the blood of a goat at the foot of the trunk and strewing grass on the branches.[2] The natives of the Bissagos Islands, off the west coast of Africa, sacrifice dogs, cocks, and oxen to their sacred trees, but they eat the flesh of the victims and leave only the horns, fastened to the trees, for the spirits.[3] In a Turkish village of Northern Syria there is a very old oak-tree which the people worship, burning incense to it and bringing offerings as they would to a shrine.[4] In Patagonia, between the Rio Negro and the Rio Colorado, there stands solitary an ancient acacia-tree with a gnarled and hollow trunk. The Indians revere it as the abode of a spirit, and hang offerings of blankets, ponchos, ribbons, and coloured threads on it, so that the tree presents the aspect of an old clothes' shop, the tattered, weather-worn garments drooping sadly from the boughs. No Indian passes it without leaving something, if it be only a little horse-hair which he ties to a branch. The hollow trunk contains offerings of tobacco, beads, and sometimes coins. But the best evidence of the sanctity of the tree are the bleached skeletons of many horses which have been killed in honour of the spirit; for the horse is the most precious sacrifice that these Indians can offer. They slaughter the animal also to propitiate the spirits of the deep and rapid

[1] C. C. von der Decken, *Reisen in Ost-Afrika* (Leipsic and Heidelberg, 1869-1871), i. 216. The writer does not describe the mode of appeasing the tree-spirit in the case mentioned. As to the Wanika beliefs, see above, p. 12.

[2] Sir Harry Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate* (London, 1902), ii. 832.

[3] J. B. L. Durand, *Voyage au Sénégal* (Paris, 1802), p. 119.

[4] S. J. Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion To-day* (Chicago, 1902), p. 94.

rivers which they have often to ford or swim.[1] The Kayans of Central Borneo ascribe souls to the trees which yield the poison they use to envenom their arrows. They think that the spirit of the *tasem* tree (*Antiaris toxicaria*) is particularly hard to please; but if the wood has a strong and agreeable scent, they know that the man who felled the tree must have contrived by his offerings to mollify the peevish spirit.[2] In some of the Louisiade Islands there are certain large trees under which the natives hold their feasts. These trees seem to be regarded as endowed with souls; for a portion of the feast is set aside for them, and the bones of pigs and of human beings are everywhere deeply imbedded in their branches.[3] Among the Kangra mountains of the Punjaub a girl used to be annually sacrificed to an old cedar-tree, the families of the village taking it in turn to supply the victim. The tree was cut down not very many years ago.[4] On Christmas Eve it is still customary in some parts of Germany to gird fruit-trees with ropes of straw on which the sausages prepared for the festival have lain. This is supposed to make the trees bear fruit. In the Mark of Brandenburg the person who ties the straw round the trees says, "Little tree, I make you a present, and you will make me one." The people say that if the trees receive gifts, they will bestow gifts in return. The custom, which is clearly a relic of tree-worship, is often observed on New Year's night or at any time between Christmas and Twelfth Night.[5]

Sacrifices to trees.

[1] A. d'Orbigny, *Voyage dans l'Amérique Méridionale* (Paris and Strasburg, 1839-1843), ii. 157, 159 *sq.*

[2] A. W. Nieuwenhuis, *In Centraal-Borneo* (Leyden, 1900), i. 146.

[3] H. H. Romilly, *From my Verandah in New Guinea* (London, 1889), p. 86.

[4] D. C. J. Ibbetson, *Outlines of Panjab Ethnography* (Calcutta, 1883), p. 120.

[5] W. von Schulenberg, "Volkskundliche Mittheilungen aus der Mark," *Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte* (1896), p. 189. Compare A. Kuhn und W. Schwartz, *Nord-deutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 407, § 142; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 463, § 208; A. Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, ii. pp. 108 *sq.*, §§ 326, 327, p. 116, §§ 356, 358; A. Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, i. pp. 464 *sq.*, § 6; K. Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Meklenburg*, ii. 228 *sq.*; W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche*,[2] p. 29; R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde* (Brunswick, 1896), p. 234; R. Wuttke, *Sächsische Volkskunde*[2] (Dresden, 1901), p. 370. The custom has been discussed by U. Jahn, *Die deutschen Opfergebräuche bei Ackerbau und Viehzucht* (Breslau, 1884), pp. 214-220. He comes to the conclusion, which I cannot but regard as erroneous, that

Trees supposed to be sensitive and to feel wounds.

If trees are animate, they are necessarily sensitive and the cutting of them down becomes a delicate surgical operation, which must be performed with as tender a regard as possible for the feelings of the sufferers, who otherwise may turn and rend the careless or bungling operator. When an oak is being felled "it gives a kind of shriekes or groanes, that may be heard a mile off, as if it were the genius of the oake lamenting. E. Wyld, Esq., hath heard it severall times."[1] The Ojebways "very seldom cut down green or living trees, from the idea that it puts them to pain, and some of their medicine-men profess to have heard the wailing of the trees under the axe."[2] Trees that bleed and utter cries of pain or indignation when they are hacked or burned occur very often in Chinese books, even in Standard Histories.[3] Old peasants in some parts of Austria still believe that forest-trees are animate, and will not allow an incision to be made in the bark without special cause; they have heard from their fathers that the tree feels the cut not less than a wounded man his hurt. In felling a tree they beg its pardon.[4] It is said that in the Upper Palatinate also old woodmen still secretly ask a fine, sound tree to forgive them before they cut it down.[5] So in Jarkino the woodman craves pardon of the tree he fells.[6] Before the Ilocanes of Luzon cut down trees in the virgin forest or on the mountains, they recite some verses to the following effect: "Be not uneasy, my friend, though we fell what we have been ordered to fell." This they do in order not to draw down on themselves the hatred of the spirits who live in the trees, and who are apt to avenge themselves by visiting with grievous sickness such as injure them wantonly.[7] When the Tagalogs of the

Apologies offered to trees for cutting them down.

the custom was in origin a rational precaution to keep the caterpillars from the trees. Compare the marriage of trees, below, pp. 24 *sqq.*

[1] J. Aubrey, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme* (London, 1881), p. 247.

[2] Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, p. 104.

[3] J. J. M. de Groot, *Religious System of China*, iv. 274.

[4] A. Peter, *Volksthümliches aus Österreichisch-Schlesien* (Troppau, 1865-67), ii. 30.

[5] P. Wagler, *Die Eiche in alter und neuer Zeit*, ii. (Berlin, 1891) p. 56 note 1.

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

[7] J. de los Reyes y Florentino, "Die religiosen Anschauungen der Ilocanen (Luzon)," *Mittheilungen der k. k. Geograph. Gesellschaft in Wien*, xxxi. (1888) p. 556.

Philippines wish to pluck a flower, they ask leave of the genius (*nono*) of the flower to do so; when they are obliged to cut down a tree they beg pardon of the genius of the tree and excuse themselves by saying that it was the priest who bade them fell it.[1] Among the Tigre-speaking tribes in the north of Abyssinia people are afraid to fell a green and fruit-bearing tree lest they incur the curse of God, which is heard in the groaning of the tree as it sinks to the ground. But if a man is bold enough to cut down such a tree, he will say to it, "Thy curse abide in thee," or he will allege that it was not he but an elephant or a rhinoceros that knocked it down.[2] Amongst the Hos of Togoland, in West Africa, when a man wishes to make palm-wine he hires woodmen to fell the trees. They go into the palm-wood, set some meal on the ground and say to the wood, "That is your food. The old man at home sent us to cut you down. We are still children who know nothing at all. The old man at home has sent us." They say this because they think that the wood is a spirit and that it is angry with them.[3] Before a Karo Batak cuts down a tree, he will offer it betel and apologies; and if in passing the place afterwards he should see the tree weeping or, as we should say, exuding sap, he hastens to console it by sprinkling the blood of a fowl on the stump.[4] The Basoga of Central Africa think that when a tree is cut down the angry spirit which inhabits it may cause the death of the chief and his family. To prevent this disaster they consult a medicine-man before they fell a tree. If the man of skill gives leave to proceed, the woodman first offers a fowl and a goat to the tree; then as soon as he has given the first blow with the axe, he applies his mouth to the cut and sucks some of the sap. In this way he forms a brotherhood with the tree, just as two men become blood-brothers by sucking each

[1] F. Gardner, "Philippine (Tagalog) Superstitions," *Journal of American Folk-lore*, xix. (1906) p. 191. These superstitions are translated from an old and rare work *La Pratica del ministerio*, by Padre Tomas Ortiz (Manila, 1713).

[2] Th. Nöldeke, "Tigre-Texte," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, xxiv. (1910) p. 298, referring to E. Littmann, *Publications of the Princeton Expedition to Abyssinia* (Leyden, 1910).

[3] J. Spieth, *Die Ewe-Stämme* (Berlin, 1906), pp. 394-396.

[4] J. H. Neumann, "De *těndi* in verband met Si Dajang," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xlviii. (1904) pp. 124 *sq.*

other's blood. After that he can cut down his tree-brother with impunity.[1] An ancient Indian ritual directs that in preparing to fell a tree the woodman should lay a stalk of grass on the spot where the blow is to fall, with the words, "O plant, shield it!" and that he should say to the axe, "O axe, hurt it not!" When the tree had fallen, he poured melted butter on the stump, saying, "Grow thou out of this, O lord of the forest, grow with a hundred shoots! May we grow with a thousand shoots!" Then he anointed the severed stem and wound a rope of grass round it.[2]

Bleeding trees.

Again, when a tree or plant is cut it is sometimes thought to bleed. Some Indians dare not cut a certain plant, because there comes out a red juice which they take for the blood of the plant.[3] In Samoa there was a grove of trees which no one dared hew down. Once some strangers tried to do so, but blood flowed from the tree, and the sacrilegious strangers fell ill and died.[4] Down to 1859 there stood a sacred larch-tree at Nauders in the Tyrol which was thought to bleed whenever it was cut; moreover people fancied that the steel pierced the woodman's body to the same depth that it pierced the tree, and that the wound on his body would not heal until the bark closed over the scar on the trunk. So sacred was the tree that no one would gather fuel or cut timber near it; and to curse, scold, or quarrel in its neighbourhood was regarded as a crying sin which would be supernaturally punished on the spot. Angry disputants were often hushed with the warning whisper, "Don't, the sacred tree is here."[5]

Trees threatened in order to make them bear fruit.

But the spirits of vegetation are not always treated with deference and respect. If fair words and kind treatment do not move them, stronger measures are sometimes resorted to. The durian-tree of the East Indies, whose smooth stem

[1] From a letter of the Rev. J. Roscoe, written in Busoga, 21st May, 1908.

[2] *Satapatha-Brâhmana*, translated by J. Eggeling, Part II. pp. 165 *sq.* (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxvi.); H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, pp. 256 *sq.*

[3] De la Loubere, *Du royaume de Siam* (Amsterdam, 1691), i. 383.

[4] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 63.

[5] I. v. Zingerle, "Der heilige Baum bei Nauders," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iv. (1859), pp. 33 *sqq.* According to Lucan (*Pharsal.* iii. 429-431), the soldiers whom Caesar ordered to cut down the sacred oak-grove of the Druids at Marseilles believed that the axes would rebound from the trees and wound themselves.

often shoots up to a height of eighty or ninety feet without sending out a branch, bears a fruit of the most delicious flavour and the most disgusting stench. The Malays cultivate the tree for the sake of its fruit, and have been known to resort to a peculiar ceremony for the purpose of stimulating its fertility. Near Jugra in Selangor there is a small grove of durian-trees, and on a specially chosen day the villagers used to assemble in it. Thereupon one of the local sorcerers would take a hatchet and deliver several shrewd blows on the trunk of the most barren of the trees, saying, "Will you now bear fruit or not? If you do not, I shall fell you." To this the tree replied through the mouth of another man who had climbed a mangostin-tree hard by (the durian-tree being unclimbable), "Yes, I will now bear fruit; I beg you not to fell me."[1] So in Japan to make trees bear fruit two men go into an orchard. One of them climbs up a tree and the other stands at the foot with an axe. The man with the axe asks the tree whether it will yield a good crop next year and threatens to cut it down if it does not. To this the man among the branches replies on behalf of the tree that it will bear abundantly.[2] Odd as this mode of horticulture may seem to us, it has its exact parallels in Europe. On Christmas Eve many a South Slavonian and Bulgarian peasant swings an axe threateningly against a barren fruit-tree, while another man standing by intercedes for the menaced tree, saying, "Do not cut it down; it will soon bear fruit." Thrice the axe is swung, and thrice the impending blow is arrested at the entreaty of the intercessor. After that the frightened tree will certainly bear fruit next year.[3] So at the village of Ucria in Sicily, if a tree obstinately refuses to bear fruit, the owner pretends to hew it down. Just as the axe is about to fall, a friend intercedes for the tree, begging him to have patience for one year more, and promising not to interfere again if the culprit has not mended

[1] W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 198 *sq.* As to the durian-tree and its fruit, see A. R. Wallace, *The Malay Archipelago*[6] (London, 1877), pp. 74 *sqq.*

[2] W. G. Aston, *Shinto* (London, 1905), p. 165.

[3] F. S. Krauss, *Volksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 34; A. Strausz, *Die Bulgaren* (Leipsic, 1898), p. 352. Compare R. F. Kaindl, "Aus der Volksüberlieferung der Bojken," *Globus*, lxxix. (1901) p. 152.

Trees threatened in order to make them bear fruit.

his ways by then. The owner grants his request, and the Sicilians say that a tree seldom remains deaf to such a menace. The ceremony is performed on Easter Saturday.[1] In Armenia the same pantomime is sometimes performed by two men for the same purpose on Good Friday.[2] In the Abruzzi the ceremony takes place before sunrise on the morning of St. John's Day (Midsummer Day). The owner threatens the trees which are slow to bear fruit. Thrice he walks round each sluggard repeating his threat and striking the trunk with the head of an axe.[3] In Lesbos, when an orange-tree or a lemon-tree does not bear fruit, the owner will sometimes set a looking-glass before the tree; then standing with an axe in his hand over against the tree and gazing at its reflection in the glass he will feign to fall into a passion and will say aloud, "Bear fruit, or I'll cut you down."[4] When cabbages merely curl their leaves instead of forming heads as they ought to do, an Esthonian peasant will go out into the garden before sunrise, clad only in his shirt, and armed with a scythe, which he sweeps over the refractory vegetables as if he meant to cut them down. This intimidates the cabbages and brings them to a sense of their duty.[5]

Attempts to deceive the spirits of trees and plants.

If European peasants thus know how to work on the fears of cabbages and fruit-trees, the subtle Malay has learned how to overreach the simple souls of the plants and trees that grow in his native land. Thus, when a bunch of fruit hangs from an *aren* palm-tree, and in reaching after it you tread on some of the fallen fruit, the Galelareese say that you ought to grunt like a wild boar in order that your feet may not itch. The chain of reasoning seems weak to a European mind, but the natives find no flaw in it. They

[1] G. Pitrè, *Spettacoli e feste popolari* (Palermo, 1881), p. 221; *id.*, *Usi e costumi, credenze e pregiudizi del popolo siciliano*, iii. (Palermo, 1889) p. 111; G. Vuillier, "Chez les magiciens et les sorciers de la Corrèze," *Tour du monde*, N.S. v. (1899) p. 512.

[2] M. Tchéraz, "Notes sur la mythologie Arménienne," *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists* (London, 1893), ii. 827. Compare M. Abeghian, *Der armenische Volksglaube* (Leipsic, 1899), p. 60.

[3] G. Finamore, *Credenze, usi, e costumi abruzzesi* (Palermo, 1890), pp. 162 *sq.*

[4] Georgeakis et Pineau, *Folk-lore de Lesbos* (Paris, 1894), p. 354.

[5] Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten* (St. Petersburg, 1854), p. 134.

have observed that wild boars are fond of the fruit, and run freely about among it as it lies on the ground. From this they infer that the animal's feet are proof against the itch which men suffer through treading on the fruit; and hence they conclude that if, by grunting in a natural and life-like manner, you can impress the fruit with the belief that you are a pig, it will treat your feet as tenderly as the feet of his friends the real pigs.[1] Again, pregnant women in Java sometimes take a fancy to eat the wild species of a particular plant (*Colocasia antiquorum*), which, on account of its exceedingly pungent taste, is not commonly used as food by human beings, though it is relished by pigs. In such a case it becomes the husband's duty to go and look for the plant, but before he gathers it he takes care to grunt loudly, in order that the plant may take him for a pig, and so mitigate the pungency of its flavour.[2] Again, in the Madiun district of Java there grows a plant of which the fruit is believed to be injurious for men, but not for apes. The urchins who herd buffaloes, and to whom nothing edible comes amiss, eat this fruit also; but before plucking it they take the precaution of mimicking the voices of apes, in order to persuade the plant that its fruit is destined for the maw of these creatures.[3] Once more, the Javanese scrape the rind of a certain plant (*Sarcolobus narcoticus*) into a powder, with which they poison such dangerous beasts as tigers and wild boars. But the rind is believed not to be a poison for men. Hence the person who gathers the plant has to observe certain precautions in order that its baneful quality may not be lost in passing through his hands. He approaches it naked and creeping on all fours to make the plant think that he is a ravenous beast and not a man, and to strengthen the illusion he bites the stalk. After that the deadly property of the rind is assured. But even when the plant has been gathered and the powder made from it in strict accordance with certain superstitious rules, care is still

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

[2] A. G. Vorderman, "Planten-animisme op Java," *Teysmannia*, No. 2, 1896, pp. 59 *sq.*; *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, ix. (1896) p. 175.

[3] A. G. Vorderman, *op. cit.* p. 60; *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, ix. (1896) p. 176.

needed in handling the powder, which is regarded as alive and intelligent. It may not be brought near a corpse, nor may a corpse be carried past the house in which the powder is kept. For if either of these things were to happen, the powder, seeing the corpse, would hastily conclude that it had already done its work, and so all its noxious quality would be gone.[1] The Indians of the Upper Orinoco extract a favourite beverage from certain palm-trees which grow in their forests. In order to make the trees bear abundance of fruit the medicine-men blow sacred trumpets under them; but how this is supposed to produce the desired effect does not appear. The trumpets (*botutos*) are objects of religious veneration; no woman may look on them under pain of death. Candidates for initiation into the mystery of the trumpets must be men of good character and celibate. The initiated members scourge each other, fast, and practise other austerities.[2]

Trees married to each other.

The conception of trees and plants as animated beings naturally results in treating them as male and female, who can be married to each other in a real, and not merely a figurative or poetical sense of the word. The notion is not purely fanciful, for plants like animals have their sexes and reproduce their kind by the union of the male and female elements. But whereas in all the higher animals the organs of the two sexes are regularly separated between different individuals, in most plants they exist together in every individual of the species. This rule, however, is by no means universal, and in many species the male plant is distinct from the female. The distinction appears to have been observed by some savages, for we are told that the Maoris "are acquainted with the sex of trees, etc., and have distinct names for the male and female of some trees."[3]

Artificial fertilisation of the date-palm.

The ancients knew the difference between the male and the female date-palm, and fertilised them artificially by shaking the pollen of the male tree over the flowers of the female.[4]

[1] A. G. Vorderman, *op. cit.* pp. 61-63.

[2] A. de Humboldt, *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales du Nouveau Continent*, ii. (Paris, 1819) pp. 369 *sq.*, 429 *sq.*

[3] Elsdon Best, "Maori Nomenclature," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 197.

[4] Herodotus, i. 193; Theophrastus, *Historia plantarum*, ii. 8. 4; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xiii. 31, 34 *sq.* In this

The fertilisation took place in spring. Among the heathen of Harran the month during which the palms were fertilised bore the name of the Date Month, and at this time they celebrated the marriage festival of all the gods and goddesses.[1] Different from this true and fruitful marriage of the palm are the false and barren marriages of plants which play a part in Hindoo superstition. For example, if a Hindoo has planted a grove of mangos, neither he nor his wife may taste of the fruit until he has formally married one of the trees, as a bridegroom, to a tree of a different sort, commonly a tamarind-tree, which grows near it in the grove. If there is no tamarind to act as bride, a jasmine will serve the turn. The expenses of such a marriage are often considerable, for the more Brahmans are feasted at it, the greater the glory of the owner of the grove. A family has been known to sell its golden and silver trinkets, and to borrow all the money they could in order to marry a mango-tree to a jasmine with due pomp and ceremony.[2] According to another account of the ceremony, a branch of a *bar* tree is brought and fixed near one of the mango trees in the grove to represent the *bar* or bridegroom, and both are wrapt round with the same piece of cloth by the owner of the grove and his wife. To complete the ceremony a bamboo basket containing the bride's belongings and dowry on a miniature scale is provided; and after the Brahman priest has done his part, vermilion, the emblem of a completed marriage, is applied to the mango as to a bride.[3] Another plant which figures as

Marriages of trees in India.

passage Pliny states that naturalists distinguished the sexes of all trees and plants. On Assyrian monuments a winged figure is often represented holding an object which looks like a pine-cone to a palm-tree. The scene has been ingeniously and with great probability explained by Professor E. B. Tylor as the artificial fertilisation of the date-palm by means of the male inflorescence. See his paper in *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, xii. (1890) pp. 383-393. On the artificial fertilisation of the date-palm, see C. Ritter, *Vergleichende Erdkunde von Arabien* (Berlin, 1847), ii. 811, 827 *sq.*

[1] D. Chwolsohn, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus* (St. Petersburg, 1856), ii. 36, 251. Mohammed forbade the artificial fertilisation of the palm, probably because of the superstitions attaching to the ceremony. But he had to acknowledge his mistake. See D. S. Margoliouth, *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, p. 230 (a passage pointed out to me by Dr. A. W. Verrall).

[2] Sir W. H. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official* (Westminster, 1893), i. 38 *sq.*; compare *Census of India, 1901*, vol. xiii., *Central Provinces*, part i. p. 92.

[3] *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, lxxii., part iii. (Calcutta, 1904) p. 42.

Marriage of the holy basil.

a bride in Hindoo rites is the *tulasi* or Holy Basil (*Ocymum sanctum*). It is a small shrub, not too big to be grown in a large flower-pot, and is often placed in rooms; indeed there is hardly a respectable Hindoo family that does not possess one. In spite of its humble appearance, the shrub is pervaded by the essence of Vishnu and his wife Lakshmi, and is itself worshipped daily as a deity. The following prayer is often addressed to it: "I adore that *tulasi* in whose roots are all the sacred places of pilgrimage, in whose centre are all the deities, and in whose upper branches are all the Vedas." The plant is especially a woman's divinity, being regarded as an embodiment of Vishnu's wife Lakshmi, or of Rama's wife Sita, or of Krishna's wife Rukmini. Women worship it by walking round it and praying or offering flowers and rice to it. Now this sacred plant, as the embodiment of a goddess, is annually married to the god Krishna in every Hindoo family. The ceremony takes place in the month *Karttika* or November. In Western India they often bring an idol of the youthful Krishna in a gorgeous palanquin, followed by a long train of attendants, to the house of a rich man to be wedded to the basil; and the festivities are celebrated with great pomp.[1] Again, as the wife of Vishnu, the holy basil is married to the *Salagrama*, a black fossil ammonite which is regarded as an embodiment of Vishnu. In North-Western India this marriage of the plant to the fossil has to be performed before it is lawful to taste of the fruit of a new orchard. A man holding the fossil personates the bridegroom, and another holding the basil represents the bride. After burning a sacrificial fire, the officiating Brahman puts the usual questions to the couple about to be united. Bride and bridegroom walk six times round a small spot marked out in the centre of the orchard.[2] Further, no well is considered lucky until the

[1] J. A. Dubois, *Mœurs, institutions et cérémonies des peuples de l'Inde* (Paris, 1825), ii. 448 *sq.*; Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought in India*, pp. 333-335; W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), ii. 110 *sq.* According to another account, it is Vishnu, not Krishna, to whom the holy plant is annually married in every pious Hindoo family. See *Census of India, 1901*, vol. xviii., *Baroda*, p. 125.

[2] Sir Henry M. Elliot, *Memoirs on the History, Folklore, and Distribution of the Races of the North-western Provinces of India*, edited by J. Beames (London, 1869), i. 233 *sq.*

Salagrama has been solemnly wedded to the holy basil, which stands for the garden that the well is intended to water. The relations assemble; the owner of the garden represents the bridegroom, while a kinsman of his wife personates the bride. Gifts are given to the Brahmans, a feast is held in the garden, and after that both garden and well may be used without danger.[1] The same marriage of the sacred fossil to the sacred plant is celebrated annually by the Rajah of Orchha at Ludhaura. A former Rajah used to spend a sum equal to about thirty thousand pounds, being one-fourth of his revenue, upon the ceremony. On one occasion over a hundred thousand people are said to have been present at the rite, and to have been feasted at the expense of the Rajah. The procession consisted of eight elephants, twelve hundred camels, and four thousand horses, all mounted and elegantly caparisoned. The most sumptuously decorated of the elephants carried the fossil god to pay his bridal visit to the little shrub goddess. On such an occasion all the rites of a regular marriage are performed, and afterwards the newly-wedded couple are left to repose together in the temple till the next year.[2] On Christmas

Marriage of the holy basil.

[1] W. Crooke, *op. cit.* i. 49.

[2] Sir W. H. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official* (Westminster, 1893), i. 147-149, 175. The *Salagrama* is commonly perforated in one or more places by worms or, as the Hindoos believe, by the legendary insect Vajrakita or by Vishnu himself. The value of the fossil shell depends on its colour, and the number of its convolutions and holes. The black are prized as gracious embodiments of Vishnu; the violet are shunned as dangerous avatars of the god. He who possesses a black *Salagrama* keeps it wrapped in white linen, washes and adores it daily. A draught of the water in which the shell has been washed is supposed to purge away all sin and to secure the temporal and eternal welfare of the drinker. These fossils are found in Nepaul, in the upper course of the river Gandaka, a northern tributary of the Ganges. Hence the district goes by the name of Salagrami, and is highly esteemed for its sanctity; a visit to it confers great merit on a man. See Sonnerat, *Voyage aux Indes Orientales et à la Chine* (Paris, 1782), i. 173 *sq.*; J. A. Dubois, *Mœurs, institutions et cérémonies des peuples de l'Indie* (Paris, 1825), ii. 446-448; Sir W. H. Sleeman, *op. cit.* i. 148 *sq.*, with the editor's notes; Monier Williams, *Religious Thought and Life in India*, pp. 69 *sq.*; G. Watt, *Dictionary of the Economic Products of India*, vi. Part II. (London and Calcutta, 1893) p. 384; W. Crooke, *op. cit.* ii. 164 *sq.*; *Indian Antiquary*, xxv. (1896) p. 146; G. Oppert, *On the Original Inhabitants of Bharatavarsa or India* (Westminster and Leipsic, 1893), pp. 337-359; *id.*, "Note sur les Sālagrāmas," *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (Paris, 1900), pp. 472-485. The shell derives its name of ammonite from its resemblance to a ram's horn, recalling the ram-god Ammon.

Eve German peasants used to tie fruit-trees together with straw ropes to make them bear fruit, saying that the trees were thus married.[1]

Trees in blossom and rice in bloom treated like pregnant women.

In the Moluccas, when the clove-trees are in blossom, they are treated like pregnant women. No noise may be made near them; no light or fire may be carried past them at night; no one may approach them with his hat on, all must uncover in their presence. These precautions are observed lest the tree should be alarmed and bear no fruit, or should drop its fruit too soon, like the untimely delivery of a woman who has been frightened in her pregnancy.[2] So in the East the growing rice-crop is often treated with the same considerate regard as a breeding woman. Thus in Amboyna, when the rice is in bloom, the people say that it is pregnant and fire no guns and make no other noises near the field, for fear lest, if the rice were thus disturbed, it would miscarry, and the crop would be all straw and no grain.[3] The Javanese also regard the bloom on the rice as a sign that the plant is pregnant; and they treat it accordingly, by mingling in the water that irrigates the fields a certain astringent food prepared from sour fruit, which is believed to be wholesome for women with child.[4] In some districts of Western Borneo there must be no talk of corpses or demons in the fields, else the spirit of the growing rice would be frightened and flee away to Java.[5] The Toboongkoos of Central Celebes will not fire a gun in a ricefield, lest the rice should be frightened away.[6] The Chams of Binh-Thuan, in Cochin-China, do not dare to touch the rice in the granary at

[1] *Die gestriegelte Rockenphilosophie* (Chemnitz, 1759), pp. 239 *sq.*; U. Jahn, *Die deutsche Opfergebräuche bei Ackerbau und Viehzucht*, pp. 214 *sqq.* See above, p. 17.

[2] Van Schmid, "Aanteekeningen nopens de zeden, gewoonten en gebruiken, etc., der bevolking van de eilanden Saparoea, etc." *Tijdschrift voor Neêrlands Indië*, 1843 (Batavia), dl. ii. p. 605; A. Bastian, *Indonesien*, i. 156.

[3] G. W. W. C. Baron van Hoëvell, *Ambon en meer bepaaldelijk de Oeliasers* (Dordrecht, 1875), p. 62.

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

[5] E. L. M. Kühr, "Schetsen uit Borneo's Westerafdeeling," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlvii. (1897) pp. 58 *sq.*

[6] A. C. Kruijt, "Eenige ethnografische aanteekeningen omtrent de Toboengkoe en de Tomori," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xliv. (1900) p. 221.

mid-day, because the rice is then asleep, and it would be both rude and dangerous to disturb its noonday slumber.[1] In Orissa growing rice is "considered as a pregnant woman, and the same ceremonies are observed with regard to it as in the case of human females."[2] In Poso, a district of Central Celebes, when the rice-ears are beginning to form, women go through the field feeding the young ears with soft-boiled rice to make them grow fast. They carry the food in calabashes, and grasping the ears in their hands bend them over into the vessels that they may partake of the strengthening pap. The reason for boiling the rice soft is that the ears are regarded as young children who could not digest rice cooked in the usual way.[3] The Tomori of Central Celebes feed the ripening rice by touching it with the contents of a broken egg.[4] When the grain begins to form, the people of Gayo, a district of northern Sumatra, regard the rice as pregnant and feed it with a pap composed of rice-meal, coco-nut, and treacle, which they deposit on leaves in the middle and at the corners of the field. And when the crop is plentiful and the rice has been threshed, they give it water to drink in a pitcher, which they bury to the neck in the heap of grain.[5]

Trees supposed to be tenanted by the souls of the dead.

Sometimes it is the souls of the dead which are believed to animate trees. The Dieri tribe of South Australia regard as very sacred certain trees which are supposed to be their fathers transformed; hence they speak with reverence of these trees, and are careful that they shall not be cut down or burned. If the settlers require them to hew down the trees, they earnestly protest against it, asserting that were they to do so they would have no luck, and might be punished for not protecting their ancestors.[6] Some of the Philippine Islanders believe that the souls of their ancestors are in

[1] D. Grangeon, "Les Cham et leur superstitions," *Missions Catholiques*, xxviii. (1896) p. 83.

[2] *Indian Antiquary*, i. (1872) p. 170.

[3] A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xxxix. (1895) pp. 22, 138.

[4] *Id.*, "Eenige ethnografische aanteekeningen omtrent de Toboengkoe en Tomori," *ib.*, xliv. (1900) p. 227.

[5] C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Het Gajõland en zijne Bewoners* (Batavia, 1903), pp. 344, 345.

[6] S. Gason, "The Dieyerie Tribe," *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 280; A. W. Howitt, "The Dieri and other kindred Tribes of Central Australia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891) p. 89.

Trees supposed to be tenanted by the souls of the dead.

certain trees, which they therefore spare. If they are obliged to fell one of these trees, they excuse themselves to it by saying that it was the priest who made them do it. The spirits take up their abode, by preference, in tall and stately trees with great spreading branches. When the wind rustles the leaves, the natives fancy it is the voice of the spirit; and they never pass near one of these trees without bowing respectfully, and asking pardon of the spirit for disturbing his repose. Among the Ignorrotes, in the district of Lepanto, every village has its sacred tree, in which the souls of the dead forefathers of the hamlet reside. Offerings are made to the tree, and any injury done to it is believed to entail some misfortune on the village. Were the tree cut down, the village and all its inhabitants would inevitably perish.[1] The natives of Bontoc, a province in the north of Luzon, cut down the woods near their villages, but leave a few fine trees standing as the abode of the spirits of their ancestors (*anitos*); and they honour the spirits by depositing food under the trees.[2] The Dyaks believe that when a man dies by accident, as by drowning, it is a sign that the gods mean to exclude him from the realms of bliss. Accordingly his body is not buried, but carried into the forest and there laid down. The souls of such unfortunates pass into trees or animals or fish, and are much dreaded by the Dyaks, who abstain from using certain kinds of wood, or eating certain sorts of fish, because they are supposed to contain the souls of the dead.[3] Once, while walking with a Dyak through the jungle, Sir Hugh Low observed that his companion, after raising his sword to strike a great snake, suddenly arrested his arm and suffered the reptile to escape. On asking the reason, he was told by the Dyak that the bush in front of which they were standing had been a man, a kinsman of his

[1] F. Blumentritt, "Der Ahnencultus und die religiöse Anschauungen der Malaien des Philippinen-Archipels," *Mittheilungen der Wiener Geogr. Gesellschaft* (1882), pp. 159 *sq.*; *id.*, *Versuch einer Ethnographie der Philippinen* (Gotha, 1882), pp. 13, 29 (*Petermann's Mittheilungen, Ergänzungsheft*, No. 67); J. Mallat, *Les Philippines* (Paris, 1846), i. 63 *sq.*

[2] A. Schadenberg, "Beiträge zur Kenntnis der im Innern Nordluzons lebenden Stämme," *Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte* (1888), p. 40.

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

own, who, dying some ten years before, had appeared in a dream to his widow and told her that he had become that particular bamboo-tree. Hence the ground and everything on it was sacred, and the serpent might not be interfered with. The Dyak further related that in spite of the warning given to the woman in the vision, a man had been hardy enough to cut a branch of the tree, but that the fool had paid for his temerity with his life, for he died soon afterwards. A little bamboo altar stood in front of the bush, on which the remnants of offerings presented to the spirit of the tree were still visible when Sir Hugh Low passed that way.[1]

Trees supposed to be tenanted by the souls of the dead.

In Corea the souls of people who die of the plague or by the roadside, and of women who expire in childbed, invariably take up their abode in trees. To such spirits offerings of cake, wine, and pork are made on heaps of stones piled under the trees.[2] In China it has been customary from time immemorial to plant trees on graves in order thereby to strengthen the soul of the deceased and thus to save his body from corruption; and as the evergreen cypress and pine are deemed to be fuller of vitality than other trees, they have been chosen by preference for this purpose. Hence the trees that grow on graves are sometimes identified with the souls of the departed.[3] Among the Miao-Kia, an aboriginal race of Southern and Western China, a sacred tree stands at the entrance of every village, and the inhabitants believe that it is tenanted by the soul of their first ancestor and that it rules their destiny. Sometimes there is a sacred grove near a village, where the trees are suffered to rot and die on the spot. Their fallen branches cumber the ground, and no one may remove them unless he has first asked leave of the spirit of the tree and offered him a sacrifice.[4] Among the Maraves of Southern Africa the burial-ground is always regarded as a holy place where neither a tree may be felled nor a beast killed, because everything there is supposed to be tenanted by the souls of

[1] H. Low, *Sarawak* (London, 1848), p. 264.

[2] Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours* (London, 1898), i. 106 *sq.*

[3] J. J. M. de Groot, *Religious System of China*, ii. 462 *sqq.*, iv. 277 *sq.*

[4] *La Mission lyonnaise d'exploration commerciale en Chine 1895-1897* (Lyons, 1898), p. 361.

Trees supposed to be tenanted by the souls of the dead.

the dead.[1] Trees supposed to be inhabited by spirits of the dead are reported to be common in Southern Nigeria.[2] Thus in the Indem tribe on the Cross River every village has a big tree into which the souls of the villagers are believed to pass at death. Hence they will not allow these trees to be cut, and they sacrifice to them when people are ill.[3] Other natives of the Cross River say that the big tree of the village is "their Life," and that anybody who breaks a bough of it will fall sick or die unless he pays a fine to the chief.[4] Some of the mountaineers on the north-west coast of New Guinea think that the spirits of their ancestors live on the branches of trees, on which accordingly they hang rags of red or white cotton, always in the number of seven or a multiple of seven; also, they place food on the trees or hang it in baskets from the boughs.[5] Among the Buryats of Siberia the bones of a deceased shaman are deposited in a hole hewn in the trunk of a great fir, which is then carefully closed up. Thenceforth the tree goes by the name of the shaman's fir, and is looked upon as his abode. Whoever cuts down such a tree will perish with all his household. Every tribe has its sacred grove of firs in which the bones of the dead shamans are buried. In treeless regions these firs often form isolated clumps on the hills, and are visible from afar.[6] The Lkungen Indians of British Columbia fancy that trees are transformed men, and that the creaking of the branches in the wind is their voice.[7] In Croatia, they say that witches used to be buried under old trees in the forest, and that their souls passed into the trees and left the villagers in peace.[8] A tree that grows on a grave is regarded by the South Slavonian peasant as a sort of fetish.

[1] "Der Muata Cazembe und die Völkerstämme der Maravis, Chevas, Muembas, Lundas und andere von Süd-Afrika," *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, vi. (1856) p. 273.

[2] Major A. G. Leonard, *The Lower Niger and its Tribes* (London, 1906), pp. 298 *sqq.*

[3] Ch. Partridge, *Cross River Natives* (London, 1905), pp. 272 *sq.*

[4] Ch. Partridge, *op. cit.* pp. 5, 194, 205 *sq.*

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

[6] "Shamanism in Siberia and European Russia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxiv. (1895) p. 136.

[7] Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 28 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

[8] F. S. Krauss, *Volksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 36.

Whoever breaks a twig from it hurts the soul of the dead, but gains thereby a magic wand, since the soul embodied in the twig will be at his service.[1] This reminds us of the story of Polydorus in Virgil,[2] and of the bleeding pomegranate that grew on the grave of the fratricides Eteocles and Polynices at Thebes.[3] Similar stories are told far away from the classic lands of Italy and Greece. In an Annamite tale an old fisherman makes an incision in the trunk of a tree which has drifted ashore; but blood flows from the cut, and it appears that an empress with her three daughters, who had been cast into the sea, are embodied in the tree.[4] On the Slave Coast of West Africa the negroes tell how from the mouldering bones of a little boy, who had been murdered by his brother in the forest, there sprang up an edible fungus, which spoke and revealed the crime to the child's mother when she attempted to pluck it.[5]

Trees sometimes conceived not as the body but merely as the abode of spirits.

In most, if not all, of these cases the spirit is viewed as incorporate in the tree; it animates the tree and must suffer and die with it. But, according to another and probably later opinion, the tree is not the body, but merely the abode of the tree-spirit, which can quit it and return to it at pleasure. The inhabitants of Siaoo, an island of the Sangi group in the East Indies, believe in certain sylvan spirits who dwell in forests or in great solitary trees. At full moon the spirit comes forth from his lurking-place and roams about. He has a big head, very long arms and legs, and a ponderous body. In order to propitiate the wood-spirits people bring offerings of food, fowls, goats, and so forth to the places which they are supposed to haunt.[6] The people of Nias think that, when a tree dies, its liberated spirit becomes a demon, which can kill a coco-nut palm by merely lighting on its branches, and can cause the death of all the children in a house by perching on one of the posts that support it. Further, they are of opinion that certain

[1] F. S. Krauss, *loc. cit.*

[2] *Aeneid*, iii. 22 *sqq.*

[3] Philostratus, *Imagines*, ii. 29.

[4] A. Landes, "Contes et légendes annamites," No. 9, in *Cochinchine française: excursions et reconnaissances*, No. 20 (Saigon, 1885), p. 310.

[5] A. B. Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa*, pp. 134-136.

[6] B. C. A. J. van Dinter, "Eenige geographische en ethnographische aanteekeningen betreffende het eiland Siaoe," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-Land- en Volkenkunde*, xli. (1899) pp. 379 *sq.*

Trees conceived as the abode of spirits.

trees are at all times inhabited by roving demons who, if the trees were damaged, would be set free to go about on errands of mischief. Hence the people respect these trees, and are careful not to cut them down.[1] On the Tanga coast of East Africa mischievous sprites reside in great trees, especially in the fantastically shaped baobabs. Sometimes they appear in the shape of ugly black beings, but as a rule they enter unseen into people's bodies, from which, after causing much sickness and misery, they have to be cast out by the sorcerer.[2] The Warramunga tribe of Central Australia believe that certain trees are the abode of disembodied human spirits waiting to be born again. No woman will strike one of these trees with an axe, lest the blow might disturb one of the spirits, who might come forth from the tree and enter her body.[3] In the Galla region of East Africa, where the vegetation is magnificent, there are many sacred trees, the haunts of jinn. Most of them belong to the sycamore and maple family, but they do not all exhale an equal odour of sanctity. The *watêsa*, with its edible fruit, is least revered; people climb it to get the fruit, and this disturbs the jinn, who naturally do not care to linger among its boughs. The *gute tubi*, which has no edible fruit, is more sacred. Every Galla tribe has its sacred tree, which is always one individual of a particular species called *lafto*. When a tree has been consecrated by a priest it becomes holy, and no branch of it may be broken. Such trees are loaded with long threads, woollen bands, and bracelets; the blood of animals is poured on their roots and sometimes smeared on their trunks, and pots full of butter, milk, and flesh are placed among the branches or on the ground under them. In many Galla tribes women may not tread on the shadow of sacred trees or even approach the trees.[4]

Not a few ceremonies observed at cutting down haunted trees are based on the belief that the spirits have it in their

[1] E. Modigliani, *Un Viaggio a Nias* (Milan, 1890), p. 629.

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

[3] Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 162, 330 *sq.*

[4] Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: Die geistige Cultur der Danâkil, Galla und Somâl* (Berlin, 1896), pp. 34 *sq.* On the Galla worship of trees, see further Mgr. Massaja, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xxx. (1858) p. 50; Coulbeaux, "Au pays de Menelik," *Missions Catholiques*, xxx. (1898) p. 418.

power to quit the trees at pleasure or in case of need. Thus when the Pelew Islanders are felling a tree, they conjure the spirit of the tree to leave it and settle on another.[1] The wily negro of the Slave Coast, who wishes to fell an *ashorin* tree, but knows that he cannot do it so long as the spirit remains in the tree, places a little palm-oil on the ground as a bait, and then, when the unsuspecting spirit has quitted the tree to partake of this dainty, hastens to cut down its late abode.[2] The Alfoors of Poso, in Central Celebes, believe that great trees are inhabited by demons in human form, and the taller the tree the more powerful the demon. Accordingly they are careful not to fell such trees, and they leave offerings at the foot of them for the spirits. But sometimes, when they are clearing land for cultivation, it becomes necessary to cut down the trees which cumber it. In that case the Alfoor will call to the demon of the tree and beseech him to leave his abode and go elsewhere, and he deposits food under the tree as provision for the spirit on his journey. Then, and not till then, he may fell the tree. Woe to the luckless wight who should turn a tree-spirit out of his house without giving him due notice![3] When the Toboongkoos of Central Celebes are about to clear a piece of forest in order to plant rice, they build a tiny house and furnish it with tiny clothes and some food and gold. Then they call together all the spirits of the wood, offer them the little house with its contents, and beseech them to quit the spot. After that they may safely cut down the wood without fearing to wound themselves in so doing.[4] Before the Tomori of Central Celebes fell a tall tree they lay a quid of betel at its foot, and invite the spirit who dwells in the tree to change his lodging; moreover, they set a little ladder against the trunk to enable him to descend with safety and comfort.[5]

Ceremonies at felling trees.

[1] J. Kubary, "Die Religion der Pelauer," in A. Bastian's *Allerlei aus Volks- und Menschenkunde*, i. 52; *id.*, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Karolinen Archipels*, iii. (Leyden, 1895) p. 228.

[2] A. B. Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 115.

[3] A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xl. (1896) pp. 28 *sq.*

[4] A. C. Kruijt, "Eenige ethnografische aanteekeningen omtrent de Toboengkoe en de Tomori," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xliv. (1900) pp. 220 *sq.*

[5] A. C. Kruijt, *op. cit.* p. 242.

Ceremonies at felling trees.

The Sundanese of the Eastern Archipelago drive golden or silver nails into the trunk of a sacred tree for the sake of expelling the tree-spirit before they hew down his abode.[1] They seem to think that, though the nails will hurt him, his vanity will be soothed by the reflection that they are of gold or silver. In Rotti, an island to the south of Timor, when they fell a tree to make a coffin, they sacrifice a dog as compensation to the tree-spirit whose property they are thus making free with.[2] Before the Gayos of Northern Sumatra clear a piece of forest for the purpose of planting tobacco or sugar-cane, they offer a quid of betel to the spirit whom they call the Lord of the Wood, and beg his leave to quarter themselves on his domain.[3] The Mandelings of Sumatra endeavour to lay the blame of all such misdeeds at the door of the Dutch authorities. Thus when a man is cutting a road through a forest and has to fell a tall tree which blocks the way, he will not begin to ply his axe until he has said: "Spirit who lodgest in this tree, take it not ill that I cut down thy dwelling, for it is done at no wish of mine but by order of the Controller." And when he wishes to clear a piece of forest-land for cultivation, it is necessary that he should come to a satisfactory understanding with the woodland spirits who live there before he lays low their leafy dwellings. For this purpose he goes to the middle of the plot of ground, stoops down, and pretends to pick up a letter. Then unfolding a bit of paper he reads aloud an imaginary letter from the Dutch Government, in which he is strictly enjoined to set about clearing the land without delay. Having done so, he says: "You hear that, spirits. I must begin clearing at once, or I shall be hanged."[4] When the Tagales of the Philippines are about to fell a tree which they believe to be inhabited by a spirit, they excuse themselves to the spirit, saying: "The priest has

[1] J. Habbema, "Bijgeloof in de Preanger-Regentschappen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xli. (1900) pp. 113, 115.

[2] G. Heijmering, "Zeden en Gewoonten op het eiland Rottie," *Tijdschrift voor Neêrlands Indië* (1844), dl. i. p. 358.

[3] C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Het Gajōland en zijne Bewoners* (Batavia, 1903), p. 351.

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

ordered us to do it; the fault is not ours, nor the will either."[1] There is a certain tree called *rara* which the Dyaks believe to be inhabited by a spirit. Before they cut down one of these trees they strike an axe into the trunk, leave it there, and call upon the spirit either to quit his dwelling or to give them a sign that he does not wish it to be meddled with. Then they go home. Next day they visit the tree, and if they find the axe still sticking in the trunk, they can fell the tree without danger; there is no spirit in it, or he would certainly have ejected the axe from his abode. But if they find the axe lying on the ground, they know that the tree is inhabited and they will not fell it; for it must surely have been the spirit of the tree in person who expelled the intrusive axe. Some sceptical Europeans, however, argue that what casts out the axe is strychnine in the sap rather than the tree-spirit. They say that if the sap is running, the axe must necessarily be forced out by the action of heat and the expansion of the exuding gutta; whereas if the axe remains in the trunk, this only shews that the tree is not vigorous but ready to die.[2]

Ceremonies at felling trees.

Before they cut down a great tree, the Indians in the neighbourhood of Santiago Tepehuacan hold a festival in order to appease the tree and so prevent it from hurting anybody in its fall.[3] In the Greek island of Siphnos, if woodmen have to fell a tree which they regard as possessed by a spirit, they are most careful, when it falls, to prostrate themselves humbly and in silence lest the spirit should chastise them as it escapes. Sometimes they put a stone on the stump of the tree to prevent the egress of the spirit.[4] In some parts of Sumatra, so soon as a tree is felled, a young tree is planted on the stump, and some betel and a few small coins are also placed on it.[5] The purpose of the

[1] F. Blumentritt, *Versuch einer Ethnographie der Philippinen* (Gotha, 1882), p. 13 (*Petermanns Mittheilungen, Ergänzungheft*, No. 67). See above, pp. 18 *sq.*

[2] Crossland, quoted by H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 286; compare *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892) p. 114.

[3] "Lettre du curé de Santiago Tepehuacan à son évêque," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), II^me. Série, ii. (1834) pp. 182 *sq.*

[4] J. T. Bent, *The Cyclades*, p. 27.

[5] A. L. Van Hasselt, *Volksbeschrijving van Midden-Sumatra* (Leyden, 1882), p. 156.

Ceremonies at felling trees.

ceremony seems plain. The spirit of the tree is offered a new home in the young tree planted on the stump of the old one, and the offering of betel and money is meant to compensate him for the disturbance he has suffered. Similarly, when the Maghs of Bengal were obliged by Europeans to cut down trees which the natives believed to be tenanted by spirits, one of them was always ready with a green sprig, which he ran and placed in the middle of the stump when the tree fell, "as a propitiation to the spirit which had been displaced so roughly, pleading at the same time the orders of the strangers for the work."[1] In Halmahera, however, the motive for placing a sprig on the stump is said to be to deceive the spirit into thinking that the fallen stem is still growing in its old place.[2] The Gilyaks insert a stick with curled shavings on the stump of the tree which they have felled, believing that in this way they give back to the dispossessed tree-spirit his life and soul.[3] German woodmen make a cross upon the stump while the tree is falling, in the belief that this enables the spirit of the tree to live upon the stump.[4] Before the Katodis fell a forest tree, they choose a tree of the same kind and worship it by presenting a cocoanut, burning incense, applying a red pigment, and begging it to bless the undertaking.[5] The intention, perhaps, is to induce the spirit of the former tree to shift its quarters to the latter. In clearing a wood, a Galelareese must not cut down the last tree till the spirit in it has been induced to go away.[6] When the Dyaks fell the jungle on the hills, they often leave a few trees standing on the hill-tops as a refuge for the dispossessed tree-spirits.[7] Sailing up the Baram river in Sarawak you pass from time to time a clearing in the forest where manioc is cultivated. In the middle of every one of these clearings a solitary tree is always left standing as a home for the

[1] W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), ii. 87.

[2] I. M. van Baarda, "Île de Halmaheira," *Bulletins de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, iv. (1893) p. 547.

[3] L. Sternberg, "Die Religion der Gilyak," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, viii. (1905) p. 246.

[4] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 83.

[5] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vii. (1843) p. 29.

[6] A. Bastian, *Indonesien*, i. 17.

[7] J. Perham, "Sea Dyak Religion," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 10 (Dec. 1882), p. 217; H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 184.

ejected spirits of the wood. Its boughs are stripped off, all but the topmost, and just under its leafy crown two cross-pieces are fastened from which rags dangle.[1] Similarly in India, the Gonds allow a grove of typical trees to remain as a home or reserve for the woodland spirits when they are clearing away a jungle.[2] The Mundaris have sacred groves which were left standing when the land was cleared, lest the sylvan gods, disquieted at the felling of the trees, should abandon the place.[3] The Miris in Assam are unwilling to break up new land for cultivation so long as there is fallow land available; for they fear to offend the spirits of the woods by hewing down trees needlessly.[4] On the other hand, when a child has been lost, the Padams of Assam think that it has been stolen by the spirits of the wood; so they retaliate on the spirits by felling trees till they find the child. The spirits, fearing to be left without a tree in which to lodge, give up the child, and it is found in the fork of a tree.[5]

Propitiating tree-spirits in house-timber.

Even when a tree has been felled, sawn into planks, and used to build a house, it is possible that the woodland spirit may still be lurking in the timber, and accordingly some people seek to propitiate him before or after they occupy the new house. Hence, when a new dwelling is ready the Toradjas of Central Celebes kill a goat, a pig, or a buffalo, and smear all the woodwork with its blood. If the building is a *lobo* or spirit-house, a fowl or a dog is killed on the ridge of the roof, and its blood allowed to flow down on both sides. The ruder Tonapoo in such a case sacrifice a human being on the roof. This sacrifice on the roof of a *lobo* or temple serves the same purpose as the smearing of blood on the woodwork of an ordinary house. The intention is to propitiate the forest-spirits who may still be in the timber; they are thus put in good humour and will do the

[1] W. Kükenthal, *Forschungsreise in den Molukken und in Borneo* (Frankfort, 1896), pp. 265 *sq.*

[2] *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxv. (1896) p. 170.

[3] E. T. Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, pp. 186, 188; compare A. Bastian, *Völkerstämme am Brahmaputra*, p. 9.

[4] E. T. Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 33; A. Bastian, *op. cit.* p. 16. Compare L. A. Waddell, "The Tribes of the Brahmaputra Valley," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, lxix. (1901) Part III. p. 16; W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*,[2] pp. 132 *sq.*

[5] E. T. Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 25; A. Bastian, *op. cit.* p. 37.

Propitiating tree-spirits in house-timber.

inmates of the house no harm. For a like reason people in Celebes and the Moluccas are much afraid of planting a post upside down at the building of a house; for the forest-spirit, who might still be in the timber, would very naturally resent the indignity and visit the inmates with sickness.[1] The Bahaus or Kayans of central Borneo are of opinion that tree-spirits stand very stiffly on the point of honour and visit men with their displeasure for any injury done to them. Hence after building a house, whereby they have been forced to illtreat many trees, these people observe a period of penance for a year, during which they must abstain from many things, such as the killing of bears, tiger-cats, and serpents. The period of taboo is brought to an end by a ceremony at which head-hunting, or the pretence of it, plays a part. The Ooloo-Ayar Dyaks on the Mandai river are still more punctilious in their observance of taboos after building a house. The length of the penance depends chiefly on the kind of timber used in the construction of the dwelling. If the timber was the valuable ironwood, the inmates of the house must deny themselves various dainties for three years. But the spirits of humbler trees are less exacting.[2] When the Kayans have felled an ironwood tree in order to cut it up into planks for a roof, they will offer a pig to the spirits of the tree, hoping thus to prevent the spirits from molesting the souls of persons assembled under the roof.[3]

Sacred trees the abode of spirits.

Thus the tree is regarded, sometimes as the body, sometimes as merely the house of the tree-spirit; and when we read of sacred trees which may not be cut down because they are the seat of spirits, it is not always possible to say with certainty in which way the presence of the spirit in the tree is conceived. In the following cases, perhaps, the trees are regarded as the dwelling-place of the spirits rather than as their bodies. The Sea Dyaks point to many a tree as sacred because it is the abode of a spirit or spirits, and to

[1] A. C. Kruijt, "Het koppensnellen der Toradja's van Midden-Celebes en zijne beteekenis," *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der konink. Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Afdeeling Letterkunde, IV. Reeks, iii. (1899) p. 195.

[2] A. W. Nieuwenhuis, *In Centraal-Borneo* (Leyden, 1900), i. 146; *id.*, *Quer durch Borneo*, i. (Leyden, 1904) p. 107.

[3] *Id.*, "Tweede Reis van Pontianak naar Samarinda," *Tijdschrift van het konink. Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, II. Serie, xvii. (1900) p. 427.

cut one of these down would provoke the spirit's anger, who might avenge himself by visiting the sacrilegious woodman with sickness.[1] The Battas of Sumatra have been known to refuse to cut down certain trees because they were the abode of mighty spirits who would resent the injury.[2] One of the largest and stateliest of the forest trees in Perak is known as *toallong;* it has a very poisonous sap which produces great irritation when it comes into contact with the skin. Many trees of this species have large hollow knobs on their trunks where branches have been broken off. These knobs are looked upon by the Malays as houses of spirits, and they object strongly to cut down trees that are thus disfigured, believing that the man who fells one of them will die within the year. When clearings are made in the forest these trees are generally left standing to the annoyance and expense of planters.[3] The Siamese fear to cut down any very fine trees lest they should incur the anger of the powerful spirits who inhabit them.[4] The En, a tribe of Upper Burma, worship the spirits of hills and forests, and over great tracts of country they will not lay out fields for fear of offending the spirits. They say that if a tree is felled a man dies.[5] In every Khond village a large grove, generally of *sâl* trees (*Shorea robusta*), is dedicated to the forest god, whose favour is sought by the sacrifice of birds, hogs, and sheep, together with an offering of rice and an addled egg. This sacred grove is religiously preserved. The young trees are occasionally pruned, but not a twig may be cut for use without the formal consent of the village and the ceremonial propitiation of the god.[6] In some parts of Berar the holy groves are so carefully preserved, that during the annual festivals held in them it is customary to gather and burn solemnly all dead and fallen branches and

[1] J. Perham, "Sea Dyak Religion," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 10 (December 1882), p. 217; H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 184.

[2] B. Hagen, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Battareligion," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxviii. 530, note.

[3] W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 202.

[4] E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe* (Westminster, 1898), pp. 192 *sq.*

[5] J. G. Scott and J. P. Hardiman, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, Part I. vol. i. (Rangoon, 1900) pp. 518 *sq.*

[6] Captain Macpherson, in *North Indian Notes and Queries*, ii. 112 § 428.

Sacred trees the abode of spirits.

trees.[1] The Larka Kols of India believe that the tops of trees are the abode of spirits who are disturbed by the felling of the trees and will take vengeance.[2] The Parahiya, a Dravidian tribe of Mirzapur, think that evil spirits live in the *sâl*, *pîpal*, and *mahua* trees; they make offerings to such trees and will not climb into their branches.[3] In Travancore demons are supposed to reside in certain large old trees, which it would be sacrilegious and dangerous to hew down. A rough stone is generally placed at the foot of one of these trees as an image or emblem, and turmeric powder is rubbed on it.[4] Some of the Western tribes of British New Guinea dread certain female devils who inhabit large trees and are very dangerous. Trees supposed to be the abode of these demons are treated with much respect and never cut down.[5] Near Old Calabar there is a ravine full of the densest and richest vegetation, whence a stream of limpid water flows purling to the river. The spot was considered by a late king to be hallowed ground, the residence of Anansa, the tutelary god of Old Calabar. The people had strict orders to revere the grove, and no branch of it might be cut.[6] Among the Bambaras of the Upper Niger every village has its sacred tree, generally a tamarind, which is supposed to be the abode of the fetish and is carefully preserved. The fetish is consulted on every important occasion, and sacrifices of sheep, dogs, and fowls, accompanied with offerings of millet and fruits, are made under the sacred tree.[7] In the deserts of Arabia a modern traveller found a great solitary acacia-tree which the Bedouins believed to be possessed by a jinnee. Shreds of cotton and horns of goats hung among the boughs and nails were knocked into the trunk. An Arab strongly dissuaded the traveller from cutting a branch of the tree,

[1] W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), ii. 91.

[2] A. Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, i. 134. The authority quoted by Bastian calls the people Curka Coles. As to the Larka Kols, see E. T. Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, pp. 177 *sqq.*

[3] W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, iv. 130.

[4] S. Mateer, *The Land of Charity* (London, 1871), p. 206.

[5] B. A. Hely, in *Annual Report on British New Guinea for 1894-95*, p. 57.

[6] T. J. Hutchinson, *Impressions of Western Africa* (London, 1858), pp. 130 *sq.*

[7] Gallieni, "Mission dans le Haut Niger et à Ségou," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), viiime Série, v. (1883) pp. 577 *sq.*

assuring him that it was death to do so.[1] The Yourouks, who inhabit the southern coasts of Asia Minor and the heights of Mount Taurus, have sacred trees which they never cut down from fear of driving away the spirits that own them.[2] The old Prussians believed that gods inhabited tall trees, such as oaks, from which they gave audible answers to enquirers; hence these trees were not felled, but worshipped as the homes of divinities. Amongst the trees thus venerated by them was the elder-tree.[3] The Samagitians thought that if any one ventured to injure certain groves, or the birds or beasts in them, the spirits would make his hands or feet crooked.[4] Down to the nineteenth century the Esthonians stood in such awe of many trees, which they considered as the seat of mighty spirits, that they would not even pluck a flower or a berry on the ground where the shadow of the trees fell, much less would they dare to break a branch from the tree itself.[5]

Sacred groves.

Even where no mention is made of wood-spirits, we may generally assume that when trees or groves are sacred and inviolable, it is because they are believed to be either inhabited or animated by sylvan deities. In Central India the *bar* tree (*Ficus Indica*) and the *pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*) are sacred, and every child learns the saying that "it is better to die a leper than pluck a leaf of a *pipal*, and he who can wound a *bar* will kick his little sister."[6] In Livonia there is a sacred grove in which, if any man fells a tree or breaks a branch, he will die within the year.[7] The Wotyaks have

[1] Ch. M. Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta* (Cambridge, 1888), i. 365.

[2] Th. Bent, "The Yourouks of Asia Minor," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891) p. 275.

[3] Erasmus Stella, "De Borussiae antiquitatibus," in Simon Grynaeus's *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum* (Paris, 1532), p. 510; J. Lasicius (Lasiczki), "De diis Samagitarum caeterorumque Sarmatarum," in *Respublica sive Status regni Poloniae, Lituaniae, Prussiae, Livoniae, etc.* (Leyden, 1627), pp. 299 *sq.*; M. C. Hartknoch, *Alt und neues Preussen* (Frankfort and Leipsic, 1684), p. 120. Lasiczki's work has been reprinted by W. Mannhardt, in *Magazin herausgegeben von der lettisch-literärischen Gesellschaft*, xiv. 82 *sqq.* (Mitau, 1868).

[4] Mathias Michov, in Simon Grynaeus's *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum* (Paris, 1532), p. 457.

[5] J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen* (Dresden and Leipsic, 1841), ii. 277.

[6] Capt. E. C. Luard, in *Census of India, 1901*, xix. (Lucknow, 1902) p. 76.

[7] J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] i. 497; compare *id.* ii. 540, 541.

Sacred groves.

sacred groves. A Russian who ventured to hew a tree in one of them fell sick and died next day.[1] The heathen Cheremiss of South-Eastern Russia have sacred groves, and woe to him who dares to fell one of the holy trees. If the author of the sacrilege is unknown, they take a cock or a goose, torture it to death and then throw it on the fire, while they pray to the gods to punish the sinner and cause him to perish like the bird.[2] Near a chapel of St. Ninian, in the parish of Belly, there stood more than a century and a half ago a row of trees, "all of equal size, thick planted for about the length of a butt," which were "looked upon by the superstitious papists as sacred trees, from which they reckon it sacriledge to take so much as a branch or any of the fruit."[3] So in the island of Skye some two hundred and fifty years ago there was a holy lake, "surrounded by a fair wood, which none presumes to cut"; and those who ventured to infringe its sanctity by breaking even a twig either sickened on the spot or were visited afterwards by "some signal inconvenience."[4] Sacrifices offered at cutting down trees are doubtless meant to appease the wood-spirits. In Gilgit it is usual to sprinkle goat's blood on a tree of any kind before felling it.[5] The Akikuyu of British East Africa hold the *mugumu* or *mugomo* tree, a species of fig, sacred on account of its size and fine appearance; hence they do not ruthlessly cut it down like all other trees which cumber a patch of ground that is to be cleared for tillage. Groves of this tree are sacred. In them no axe may be laid to any tree, no branch broken, no firewood gathered, no grass burnt; and wild animals which have taken refuge there may not be molested. In these sacred groves sheep and goats are sacrificed and prayers are offered for rain or fine weather or in behalf of sick children. The whole meat of the sacrifices is left in the grove for God (*Ngai*) to eat; the fat is placed in a cleft of the trunk or in the branches as a tit-bit for

[1] Max Buch, *Die Wotjäken* (Stuttgart, 1882), p. 124.

[2] P. v. Stenin, "Ein neuer Beitrag zur Ethnographie der Tscheremissen," *Globus*, lviii. (1890) p. 204.

[3] J. G. Dalyell, *Darker Superstitions of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1834), p. 400.

[4] J. G. Dalyell, *loc. cit.*

[5] J. Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, p. 116.

him. He lives up in the boughs but comes down to partake of the food.[1]

§ 2. *Beneficent Powers of Tree-Spirits*

Transition of tree-spirit into anthropomorphic deity of the woods.

When a tree comes to be viewed, no longer as the body of the tree-spirit, but simply as its abode which it can quit at pleasure, an important advance has been made in religious thought. Animism is passing into polytheism. In other words, instead of regarding each tree as a living and conscious being, man now sees in it merely a lifeless, inert mass, tenanted for a longer or shorter time by a supernatural being who, as he can pass freely from tree to tree, thereby enjoys a certain right of possession or lordship over the trees, and, ceasing to be a tree-soul, becomes a forest god. As soon as the tree-spirit is thus in a measure disengaged from each particular tree, he begins to change his shape and assume the body of a man, in virtue of a general tendency of early thought to clothe all abstract spiritual beings in concrete human form. Hence in classical art the sylvan deities are depicted in human shape, their woodland character being denoted by a branch or some equally obvious symbol.[2] But this change of shape does not affect the essential character of the tree-spirit. The powers which he exercised as a tree-soul incorporate in a tree, he still continues to wield as a god of trees. This I shall now attempt to prove in detail. I shall shew, first, that trees considered as animate beings are credited with the power of making the rain to fall, the sun to shine, flocks and herds to multiply, and women to bring forth easily; and, second, that the very same powers are attributed to tree-gods conceived as anthropomorphic beings or as actually incarnate in living men.

First, then, trees or tree-spirits are believed to give rain

[1] H. R. Tate, "Further Notes on the Kikuyu Tribe of British East Africa," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxiv. (1904) p. 263; *id.* "The Native Law of the Southern Gikuyu of British East Africa," *Journal of the African Society*, No. 35 (April 1910), pp. 242 *sq.*

[2] On the representations of Silvanus, the Roman wood-god, see H. Jordan in L. Preller's *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 393 note; A. Baumeister, *Denkmäler des classischen Altertums*, iii. 1665 *sq.* A good representation of Silvanus bearing a pine branch is given in the Sale Catalogue of H. Hoffmann, Paris, 1888, pt. ii.

Trees supposed to give rain and sunshine.

and sunshine. When the missionary Jerome of Prague was persuading the heathen Lithuanians to fell their sacred groves, a multitude of women besought the Prince of Lithuania to stop him, saying that with the woods he was destroying the house of god from which they had been wont to get rain and sunshine.[1] The Mundaris in Assam think that if a tree in the sacred grove is felled the sylvan gods evince their displeasure by withholding rain.[2] In order to procure rain the inhabitants of Monyo, a village in the Sagaing district of Upper Burma, chose the largest tamarind-tree near the village and named it the haunt of the spirit (*nat*) who controls the rain. Then they offered bread, cocoanuts, plantains, and fowls to the guardian spirit of the village and to the spirit who gives rain, and they prayed, "O Lord *nat* have pity on us poor mortals, and stay not the rain. Inasmuch as our offering is given ungrudgingly, let the rain fall day and night." Afterwards libations were made in honour of the spirit of the tamarind-tree; and still later three elderly women, dressed in fine clothes and wearing necklaces and earrings, sang the Rain Song.[3] In Cambodia each village or province has its sacred tree, the abode of a spirit. If the rains are late the people sacrifice to the tree.[4] In time of drought the elders of the Wakamba in East Africa assemble and take a calabash of cider and a goat to a baobab-tree, where they kill the goat but do not eat it.[5] When Ovambo women go out to sow corn they take with them in the basket of seed two green branches of a particular kind of tree (*Peltophorum africanum Sond.*), one of which they plant in the field along with the first seed sown. The branch is believed to have the power of attracting rain; hence in one of the native dialects the tree goes by the name of the "rain-bush."[6] To extort rain from the tree-

[1] Aeneas Sylvius, *Opera* (Bâle, 1571), p. 418 [wrongly numbered 420]; compare Erasmus Stella, "De Borussiae antiquitatibus," in *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum*, p. 510.

[2] E. T. Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 186.

[3] J. G. Scott and J. P. Hardiman, *Gazetteer of Upper Burmah and the Shan States*, Part II. vol. iii. (Rangoon, 1901), pp. 63 *sq.*

[4] E. Aymonier, in *Cochinchine française: excursions et reconnaissances*, No. 16 (Saigon, 1883), pp. 175 *sq.*

[5] L. Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa* (London, 1898), p. 489.

[6] H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, pp. 295 *sq.*

spirit a branch is sometimes dipped in water, as we have seen above.[1] In such cases the spirit is doubtless supposed to be immanent in the branch, and the water thus applied to the spirit produces rain by a sort of sympathetic magic, exactly as we saw that in New Caledonia the rain-makers pour water on a skeleton, believing that the soul of the deceased will convert the water into rain.[2] There is hardly room to doubt that Mannhardt is right in explaining as a rain-charm the European custom of drenching with water the trees which are cut at certain popular festivals, as mid-summer, Whitsuntide, and harvest.[3]

Tree-spirits supposed to make the crops grow.

Again, tree-spirits make the crops to grow. Amongst the Mundaris every village has its sacred grove, and "the grove deities are held responsible for the crops, and are especially honoured at all the great agricultural festivals."[4] The negroes of the Gold Coast are in the habit of sacrificing at the foot of certain tall trees, and they think that if one of these were felled all the fruits of the earth would perish.[5] Before harvest the Wabondëi of East Africa sacrifice a goat to the spirit that lives in baobab-trees; the blood is poured into a hole at the foot of one of the trees. If the sacrifice were omitted the spirit would send disease and death among the people.[6] The Gallas dance in couples round sacred trees, praying for a good harvest. Every couple consists of a man and woman, who are linked together by a stick, of which each holds one end. Under their arms they carry green corn or grass.[7] Swedish peasants stick a leafy branch in each furrow of their corn-fields, believing that this will ensure an abundant crop.[8] The same idea comes out in the German and French custom of the Harvest-May. This is a large branch or a whole tree, which is decked with ears of corn, brought home on the last waggon from the harvest-

The Harvest-May.

[1] See above, vol. i. pp. 248, 250, 309.

[2] Above, vol. i. p. 284.

[3] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus* (Berlin, 1875), pp. 158, 159, 170, 197, 214, 351, 514.

[4] E. T. Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 188.

[5] Villault, *Relation des costes appellées Guinée* (Paris, 1669), pp. 266 *sq.*; Labat, *Voyage du chevalier des Marchais en Guinée, isles voisines, et à Cayenne* (Paris, 1730), i. 338.

[6] O. Baumann, *Usambara und seine Nachbargebiete* (Berlin, 1891), p. 142.

[7] C. E. X. Rochet d'Hericourt, *Voyage sur la côte orientale de la Mer Rouge dans le pays d'Adel et le royaume de Choa* (Paris, 1841), pp. 166 *sq.*

[8] L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden* (London, 1870), p. 266.

The Harvest-May.

field, and fastened on the roof of the farmhouse or of the barn, where it remains for a year. Mannhardt has proved that this branch or tree embodies the tree-spirit conceived as the spirit of vegetation in general, whose vivifying and fructifying influence is thus brought to bear upon the corn in particular. Hence in Swabia the Harvest-May is fastened amongst the last stalks of corn left standing on the field; in other places it is planted on the corn-field and the last sheaf cut is attached to its trunk.[1] The Harvest-May of Germany has its counterpart in the *eiresione* of ancient Greece.[2] The *eiresione* was a branch of olive or laurel, bound about with ribbons and hung with a variety of fruits. This branch was carried in procession at a harvest festival and was fastened over the door of the house, where it remained for a year. The object of preserving the Harvest-May or the *eiresione* for a year is that the life-giving virtue of the bough may foster the growth of the crops throughout the year. By the end of the year the virtue of the bough is supposed to be exhausted and it is replaced by a new one. Following a similar train of thought some of the Dyaks of Sarawak are careful at the rice harvest to take up the roots of a certain bulbous plant, which bears a beautiful crown of white and fragrant flowers. These roots are preserved with the rice in the granary and are planted again with the seed-rice in the following season; for the Dyaks say that the rice will not grow unless a plant of this sort be in the field.[3]

Customs like the Harvest-May in India and Africa.

Customs like that of the Harvest-May appear to exist in India and Africa. At a harvest festival of the Lhoosai of South-Eastern India the chief goes with his people into the forest and fells a large tree, which is then carried into the village and set up in the midst. Sacrifice is offered, and spirits and rice are poured over the tree. The ceremony closes with a feast and a dance, at which the unmarried men and girls are the only performers.[4] Among the Bechuanas the hack-thorn is very sacred, and it would be a serious offence to cut a bough from it and carry it into the village

[1] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 190 *sqq.*

[2] W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte* (Berlin, 1877), pp. 212 *sqq.*

[3] H. Low, *Sarawak*, p. 274; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxv. (1896) p. 111.

[4] T. H. Lewin, *Wild Races of South-Eastern India* (London, 1870), p. 270.

during the rainy season. But when the corn is ripe in the ear the people go with axes, and each man brings home a branch of the sacred hack-thorn, with which they repair the village cattle-yard.[1] According to another authority, it is a rule with the Bechuanas that "neither the hook-thorn nor the milk-tree must be cut down while the corn is on the ground, for this, they think, would prevent rain. When I was at Lattakoo, though Mr. Hamilton stood in much need of some milk-tree timber, he durst not supply himself till all the corn was gathered in."[2] Many tribes of South-Eastern Africa will not cut down timber while the corn is green, fearing that if they did so, the crops would be destroyed by blight, hail, or early frost.[3] The heathen Cheremiss, in the Russian Government of Kasan, will not fell trees, mow grass, or dig the ground while the corn is in bloom.[4] Again, the fructifying power of the tree is put forth at seed-time as well as at harvest. Among the Aryan tribes of Gilgit, on the north-western frontier of India, the sacred tree is the *Chili*, a species of cedar (*Juniperus excelsa*). At the beginning of wheat-sowing the people receive from the rajah's granary a quantity of wheat, which is placed in a skin mixed with sprigs of the sacred cedar. A large bonfire of the cedar wood is lighted, and the wheat which is to be sown is held over the smoke. The rest is ground and made into a large cake, which is baked on the same fire and given to the ploughman.[5] Here the intention of fertilising the seed by means of the sacred cedar is unmistakable.

Customs like the Harvest-May in Africa and India.

In all these cases the power of fostering the growth of crops, and, in general, of cultivated plants, is ascribed to trees. The ascription is not unnatural. For the tree is the

Fertilising virtue attributed to trees.

[1] J. Mackenzie, *Ten Years North of the Orange River* (Edinburgh, 1871), p. 385.

[2] J. Campbell, *Travels in South Africa, Second Journey* (London, 1822), ii. 203.

[3] Rev. J. Macdonald, MS. notes; compare *id.*, *Light in Africa*, p. 210; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891) p. 140. The Nubas will not cut shoots of the *nabac* (a thorn-tree) during the rainy season (*Missions Catholiques*, xiv. (1882) p. 460). Among some of the hill-tribes of the Punjaub no one is allowed to cut grass or any green thing with an iron sickle till the festival of the ripening grain has been celebrated; otherwise the field-god would be angry and send frost to destroy or injure the harvest (D. C. J. Ibbetson, *Outlines of Panjab Ethnography*, p. 121).

[4] "Ueber die Religion der heidnischen Tscheremissen im Gouvernement Kasan," *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, N.F. iii. (1857) p. 150.

[5] J. Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, pp. 103 *sq.*

largest and most powerful member of the vegetable kingdom, and man is familiar with it before he takes to cultivating corn. Hence he naturally places the feebler and, to him, newer plant under the dominion of the older and more powerful.

Tree-spirits make herds to multiply and women to bring forth.

Again, the tree-spirit makes the herds to multiply and blesses women with offspring. The sacred *Chili* or cedar of Gilgit was supposed to possess this virtue in addition to that of fertilising the corn. At the commencement of wheat-sowing three chosen unmarried youths, after undergoing daily washing and purification for three days, used to start for the mountain where the cedars grew, taking with them wine, oil, bread, and fruit of every kind. Having found a suitable tree they sprinkled the wine and oil on it, while they ate the bread and fruit as a sacrificial feast. Then they cut off the branch and brought it to the village, where, amid general rejoicing, it was placed on a large stone beside running water. "A goat was then sacrificed, its blood poured over the cedar branch, and a wild dance took place, in which weapons were brandished about, and the head of the slaughtered goat was borne aloft, after which it was set up as a mark for arrows and bullet-practice. Every good shot was rewarded with a gourd full of wine and some of the flesh of the goat. When the flesh was finished the bones were thrown into the stream and a general ablution took place, after which every man went to his house taking with him a spray of the cedar. On arrival at his house he found the door shut in his face, and on his knocking for admission, his wife asked, 'What have you brought?' To which he answered, 'If you want children, I have brought them to you; if you want food, I have brought it; if you want cattle, I have brought them; whatever you want, I have it.' The door was then opened and he entered with his cedar spray. The wife then took some of the leaves, and pouring wine and water on them placed them on the fire, and the rest were sprinkled with flour and suspended from the ceiling. She then sprinkled flour on her husband's head and shoulders, and addressed him thus, 'Ai Shiri Bagerthum, son of the fairies, you have come from far!' *Shiri Bagerthum*, 'the dreadful king,' being the form

of address to the cedar when praying for wants to be fulfilled. The next day the wife baked a number of cakes, and taking them with her, drove the family goats to the Chili stone. When they were collected round the stone, she began to pelt them with pebbles, invoking the Chili at the same time. According to the direction in which the goats ran off, omens were drawn as to the number and sex of the kids expected during the ensuing year. Walnuts and pomegranates were then placed on the Chili stone, the cakes were distributed and eaten, and the goats followed to pasture in whatever direction they showed a disposition to go. For five days afterwards this song was sung in all the houses :—

> '*Dread Fairy King, I sacrifice before you,*
> *How nobly do you stand! you have filled up my house,*
> *You have brought me a wife when I had not one,*
> *Instead of daughters you have given me sons.*
> *You have shown me the ways of right,*
> *You have given me many children.*' "[1]

Fertilising virtue attributed to trees.

Here the driving of the goats to the stone on which the cedar had been placed is clearly meant to impart to them the fertilising influence of the cedar. In Northern India the *Emblica officinalis* is a sacred tree. On the eleventh of the month Phalgun (February) libations are poured at the foot of the tree, a red or yellow string is bound about the trunk, and prayers are offered to it for the fruitfulness of women, animals, and crops.[2] Again, in Northern India the coco-nut is esteemed one of the most sacred fruits, and is called Sriphala, or the fruit of Sri, the goddess of prosperity. It is the symbol of fertility, and all through Upper India is kept in shrines and presented by the priests to women who desire to become mothers.[3] In the town of Qua, near Old Calabar, there used to grow a palm-tree which ensured conception to any barren woman who ate a nut from its branches.[4] In

[1] J. Biddulph, *op. cit.* pp. 106 *sq.*

[2] W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), ii. 102. See also Sir H. M. Elliot, *Memoirs on the History, Folk-lore, and Distribution of the Races of the North-Western Provinces of India*, edited by J. Beames, ii. 217, where, however, the object of the prayers is said to be the fruitfulness of the tree itself, not the fruitfulness of women, animals, and cattle.

[3] W. Crooke, *op. cit.* ii. 106.

[4] Th. J. Hutchinson, *Impressions of Western Africa*, p. 128.

Europe the May-tree or May-pole is apparently supposed to possess similar powers over both women and cattle. Thus in some parts of Germany on the first of May the peasants set up May-trees or May-bushes at the doors of stables and byres, one for each horse and cow; this is thought to make the cows yield much milk.[1] Of the Irish we are told that "they fancy a green bough of a tree, fastened on May-day against the house, will produce plenty of milk that summer."[2] In Suffolk there was an old custom, observed in most farm-houses, that any servant who could bring in a branch of hawthorn in blossom on the first of May was entitled to a dish of cream for breakfast.[3] Similarly, "in parts of Cornwall, till certainly ten years ago, any child who brought to a dairy on May morning a piece of hawthorn in bloom, or a piece of fresh bracken, long enough to surround the earthenware bowl in which cream is kept, was given a bowl of cream."[4] On May Day English milkmaids used to dance with garlands on their pails. One May morning long ago Pepys on his way to Westminster saw many of them dancing thus to the music of a fiddle while pretty Nel Gwynne, in her smock sleeves and bodice, watched them from the door of her lodgings in Drury-lane.[5]

Influence of May-trees on cattle.

May-tree or May-bush a protection against witchcraft.

However in these and similar European customs it seems that the influence of the tree, bush, or bough is really protective rather than generative; it does not so much fill the udders of the cows as prevent them from being drained dry by witches, who ride on broomsticks or pitchforks through the air on the Eve of May Day (the famous Walpurgis Night) and make great efforts to steal the milk from the cattle. Hence the many precautions which the prudent herdsman must take to guard his beasts at this season from the raids of these baleful creatures. For example, on May morning the Irish scatter primroses on the threshold, keep a

[1] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 161; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 397; A. Peter, *Volksthümliches aus Österreichisch-Schlesien*, ii. 286.

[2] W. Camden, *Britannia*, ed. R. Gough (London, 1779), iii. 659. Camden's authority is Good, a writer of the sixteenth century.

[3] *County Folk-lore: Suffolk*, collected and edited by Lady Eveline Camilla Gurdon (London, 1893), p. 117.

[4] Mr. E. F. Benson, in a letter to the author dated December 15, 1892.

[5] *Memoirs of Samuel Pepys, Esq.*, edited by Lord Braybrooke, Second Edition (London, 1828), ii. 209, under May 1st, 1667.

piece of red-hot iron on the hearth, or twine branches of whitethorn and mountain-ash or rowan about the door. To save the milk they cut and peel boughs of mountain-ash (rowan), and bind the twigs round the milk-pails and the churn.[1] According to a writer of the sixteenth century, whose description is quoted by Camden, the Irish "account every woman who fetches fire on May-day a witch, nor will they give it to any but sick persons, and that with an imprecation, believing she will steal all the butter the next summer. On May day they kill all the hares they find among their cattle, supposing them the old women who have designs on the butter. They imagine the butter so stolen may be recovered if they take some of the thatch hanging over the door and burn it."[2] In the north-east of Scotland pieces of rowan-tree and woodbine, or of rowan alone, used to be placed over the doors of the cow-houses on May Day to keep the witches from the kine; and a still better way of attaining the same object was to tie a cross of rowan-tree wood with a scarlet thread to each animal's tail.[3] The Highlanders of Scotland believe that on Beltane eve, that is the night before May Day, the witches go about in the shape of hares and suck the milk from the cows. To guard against their depredations tar was put behind the ears of the cattle and at the root of the tail, and the house was hung with rowan-tree.[4] For the same reason the Highlanders say that the peg of the cow-shackle and the handle and cross of the churn-staff should always be made of rowan, because that is the most potent charm against witchcraft.[5] In the Isle of Man on May Day, old style, people carried crosses of rowan in their hats and fastened May-flowers over their doors as a protection against elves and witches, and for the same purpose they tied crosses of rowan to the tails of

Precautions against witchcraft on May Day.

[1] Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms, and Superstitions of Ireland* (London, 1887), i. 196 *sq.* If an Irish housewife puts a ring of rowan-tree or quicken, as it is also called, on the handle of the churn-dash when she is churning, no witch can steal her butter (P. W. Joyce, *Social History of Ancient Ireland* (London, 1903), i. 236 *sq.*).

[2] W. Camden, *loc. cit.*

[3] W. Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-east of Scotland* (London, 1881), p. 188.

[4] J. G. Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, p. 270, compare *ib.*, pp. 7 *sqq.*

[5] J. G. Campbell, *op. cit.* pp. 11 *sq.* In Germany also the rowan-tree is a charm against witchcraft (A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,[2] p. 106, § 145).

Precautions against witchcraft on May Day and Walpurgis Night.

the cattle. Also women washed their faces in the dew early on May morning in order to secure good luck, a fine complexion, and immunity from witches. Further, the break of day on that morning was the signal for setting the ling or gorse on fire, which was done for the sake of burning out the witches, who are wont to take the shape of hares. In some places, indeed, as in the Lezayre parish, the practice was to burn gorse in the hedge of every field to drive away the witches, who are still feared in the Isle of Man.[1] In Norway and Denmark branches of rowan are similarly used to protect houses and cattle-stalls against witches on Walpurgis Night, and there, too, it is thought that the churn-staff should be made of rowan.[2] In Germany a common way of keeping witches from the cattle on Walpurgis Night is to chalk up three crosses on the door of the cowhouse.[3] Branches of buckthorn stuck in the muck-heaps on the eve of May Day answer the same purpose.[4] In Silesia the precautions taken at this season against witches are many and various; for example, pieces of buckthorn are nailed crosswise over the door of the cowhouse; pitchforks and harrows, turned upside down, with the prongs pointing outwards, are placed at the doors; and a sod of fresh turf from a meadow is laid before the threshold and strewed with marsh-marigolds. Before the witches can pass the threshold, they must count every blade of grass in the turf and every petal of the marigolds; and while they are still counting the day breaks and their power is gone. For the same reason little birch-trees are set up at the house-door, because the witches cannot enter the house till they have counted all the leaves; and before they have done the sum it is broad

[1] Sir John Rhys, "The Coligny Calendar," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. iv. pp. 55 *sq.* of the offprint.

[2] A. Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*[2] (Gütersloh, 1886), pp. 178 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Germanische Mythen* (Berlin, 1858), pp. 17 *sq.*

[3] J. D. H. Temme, *Die Volkssagen der Altmark* (Berlin, 1839), p. 85; E. Sommer, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Sachsen und Thüringen* (Halle, 1846), p. 149; A. Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, ii. p. 154, § 432, p. 155, § 436; A. Schleicher, *Volkstümliches aus Sonnenberg* (Weimar, 1858), p. 139; A. Peter, *Volksthümliches aus Österreichisch-Schlesien* (Troppau, 1865-67), ii. 252; R. Eisel, *Sagenbuch des Voigtlandes* (Gera, 1871), p. 210; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 210; P. Drechsler, *Sitte, Brauch und Volksglaube in Schlesien*, i. (Leipsic, 1903) p. 109.

[4] A. Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*,[2] p. 166.

daylight, and they must flee away with the shadows.[1] On Walpurgis Night the Germans of Moravia put knives under the threshold of the cowhouse and twigs of birch at the door and in the muck-heap to keep the witches from the cows.[2] For the same purpose the Bohemians at this season lay branches of gooseberry bushes, hawthorn, and wild rose-trees on the thresholds of the cowhouses, because the witches are caught by the thorns and can get no farther.[3] We now see why thorny trees and bushes, whether hawthorn, buckthorn, or what not, afford protection against witchcraft: they serve as prickly hedges through which the witches cannot force their way. But this explanation clearly does not apply to the mountain-ash and the birch.

Influence of tree-spirits on cattle among the Wends, Esthonians, and Circassians

On the second of July some of the Wends used to set up an oak-tree in the middle of the village with an iron cock fastened to its top; then they danced round it, and drove the cattle round it to make them thrive.[4] Some of the Esthonians believe in a mischievous spirit called Metsik, who lives in the forest and has the weal of the cattle in his hands. Every year a new image of him is prepared. On an appointed day all the villagers assemble and make a straw man, dress him in clothes, and take him to the common pasture-land of the village. Here the figure is fastened to a high tree, round which the people dance noisily. On almost every day of the year prayer and sacrifice are offered to him that he may protect the cattle. Sometimes the image of Metsik is made of a corn-sheaf and fastened to a tall tree in the wood. The people perform strange antics before it to induce Metsik to guard the corn and the cattle.[5] The Circassians regard the pear-tree as the protector of cattle. So they cut down a young pear-tree in the forest, branch it, and carry it home, where it is adored as a divinity. Almost every house has one such pear-tree. In autumn, on the day of the festival, the tree is carried into the house with great ceremony to the sound of music and

[1] P. Drechsler, *op. cit.* i. 109 *sq.* Compare A. Peter, *loc. cit.*

[2] W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren* (Vienna and Olmütz, 1893), p. 324.

[3] Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 210.

[4] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 174.

[5] J. B. Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. No. 2 (Dorpat, 1872), pp. 10 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 407 *sq.*

amid the joyous cries of all the inmates, who compliment it on its fortunate arrival. It is covered with candles, and a cheese is fastened to its top. Round about it they eat, drink, and sing. Then they bid the tree good-bye and take it back to the courtyard, where it remains for the rest of the year, set up against the wall, without receiving any mark of respect.[1]

Tree-spirits grant offspring or an easy delivery to women.

In the Tuhoe tribe of Maoris "the power of making women fruitful is ascribed to trees. These trees are associated with the navel-strings of definite mythical ancestors, as indeed the navel-strings of all children used to be hung upon them down to quite recent times. A barren woman had to embrace such a tree with her arms, and she received a male or a female child according as she embraced the east or the west side."[2] The common European custom of placing a green bush on May Day before or on the house of a beloved maiden probably originated in the belief of the fertilising power of the tree-spirit.[3] In some parts of Bavaria such bushes are set up also at the houses of newly-married pairs, and the practice is only omitted if the wife is near her confinement; for in that case they say that the husband has "set up a May-bush for himself."[4] Among the South Slavonians a barren woman, who desires to have a child, places a new chemise upon a fruitful tree on the eve of St. George's Day. Next morning before sunrise she examines the garment, and if she finds that some living creature has crept on it, she hopes that her wish will be fulfilled within the year. Then she

[1] Potocki, *Voyage dans les steps d'Astrakhan et du Caucase* (Paris, 1829), i. 309.

[2] W. Foy, in *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, x. (1907) p. 551. For details of the evidence see W. H. Goldie, M.D., "Maori Medical Lore," *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, xxxvii. (1904) pp. 93-95.

[3] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 163 *sqq.* To his authorities add for France, A. Meyrac, *Traditions, coutumes, légendes et contes des Ardennes*, pp. 84 *sqq.*; L. F. Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, pp. 131 *sq.*; Bérenger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances*, v. 309 *sq.*; Ch. Beauquier, *Les Mois en Franche-Comté* (Paris, 1900), pp. 69-72; F. Chapiseau, *Le Folk-lore de la Beauce et du Perche* (Paris, 1902), ii. 109-111: for Silesia, F. Tetzner, "Die Tschechen und Mährer in Schlesien," *Globus*, lxxviii. (1900) p. 340; P. Drechsler, *Sitte, Brauch und Volksglaube in Schlesien*, i. 112 *sq.*; for Moravia, W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, p. 26; for Sardinia, R. Tennant, *Sardinia and its Resources* (Rome and London, 1885), pp. 185 *sq.* In Brunswick the custom is observed at Whitsuntide (R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde*, p. 248).

[4] *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, i. 373.

puts on the chemise, confident that she will be as fruitful as the tree on which the garment has passed the night.[1] Among the Kara-Kirghiz barren women roll themselves on the ground under a solitary apple-tree, in order to obtain offspring.[2] Some of the hill-tribes of India have a custom of marrying the bride and bridegroom to two trees before they are married to each other. For example, among the Mundas the bride touches with red lead a *mahwá*-tree, clasps it in her arms, and is tied to it; and the bridegroom goes through a like ceremony with a mango-tree.[3] The intention of the custom may perhaps be to communicate to the newly-wedded pair the vigorous reproductive power of the trees.[4] Lastly, the

[1] F. S. Krauss, *Volksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 35.

[2] W. Radloff, *Proben der Volkslitteratur der nördlichen Türkischen Stämme*, v. 2 (St. Petersburg, 1885).

[3] E. T. Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 194; a similar custom is practised among the Kurmis, *ibid.*, p. 319. Among the Mundas the custom seems now to have fallen into disuse (H. H. Risley, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal: Ethnographic Glossary*, ii. 102).

[4] The explanation has been suggested by Mr. W. Crooke (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxviii. (1899) p. 243). There are other facts, however, which point to a different explanation, namely, that the practice is intended to avert possible evil consequences from bride or bridegroom. For example, "the superstition regarding a man's third marriage, prevalent in Barār and, I believe in other parts of India, is not despised by the Vēlamās. A third marriage is unlucky. Should a man marry a third wife, it matters not whether his former wives be alive or not, evil will befall either him or that wife. No father would give his girl to a man whose third wife she would be. A man therefore, who has twice entered the married state and wishes to mate yet once again, cannot obtain as a third wife any one who has both the wit and the tongue to say no; a tree has neither, so to a tree he is married. I have not been able to discover why the tree, or rather shrub, called in Marāthī *ru'i* and in Hindūstānī *madar* (*Asclepias gigantea*), is invariably the victim selected in Barār, nor do I know whether the shrub is similarly favoured in other parts of India. The ceremony consists in the binding of a *mangal sūtra* round the selected shrub, by which the bridegroom sits, while turmeric-dyed rice (*akṣata*) is thrown over both him and the shrub. This is the whole of the simple ceremony. He has gone through his unlucky third marriage, and any lady whom he may favour after this will be his fourth wife" (Captain Wolseley Haig, "Notes on the Vēlamā Caste in Bārār," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, lxx. part iii. (1901) p. 28). Again, the Vellalas of Southern India "observe a curious custom (derived from Brāhmans) with regard to marriage, which is not unknown in other communities. A man marrying a second wife after the death of his first has to marry a plantain tree, and cut it down before tying the *tāli*, and, in case of a third marriage, a man has to tie a *tāli* first to the erukkan (arka: *Calotropis gigantea*) plant. The idea is that second and fourth wives do not prosper, and the tree and the plant are accordingly made to take their places" (Mr. Hemingway, quoted by E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, vii. 387). Tying the *tali* to the bride is the common Hindoo symbol of marriage, like giving the ring with us. As to these Indian marriages to trees see further my *Totemism and Exogamy*, i. 32 *sq.*, iv

Power of trees to grant women an easy delivery.

power of granting to women an easy delivery at child-birth is ascribed to trees both in Sweden and Africa. In some districts of Sweden there was formerly a *bårdträd* or guardian-tree (lime, ash, or elm) in the neighbourhood of every farm. No one would pluck a single leaf of the sacred tree, any injury to which was punished by ill-luck or sickness. Pregnant women used to clasp the tree in their arms in order to ensure an easy delivery.[1] In some negro tribes of the Congo region pregnant women make themselves garments out of the bark of a certain sacred tree, because they believe that this tree delivers them from the dangers that attend child-bearing.[2] The story that Leto clasped a palm-tree and an olive-tree or two laurel-trees, when she was about to give birth to the divine twins Apollo and Artemis, perhaps points to a similar Greek belief in the efficacy of certain trees to facilitate delivery.[3]

210 *sqq.*; *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. § 252, iii. §§ 12, 90, 562, iv. § 396; *North Indian Notes and Queries*, i. § 110; D. C. J. Ibbetson, *Settlement Report of the Karnal District*, p. 155; H. H. Risley, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, i. 531; Capt. E. C. Luard, in *Census of India, 1901*, vol. xix. 76; W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, ii. 363; *id.*, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), ii. 115-121. I was formerly disposed to connect the custom with totemism, but of this there seems to be no sufficient evidence.

[1] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 51 *sq.*

[2] Merolla, "Voyage to Congo," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 236 *sq.*

[3] C. Bötticher, *Der Baumkultus der Hellenen* (Berlin, 1856), pp. 30 *sq.*

CHAPTER X

RELICS OF TREE-WORSHIP IN MODERN EUROPE

May-trees in Europe.

FROM the foregoing review of the beneficent qualities commonly ascribed to tree-spirits, it is easy to understand why customs like the May-tree or May-pole have prevailed so widely and figured so prominently in the popular festivals of European peasants. In spring or early summer or even on Midsummer Day, it was and still is in many parts of Europe the custom to go out to the woods, cut down a tree and bring it into the village, where it is set up amid general rejoicings; or the people cut branches in the woods, and fasten them on every house. The intention of these customs is to bring home to the village, and to each house, the blessings which the tree-spirit has in its power to bestow. Hence the custom in some places of planting a May-tree before every house, or of carrying the village May-tree from door to door, that every household may receive its share of the blessing. Out of the mass of evidence on this subject a few examples may be selected.

May-trees and May-bushes in England.

Sir Henry Piers, in his *Description of Westmeath*, writing in 1682 says: "On May-eve, every family sets up before their door a green bush, strewed over with yellow flowers, which the meadows yield plentifully. In countries where timber is plentiful, they erect tall slender trees, which stand high, and they continue almost the whole year; so as a stranger would go nigh to imagine that they were all signs of ale-sellers, and that all houses were ale-houses."[1] In Northamptonshire a young tree ten or twelve feet high used to be planted before each house on May Day so as to appear

[1] Quoted by J. Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 246 (ed. Bohn).

growing; flowers were thrown over it and strewn about the door.[1] "Among ancient customs still retained by the Cornish, may be reckoned that of decking their doors and porches on the first of May with green boughs of sycamore and hawthorn, and of planting trees, or rather stumps of trees, before their houses."[2] In the north of England it was formerly the custom for young people to rise a little after midnight on the morning of the first of May, and go out with music and the blowing of horns into the woods, where they broke branches and adorned them with nosegays and crowns of flowers. This done, they returned about sunrise and fastened the flower-decked branches over the doors and windows of their houses.[3] At Abingdon in Berkshire young people formerly went about in groups on May morning, singing a carol of which the following are two of the verses:—

May garlands in England.

> "*We've been rambling all the night,*
> *And sometime of this day;*
> *And now returning back again,*
> *We bring a garland gay.*
>
> *A garland gay we bring you here;*
> *And at your door we stand;*
> *It is a sprout well budded out,*
> *The work of our Lord's hand.*"[4]

At the towns of Saffron Walden and Debden in Essex on the first of May little girls go about in parties from door to door singing a song almost identical with the above and carrying garlands; a doll dressed in white is usually placed in the middle of each garland.[5] Similar customs have been and indeed are still observed in various parts of England. The garlands are generally in the form of hoops intersecting each other at right angles. Thus on May morning the girls of the neighbouring villages used to flock into Northampton bringing their garlands, which they exhibited from house to house. The skeleton of

[1] T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *British Popular Customs* (London, 1876), p. 254.

[2] W. Borlase, *The Natural History of Cornwall* (Oxford, 1758), p. 294.

[3] J. Brand, *op. cit.* i. 212 *sq.*

[4] T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *Popular British Customs*, p. 233.

[5] R. Chambers, *Book of Days* (London and Edinburgh, 1886), i. 578; T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *op. cit.* pp. 237 *sq.*

the garland was formed of two hoops of osier or hazel crossing each other at right angles, and so twined with flowers and ribbons that no part of them could be seen. In the centre of the garlands were placed gaily dressed dolls, one, two, or three in number according to the size of the garland. The whole was fixed to a staff about five feet long, by which it was carried. In shewing their garlands the children chanted some simple ditties and received in return pennies, which furnished forth a feast on their return to their homes. A merry dance round the garland concluded the festivity.[1] At Uttoxeter groups of children carry garlands of flowers about the town on May Day. "The garlands consist of two hoops, one passing through the other, which give the appearance of four half-circles, and they are decorated with flowers and evergreens, and surmounted with a bunch of flowers as a sort of crown, and in the centre of the hoops is a pendant orange and flowers." One or more of the children carry a little pole or stick upright with a bunch of flowers fastened to the top. They are themselves decorated with flowers and ribbons, and receive pence from the houses which they visit.[2] At Watford in Hertfordshire, groups of children, almost entirely girls, go about the streets from door to door on May Day singing some verses, of which two agree almost verbally with those which, as we have seen, are sung at Abingdon in Berkshire. They are dressed in white, and adorned with gay ribbons and sashes of many hues. "Two of the girls carry between them on a stick what they call 'the garland,' which in its simplest form, is made of two circular hoops, intersecting each other at right angles; a more elaborate form has, in addition, smaller semicircles inserted in the four angles formed by the meeting of the hoops at the top of 'the garland.' These hoops are covered with any wild-flowers in season, and are further ornamented with ribbons. The

May garlands in England.

[1] W. Hone, *Every Day Book* (London, N.D.), ii. 615 *sq.*; T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, pp. 251 *sq.* At Polebrook in Northamptonshire the verses sung by the children on their rounds include two which are almost identical with those sung at Abingdon in Berkshire. See Dyer, *op. cit.* pp. 255 *sq.* The same verses were formerly sung on May Day at Hitchin in Hertfordshire (Hone, *Every Day Book*, i. 567 *sq.*; Dyer, *op. cit.* pp. 240 *sq.*).

[2] Dyer, *op. cit.* p. 263.

May garlands in England.

'garland' in shape reminds me of the 'Christmas' which used to form the centre of the Christmas decorations in Yorkshire some few years ago, except that the latter had a bunch of mistletoe inside the hoops."[1] A similar custom was observed at Bampton-in-the-Bush in Oxfordshire down to about the middle of the nineteenth century. The garland consisted of two crossed hoops covered with moss, flowers, and ribbons. Two girls, known as the Lady and her Maid, bore the garland between them on a stick; and a boy called the Lord, who carried a stick dressed with ribbons and flowers, collected contributions from the spectators. From time to time the Lady sang a few lines and was then kissed by the Lord.[2] At Sevenoaks in Kent the children carry boughs and garlands from door to door on May Day. The boughs consist of sticks carried upright with bunches of leaves and wild-flowers fastened to the top. The garlands are formed of two hoops interlaced cross-wise and covered with blue and yellow flowers from the woods and hedges. Sometimes the garlands are fastened to the end of a stick carried perpendicularly, sometimes they hang from the middle of a stick borne horizontally by two children.[3] In the streets of Cambridge little girls regularly make their appearance every May Day with female dolls enclosed in hoops, which are covered with ribbons and flowers. These they shew to passers-by, inviting them to remember the May Lady by paying a small sum to her bearers.[4] At Salisbury girls go through the streets on May Day in pairs, carrying between them on a stick a circular garland or hoop adorned with flowers and bows; they visit the shops asking for money. A similar custom is observed at Wilton a few miles from Salisbury.[5] At Cawthorne in Yorkshire "on the first of May the school-children came with hoops to beg for artificial flowers; these my mother's maid

[1] Percy Manning, in *Folk-lore*, iv. (1893) pp. 403 *sq.*

[2] *Id.*, in *Folk-lore*, viii. (1897) p. 308. Customs of the same sort are reported also from Combe, Headington, and Islip, all in Oxfordshire (Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, pp. 261 *sq.*). See below, pp. 90 *sq.*

[3] Dyer, *op. cit.* p. 243.

[4] W. H. D. Rouse, in *Folk-lore*, iv. (1893) p. 53. I have witnessed the ceremony almost annually for many years. Many of the hoops have no doll, and ribbons or rags of coloured cloth are more conspicuous than flowers in their decoration.

[5] J. P. Emslie, in *Folk-lore*, xi. (1900) p. 210.

used to sew on to the hoops, which with ribbons and other decorations, were used in decking out a tall May-pole planted in the village."[1] It appears that a hoop wreathed with rowan and marsh marigold, and bearing suspended within it two balls, is still carried on May Day by villagers in some parts of Ireland. The balls, which are sometimes covered with gold and silver paper, are said to have originally represented the sun and moon.[2]

May customs in France, Germany, and Greece.

In some villages of the Vosges Mountains on the first Sunday of May young girls go in bands from house to house, singing a song in praise of May, in which mention is made of the "bread and meal that come in May." If money is given them, they fasten a green bough to the door; if it is refused, they wish the family many children and no bread to feed them.[3] In the French department of Mayenne, boys who bore the name of *Maillotins* used to go about from farm to farm on the first of May singing carols, for which they received money or a drink; they planted a small tree or a branch of a tree.[4] Among the Germans of Moravia on the third Sunday before Easter, which goes by the name of *Laetare* Sunday, it is customary in some places for young girls to carry a small fir-tree about from door to door, while they sing songs, for which they receive presents. The tree is tricked out with many-coloured ribbons, and sometimes with flowers and dyed egg-shells, and its branches are twined together so as to form what is called a crown.[5] In Corfu the children go about singing May songs on the first of May. The boys carry small cypresses adorned with ribbons, flowers, and the fruits of the season. They receive a glass of wine at each

[1] *Memoirs of Anna Maria Wilhelmina Pickering*, edited by her son, Spencer Pickering (London, 1903), pp. 160 *sq.*

[2] Lady Wilde, *Ancient Cures, Charms, and Usages of Ireland* (London, 1890), pp. 101 *sq.* At the ancient Greek festival of the Daphnephoria or "Laurel-bearing" a staff of olive-wood, decked with laurels, purple ribbons, and many-coloured flowers, was carried in procession, and attached to it were two large globes representing the sun and moon, together with a number of smaller globes which stood for the stars. See Proclus, quoted by Photius, *Bibliotheca*, p. 321, ed. Bekker.

[3] E. Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses* (Paris, 1867) pp. 167 *sqq.*

[4] *Revue des traditions populaires*, ii. (1887) p. 200.

[5] W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren* (Wien und Olmütz, 1893), pp. 319 *sq.*, 355-359.

house. The girls carry nosegays. One of them is dressed up like an angel, with gilt wings, and scatters flowers.[1]

Whitsuntide customs in Russia.

On the Thursday before Whitsunday the Russian villagers "go out into the woods, sing songs, weave garlands, and cut down a young birch-tree, which they dress up in woman's clothes, or adorn with many-coloured shreds and ribbons. After that comes a feast, at the end of which they take the dressed-up birch-tree, carry it home to their village with joyful dance and song, and set it up in one of the houses, where it remains as an honoured guest till Whitsunday. On the two intervening days they pay visits to the house where their 'guest' is; but on the third day, Whitsunday, they take her to a stream and fling her into its waters," throwing their garlands after her. "All over Russia every village and every town is turned, a little before Whitsunday, into a sort of garden. Everywhere along the streets the young birch-trees stand in rows, every house and every room is adorned with boughs, even the engines upon the railway are for the time decked with green leaves."[2] In this Russian custom the dressing of the birch in woman's clothes shews how clearly the tree is personified; and the throwing it into a stream is most probably a rain-charm. In some villages of Altmark it was formerly the custom for serving-men, grooms, and cowherds to go from farm to farm at Whitsuntide distributing crowns made of birch branches and flowers to the farmers; these crowns were hung up in the houses and left till the following year.[3]

May-trees in Germany and Sweden.

In the neighbourhood of Zabern in Alsace bands of people go about carrying May-trees. Amongst them is a man dressed in a white shirt, with his face blackened; in front of him is carried a large May-tree, but each member of the band also carries a smaller one. One of the company bears a huge basket in which he collects eggs, bacon, and so forth.[4] In some parts of Sweden on the eve of May Day lads go about carrying each a bunch of fresh-gathered birch twigs, wholly or partially in leaf. With the village fiddler at

[1] *Folk-lore*, i. (1890) pp. 518 *sqq.*

[2] W. R. S. Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*[2] (London, 1872), pp. 234 *sq.*

[3] A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen* (Berlin, 1843), p. 315.

[4] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 162.

their head, they make the round of the houses singing May songs; the burden of their songs is a prayer for fine weather, a plentiful harvest, and worldly and spiritual blessings. One of them carries a basket in which he collects gifts of eggs and the like. If they are well received they stick a leafy twig in the roof over the cottage door.[1]

Mid-summer trees and poles in Sweden.

But in Sweden midsummer is the season when these ceremonies are chiefly observed. On the Eve of St. John (the twenty-third of June) the houses are thoroughly cleansed and garnished with green boughs and flowers. Young fir-trees are raised at the doorway and elsewhere about the homestead; and very often small umbrageous arbours are constructed in the garden. In Stockholm on this day a leaf-market is held at which thousands of May-poles (*Maj Stänger*), from six inches to twelve feet high, decorated with leaves, flowers, slips of coloured paper, gilt egg-shells strung on reeds, and so on, are exposed for sale. Bonfires are lit on the hills, and the people dance round them and jump over them. But the chief event of the day is setting up the May-pole. This consists of a straight and tall spruce-pine tree, stripped of its branches. "At times hoops and at others pieces of wood, placed cross-wise, are attached to it at intervals; whilst at others it is provided with bows, representing, so to say, a man with his arms akimbo. From top to bottom not only the 'Maj Stäng' (May-pole) itself, but the hoops, bows, etc., are ornamented with leaves, flowers, slips of various cloth, gilt egg-shells, etc.; and on the top of it is a large vane, or it may be a flag." The raising of the May-pole, the decoration of which is done by the village maidens, is an affair of much ceremony; the people flock to it from all quarters, and dance round it in a great ring.[2] Midsummer customs of the same sort used to be observed in some parts of Germany. Thus in the towns of the Upper Harz Mountains tall fir-trees, with the bark peeled off their lower trunks, were set up in open places and decked with flowers and eggs, which were painted yellow and red. Round these trees the young folk danced by day and the old folk in the evening. Many

[1] L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 235.

[2] L. Lloyd, *op. cit.* pp. 257 *sqq.*

people disguised themselves, and dramatic representations were given, amongst others mock executions, at which the sufferer's hat was knocked off instead of his head. At the village of Lerbach in these fir-clad mountains children would gather together on Midsummer Day, each with a tiny fir-tree, which they made to revolve from left to right in the direction of the sun, while they sang "The maiden turned herself about," or "Oh, thou dear Summertime! Oh, thou dear Summertime!"[1] In some parts of Bohemia also a May-pole or midsummer-tree is erected on St. John's Eve. The lads fetch a tall fir or pine from the wood and set it up on a height, where the girls deck it with nosegays, garlands, and red ribbons. It is afterwards burned.[2]

Village May-poles in England.

It would be needless to illustrate at length the custom, which has prevailed in various parts of Europe, such as England, France, and Germany, of setting up a village May-tree or May-pole on May Day.[3] A few examples will suffice. The puritanical writer Phillip Stubbes in his *Anatomie of Abuses*, first published at London in 1583, has described with manifest disgust how they used to bring in the May-pole in the days of good Queen Bess. His description affords us a vivid glimpse of merry England in the olden time. "Against May, Whitsonday, or other time, all the yung men and maides, olde men and wives, run gadding over night to the woods, groves, hils, and mountains, where they spend all the night in plesant pastimes; and in the morning they return, bringing with them birch and branches of trees, to deck their assemblies withall. And no mervaile, for there is a great Lord present amongst them, as superintendent and Lord over their pastimes and sportes, namely, Sathan, prince of hel. But the cheifest jewel they bring from thence is their May-pole, which they bring home

[1] H. Pröhle, *Harzbilder* (Leipsic, 1855), pp. 19 *sq.* Compare *id.*, in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, i. (1853) pp. 81 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Germanische Mythen*, pp. 512 *sqq.*; A. Kuhn und W. Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche* (Leipsic, 1848), p. 390, § 80.

[2] Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen* (Prague, N.D.), pp. 308 *sq.* A fuller description of the ceremony will be given later.

[3] For the evidence see J. Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 234 *sqq.*; W. Hone, *Every Day Book*, i. 547 *sqq.*, ii. 574 *sqq.*; R. Chambers, *Book of Days*, i. 574 *sqq.*; T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, pp. 228 *sqq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 168 *sqq.*

with great veneration, as thus. They have twentie or fortie yoke of oxen, every oxe having a sweet nose-gay of flouers placed on the tip of his hornes, and these oxen drawe home this May-pole (this stinkyng ydol, rather), which is covered all over with floures and hearbs, bound round about with strings, from the top to the bottome, and sometime painted with variable colours, with two or three hundred men, women and children following it with great devotion. And thus beeing reared up, with handkercheefs and flags hovering on the top, they straw the ground rounde about, binde green boughes about it, set up sommer haules, bowers, and arbors hard by it. And then fall they to daunce about it, like as the heathen people did at the dedication of the Idols, whereof this is a perfect pattern, or rather the thing itself. I have heard it credibly reported (and that *viva voce*) by men of great gravitie and reputation, that of fortie, threescore, or a hundred maides going to the wood over night, there have scaresly the third part of them returned home againe undefiled."[1] Of the Cornish people their historian Borlase says: "From towns they make excursions, on May eve, into the country, cut down a tall elm, bring it into town with rejoicings, and having fitted a straight taper pole to the end of it, and painted it, erect it in the most publick part, and upon holidays and festivals dress it with garlands of flowers, or ensigns and streamers."[2] In Northumberland, down apparently to near the end of the eighteenth century, young people of both sexes used to go out early on May morning to gather the flowering thorn and the dew off the grass, which they brought home with music and acclamations; then, having dressed a pole on the green with garlands, they danced about it. The dew was considered as a great cosmetic, and preserved the face from wrinkles, blotches, and the traces of old age. A syllabub made of warm milk from the cow, sweet cakes, and wine was prepared for the feast; and a kind of divination, to discover who should be wedded first, was practised by dropping a marriage-ring into the syllabub and fishing for it

Bringing in the May-pole.

[1] Phillip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, p. 149 (F. J. Furnivall's reprint). In later editions some verbal changes were made.

[2] W. Borlase, *Natural History of Cornwall* (Oxford, 1758), p. 294.

with a ladle.[1] At Padstow in Cornwall, when shipbuilding was a thriving industry of the port, the shipwrights used to erect a tall May-pole at the top of Cross Street in the middle of a cross inlaid with stone. The pole was gaily decorated with spring flowers and so forth. But the custom has long been abandoned. A great feature of the celebration of May Day at Padstow used to be the Hobby Horse, that is, a man wearing a ferocious mask, who went dancing and singing before the chief houses, accompanied by a great flower-bedecked crowd of men and women, while the men fired pistols loaded with powder in all directions.[2]

Village May-trees and May-poles in Germany.

In Swabia on the first of May a tall fir-tree used to be fetched into the village, where it was decked with ribbons and set up; then the people danced round it merrily to music. The tree stood on the village green the whole year through, until a fresh tree was brought in next May Day.[3] In Saxony "people were not content with bringing the summer symbolically (as king or queen) into the village; they brought the fresh green itself from the woods even into the houses: that is the May or Whitsuntide trees, which are mentioned in documents from the thirteenth century onwards. The fetching in of the May-tree was also a festival. The people went out into the woods to seek the May (*majum quaerere*), brought young trees, especially firs and birches, to the village and set them up before the doors of the houses or of the cattle-stalls or in the rooms. Young fellows erected such May-trees, as we have already said, before the chambers of their sweethearts. Besides these household Mays, a great May-tree or May-pole, which had also been brought in solemn procession to the village, was set up in the middle of the village or in the market-place of the town. It had been chosen by the whole community, who watched over it most carefully. Generally the tree was stripped of its branches and leaves, nothing but the crown being left, on which were displayed, in addition to many-coloured ribbons and cloths, a variety of victuals such as

[1] W. Hutchinson, *View of Northumberland* (Newcastle, 1778), ii. Appendix, pp. 13 *sq.*; Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 257.

[2] "Padstow 'Hobby Hoss,'" *Folk-lore*, xvi. (1905) pp. 59 *sq.*

[3] E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben* (Stuttgart, 1852), p. 396.

sausages, cakes, and eggs. The young folk exerted themselves to obtain these prizes. In the greasy poles which are still to be seen at our fairs we have a relic of these old May-poles. Not uncommonly there was a race on foot or on horseback to the May-tree—a Whitsuntide pastime which in course of time has been divested of its goal and survives as a popular custom to this day in many parts of Germany. In the great towns of our land the custom has developed into sport, for our spring races are in their origin nothing but the old German horse-races, in which the victor received a prize (generally a red cloth) from the hand of a maiden, while the last rider was greeted with jeers and gibes by the assembled community."[1] The custom of the May-tree is observed by the Wends of Saxony, as well as by the Germans. The young men of the village choose the slimmest and tallest tree in the wood, peel it and set it up on the village green. Its leafy top is decked with cloths and ribbons presented by the girls. Here it stands, towering high above the roofs, till Ascension Day, or in many places till Whitsuntide. When it is being taken down, the young folk dance round it, and the youth who catches and breaks off the leafy crown of the falling tree is the hero of the day. Holding the green boughs aloft he is carried shoulder-high, with music and joyous shouts, to the ale-house, where the dance is resumed.[2] At Bordeaux on the first of May the boys of each street used to erect in it a May-pole, which they adorned with garlands and a great crown; and every evening during the whole of the month the young people of both sexes danced singing about the pole.[3] Down to the present day May-trees decked with flowers and ribbons are set up on May Day in every village and hamlet of gay Provence. Under them the young folk make merry and the old folk rest.[4] The Red Karens of Upper Burma hold a festival in April, at which the chief ceremony is the erection of a post on ground set apart for

May-poles and May-trees in Germany and France.

May-poles among the Karens of Burma.

[1] E. Mogk, in R. Wuttke's *Sächsische Volkskunde*[2] (Dresden, 1901), pp. 309 *sq.*

[2] M. Rentsch, in R. Wuttke's *op. cit.* p. 359.

[3] A. De Nore, *Coutumes, mythes et traditions des provinces de France* (Paris and Lyons, 1846), p. 137.

[4] Bérenger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances* (Paris, 1896), v. 308 *sq.* Compare *id.*, *Reminiscences populaires de la Provence*, pp. 21 *sq.*, 26, 27.

the purpose in or near each village. A new post is set up every year; the old ones are left standing, but are not renewed if they fall or decay. Omens are first drawn from chicken bones as to which tree will be the best to fell for the post, which day will be the luckiest, and so on. A pole some twenty or thirty feet long is then hewn from the tree and ornamented with a rudely carved capital. On the lucky day all the villagers assemble and drag the pole to the chosen spot. When it has been set up, the people dance "a rude sort of May-pole dance" to the music of drums and gongs. Much pork is eaten and much liquor drunk on this festive occasion.[1]

Permanent May-poles.

In all these cases, apparently, the custom is or was to bring in a new May-tree each year. However, in England the village May-pole seems as a rule, at least in later times, to have been permanent, not renewed annually.[2] Villages of Upper Bavaria renew their May-pole once every three, four, or five years. It is a fir-tree fetched from the forest, and amid all the wreaths, flags, and inscriptions with which it is bedecked, an essential part is the bunch of dark green foliage left at the top "as a memento that in it we have to do, not with a dead pole, but with a living tree from the greenwood."[3] We can hardly doubt that originally the practice everywhere was to set up a new May-tree every year. As the object of the custom was to bring in the fructifying spirit of vegetation, newly awakened in spring, the end would have been defeated if, instead of a living tree, green and sappy, an old withered one had been erected year after year or allowed to stand permanently. When, however, the meaning of the custom had been forgotten, and the May-tree was regarded simply as a centre for holiday merry-making, people saw no reason for felling a fresh tree every year, and preferred to let the same tree stand permanently, only decking it with fresh flowers on May Day. But even when the May-pole had thus become a fixture, the need of giving it the appearance of being a green tree, not a dead pole, was sometimes felt. Thus at Weverham in Cheshire "are two May-poles, which

[1] J. G. Scott and J. P. Hardiman, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, part i. vol. i. (Rangoon, 1900) p. 529.

[2] W. Hone, *Every Day Book*, i. 547 *sqq.*; R. Chambers, *Book of Days*, i. 571.

[3] *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, i. 372.

are decorated on this day (May Day) with all due attention to the ancient solemnity; the sides are hung with garlands, and the top terminated by a birch or other tall slender tree with its leaves on; the bark being peeled, and the stem spliced to the pole, so as to give the appearance of one tree from the summit."[1] Thus the renewal of the May-tree is like the renewal of the Harvest-May;[2] each is intended to secure a fresh portion of the fertilising spirit of vegetation, and to preserve it throughout the year. But whereas the efficacy of the Harvest-May is restricted to promoting the growth of the crops, that of the May-tree or May-branch extends also, as we have seen, to women and cattle. Lastly, it is worth noting that the old May-tree is sometimes burned at the end of the year. Thus in the district of Prague young people break pieces of the public May-tree and place them behind the holy pictures in their rooms, where they remain till next May Day, and are then burned on the hearth.[3] In Würtemberg the bushes which are set up on the houses on Palm Sunday are sometimes left there for a year and then burnt.[4] The *eiresione* (the Harvest-May of Greece) was perhaps burnt at the end of the year.[5]

The May-tree burnt at the end of the year.

So much for the tree-spirit conceived as incorporate or immanent in the tree. We have now to shew that the tree-spirit is often conceived and represented as detached from the tree and clothed in human form, and even as embodied in living men or women. The evidence for this anthropomorphic representation of the tree-spirit is largely to be found in the popular customs of European peasantry. These will be described presently, but before examining them we may notice an Esthonian folk-tale which illustrates the same train of thought very clearly. Once upon a time, so runs the tale, a young peasant was busy raking the hay in a

Tree-spirit detached from the tree and represented in human form.

[1] W. Hone, *Every Day Book*, ii. 597 *sq.* Mr. G. W. Prothero tells me that about the year 1875 he saw a permanent May-pole decked with flowers on May Day on the road between Cambridge and St. Neot's, not far from the turning to Caxton.

[2] See above, pp. 47 *sq.*

[3] Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 217; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 566.

[4] A. Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1861-1862), ii. 74 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 566.

[5] Aristophanes, *Plutus*, 1054; W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, pp. 222 *sq.*

Esthonian story of a tree-elf.

meadow, when on the rim of the horizon a heavy thunder-cloud loomed black and angry, warning him to make haste with his work before the storm should break. He finished in time, and was wending his way homeward, when under a tree he espied a stranger fast asleep. "He will be drenched to the skin," thought the good-natured young fellow to himself, "if I allow him to sleep on." So he stepped up to the sleeper and shaking him forcibly roused him from his slumber. The stranger started up, and at sight of the thunder-cloud, which now darkened the sky, he blenched, fumbled in his pockets, and finding nothing in them wherewith to reward the friendly swain, he said, "This time I am your debtor. But the time will come when I shall be able to repay your kindness. Remember what I tell you. You will enlist. You will be parted from your friends for years, and one day a feeling of homesickness will come over you in a foreign land. Then look up, and you will see a crooked birch-tree a few steps from you. Go to it, knock thrice on the trunk, and ask, 'Is the Crooked One at home?' The rest will follow." With these words the stranger hastened away and was out of sight in a moment. The peasant also went his way, and soon forgot all about the matter. Well, time went by and part of the stranger's prophecy came true. For the peasant turned soldier and served in a cavalry regiment for years. One day, when he was quartered with his regiment in the north of Finland, it fell to his turn to tend the horses while his comrades were roistering in the tavern. Suddenly a great yearning for home, such as he had never known before, came over the lonely trooper; tears started to his eyes, and dear visions of his native land crowded on his soul. Then he bethought him of the sleeping stranger in the wood, and the whole scene came back to him as fresh as if it had happened yesterday. He looked up, and there, strange to tell, he was aware of a crooked birch-tree right in front of him. More in jest than in earnest he went up to it and did as the stranger had bidden him. Hardly had the words, "Is the Crooked One at home?" passed his lips when the stranger himself stood before him and said, "I am glad you have come. I feared you had forgotten me. You wish to be at

home, do you not?" The trooper said yes, he did. Then the Crooked One cried into the tree, "Young folks, which of you is the fleetest?" A voice from the birch replied, "Father, I can run as fast as a moor-hen flies." "Well, I need a fleeter messenger to-day." A second voice answered, "I can run like the wind." "I need a swifter envoy," said the father. Then a third voice cried, "I can run like the thought of man." "You are after my own heart. Fill a bag full of gold and take it with my friend and benefactor to his home." Then he caught the soldier by the hat, crying, "The hat to the man, and the man to the house!" The same moment the soldier felt his hat fly from his head. When he looked about for it, lo! he was at home in the old familiar parlour wearing his old peasant clothes, and the great sack of money stood beside him. Yet on parade and at the roll-call he was never missed. When the man who told this story was asked, "Who could the stranger be?" he answered, "Who but a tree-elf?"[1]

Tree-spirit represented simultaneously in vegetable and human form.

There is an instructive class of cases in which the tree-spirit is represented simultaneously in vegetable form and in human form, which are set side by side as if for the express purpose of explaining each other. In these cases the human representative of the tree-spirit is sometimes a doll or puppet, sometimes a living person; but whether a puppet or a person, it is placed beside a tree or bough; so that together the person or puppet, and the tree or bough, form a sort of bilingual inscription, the one being, so to speak, a translation of the other. Here, therefore, there is no room left for doubt that the spirit of the tree is actually represented in human form. Thus in Bohemia, on the fourth Sunday in Lent, young people throw a puppet called Death into the water; then the girls go into the wood, cut down a young tree, and fasten to it a puppet dressed in white clothes to look like a woman; with this tree and puppet they go from house to house collecting gratuities and singing songs with the refrain:—

[1] Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, pp. 112-114. Some traits in this story seem to suggest that the return of the trooper to his old home was, like that of the war-broken veteran in Campbell's poem, only a soldier's dream.

"*We carry Death out of the village,*
We bring Summer into the village."[1]

Here, as we shall see later on, the "Summer" is the spirit of vegetation returning or reviving in spring. In some parts of our own country children go about asking for pence with some small imitations of May-poles, and with a finely-dressed doll which they call the Lady of the May.[2] In these cases the tree and the puppet are obviously regarded as equivalent.

The Little May Rose

At Thann, in Alsace, a girl called the Little May Rose, dressed in white, carries a small May-tree, which is gay with garlands and ribbons. Her companions collect gifts from door to door, singing a song:—

"*Little May Rose turn round three times,*
Let us look at you round and round!
Rose of the May, come to the greenwood away,
We will be merry all.
So we go from the May to the roses."

In the course of the song a wish is expressed that those who give nothing may lose their fowls by the marten, that their vine may bear no clusters, their tree no nuts, their field no corn; the produce of the year is supposed to depend on the gifts offered to these May singers.[3] Here and in the cases mentioned above, where children go about with green boughs or garlands on May Day singing and collecting money, the meaning is that with the spirit of vegetation they bring plenty and good luck to the house, and they expect to be paid for the service. In Russian Lithuania, on the first of May, they used to set up a green tree before the village. Then the rustic swains chose the prettiest girl, crowned her, swathed her in birch branches and set her beside the May-tree, where they danced, sang, and shouted "O May! O May!"[4] In Brie (Isle de France) a May-tree is set up in the midst of the village; its top is crowned with flowers; lower down it is twined with leaves and twigs, still lower with huge green branches. The girls dance round it, and

[1] Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, pp. 86 *sqq.*: W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 156.

[2] R. Chambers, *Book of Days*, i. 573. Compare the Cambridge custom, described above, p. 62.

[3] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 312.

[4] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 313.

at the same time a lad wrapt in leaves and called Father May is led about.[1] In the small towns of the Franken Wald mountains in Northern Bavaria, on the second of May, a *Walber* tree is erected before a tavern, and a man dances round it, enveloped in straw from head to foot in such a way that the ears of corn unite above his head to form a crown. He is called the *Walber*, and used to be led in procession through the streets, which were adorned with sprigs of birch.[2] The *Walber*.

Amongst the Slavs of Carinthia, on St. George's Day (the twenty-third of April), the young people deck with flowers and garlands a tree which has been felled on the eve of the festival. The tree is then carried in procession, accompanied with music and joyful acclamations, the chief figure in the procession being the Green George, a young fellow clad from head to foot in green birch branches. At the close of the ceremonies the Green George, that is an effigy of him, is thrown into the water. It is the aim of the lad who acts Green George to step out of his leafy envelope and substitute the effigy so adroitly that no one shall perceive the change. In many places, however, the lad himself who plays the part of Green George is ducked in a river or pond, with the express intention of thus ensuring rain to make the fields and meadows green in summer. In some places the cattle are crowned and driven from their stalls to the accompaniment of a song :— Green George in Carinthia.

> "*Green George we bring,*
> *Green George we accompany,*
> *May he feed our herds well.*
> *If not, to the water with him.*"[3]

Here we see that the same powers of making rain and fostering the cattle, which are ascribed to the tree-spirit regarded as incorporate in the tree, are also attributed to the tree-spirit represented by a living man.

Among the gypsies of Transylvania and Roumania the

[1] *Ibid.* p. 314.

[2] *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 357 ; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 312 *sq.* The word *Walber* probably comes from Walburgis, which is doubtless only another form of the better known Walpurgis. The second of May is called Walburgis Day, at least in this part of Bavaria.

[3] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 313 *sq.*

Green George among the gypsies.

festival of Green George is the chief celebration of spring. Some of them keep it on Easter Monday, others on St. George's Day (the twenty-third of April). On the eve of the festival a young willow tree is cut down, adorned with garlands and leaves, and set up in the ground. Women with child place one of their garments under the tree, and leave it there over night; if next morning they find a leaf of the tree lying on the garment, they know that their delivery will be easy. Sick and old people go to the tree in the evening, spit on it thrice, and say, "You will soon die, but let us live." Next morning the gypsies gather about the willow. The chief figure of the festival is Green George, a lad who is concealed from top to toe in green leaves and blossoms. He throws a few handfuls of grass to the beasts of the tribe, in order that they may have no lack of fodder throughout the year. Then he takes three iron nails, which have lain for three days and nights in water, and knocks them into the willow; after which he pulls them out and flings them into a running stream to propitiate the water-spirits. Finally, a pretence is made of throwing Green George into the water, but in fact it is only a puppet made of branches and leaves which is ducked in the stream.[1] In this version of the custom the powers of granting an easy delivery to women and of communicating vital energy to the sick and old are clearly ascribed to the willow; while Green George, the human double of the tree, bestows food on the cattle, and further ensures the favour of the water-spirits by putting them in indirect communication with the tree.

Double representation of the tree-spirit by tree and man among the Oraons.

An example of the double representation of the spirit of vegetation by a tree and a living man is reported from Bengal. The Oraons have a festival in spring while the sál-trees are in blossom, because they think that at this time the marriage of earth is celebrated and the sál flowers are necessary for the ceremony. On an appointed day the villagers go with their priest to the Sarna, the sacred grove, a remnant of the old sál forest in which a goddess Sarna Burhi, or woman of the grove, is supposed to dwell. She is thought to have great influence on the rain; and the priest

[1] H. von Wlislocki, *Volksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Zigeuner* (Münster i. W., 1891), pp. 148 *sq.*

arriving with his party at the grove sacrifices to her five fowls, of which a morsel is given to each person present. Then they gather the sál flowers and return laden with them to the village. Next day the priest visits every house, carrying the flowers in a wide open basket. The women of each house bring out water to wash his feet as he approaches, and kneeling make him an obeisance. Then he dances with them and places some of the sál flowers over the door of the house and in the women's hair. No sooner is this done than the women empty their water-jugs over him, drenching him to the skin. A feast follows, and the young people, with sál flowers in their hair, dance all night on the village green.[1] Here, the equivalence of the flower-bearing priest to the goddess of the flowering tree comes out plainly. For she is supposed to influence the rain, and the drenching of the priest with water is, doubtless, like the ducking of the Green George in Carinthia and elsewhere, a rain-charm. Thus the priest, as if he were the tree goddess herself, goes from door to door dispensing rain and bestowing fruitfulness on each house, but especially on the women. In some parts of India the harvest-goddess Gauri, the wife of Siva, is represented both by an unmarried girl and by a bundle of the wild flowering balsam plant touch-me-not (*Impatiens sp.*), which is tied up in a mummy-like figure with a woman's mask, dress, and ornaments. Before being removed from the soil to represent the goddess the plants are worshipped. The girl is also worshipped. Then the bundle of plants is carried and the girl who personates the goddess walks through the rooms of the house, while the supposed footprints of Gauri herself are imprinted on the floor with red paste. On entering each room the human representative of Gauri is asked, "Gauri, Gauri, whither have you come and what do you see?" and the girl makes appropriate replies. Then she is given a mouthful of sweets and the mistress of the house says, "Come with golden feet and stay for ever." The plant-formed effigy of Gauri is afterwards worshipped as the goddess herself and receives offerings of rice-cakes and pan-cakes. On the third day it is thrown into a river or tank; then a handful of pebbles or sand is brought home from the

Double representation of the harvest-goddess Gauri by a bundle of plants and an unmarried girl.

[1] E. T. Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 261.

spot and thrown all over the house and the trees to bring good luck to the house and to protect the trees from vermin. A remarkable feature of the ceremonies is that the goddess Gauri is supposed to be secretly followed by her husband Siva, who remains hidden under the fold of her garment and is represented by a *lôṭâ*, covered by a coco-nut and filled with rice, which is carefully measured. After the image of Gauri has been thrown into the river or tank, the rice in the *lôṭâ* representing Siva is carefully measured again, in order to see whether the quantity has increased or decreased, and according to the result an abundant or a scanty harvest is prognosticated.[1] Hence it appears that the whole ritual aims at ensuring a plentiful crop of rice. In this case the spirit of vegetation thus represented in duplicate by a living girl and the effigy of a woman is a harvest goddess, not a tree-spirit, but the principle is the same.

W. Mannhardt's summary of the evidence.

Without citing more examples to the same effect, we may sum up the results of the preceding pages in the words of Mannhardt: "The customs quoted suffice to establish with certainty the conclusion that in these spring processions the spirit of vegetation is often represented both by the May-tree and in addition by a man dressed in green leaves or flowers or by a girl similarly adorned. It is the same spirit which animates the tree and is active in the inferior plants and which we have recognised in the May-tree and the Harvest-May. Quite consistently the spirit is also supposed to manifest his presence in the first flower of spring and reveals himself both in a girl representing a May-rose, and also, as giver of harvest, in the person of the *Walber*. The procession with this representative of the divinity was supposed to produce the same beneficial effects on the fowls, the fruit-trees, and the crops as the presence of the deity himself. In other words, the mummer was regarded not as an image but as an actual representative of the spirit of vegetation; hence the wish expressed by the attendants on the May-rose and the May-tree that those who refuse them gifts of eggs, bacon, and so forth, may have no share in the blessings which it is in the power of the itinerant

[1] B. A. Gupte, "Harvest Festivals in honour of Gauri and Ganesh," *Indian Antiquary*, xxxv. (1906) p. 61.

spirit to bestow. We may conclude that these begging processions with May-trees or May-boughs from door to door ('bringing the May or the summer') had everywhere originally a serious and, so to speak, sacramental significance; people really believed that the god of growth was present unseen in the bough; by the procession he was brought to each house to bestow his blessing. The names May, Father May, May Lady, Queen of the May, by which the anthropomorphic spirit of vegetation is often denoted, shew that the idea of the spirit of vegetation is blent with a personification of the season at which his powers are most strikingly manifested."[1]

Tree-spirit or vegetation-spirit represented by a person alone.

Thus far we have seen that the tree-spirit or the spirit of vegetation in general is represented either in vegetable form alone, as by a tree, bough, or flower; or in vegetable and human form simultaneously, as by a tree, bough, or flower in combination with a puppet or a living person. It remains to shew that the representation of him by a tree, bough, or flower is sometimes entirely dropped, while the representation of him by a living person remains. In this case the representative character of the person is generally marked by dressing him or her in leaves or flowers; sometimes too it is indicated by the name he or she bears.

Green George in Russia.

Thus in some parts of Russia on St. George's Day (the twenty-third of April) a youth is dressed out, like our Jack-in-the-Green, with leaves and flowers. The Slovenes call him the Green George. Holding a lighted torch in one hand and a pie in the other, he goes out to the corn-fields, followed by girls singing appropriate songs. A circle of brushwood is then lighted, in the middle of which is set the pie. All who take part in the ceremony then sit down around the fire and divide the pie among them.[2] In this custom the Green George dressed in leaves and flowers is plainly identical with the similarly disguised Green George who is associated with a tree in the Carinthian, Transylvanian, and Roumanian customs observed on the same day. Again, we saw that in Russia at Whitsuntide a birch-tree is dressed

[1] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 315 *sq.*

[2] W. R. S. Ralston, *Russian Folk-tales*, p. 345. As to Green George see above, pp. 75 *sq.*

Whitsuntide customs in Russia.

in woman's clothes and set up in the house. Clearly equivalent to this is the custom observed on Whit-Monday by Russian girls in the district of Pinsk. They choose the prettiest of their number, envelop her in a mass of foliage taken from the birch-trees and maples, and carry her about through the village. In a district of Little Russia they take round a "poplar," represented by a girl wearing bright flowers in her hair.[1] At Whitsuntide in Holland poor women used to go about begging with a little girl called Whitsuntide Flower (*Pinxterbloem*, perhaps a kind of iris); she was decked with flowers and sat in a waggon. In North Brabant she wears the flowers from which she takes her name and a song is sung:—

"*Whitsuntide Flower,*
Turn yourself once round."[2]

May customs in France.

All over Provence on the first of May pretty little girls are dressed in white, decked with crowns and wreaths of roses, and set on seats or platforms strewn with flowers in the streets, while their companions go about begging coppers for the Mayos or Mayes, as they are called, from the passers-by.[3] In some parts of the Ardennes on May Day a small girl, clad in white and wearing a chaplet of flowers on her head, used to go from house to house with her playmates, collecting contributions and singing that it was May, the month of May, the pretty month of May, that the wheat was tall, the hawthorn in bloom, and the lark carolling in the sky.[4]

The Little Leaf Man.

In Ruhla (Thüringen) as soon as the trees begin to grow green in spring, the children assemble on a Sunday and go out into the woods, where they choose one of their playmates to be the Little Leaf Man. They break branches from the trees and twine them about the child till only his

[1] W. R. S. Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 234.

[2] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 318: J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] ii. 657.

[3] A. de Nore, *Coutumes, mythes et traditions des provinces de France*, pp. 17 *sq.*; Bérenger-Féraud, *Réminiscences populaires de la Provence*, pp. 1 *sq.*

[4] A. Meyrac, *Traditions, coutumes, légendes et contes des Ardennes* (Charleville, 1890), pp. 79-82. The girl was called the Trimouzette. A custom of the same general character was practised down to recent times in the Jura (Bérenger-Féraud, *Réminiscences populaires de la Provence*, p. 18).

shoes peep out from the leafy mantle. Holes are made in it for him to see through, and two of the children lead the Little Leaf Man that he may not stumble or fall. Singing and dancing they take him from house to house, asking for gifts of food such as eggs, cream, sausages, and cakes. Lastly, they sprinkle the Leaf Man with water and feast on the food they have collected.[1] At Röllshausen on the Schwalm, in Hesse, when afternoon service is over on Whitsunday, the schoolboys and schoolgirls go out into the wood and there clothe a boy from head to foot in leaves so that nobody would know him. He is called the Little Whitsuntide Man. A procession is then formed. Two boys lead their leaf-clad playfellow; two others precede him with a basket; and two girls with another basket bring up the rear. Thus they go from house to house singing hymns or popular songs and collecting eggs and cakes in the baskets. When they have feasted on these, they strip their comrade of his verdant envelope on an open place in front of the village.[2] In some parts of Rhenish Bavaria at Whitsuntide a boy or lad is swathed in the yellow blossom of the broom, the dark green twigs of the firs, and other foliage. Thus attired he is known as the Quack and goes from door to door, whirling about in the dance, while an appropriate song is chanted and his companions levy contributions.[3] In the Fricktal, Switzerland, at Whitsuntide boys go out into a wood and swathe one of their number in leafy boughs. He is called the Whitsuntide-lout (*Pfingstlümmel*), and being mounted on horseback with a green branch in his hand he is led back into the village. At the village-well a halt is called and the leaf-clad lout is dismounted and ducked in the trough. Thereby he acquires the right of sprinkling water on everybody, and he exercises the right specially on girls and street urchins. The urchins

Leaf-clad mummers at Whitsuntide.

[1] F. A. Reimann, *Deutsche Volksfeste im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Weimar, 1839), pp. 159 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 320; A. Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 211.

[2] W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche im Lichte der heidnischen Vorzeit* (Marburg, 1888), p. 70.

[3] *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iv. 2, pp. 359 *sq.* Similarly in the Département de l'Ain (France) on the first of May eight or ten boys unite, clothe one of their number in leaves, and go from house to house begging (W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 318).

march before him in bands begging him to give them a Whitsuntide wetting.[1]

Jack-in-the-Green in England.

In England the best-known example of these leaf-clad mummers is the Jack-in-the-Green, a chimney-sweeper who walks encased in a pyramidal framework of wickerwork, which is covered with holly and ivy, and surmounted by a crown of flowers and ribbons. Thus arrayed he dances on May Day at the head of a troop of chimney-sweeps, who collect pence.[2] The ceremony was witnessed at Cheltenham on the second of May 1892, by Dr. W. H. D. Rouse, who has described in detail the costume of the performers. They were all chimney-sweeps of the town. Jack-in-the-Green or the Bush-carrier was enclosed in a wooden framework on which leaves were fastened so as to make a thick cone about six feet high, topped with a crown, which consisted of two wooden hoops placed crosswise and covered with flowers. The leafy envelope was unbroken except for a single opening through which peered the face of the mummer. From time to time in their progress through the streets the performers halted, and three of them, dressed in red, blue, and yellow respectively, tripped lightly round the leaf-covered man to the inspiring strains of a fiddle and a tin whistle on which two of their comrades with blackened faces discoursed sweet music. The leader of the procession was a clown fantastically clad in a long white pinafore or blouse with coloured fringes and frills, and wearing on his head a beaver hat of the familiar pattern, the crown of which hung loose and was adorned with ribbons and a bird or a bundle of feathers. Large black rings surrounded his eyes, and a red dab over mouth and chin lent a pleasing variety to his countenance. He contributed to the public hilarity by flapping the yellow fringe of his blouse with quaint gestures and occasionally fanning himself languidly. His efforts were seconded by another performer, who wore a red fool's cap, all stuck with flowers, and a white pinafore enriched with black human figures in front and a black gridiron-like pattern, crossed diagonally by a red bar, at the back. Two

[1] E. Hoffmann-Krayer, "Fruchtbarkeitsriten im schweizerischen Volksbrauch," *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde*, xi. (1907) p. 252.

[2] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 322; W. Hone, *Every-Day Book*, i. 583 *sqq.*; T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, pp. 230 *sq.*

boys in white pinafores, with similar figures, or stars, on the breast, and a fish on the back, completed the company. Formerly there used to be a man in woman's clothes, who personated the clown's wife.[1] In some parts also of France a young fellow is encased in a wicker framework covered with leaves and is led about.[2] In Frickthal, in the Swiss canton of Aargau, a similar frame of basketwork is called the Whitsuntide Basket. As soon as the trees begin to bud, a spot is chosen in the wood, and here the village lads make the frame with all secrecy, lest others should forestall them. Leafy branches are twined round two hoops, one of which rests on the shoulders of the wearer, the other encircles his calves; holes are made for his eyes and mouth; and a large nosegay crowns the whole. In this guise he appears suddenly in the village at the hour of vespers, preceded by three boys blowing on horns made of willow bark. The great object of his supporters is to set up the Whitsuntide Basket on the village well, and to keep it and him there, despite the efforts of the lads from neighbouring villages, who seek to carry off the Whitsuntide Basket and set it up on their own well.[3] In the neighbourhood of Ertingen (Würtemberg) a masker of the same sort, known as the Lazy Man (*Latzmann*), goes about the village on Midsummer Day; he is hidden under a great pyramidal or conical frame of wickerwork, ten or twelve feet high, which is completely covered with sprigs of fir. He has a bell which he rings as he goes, and he is attended by a suite of persons dressed up in character —a footman, a colonel, a butcher, an angel, the devil, the doctor, and so on. They march in Indian file and halt before every house, where each of them speaks in character, except the Lazy Man, who says nothing. With what they get by begging from door to door they hold a feast.[4]

The Whitsuntide Basket in Switzerland.

The Lazy Man in Würtemberg.

In the class of cases of which the foregoing are specimens it is obvious that the leaf-clad person who is led about is

[1] W. H. D. Rouse, "May-Day in Cheltenham," *Folk-lore*, iv. (1893) pp. 50-53. On May Day 1891 I saw a Jack-in-the-Green in the streets of Cambridge.

[2] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 323.

[3] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 323; H. Herzog, *Schweizerische Volksfeste, Sitten und Gebräuche* (Aarau, 1884), pp. 248 *sq.*

[4] A. Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, ii. 114 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 325.

equivalent to the May-tree, May-bough, or May-doll, which is carried from house to house by children begging. Both are representatives of the beneficent spirit of vegetation, whose visit to the house is recompensed by a present of money or food.

Leaf-clad representative of vegetation sometimes called a King or Queen.

Often the leaf-clad person who represents the spirit of vegetation is known as the king or the queen; thus, for example, he or she is called the May King, Whitsuntide King, Queen of May, and so on. These titles, as Mannhardt observes, imply that the spirit incorporate in vegetation is a ruler, whose creative power extends far and wide.[1]

May-Kings at Whitsuntide in Germany and Bohemia.

In a village near Salzwedel a May-tree is set up at Whitsuntide and the boys race to it; he who reaches it first is king; a garland of flowers is put round his neck and in his hand he carries a May-bush, with which, as the procession moves along, he sweeps away the dew. At each house they sing a song, wishing the inmates good luck, referring to the "black cow in the stall milking white milk, black hen on the nest laying white eggs," and begging a gift of eggs, bacon, and so on.[2] At the village of Ellgoth in Silesia a ceremony called the King's Race is observed at Whitsuntide. A pole with a cloth tied to it is set up in a meadow, and the young men ride past it on horseback, each trying to snatch away the cloth as he gallops by. The one who succeeds in carrying it off and dipping it in the neighbouring Oder is proclaimed King.[3] Here the pole is clearly a substitute for a May-tree. In some villages of Brunswick at Whitsuntide a May King is completely enveloped in a May-bush. In some parts of Thüringen also they have a May King at Whitsuntide, but he is dressed up rather differently. A frame of wood is made in which a man can stand; it is completely covered with birch boughs and is surmounted by a crown of birch and flowers, in which a bell is fastened. This frame is placed in the wood and the May King gets into it. The rest go out and look for him, and when they have found him they lead him back into the village to the magistrate, the clergyman, and others, who have to guess

[1] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 314 *sq.*

[2] A. Kuhn und W. Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 380.

[3] F. Tetzner, "Die Tschechen und Mährer in Schlesien," *Globus*, lxviii (1900) p. 340.

who is in the verdurous frame. If they guess wrong, the May King rings his bell by shaking his head, and a forfeit of beer or the like must be paid by the unsuccessful guesser.[1] The May King.

At Wahrstedt in Brunswick the boys at Whitsuntide choose by lot a king and a high-steward (*füstje-meier*). The latter is completely concealed in a May-bush, wears a wooden crown wreathed with flowers, and carries a wooden sword. The king, on the other hand, is only distinguished by a nosegay in his cap, and a reed, with a red ribbon tied to it, in his hand. They beg for eggs from house to house, threatening that, where none are given, none will be laid by the hens throughout the year. In this custom the high-steward appears, for some reason, to have usurped the insignia of the king.[2] At Hildesheim, in Hanover, five or six young fellows go about on the afternoon of Whit-Monday cracking long whips in measured time and collecting eggs from the houses. The chief person of the band is the Leaf King, a lad swathed so completely in birchen twigs that nothing of him can be seen but his feet. A huge head-dress of birchen twigs adds to his apparent stature. In his hand he carries a long crook, with which he tries to catch stray dogs and children.[3] In some parts of Bohemia on Whit-Monday the young fellows disguise themselves in tall caps of birch bark adorned with flowers. One of them is dressed as a king and dragged on a sledge to the village green, and if on the way they pass a pool the sledge is always overturned into it. Arrived at the green they gather round the king; the crier jumps on a stone or climbs up a tree and recites lampoons about each house and its inmates. Afterwards the disguises of bark are stripped off and they go about the village in holiday attire, carrying a May-tree and begging. Cakes, eggs, and corn are sometimes given them.[4] The Leaf King.

At Grossvargula, near Langensalza, in the eighteenth century a Grass King used to be led about in procession at Whitsuntide. He was encased in a pyramid The Grass King.

[1] A. Kuhn und W. Schwartz, *op. cit.* pp. 383 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 342.

[2] R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde* (Brunswick, 1896), pp. 249 *sq.*

[3] K. Seifart, *Sagen, Märchen, Schwänke und Gebräuche aus Stadt und Stift Hildesheim*, Zweite Auflage (Hildesheim, 1889), pp. 180 *sq.*

[4] Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, pp. 260 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 342 *sq.*

The Grass King.

of poplar branches, the top of which was adorned with a royal crown of branches and flowers. He rode on horseback with the leafy pyramid over him, so that its lower end touched the ground, and an opening was left in it only for his face. Surrounded by a cavalcade of young fellows, he rode in procession to the town hall, the parsonage, and so on, where they all got a drink of beer. Then under the seven lindens of the neighbouring Sommerberg, the Grass King was stripped of his green casing; the crown was handed to the Mayor, and the branches were stuck in the flax fields in order to make the flax grow tall.[1] In this last trait the fertilising influence ascribed to the representative of the tree-spirit comes out clearly. In the neighbourhood of Pilsen (Bohemia) a conical hut of green branches, without any door, is erected at Whitsuntide in the midst of the village. To this hut rides a troop of village lads with a king at their head. He wears a sword at his side and a sugar-loaf hat of rushes on his head. In his train are a judge, a crier, and a personage called the Frog-flayer or Hangman. This last is a sort of ragged merryandrew, wearing a rusty old sword and bestriding a sorry hack. On reaching the hut the crier dismounts and goes round it looking for a door. Finding none, he says, "Ah, this is perhaps an enchanted castle; the witches creep through the leaves and need no door." At last he draws his sword and hews his way into the hut, where there is a chair, on which he seats himself and proceeds to criticise in rhyme the girls, farmers, and farm-servants of the neighbourhood. When this is over, the Frog-flayer steps forward and, after exhibiting a cage with frogs in it, sets up a gallows on which he hangs the frogs in a row.[2] In the neighbourhood of Plas the ceremony differs in some points. The king and his soldiers are completely clad in bark, adorned with flowers and ribbons; they all carry swords and ride horses, which are gay with green branches and flowers. While the village dames and girls are being criticised at the arbour, a frog is secretly pinched and poked by the crier till it quacks. Sentence of death is

[1] F. A. Reimann, *Deutsche Volksfeste im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, pp. 157-159; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 347 *sq.*; A. Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen* (Vienna, 1878), p. 203.

[2] Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, pp. 253 *sqq.*

passed on the frog by the king; the hangman beheads it and flings the bleeding body among the spectators. Lastly, the king is driven from the hut and pursued by the soldiers.[1] The pinching and beheading of the frog are doubtless, as Mannhardt observes,[2] a rain-charm. We have seen that some Indians of the Orinoco beat frogs for the express purpose of producing rain, and that killing a frog is a European rain-charm.[3]

May-Queens and Whitsuntide Queens.

Often the spirit of vegetation in spring is represented by a queen instead of a king. In the neighbourhood of Libchowic (Bohemia), on the fourth Sunday in Lent, girls dressed in white and wearing the first spring flowers, as violets and daisies, in their hair, lead about the village a girl who is called the Queen and is crowned with flowers. During the procession, which is conducted with great solemnity, none of the girls may stand still, but must keep whirling round continually and singing. In every house the Queen announces the arrival of spring and wishes the inmates good luck and blessings, for which she receives presents.[4] In German Hungary the girls choose the prettiest girl to be their Whitsuntide Queen, fasten a towering wreath on her brow, and carry her singing through the streets. At every house they stop, sing old ballads, and receive presents.[5] In the south-east of Ireland on May Day the prettiest girl used to be chosen Queen of the district for twelve months. She was crowned with wild flowers; feasting, dancing, and rustic sports followed, and were closed by a grand procession in the evening. During her year of office she presided over rural gatherings of young people at dances and merry-makings. If she married before next May Day, her authority was at an end, but her successor was not elected till that day came round.[6] The May Queen is common in France[7] and familiar in England. Thus at the adjoining

[1] Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 262; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 353 *sq.*

[2] *Baumkultus*, p. 355.

[3] Above, vol. i. pp. 292, 293.

[4] Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 93; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 344.

[5] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 343 *sq.*

[6] T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, pp. 270 *sq.*

[7] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 344 *sqq.*; E. Cortet, *Fêtes religieuses*, pp. 160 *sqq.*; D. Monnier, *Traditions populaires comparées*, pp. 282 *sqq.*; Bérenger-Féraud, *Réminiscences populaires de la Provence*, pp. 17 *sq.*; Ch. Beauquier,

The May Queen in Warwickshire.

villages of Cherrington and Stourton in south Warwickshire, the Queen of May is still represented on May Day by a small girl dressed in white and wearing a wreath of flowers on her head. An older girl wheels the Queen in what is called a mail-cart, that is, a child's perambulator on two wheels. Another girl carries a money-box. Four boys bear the May-pole, a conical framework formed of a high tripod with a central shaft. The whole structure is encased in a series of five hoops, which rise one above the other, diminishing in size from bottom to top with the tapering of the cone. The hoops, as well as the tripod and the central shaft, are all covered with whatever flowers happen to be in bloom, such as marsh-marigolds, primroses, or blue-bells. To the top of the central shaft is fastened a bunch of the flower called crown-imperial, if it is in season. The lowest hoop is crossed by two bars at right angles to each other, and the projecting ends of the bars serve as handles, by which the four boys carry the May-pole. Each of the bearers has a garland of flowers slung over his shoulder. Thus the children go from house to house, singing their songs and receiving money, which goes to provide a treat for them in the afternoon.[1]

Spirit of vegetation represented simultaneously by a King and Queen or a Bridegroom and Bride.

Again the spirit of vegetation is sometimes represented by a king and queen, a lord and lady, or a bridegroom and bride. Here again the parallelism holds between the anthropomorphic and the vegetable representation of the tree-spirit, for we have seen above that trees are sometimes married to each other.[2] At Halford in south Warwickshire the children go from house to house on May Day, walking two and two in procession and headed by a King and Queen. Two boys carry a May-pole some six or seven feet high, which is covered with flowers and greenery. Fastened to it near the top are two cross-bars at right angles to each other. These are also decked with flowers, and from

Les Mois en Franche-Comté (Paris, 1900), pp. 65-69. In Franche-Comté she seems to be generally known as *l'épousée*, "the spouse."

[1] From information given me by Mabel Bailey, in the service of Miss A. Wyse of Halford. My informant's father is a native of Stourton, and she herself has spent much of her life there. I conjecture that the conical flower-bedecked structure may once have been borne by a mummer concealed within it. Compare the customs described above, pp. 82 *sq.*

[2] Above, pp. 24 *sqq.*

the ends of the bars hang hoops similarly adorned. At the houses the children sing May songs and receive money, which is used to provide tea for them at the school-house in the afternoon.[1] In a Bohemian village near Königgrätz on Whit-Monday the children play the king's game, at which a king and queen march about under a canopy, the queen wearing a garland, and the youngest girl carrying two wreaths on a plate behind them. They are attended by boys and girls called groomsmen and bridesmaids, and they go from house to house collecting gifts.[2] A regular feature in the popular celebration of Whitsuntide in Silesia used to be, and to some extent still is, the contest for the kingship. This contest took various forms, but the mark or goal was generally the May-tree or May-pole. Sometimes the youth who succeeded in climbing the smooth pole and bringing down the prize was proclaimed the Whitsuntide King and his sweetheart the Whitsuntide Bride. Afterwards the king, carrying the May-bush, repaired with the rest of the company to the ale-house, where a dance and a feast ended the merry-making. Often the young farmers and labourers raced on horseback to the May-pole, which was adorned with flowers, ribbons, and a crown. He who first reached the pole was the Whitsuntide King, and the rest had to obey his orders for that day. The worst rider became the clown. At the May-tree all dismounted and hoisted the king on their shoulders. He nimbly swarmed up the pole and brought down the May-bush and the crown, which had been fastened to the top. Meantime the clown hurried to the ale-house and proceeded to bolt thirty rolls of bread and to swig four quart bottles of brandy with the utmost possible despatch. He was followed by the king, who bore the May-bush and crown at the head of the company. If on their arrival the clown had already disposed of the rolls and the brandy, and greeted the king with a speech and a glass of beer, his score was paid by the king; otherwise he had to settle it himself. After church time the stately procession wound through the village. At the head of it rode the king, decked

Whitsuntide King and Queen

[1] From information given me by Miss A. Wyse of Halford.

[2] Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, pp. 265 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 422.

Whitsuntide King and Queen.

with flowers and carrying the May-bush. Next came the clown with his clothes turned inside out, a great flaxen beard on his chin, and the Whitsuntide crown on his head. Two riders disguised as guards followed. The procession drew up before every farmyard; the two guards dismounted, shut the clown into the house, and claimed a contribution from the housewife to buy soap with which to wash the clown's beard. Custom allowed them to carry off any victuals which were not under lock and key. Last of all they came to the house in which the king's sweetheart lived. She was greeted as Whitsuntide Queen and received suitable presents—to wit, a many-coloured sash, a cloth, and an apron. The king got as a prize, a vest, a neckcloth, and so forth, and had the right of setting up the May-bush or Whitsuntide-tree before his master's yard, where it remained as an honourable token till the same day next year. Finally the procession took its way to the tavern, where the king and queen opened the dance. Sometimes the Whitsuntide King and Queen succeeded to office in a different way. A man of straw, as large as life and crowned with a red cap, was conveyed in a cart, between two men armed and disguised as guards, to a place where a mock court was waiting to try him. A great crowd followed the cart. After a formal trial the straw man was condemned to death and fastened to a stake on the execution ground. The young men with bandaged eyes tried to stab him with a spear. He who succeeded became king and his sweetheart queen. The straw man was known as the Goliath.[1] Near Grenoble, in France, a king and queen are chosen on the first of May and are set on a throne for all to see.[2] At Headington, near Oxford, children used to carry garlands from door to door on May Day. Each garland was borne by two girls, and they were followed by a lord and lady—a boy and girl linked together by a white handkerchief, of which each held an end, and dressed with ribbons, sashes, and flowers. At each door they sang a verse:—

King and Queen of May.

[1] P. Drechsler, *Sitte, Brauch und Volksglaube in Schlesien*, i. (Leipsic, 1903) pp. 125-129.

[2] D. Monnier, *Traditions populaires comparées* (Paris, 1854), p. 304; E. Cortet, *Fêtes religieuses*, p. 161; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 423.

"*Gentlemen and ladies,*
We wish you happy May;
We come to shew you a garland,
Because it is May-day."

On receiving money the lord put his arm about his lady's waist and kissed her.[1] At Fleuriers in Switzerland on the seventh of May 1843 a May-bridegroom (*Époux de Mai*) and his bride were escorted in a procession of over two hundred children, some of whom carried green branches of beech. A number of May Fools were entrusted with the delicate duty of going round with the hat. The proceeds of their tact and industry furnished a banquet in the evening, and the day ended with a children's ball.[2] In some Saxon villages at Whitsuntide a lad and a lass used to disguise themselves and hide in the bushes or high grass outside the village. Then the whole village went out with music "to seek the bridal pair." When they found the couple they all gathered round them, the music struck up, and the bridal pair was led merrily to the village. In the evening they danced. In some places the bridal pair was called the prince and the princess.[3]

Whitsuntide Bridegroom and Bride in Denmark.

In a parish of Denmark it used to be the custom at Whitsuntide to dress up a little girl as the Whitsun-bride (*pinse-bruden*) and a little boy as her groom. She was decked in all the finery of a grown-up bride, and wore a crown of the freshest flowers of spring on her head. Her groom was as gay as flowers, ribbons, and knots could make him. The other children adorned themselves as best they could with the yellow flowers of the trollius and caltha. Then they went in great state from farmhouse to farmhouse, two little girls walking at the head of the procession as bridesmaids, and six or eight outriders galloping ahead on hobby-horses to announce their coming. Contributions

[1] J. Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 233 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 424. We have seen (p. 62) that a custom of the same sort used to be observed at Bampton-in-the-Bush in Oxfordshire.

[2] E. Hoffmann-Krayer, "Fruchtbarkeitsriten im schweizerischen Volksbrauch," *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde*, xi. (1907) pp. 257 *sq.*

[3] E. Sommer, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Sachsen und Thüringen* (Halle, 1843), pp. 151 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 431 *sq.* The custom is now obsolete (E. Mogk, in R. Wuttke's *Sächsische Volkskunde*,[2] Dresden, 1901, p. 309).

of eggs, butter, loaves, cream, coffee, sugar, and tallow-candles were received and conveyed away in baskets. When they had made the round of the farms, some of the farmers' wives helped to arrange the wedding feast, and the children danced merrily in clogs on the stamped clay floor till the sun rose and the birds began to sing. All this is now a thing of the past. Only the old folks still remember the little Whitsun-bride and her mimic pomp.[1]

Mid-summer Bride-groom and Bride in Sweden and Norway.

We have seen that in Sweden the ceremonies associated elsewhere with May Day or Whitsuntide commonly take place at Midsummer.[2] Accordingly we find that in some parts of the Swedish province of Blekinge they still choose a Midsummer's Bride, to whom the "church coronet" is occasionally lent. The girl selects for herself a Bridegroom, and a collection is made for the pair, who for the time being are looked on as man and wife. The other youths also choose each his bride.[3] A similar ceremony seems to be still kept up in Norway, for a correspondent writes to me as follows in reference to the Danish custom of the Whitsun-bride: "It may interest you to know that on June 23, 1893, I witnessed at Ullensvang, Hardanger, Norway, a ceremony almost exactly the same as that described in your book. Wild flowers are scarce there, and the bride wore the usual metal crown, the attendants for the most part wearing the pretty Hardanger costume. The dancing took place in an unlighted barn, as the farmer was afraid of fire. There were plenty of boys at the dance, but so far as I can remember, none in the procession. The custom is clearly dying out, and the somewhat reluctant bridegroom was the subject of a good deal of chaff from his fellows."[4] In Sardinia the Midsummer couples are known as the Sweethearts of St. John, and their association with the growth of plants is clearly brought out by the pots of sprouting grain which form a principal part of the ceremony.[5]

In the neighbourhood of Briançon (Dauphiné) on May

[1] H. F. Feilberg, in *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895) pp. 194 *sq.*

[2] See above, p. 65.

[3] L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 257.

[4] Mr. W. C. Crofts, in a letter to me dated February 3, 1901, 9 Northwich Terrace, Cheltenham.

[5] For details see *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, Second Edition, pp. 202 *sq.*

Day the lads wrap up in green leaves a young fellow whose sweetheart has deserted him or married another. He lies down on the ground and feigns to be asleep. Then a girl who likes him, and would marry him, comes and wakes him, and raising him up offers him her arm and a flag. So they go to the alehouse, where the pair lead off the dancing. But they must marry within the year, or they are treated as old bachelor and old maid, and are debarred the company of the young folk. The lad is called the bridegroom of the month of May (*le fiancé du mois de May*). In the alehouse he puts off his garment of leaves, out of which, mixed with flowers, his partner in the dance makes a nosegay, and wears it at her breast next day, when he leads her again to the alehouse.[1] Like this is a Russian custom observed in the district of Nerechta on the Thursday before Whitsunday. The girls go out into a birch-wood, wind a girdle or band round a stately birch, twist its lower branches into a wreath, and kiss each other in pairs through the wreath. The girls who kiss through the wreath call each other gossips. Then one of the girls steps forward, and mimicking a drunken man, flings herself on the ground, rolls on the grass, and feigns to fall fast asleep. Another girl wakens the pretended sleeper and kisses him; then the whole bevy trips singing through the wood to twine garlands, which they throw into the water. In the fate of the garlands floating on the stream they read their own.[2] Here the part of the sleeper was probably at one time played by a lad. In these French and Russian customs we have a forsaken bridegroom, in the following a forsaken bride. On Shrove Tuesday the Slovenes of Oberkrain drag a straw puppet with joyous cries up and down the village; then they throw it into the water or burn it, and from the height of the flames they judge of the abundance of the next harvest. The noisy crew is followed by a female masker, who drags a great board by a string and gives out that she is a forsaken bride.[3]

Forsaken Bridegroom or Bride of May or Whitsuntide.

Viewed in the light of what has gone before, the awakening of the forsaken sleeper in these ceremonies prob-

[1] This custom was told to W. Mannhardt by a French prisoner in the war of 1870-71 (*Baumkultus*, p. 434).

[2] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 434 *sq.*

[3] *Ibid.* p. 435.

ably represents the revival of vegetation in spring. But it is not easy to assign their respective parts to the forsaken bridegroom and to the girl who wakes him from his slumber. Is the sleeper the leafless forest or the bare earth of winter? Is the girl who wakens him the fresh verdure or the genial sunshine of spring? It is hardly possible, on the evidence before us, to answer these questions. The Oraons of Bengal, it may be remembered, celebrate the marriage of earth in the springtime, when the sál-tree is in blossom.[1] But from this we can hardly argue that in the European ceremonies the sleeping bridegroom is "the dreaming earth" and the girl the spring blossoms.

St. Bride in Scotland and the Isle of Man.

In the Highlands of Scotland the revival of vegetation in spring used to be graphically represented on St. Bride's Day, the first of February. Thus in the Hebrides "the mistress and servants of each family take a sheaf of oats, and dress it up in women's apparel, put it in a large basket, and lay a wooden club by it, and this they call Briid's bed; and then the mistress and servants cry three times, 'Briid is come, Briid is welcome.' This they do just before going to bed, and when they rise in the morning they look among the ashes, expecting to see the impression of Briid's club there; which if they do, they reckon it a true presage of a good crop and prosperous year, and the contrary they take as an ill omen."[2] The same custom is described by another witness thus: "Upon the night before Candlemas it is usual to make a bed with corn and hay, over which some blankets are laid, in a part of the house, near the door. When it is ready, a person goes out and repeats three times, . . . 'Bridget, Bridget, come in; thy bed is ready.' One or more candles are left burning near it all night."[3] Similarly in the

[1] See above, pp. 76 *sq.*

[2] M. Martin, *Description of the Western Islands of Scotland* (London, 1673 [1703]), p. 119; *id.* in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 613; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 436. According to Martin, the ceremony took place on Candlemas Day, the second of February. But this seems to be a mistake. See J. G. Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, pp. 247 *sq.* The Rev. James Macdonald, of Reay in Caithness, was assured by old people that the sheaf used in making Briid's bed was the last sheaf cut at harvest (J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, p. 141). Later on we shall see that the last sheaf is often regarded as embodying the spirit of the corn, and special care is therefore taken of it.

[3] John Ramsay of Ochtertyre, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth*

Isle of Man "on the eve of the first of February, a festival was formerly kept, called, in the Manks language, *Laa'l Breeshey*, in honour of the Irish lady who went over to the Isle of Man to receive the veil from St. Maughold. The custom was to gather a bundle of green rushes, and standing with them in the hand on the threshold of the door, to invite the holy Saint Bridget to come and lodge with them that night. In the Manks language, the invitation ran thus:— '*Brede, Brede, tar gys my thie tar dyn thie ayms noght. Foshil jee yn dorrys da Brede, as lhig da Brede e heet staigh.*' In English: 'Bridget, Bridget, come to my house, come to my house to-night. Open the door for Bridget, and let Bridget come in.' After these words were repeated, the rushes were strewn on the floor by way of a carpet or bed for St. Bridget. A custom very similar to this was also observed in some of the Out-Isles of the ancient kingdom of Man."[1] In these Manx and Highland ceremonies it is obvious that St. Bride, or St. Bridget, is an old heathen goddess of fertility, disguised in a threadbare Christian cloak. Probably she is no other than the Celtic goddess Brigit, who will meet us again later on.[2]

May Bride or Whitsuntide Bride.

Often the marriage of the spirit of vegetation in spring, though not directly represented, is implied by naming the human representative of the spirit, "the Bride," and dressing her in wedding attire. Thus in some villages of Altmark at Whitsuntide, while the boys go about carrying a May-tree or leading a boy enveloped in leaves and flowers, the girls lead about the May Bride, a girl dressed as a bride with a great nosegay in her hair. They go from house to house, the May Bride singing a song in which she asks for a present, and tells the inmates of each house that if they give her something they will themselves have something the

Century, edited by Alex. Allardyce (Edinburgh, 1888), ii. 447. At Ballinasloe in County Galway it is customary to fasten a cross of twisted corn in the roof of the cottages on Candlemas Day. The cross is fastened by means of a knife stuck through a potato, and remains in its place for months, if not for a year. This custom (of which I was informed by Miss Nina Hill in a letter dated May 5, 1898) may be connected with the Highland one described in the text.

[1] J. Train, *Historical and Statistical Account of the Isle of Man* (Douglas, Isle of Man, 1845), ii. 116.

[2] See below, pp. 240 *sqq.* Brigit is the true original form of the name, which has been corrupted into Breed, Bride, and Bridget. See Douglas Hyde, *A Literary History of Ireland* (London, 1899), p. 53, note 2.

The Whitsuntide Bride and May Bride.

whole year through; but if they give her nothing they will themselves have nothing.[1] In some parts of Westphalia two girls lead a flower-crowned girl called the Whitsuntide Bride from door to door, singing a song in which they ask for eggs.[2] At Waggum in Brunswick, when service is over on Whitsunday, the village girls assemble, dressed in white or bright colours, decked with flowers, and wearing chaplets of spring flowers in their hair. One of them represents the May Bride, and carries a crown of flowers on a staff as a sign of her dignity. As usual the children go about from cottage to cottage singing and begging for eggs, sausages, cakes, or money. In other parts of Brunswick it is a boy clothed all in birch leaves who personates the May Bride.[3] In Bresse in the month of May a girl called *la Mariée* is tricked out with ribbons and nosegays and is led about by a gallant. She is preceded by a lad carrying a green May-tree, and appropriate verses are sung.[4]

[1] A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, pp. 318 *sqq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 437.

[2] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 438.

[3] R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde* (Brunswick, 1896), p. 248.

[4] D. Monnier, *Traditions populaires comparées*, pp. 283 *sq.*; E. Cortet, *Fêtes religieuses*, pp. 162 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 439 *sq.*

CHAPTER XI

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SEXES ON VEGETATION

FROM the preceding examination of the spring and summer festivals of Europe we may infer that our rude forefathers personified the powers of vegetation as male and female, and attempted, on the principle of homoeopathic or imitative magic, to quicken the growth of trees and plants by representing the marriage of the sylvan deities in the persons of a King and Queen of May, a Whitsun Bridegroom and Bride, and so forth. Such representations were accordingly no mere symbolic or allegorical dramas, pastoral plays designed to amuse or instruct a rustic audience. They were charms intended to make the woods to grow green, the fresh grass to sprout, the corn to shoot, and the flowers to blow. And it was natural to suppose that the more closely the mock marriage of the leaf-clad or flower-decked mummers aped the real marriage of the woodland sprites, the more effective would be the charm. Accordingly we may assume with a high degree of probability that the profligacy which notoriously attended these ceremonies[1] was at one time not an accidental excess but an essential part of the rites, and that in the opinion of those who performed them the marriage of trees and plants could not be fertile without the real union of the human sexes. At the present day it might perhaps be vain to look in civilised Europe for customs of this sort observed for the explicit purpose of promoting the growth of vegetation. But ruder races in other parts of the world have consciously employed the intercourse of the sexes as a means to ensure the fruitfulness

The marriage of the King and Queen of May intended to promote the growth of vegetation by homoeopathic magic.

[1] See above, p. 67, and below, p. 104.

of the earth; and some rites which are still, or were till lately, kept up in Europe can be reasonably explained only as stunted relics of a similar practice. The following facts will make this plain.

Intercourse of the sexes practised in order to make the crops grow.

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. In the month of December, when the alligator pears begin to ripen, the Indians of Peru used to hold a festival called *Acatay mita* in order to make the fruit grow mellow. The festival lasted five days and nights, and was preceded by a fast of five days during which they ate neither salt nor pepper and refrained from their wives. At the festival men and boys assembled stark naked in an open space among the orchards, and ran from there to a distant hill. Any woman whom they overtook on the way they violated.[2] 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.[3] 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

[1] Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique Centrale* (Paris, 1857-1859), ii. 565; H. H. Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 719 *sq.*, iii. 507; O. Stoll, *Die Ethnologie der Indianerstämme von Guatemala* (Leyden, 1889), p. 47.

[2] P. J. de Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la idolatria del Piru* (Lima, 1621), pp. 36 *sq.*

[3] G. A. Wilken, "Het animisme bij de volken van den Indischen Archipel," *De Indische Gids*, June 1884, p. 958.

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 coco-nut leaves, which may be seen hanging everywhere in their houses and in the sacred fig-tree. Under the tree lies a large flat stone, which serves as a sacrificial table. On it the heads of slain foes were and are still placed in some of the islands. 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 considerately 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, amid song and dance, by the real union of the sexes under the tree. The object of the festival, we are told, is to procure rain, plenty of food and drink, abundance of cattle and children and riches from Grandfather Sun. They pray that he may make every she-goat to cast two or three young, the people to multiply, the dead pigs to be replaced by living pigs, the empty rice-baskets to be filled, and so on. And to induce him to grant their requests they offer him pork and rice and liquor, and invite him to fall to. 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]

[1] J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluik-en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, pp. 337, 372-375, 410 *sq.*; G. W. W. C. Baron van Hoëvell, in *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land en Volkenkunde*, xxxiii. (1890) pp. 204 *sq.*, 206 *sq.*; *id.*, in *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, viii. (1895) p. 134; J. A. Jacobsen, *Reisen in die Inselwelt des Banda-Meeres* (Berlin, 1896), pp. 123, 125; J. H. de Vries, "Reis door eenige eilandgroepen der Residentie Amboina," *Tijdschrift van het koninkl. Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, xvii. (1900) pp. 594, 612, 615 *sq.* The name of the festival is variously given as *poréke*, *porèka*, *porka*, and *purka*. 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 Timor-eezen," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, dl. v. (1888), Afdeeling meer uitgebreide artikelen, p. 397.

Among the Tangkhuls of Manipur, before the rice is sown and when it is reaped, the boys and girls have a tug-of-war with a tough rope of twisted creeper. Great jars of beer are set ready, and the strictness of their ordinary morality is broken by a night of unbridled licence.[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.

Intercourse of the sexes practised in order to make trees bear fruit.

The same means which are thus adopted to stimulate the growth of the crops are naturally employed to ensure the fruitfulness of trees. The work known as *The Agriculture of the Nabataeans* 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 impregnate 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 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

[1] T. C. Hodson, "The Native Tribes of Manipur," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxi. (1901) p. 307.

[2] Maimonides, translated by D. Chwolsohn, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, ii. 475. It is not quite clear whether the direction, which Maimonides here attributes to the heathen of Harran, 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 D. Chwolsohn, *op. cit.* i. 697 *sqq.* The book is an early Mohammedan forgery; but the superstitions it describes may very well be genuine. See A. von Gutschmid, *Kleine Schriften*, ii. 568-713.

[3] G. W. W. C. Baron van Hoëvell, *Ambon en meer bepaaldelijk de Oeliasers* (Dordrecht, 1875), pp. 62 *sq.*

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 Islands a pregnant woman is taken into the gardens in order to impart the blessing of fertility to the plants.[3]

The Baganda of Central Africa believe so strongly in

[1] J. Kreemer, "Tiang-dèrès," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xxvi. (1882), pp. 128-132. This and the preceding custom have been already quoted by G. A. Wilken ("Het animisme bij de volken van den Indischen Archipel," *De Indische Gids*, June 1884, pp. 962 *sq.*; and *Handleiding voor de vorgelijkende Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* (Leyden, 1893), p. 550).

[2] Above, p. 26.

[3] W. Svoboda, "Die Bewohner des Nikobaren-Archipels," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, v. (1892) pp. 193 *sq.* For other examples of a fruitful woman making trees fruitful, see above, vol. i. pp. 140 *sq.*

In Uganda parents of twins are supposed to fertilise the plantains.

the intimate relation between the intercourse of the sexes and the fertility of the ground that among them a barren wife is generally sent away because she is supposed to prevent her husband's garden from bearing fruit. On the contrary, a couple who have given proof of extraordinary fertility by becoming the parents of twins are believed by the Baganda to be endowed with a corresponding power of increasing the fruitfulness of the plantain-trees, which furnish them with their staple food. Some little time after the birth of the twins a ceremony is performed, the object of which clearly is to transmit the reproductive virtue of the parents to the plantains. The mother lies down on her back in the thick grass near the house and places a flower of the plantain between her legs; then her husband comes and knocks the flower away with his genital member. Further, the parents go through the country, performing dances in the gardens of favoured friends, apparently for the purpose of causing the plantain-trees to bear fruit more abundantly. The same belief in the fertilising power of such parents probably explains why in Uganda the father of twins is inviolable and may go into anybody's garden and take the produce at will. To distinguish him from the common herd his hair is cut in a special way, and he wears little bells at his ankles which tinkle as he walks. His sacred character is further manifested by a rule which he must observe after the round of visits has been paid, and the dances in the gardens are over. He has to remain at home until the next time that the army goes forth to battle, and in the interval he may neither dress his hair nor cut his finger-nails. When war has been proclaimed, his whole body is shaved and his nails cut. The clipped hair and nails he ties up in a ball, which he takes with him to the war, along with the bark cloth which he wore at the dances. When he has killed a foe, he crams the ball into the dead man's mouth, ties the bark-cloth round his neck, and leaves them there on the battle-field.[1] Apparently the ceremony is intended to rid him of

[1] J. Roscoe, "Further Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 32-35, 38, 80. The Peruvian custom described above (vol. i. p. 266) may in like manner have been intended to promote the growth of beans through the fertilising influence of the parents of twins. On the contrary among the Bassari of Togo, in

the peculiar sanctity or state of taboo which he contracted by the birth of twins, and to facilitate his return to ordinary life. For, to the mind of the savage, as we shall see later on, sanctity has its dangers and inconveniences, and the sacred man may often be glad to divest himself of it by stripping himself of those separable parts of his person—the hair and nails—to which the holy contagion is apt to cling.

Relics of similar customs in Europe.

In various parts of Europe customs have prevailed both at spring and harvest which are clearly based on the same crude 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 shew 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."[1] In England it seems to have been customary for young couples to roll down a slope together on May Day; on Greenwich-hill the custom was practised at Easter and Whitsuntide,[2] as it was till lately practised near Dublin on Whitmonday.[3] 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;

Western Africa, women who have given birth to twins may not go near the farm at the seasons of sowing and reaping, lest they should destroy the crop. Only after the birth of another child does custom allow them to share again the labour of the fields. See H. Klose, *Togo unter deutscher Flagge* (Berlin, 1899), p. 510.

[1] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 480 *sq.*; *id.*, *Mythologische Forschungen* (Strasburg, 1884), p. 341.

[2] J. Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 181.

[3] My informant is Prof. W. Ridgeway. The place was a field at the head of the Dargle vale, near Enniskerry.

Relics of a custom of promoting the growth of the crops by the intercourse of the sexes.

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,[1] we shall probably do no injustice to our forefathers if we conclude that they once celebrated the return of spring with grosser 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.[2] In some parts of Germany at harvest the men and women, who have reaped the corn, roll together on the field.[3] 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.[4]

Continence practised in order to make the crops grow.

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

[1] See above, p. 67.

[2] 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 *dauwtroppen* or "dew-treading." As districts or places in which the practice is still kept up the writer names South Holland, Dordrecht, and Rotterdam.

[3] L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg* (Oldenburg, 1867), ii. p. 78, § 361 ; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 481 ; *id.*, *Mythologische Forschungen*, p. 340. Compare Th. Siebs, "Das Saterland," *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, iii. (1893) p. 277.

[4] A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xxxix. (1895) p. 138, *ibid.* xl. (1896) pp. 16 *sq.*

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 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 historians 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] The same rule is observed at Kalotaszeg in Hungary; the people think that if the custom were not observed the corn would be mildewed.[4] Similarly a Central Australian headman of the Kaitish tribe strictly abstains from marital relations with his wife all the time that he is performing magical ceremonies to make the grass grow; for he believes that a breach of this rule would prevent the grass seed from sprouting properly.[5] 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

[1] G. F. Oviedo y Valdes, *Histoire du Nicaragua* (published in Ternaux-Compans' *Voyages, relations et mémoires originaux*, etc.), Paris, 1840, pp. 228 *sq.*; A. de Herrera, *General History of the Vast Continent and Islands called America* (Stevens's translation, London, 1725-26), 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. Temesvary, *Volksbräuche und Aberglauben in der Geburtshilfe und der Pflege der Neugebornen in Ungarn* (Leipsic, 1900), p. 16.

[5] Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 293. See above, vol. i. p. 88.

Continence practised in order to make the crops grow.

spoilt.[1] 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."[2] In the Mekeo district of British New Guinea, when a taboo has been put on the coco-nuts and areca-nuts to promote their growth, some fourteen or fifteen men act as watchmen to enforce the taboo. Every evening they go round the village armed with clubs and wearing masks or so covered with leaves that nobody would know them. All the time they are in office they may not chew betel nor drink coco-nut water, lest the areca-nuts (which are eaten with betel) and the coco-nuts should fail. Moreover, they may not live with their wives; indeed, they may not even look at a woman, and if they pass one they must keep their eyes on the ground.[3] Among the Kabuis of Manipur, before the rice is sown and when it is reaped, the strictest chastity has to be observed, especially by the religious head of the village, who, besides always taking the omens on behalf of the villagers, is the first to sow and the first to reap.[4] Some of the tribes of Assam believe that so long as the crops remain ungarnered, the slightest incontinence might ruin all.[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 they were forbidden to pollute themselves with women or with the contact of the dead;

[1] R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 134.

[2] J. Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea* (London, 1887), p. 181. The word which I have taken to mean "holy or taboo" is *helaga*. Mr. Chalmers does not translate or explain it. Dr. C. G. Seligmann says that the word "conveys something of the idea of 'sacred,' 'set apart,' 'charged with virtue'" (*The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, p. 101, note 2).

[3] A. C. Haddon, *Head-hunters* (London, 1901), pp. 270-272, 275 *sq.*

[4] T. C. Hodson, "The Native Tribes of Manipur," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxi. (1901) p. 307.

[5] T. C. Hodson, "The *genna* amongst the Tribes of Assam," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxvi. (1906) p. 94.

the observance of these rules of ceremonial purity was believed to increase the supply of incense.[1] Apparently the incense itself was deemed holy, for on being gathered it was deposited in the sanctuary of the Sun, where the merchants inspected and purchased it.[2] 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.[3]

Illicit love supposed to blight the fruits of the earth.

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.[4] 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 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

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xii. 54; Solinus, xxxiii. 6 *sq.*, p. 166, ed. Th. Mommsen (first edition).

[2] Theophrastus, *Histor. plant.* ix. 4. 5 *sq.*

[3] Palladius, *De re rustica*, i. 6. 14; *Geoponica*, ix. 3. 5 *sq.*

[4] With what follows compare *Psyche's Task*, chapter iv. pp. 31 *sqq.*, where I have adduced the same evidence to some extent in the same words.

Illicit love supposed to blight the fruits of the earth.

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. Epidemics and other calamities that affect the whole people are almost always traced by them to incest, by which is to be understood any marriage that conflicts with their customs.[2]

Dyak belief that lewdness may cause bad weather and spoil the crops.

Similar views are held by various tribes of Borneo. Thus 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 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

[1] F. Mason, "On dwellings, works of art, laws, etc., of the Karens," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, xxxvii. (1868) Part ii. pp. 147 *sq.* Compare A. R. M'Mahon, *The Karens of the Golden Chersonese* (London, 1876), pp. 334 *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), pp. 514 *sq.*; M. Joustra, "Het leven, de zeden, en gewoonten der Bataks," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xlvi. (1902) p. 411.

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 carcase, 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]

Kayan belief that adultery or fornication spoils the harvest.

The Bahaus or Kayans, a tribe in the interior of Borneo, believe that adultery is punished by the spirits, who visit the whole tribe with failure of the crops and other misfortunes. Hence in order to avert these calamities from the innocent members of the tribe, the two culprits, with all their possessions, are put in quarantine on a gravel bank in the middle of the river; then in order thoroughly to disinfect them, pigs and fowls are killed, and with the blood priestesses smear the property of the guilty pair. Finally the two are set on a raft, with sixteen eggs, and allowed to drift down the stream. They may save themselves by swimming ashore, but this is perhaps a mitigation of an older sentence of death by drowning. Young people shower long grass-stalks, which stand for spears, at the shamefaced and dripping couple.[2] The Blu-u Kayans of the same region similarly imagine that an intrigue between an unmarried pair is punished by the spirits with failure of the harvest, of the fishing, and of the hunt. Hence the delinquents

[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 Rev. 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 and British North Borneo*, i. 180. According to Archdeacon Perham, "Every district traversed by an adulterer is believed to be accursed of the gods until the proper sacrifice has been offered." In respectable Dyak families, when an unmarried girl is found with child and the father is unknown, they sacrifice a pig and sprinkle the doors with its blood to wash away the sin (Spenser St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*,[2] i. 64). In Ceram a person convicted of unchastity has to expiate his guilt by smearing every house in the village with the blood of a pig and a fowl. See A. Bastian, *Indonesien*, i. (Berlin, 1884) p. 144.

[2] A. W. Nieuwenhuis, *Quer durch Borneo* (Leyden, 1904-1907), i. 367.

have to appease the wrath of the spirits by sacrificing a pig and some rice.[1]

Incest and seduction supposed to be a cause of bad weather and failure of crops in Celebes.

Among the Macassars and Bugineese of Southern Celebes incest is a capital crime. "In the Bugineese language this misdeed is called *sâpa-tâna*, which, literally translated, signifies that the *ground* (*tâna*) which has been polluted with the blood of such a person must above all be *shunned* (*sâpa*). When we remember how afraid of evil spirits a native is in passing even a spot that has been stained with innocent blood, we can easily conceive what passes in his mind at the thought of the blood of one who has been guilty of such a crime. When the rivers dry up and the supply of fish runs short, when the harvest and the produce of the gardens miscarry, when edible fruits fail, and especially when sickness is rife among the cattle and horses, as well as when civil strife breaks out and the country suffers from any other widespread calamity, the native generally thinks that earth and air have been sullied with the blood of persons who have committed incest. The blood of such people should naturally not be shed. Hence the punishment usually inflicted on them is that of drowning. They are tied up in a sack and thrown into the sea. Yet they get with them on their journey to eternity the necessary provisions, consisting of a bag of rice, salt, dried fish, coco-nuts and so on, not forgetting three quids of betel."[2] Among the Tomori of Central Celebes a person guilty of incest is throttled; no drop of his blood may fall on the ground, for if it did, the rice would never grow again. The union of uncle and niece is regarded by these people as incest, but it can be expiated by an offering. A garment of the man and one of the woman are laid on a copper vessel; the blood of a sacrificed animal, either a goat or a fowl, is allowed to drip on the garments, and then the vessel with its contents is suffered

[1] A. W. Nieuwenhuis, *Quer durch Borneo*, ii. 99; *id.*, *In Centraal Borneo* (Leyden, 1900), ii. 278.

[2] B. F. Matthes, "Over de *âdâ's* of gewoonten der Makassaren en Boeg-ineezen," *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Afdeeling Letterkunde, Derde Reeks, II. (Amsterdam, 1885) p. 182. The similar Roman penalty for parricide (*Digest*, xlviii. 9. 9; Valerius Maximus, i. 1. 13; J. E. B. Mayor's note on Juvenal *Sat.* viii. 214) may have been adopted for a similar reason. But in that case the scourging which preceded the drowning can hardly have been originally a part of the punishment.

to float down the river.[1] Among the Tolalaki, another tribe of Central Celebes, persons who have defiled themselves with incest are shut up in a basket and drowned. No drop of their blood may be spilt on the ground, for that would hinder the earth from ever bearing fruit again.[2] When it rains in torrents, the Galelareese of Halmahera 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 charged with such offences are brought to Ternate; it is said that formerly they were often drowned on the way or, on being haled thither, were condemned to be thrown into the volcano.[3]

Breaches of sexual morality supposed to prevent rain and so to blight the fruits of the earth in Africa.

In some parts of Africa, also, it is believed that breaches of sexual morality disturb the course of nature, particularly by blighting the fruits of the earth. Thus the negroes of Loango suppose that the intercourse of a man with an immature girl is punished by God with drought and consequent famine, until the culprits atone for their sin by dancing naked before the king and an assembly of the people, who throw hot gravel and bits of glass at the pair. For example, in the year 1898, it was discovered that a long drought was caused by the misconduct of three girls, who were with child before they had passed through what is called the paint-house, that is, before they had been painted red and secluded for a time in token that they had attained to the age of puberty. The people were very angry and

[1] A. C. Kruijt, "Eenige ethnografische aanteekeningen omtrent de Toboengkoe en de Tomori," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xliv. (1900) p. 235.

[2] A. C. Kruijt, "Van Posso naar Mori," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xliv. (1900) p. 162.

[3] 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 explained 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).

Breaches of sexual morality supposed to prevent rain, and so to blight the fruits of the earth in Africa.

tried to punish or even kill the girls.[1] Amongst the Bavili of Loango, it is believed that if a man breaks the marriage law by marrying a woman of his mother's clan, God will in like manner punish the crime by withholding the rains in their due season.[2] Similar notions of the blighting influence of sexual crime appear to be entertained by the Nandi of British East Africa, for amongst them a girl who has been gotten with child by a warrior, may never look inside of a granary for fear of spoiling the corn.[3] Among the Basutos likewise "while the corn is exposed to view, all defiled persons are carefully kept from it. If the aid of a man in this state is necessary for carrying home the harvest, he remains at some distance while the sacks are filled, and only approaches to place them upon the draught oxen. He withdraws as soon as the load is deposited at the dwelling, and under no pretext can he assist in pouring the corn into the baskets in which it is preserved."[4] The nature of the defilement which thus disqualifies a man for handling the corn is not mentioned, but probably it would include unchastity. We may conjecture that it was for a similar reason that the Basoga of Central Africa used to punish severely the seduction of a virgin. "If a man was convicted of such a crime, and the woman's guilt was discovered, he and she were sent at night time to Kaluba's village, where they were tied to a tree. This tall spreading incense-tree was thought to be under the protection of a spirit called *Kakua Kambuzi*. Next morning the erring couple were discovered by people in the surrounding plantations, who released them. They were then allowed to settle near the tree of the protecting spirit." This practice of tying the culprits to a sacred tree may have been thought to atone for their crime and so to ensure the fertility of the earth which they had imperilled. The notion perhaps was to deliver the criminals into the power of the offended tree-spirit; if they were found alive in the morning, it was a sign that he had pardoned them. "Curiously enough, the Basoga

[1] O. Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique* (Amsterdam, 1686), p. 326; R. E. Dennett, *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind* (London, 1906), pp. 53, 67-71.

[2] R. E. Dennett, *op. cit.* p. 52.

[3] A. C. Hollis, *The Nandi, their Language and Folk-lore* (Oxford, 1909), p. 76.

[4] Rev. E. Casalis, *The Basutos* (London, 1861), p. 252.

also held in great abhorrence anything like incest amongst domestic animals—that is to say, they greatly disapproved of intercourse between a bull calf and its mother-cow, or between a bull and a cow that were known to be brother and sister. If this occurred, the bull and cow were sent by night to a fetish tree and tied there. The next morning the chief of the district appropriated the animals and turned them to his own use."[1] Following out the same train of thought, the Toradjas of Central Celebes ingeniously employ the incest of animals as a rain-charm. For they believe that the anger of the gods at incest or bestiality manifests itself in the form of violent storms, heavy rain, or long drought. Accordingly they think that it is always in their power to enrage the gods by committing incest and so to procure rain when it is needed. However, they abstain from perpetrating the crime among themselves, first, because it would be necessary to put the culprits to death, and second, because the storms thus raised would be so furious that they would do more harm than good. But they fancy that the incest, real or simulated, of animals is a lighter offence, which by discomposing, without exasperating, the higher powers will disturb the balance of nature just enough to improve the weather. A ceremony of this sort was witnessed by a missionary. Rain was wanted, and the headman of the village had to see that it fell. He took his measures accordingly. Attended by a crowd he carried a cock and a little sow to the river. Here the animals were killed, laid side by side in an intimate embrace, and wrapped tightly up in a piece of cotton. Then the headman engaged in prayer. "O gods above and gods below," said he, "if you have pity on us, and will that we eat food this year, give rain. If you will not give rain, well we have here buried a cock and a sow in an intimate embrace." By which he meant to say, "Be angry at this abomination which we have committed, and manifest your anger in storms."[2]

Incest of animals employed as a rain-charm in Africa.

These examples suffice to prove that among many savage races breaches of the marriage laws are thought to blast the

[1] Sir Harry Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate* (London, 1902), ii. 718 *sq.*

[2] A. C. Kruijt, "Regen lokken en regen verdrijven bij de Toradja's van Midden Celebes," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xliv. (1901) p. 4.

Similar notions of the blighting effect of sexual crime may be detected among the civilised races of antiquity, for example, among the Jews.

fruits of the earth through excessive rain or excessive drought. Similar notions of the disastrous effects of sexual crimes may be detected among some of the civilised races of antiquity, who seem not to have limited the supposed sterilising influence of such offences to the fruits of the earth, but to have extended it also to women and cattle.[1] Thus among the Hebrews we read how Job, passionately protesting his innocence before God, declares that he is no adulterer; "For that," says he, "were an heinous crime; yea, it were an iniquity to be punished by the judges: for it is a fire that consumeth unto Destruction, and would root out all mine increase."[2] In this passage the Hebrew word translated "increase" commonly means "the produce of the earth;"[3] and if we give the word its usual sense here, then Job affirms adultery to be destructive of the fruits of the ground, which is just what many savages still believe. This interpretation of his words is strongly confirmed by two narratives in Genesis, where we read how Sarah, Abraham's wife, was taken into his harem by a king who did not know her to be the wife of the patriarch, and how thereafter God visited the king and his household with great plagues, especially by closing up the wombs of the king's wives and his maid-servants, so that they bore no children. It was not till the king had discovered and confessed his sin, and Abraham had prayed God to forgive him, that the king's women again became fruitful.[4] These narratives seem to imply that adultery, even when it is committed in ignorance, is a cause of plague and especially of sterility among women. Again, in Leviticus, after a long list of sexual crimes, we read:[5] "Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out from before you: and the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the

[1] Probably a similar extension of the superstition to animal life occurs also among savages, though the authorities I have consulted do not mention it. A trace, however, of such an extension appears in a belief entertained by the Khasis of Assam, that if a man defies tribal custom by marrying a woman of his own clan, the women of the tribe will die in childbed and the people will suffer from other calamities. See Colonel P. R. T. Gurdon, *The Khasis* (London, 1907), pp. 94, 123.

[2] Job xxxi. 11 *sq.* (Revised Version).

[3] תְּבוּאָה. See *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, by F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and Ch. A. Briggs (Oxford, 1906), p. 100.

[4] Genesis xii. 10-20, xx. 1-18.

[5] Leviticus xviii. 24 *sq.*

iniquity thereof upon it, and the land vomiteth out her inhabitants." This passage appears to imply that the land itself was somehow physically tainted by sexual transgressions so that it could no longer support the inhabitants.

Blighting effect attributed to incest by the ancient Greeks and Irish.

It would seem that the ancient Greeks and Romans entertained similar notions as to the wasting effect of incest. According to Sophocles the land of Thebes suffered from blight, from pestilence, and from the sterility both of women and of cattle under the reign of Oedipus, who had unwittingly slain his father and wedded his mother, and the Delphic oracle declared that the only way to restore the prosperity of the country was to banish the sinner from it, as if his mere presence withered plants, animals, and women.[1] No doubt the poet and his hearers set down these public calamities in great part to the guilt of parricide, which rested on Oedipus; but they can hardly have failed to lay much also of the evil at the door of his incest with his mother. Again, in ancient Italy, under the Emperor Claudius, a Roman noble was accused of incest with his sister. He committed suicide, his sister was banished, and the emperor ordered that certain ancient ceremonies traditionally derived from the laws of King Servius Tullius should be performed, and that expiation should be made by the pontiffs at the sacred grove of Diana,[2] probably the famous Arician grove, which has furnished the starting-point of our enquiry. As Diana appears to have been a goddess of fertility in general and of the fruitfulness of women in particular, the atonement made at her sanctuary for incest may perhaps be accepted as evidence that the Romans, like other peoples, attributed to sexual immorality a tendency to blast the fruits both of the earth and of the womb. This inference is strengthened by a precept laid down by grave Roman writers that bakers, cooks, and butlers ought to be strictly chaste and continent, because it was most important that food and cups should be handled either by persons under the age of puberty, or at all events by persons who indulged very sparingly in sexual intercourse; for which reason if a baker, a cook, or a butler broke this rule of continence it was his bounden duty to wash in a river or other running water

[1] Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 22 *sqq.*, 95 *sqq.* [2] Tacitus, *Annals*, xii. 4 and 8.

before he applied himself again to his professional duties. But for all such duties the services of a boy or of a virgin were preferred.[1] The Celts of ancient Ireland similarly believed that incest blighted the fruits of the earth. According to legend Munster was afflicted in the third century of our era with a failure of the crops and other misfortunes. When the nobles enquired into the matter, they were told that these calamities were the result of an incest which the king had committed with his sister. In order to put an end to the evil they demanded of the king his two sons, the fruit of his unholy union, that they might consume them with fire and cast their ashes into the running stream. However, one of the sons, Corc by name, is said to have been purged of his inherited taint by being sent out of Ireland to an island, where a Druid purified him every morning, by putting him on the back of a white cow with red ears, and pouring water over him, till one day the cow jumped into the sea and became a rock, no doubt taking the sin of Corc's father away with her. After that the boy was brought back to Erin.[2]

Belief in the blighting effect of incest may have helped to institute the forbidden degrees.

Thus the belief that incest or sexual crime in general has power to blast the fruits of the earth is widespread and probably goes back to a very remote antiquity; it may long have preceded the rise of agriculture. We may conjecture that in its origin the belief was magical rather than religious; in other words, that the blight was at first supposed to be a direct consequence of the act itself rather than a punishment inflicted on the criminal by gods or spirits. Conceived as an unnatural union of the sexes, incest might be thought to subvert the regular processes of reproduction, and so to prevent the earth from yielding its fruits and to hinder animals and men from propagating their kinds. At a later time the anger of spiritual beings would naturally be invoked in order to give a religious sanction to the old taboo. If this

[1] Columella, *De re rustica*, xii. 2 *sq.*, appealing to the authority of M. Ambivius, Maenas Licinius, and C. Matius. See on this subject below, p. 205.

[2] G. Keating, *History of Ireland*, translated by J. O'Mahony (New York, 1857), pp. 337 *sq.*; P. W. Joyce, *Social History of Ancient Ireland* (London, 1903), ii. 512 *sq.*; J. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom* (London and Edinburgh, 1888), pp. 308 *sq.*

was so, it is possible that something of the horror which incest has excited among most, though by no means all, races of men, sprang from this ancient superstition and has been transmitted as an instinct in many nations long after the imaginary ground of it had been forgotten. Certainly a course of conduct which was supposed to endanger or destroy the general supply of food and therefore to strike a blow at the very life of the whole people, could not but present itself to the savage imagination as a crime of the blackest dye, fraught with the most fatal consequences to the public weal. How far such a superstition may in the beginning have operated to prevent the union of near kin, in other words, to institute the system of prohibited degrees which still prevails among the great majority of mankind, both savage and civilised, is a question which deserves to be considered by the historians of marriage.[1]

Explanation of the seeming contradiction in the foregoing customs.

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 leap 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 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.

Indirect benefit of some of these superstitious customs.

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

[1] Compare *Totemism and Exogamy*, iv. 153 *sqq.*

The ascetic view of chastity not understood by the savage.

and improbable. They may think that 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 Milton[1] 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 prove. They shew 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 short, the savage is willing to restrain his sexual propensity for the sake of food. Another object for the sake of which he consents to exercise the same self-restraint is victory in war. 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

[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 utmost 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; and if I found in the story afterward any of them by word or deed breaking that oath, I judged it the same fault of the poet as that which is attributed to Homer, to have written indecent things of the gods. Only this my mind gave me, that every free and gentle spirit, without that oath, ought to be born a knight, nor needed to expect the gilt spur or the laying of a sword upon his shoulder to stir him up both by his counsel and his arm, to secure and protect the weakness of any attempted chastity" (Milton, "Apology for Smectymnuus," *Complete Collection of the Historical, Political, and Miscellaneous Works of John Milton* (London, 1738), vol. i. p. 111).

easily overcome their enemies.[1] 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 renounce 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.

[1] For examples of chastity observed at home by the friends of the absent warriors, see above, vol. i. pp. 128, 131, 133. Examples of chastity observed by the warriors themselves in the field will be given in the second part of this work. Meanwhile see *The Golden Bough*,[2] i. 328, note **2**.

CHAPTER XII

THE SACRED MARRIAGE

§ 1. *Diana as a Goddess of Fertility*

Dramatic marriages of gods and goddesses as a charm to promote vegetation.

IN the last chapter we saw that according to a widespread belief, which is not without a foundation in fact, plants reproduce their kinds through the sexual union of male and female elements, and that on the principle of homoeopathic or imitative magic this reproduction can be stimulated by the real or mock marriage of men and women, who masquerade for the time being as spirits of vegetation. Such magical dramas have played a great part in the popular festivals of Europe, and based as they are on a very crude conception of natural law, it is clear that they must have been handed down from a remote antiquity. We shall hardly, therefore, err in assuming that they date from a time when the forefathers of the civilised nations of Europe were still barbarians, herding their cattle and cultivating patches of corn in the clearings of the vast forests, which then covered the greater part of the continent, from the Mediterranean to the Arctic Ocean. But if these old spells and enchantments for the growth of leaves and blossoms, of grass and flowers and fruit, have lingered down to our own time in the shape of pastoral plays and popular merry-makings, is it not reasonable to suppose that they survived in less attenuated forms some two thousand years ago among the civilised peoples of antiquity? Or, to put it otherwise, is it not likely that in certain festivals of the ancients we may be able to detect the equivalents of our May Day, Whitsuntide, and Midsummer celebrations, with this difference,

that in those days the ceremonies had not yet dwindled into mere shows and pageants, but were still religious or magical rites, in which the actors consciously supported the high parts of gods and goddesses? Now in the first chapter of this book we found reason to believe that the priest who bore the title of King of the Wood at Nemi had for his mate the goddess of the grove, Diana herself. May not he and she, as King and Queen of the Wood, have been serious counterparts of the merry mummers who play the King and Queen of May, the Whitsuntide Bridegroom and Bride in modern Europe? and may not their union have been yearly celebrated in a *theogamy* or divine marriage? Such dramatic weddings of gods and goddesses, as we shall see presently, were carried out as solemn religious rites in many parts of the ancient world; hence there is no intrinsic improbability in the supposition that the sacred grove at Nemi may have been the scene of an annual ceremony of this sort. Direct evidence that it was so there is none, but analogy pleads in favour of the view, as I shall now endeavour to shew.

Diana a goddess of the woodlands.

Diana was essentially a goddess of the woodlands, as Ceres was a goddess of the corn and Bacchus a god of the vine.[1] Her sanctuaries were commonly in groves, indeed every grove was sacred to her,[2] and she is often associated with the forest god Silvanus in dedications.[3] We must not forget that to the ancients the sanctity of a holy grove was very real and might not be violated with impunity. For example, in Attica there was a sanctuary of Erithasean Apollo, and it was enacted by law that any person caught in the act of cutting trees in it, or carrying away timber, firewood, or fallen leaves, should be punished with fifty stripes, if he was a slave, or with a fine of fifty drachms, if he was a freeman. The culprit was denounced by the priest to the king, that is, to the sacred official or minister of state who bore the

Sanctity of holy groves in antiquity.

[1] Speaking of the one God who reveals himself in many forms and under many names, Augustine says: "*Ipse in aethere sit Jupiter, ipse in aëre Juno, ipse in mare Neptunus . . . Liber in vineis, Ceres in frumentis, Diana in silvis*," etc. (*De civitate Dei*, iv. 11).

[2] Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 332: "*Nam, ut diximus, et omnis quercus Jovi est consecrata, et omnis lucus Dianae.*"

[3] W. H. Roscher, *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, i. 1005; H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, Nos. 3266-3268.

Sanctity of holy groves in antiquity.

royal title.[1] Similarly it was the duty of the sacred men at Andania, in Messenia, to scourge slaves and fine freemen who cut wood in the grove of the Great Goddesses.[2] In Crete it was forbidden, under pain of curses and fines, to fell timber, sow corn, and herd or fold flocks within the precinct of Dictaean Zeus.[3] In Italy like customs prevailed. Near Spoletium there was a sacred grove from which nothing might be taken, and in which no wood might be cut except just so much as was needed for the annual sacrifice. Any person who knowingly violated the sanctity of the grove had to expiate his offence by sacrificing an ox to Jupiter, and to pay besides a fine of three hundred pence.[4] In his treatise on farming Cato directs that before thinning a grove the Roman husbandman should offer a pig as an expiatory sacrifice to the god or goddess of the place, and should entreat his or her favour for himself, his children, and his household.[5] The *Fratres Arvales* or Brethren of the Tilled Fields were a Roman college of twelve priests, who performed public religious rites for the purpose of making the crops to grow, and they wore wreaths of ears of corn as a badge of their office.[6] Their sacrifices were offered in the grove of the goddess Dia, situated five miles down the Tiber from Rome. So hallowed was this grove, which is known to have included laurels and holly-oaks, that expiatory sacrifices of sows and lambs had to be offered when a rotten bough fell to the ground, or when an old tree was laid low by a storm or dragged down by a load of snow on its branches. And still more elaborate expiation had to be made with the slaughter of sows, sheep, and bulls when any of the sacred trees were struck by lightning and it was necessary to dig them up by the roots, split them, burn them, and plant others in their room.[7] At the annual

[1] Dittenberger, *Sylloge inscriptionum Graecarum*,[2] No. 568; Ch. Michel, *Recueil d'inscriptions grecques*, No. 686; E. S. Roberts, *Introduction to Greek Epigraphy*, ii., No. 139.

[2] Dittenberger, *op. cit.* No. 653, lines 79 *sqq.*; Ch. Michel, *op. cit.*, No. 694. As to the grove see Pausanias, iv. 33. 4 *sq.*

[3] Dittenberger, *op. cit.*, No. 929, lines 80 *sqq.* Compare *id.* No. 569; Pausanias, ii. 28. 7.

[4] H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, No. 4911.

[5] Cato, *De agri cultura*, 139.

[6] Varro, *De lingua Latina*, v. 85, ed. C. O. Müller; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xviii. 6.

[7] G. Henzen, *Acta Fratrum Arvalium* (Berlin, 1874), pp. 136-143; H.

festival of the Parilia, which was intended to ensure the welfare of the flocks and herds, Roman shepherds prayed to be forgiven if they had entered a hallowed grove, or sat down under a sacred tree, or lopped a holy bough in order to feed a sick sheep on the leaves.[1]

Sense of the divinity of woods shared by polite Roman writers.

Nor was this sense of the indwelling divinity of the woods confined to the simple rustics who, tending their flocks in the chequered shade, felt the presence of spirits in the solemn stillness of the forest, heard their voices in the sough of the wind among the branches, and saw their handiwork in the fresh green of spring and the fading gold of autumn. The feeling was shared by the most cultivated minds in the greatest age of Roman civilisation. Pliny says that "the woods were formerly the temples of the deities, and even now simple country folk dedicate a tall tree to a god with the ritual of the olden time; and we adore sacred groves and the very silence that reigns in them not less devoutly than images that gleam with gold and ivory."[2] Similarly Seneca writes: "If you come upon a grove of old trees that have shot up above the common height and shut out the sight of the sky by the gloom of their matted boughs, you feel there is a spirit in the place, so lofty is the wood, so lone the spot, so wondrous the thick unbroken shade."[3]

The breaking of the Golden Bough a rite of solemn significance, not a mere piece of bravado.

Thus the ancients, like many other people in various parts of the world, were deeply impressed with the sanctity of holy groves, and regarded even the cutting of a bough in them as a sacrilege which called for expiation. If therefore a candidate for the priesthood of Diana at Nemi had to break a branch of a certain tree in the sacred grove before he could fight the King of the Wood, we may be sure that the act was a rite of solemn significance, and that to treat it as a mere piece of bravado, a challenge to the priest to come on and defend his domain, would be to commit the commonest of all errors in dealing with the past, that, namely, of inter-

Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, ii., Nos. 5042, 5043, 5045, 5046, 5048.

[1] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 749-755.

[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xii 3.

[3] Seneca, *Epist.* iv. 12. 3. See further L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 108 *sqq.* For evidence of the poets he refers to Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 332 *sqq.*; Tibullus, i. 1. 11; Ovid, *Amores*, iii. 1. 1 *sq.*

preting the customs of other races and other generations by reference to modern European standards. In order to understand an alien religion the first essential is to divest ourselves, as well as we can, of our own familiar prepossessions, and to place ourselves at the point of view of those whose faith and practice we are studying. To do this at all is difficult; to do it completely is perhaps impossible; yet the attempt must be made if the enquiry is to progress instead of returning on itself in a vicious circle.

Diana not a mere goddess of trees, but, like Artemis, a personification of the teeming life of nature, both animal and vegetable.

A deity of the woods is naturally the patron of the beasts in the woods, both game and cattle.

But whatever her origin may have been, Diana was not always a mere goddess of trees. Like her Greek sister Artemis, she appears to have developed into a personification of the teeming life of nature, both animal and vegetable. As mistress of the greenwood she would naturally be thought to own the beasts, whether wild or tame, that ranged through it, lurking for their prey in its gloomy depths, munching the fresh leaves and shoots among the boughs, or cropping the herbage in the open glades and dells. Thus she might come to be the patron goddess both of hunters and herdsmen,[1] just as Silvanus was the god not only of woods, but of cattle.[2] Similarly in Finland the wild beasts of the forest were regarded as the herds of the woodland God Tapio and of his stately and beautiful wife. No man might slay one of these animals without the gracious permission of their divine owners. Hence the hunter prayed to the sylvan deities, and vowed rich offerings to them if they would drive the game across his path. And cattle also seem to have enjoyed the protection of those spirits of the woods, both when they were in their stalls and while they strayed in the forest.[3] So in the belief of Russian peasants the spirit Leschiy rules both the wood and all the creatures in it. The bear is to him what the dog is to man; and the migrations of the squirrels, the field-mice, and other denizens of the woods are carried out in obedience to his behests. Success in the chase depends on his favour, and to assure himself of the spirit's help the

[1] On Diana as a huntress see H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, Nos. 3257-3266. For indications of her care for domestic cattle see Livy, i. 45; Plutarch, *Quaestiones Romanae*, 4; and above, vol. i. p. 7.

[2] Virgil, *Aen.*, viii. 600 *sq.*, with Servius's note.

[3] M. A. Castren, *Vorlesungen über die finnische Mythologie* (St. Petersburg, 1853), pp. 92-99.

huntsman lays an offering, generally of bread and salt, on the trunk of a tree in the forest. In White Russia every herdsman must present a cow to Leschiy in summer, and in the Government of Archangel some herdsmen have won his favour so far that he even feeds and tends their herds for them.[1] Similarly the forest-god of the Lapps ruled over all the beasts of the forest; they were viewed as his herds, and good or bad luck in hunting depended on his will.[2] So, too, the Samagitians deemed the birds and beasts of the woods sacred, doubtless because they were under the protection of the sylvan god.[3] Before the Gayos of Sumatra hunt deer, wild goats, or wild pigs with hounds in the woods, they deem it necessary to obtain the leave of the unseen Lord of the forest. This is done according to a prescribed form by a man who has special skill in woodcraft. He lays down a quid of betel before a stake which is cut in a particular way to represent the Lord of the Wood, and having done so he prays to the spirit to signify his consent or refusal.[4]

The crowning of hunting dogs on Diana's day was probably a purificatory ceremony to cleanse them from the guilt of having killed game, the creatures of the goddess.

We have seen that at Diana's festival it was customary to crown hunting dogs, to leave wild beasts in peace, and to perform a purificatory ceremony for the benefit of young people.[5] Some light is thrown on the meaning of these customs by a passage in Arrian's treatise on hunting. He tells us that a good hound is a boon conferred by one of the gods upon the huntsman, who ought to testify his gratitude by sacrificing to the Huntress Artemis. Further, Arrian goes on to say: "It is right that after a successful chase a man should sacrifice and dedicate the first-fruits of his bag to the goddess, in order to purify both the hounds and the hunters, in accordance with old custom and usage." He tells us that the Celts were wont to form a treasury for the goddess Artemis, into which they paid a fine of two obols for every hare they killed, a drachm for every fox, and four drachms for every roe. Once a year, on the birthday of Artemis,

[1] P. v. Stenin, "Über den Geisterglauben in Russland," *Globus*, lvii. (1890), p. 283.

[2] J. Abercromby, *The Pre- and Proto-historic Finns* (London, 1898), i. 161.

[3] Mathias Michov, "De Sarmatia Asiana atque Europea," in *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum*, p. 457.

[4] C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Het Gajōland en zijne Bewoners* (Batavia, 1903), pp. 351, 359.

[5] See vol. i. p. 14.

The crowning of hunting dogs a form of purification.

they opened the treasury, and with the accumulated fines purchased a sacrificial victim, it might be a sheep, a goat, or a calf. Having slain the animal and offered her share to the Huntress Artemis, they feasted, both men and dogs; and they crowned the dogs on that day "in order to signify," says Arrian, "that the festival was for their benefit."[1] The Celts to whom Arrian, a native of Bithynia, here refers were probably the Galatians of Asia Minor; but doubtless the custom he describes was imported by these barbarians, along with their native tongue[2] and the worship of the oak,[3] from their old home in Central or Northern Europe. The Celtic divinity whom Arrian identifies with Artemis may well have been really akin both to her and to the Italian Diana. We know from other sources that the Celts revered a woodland goddess of this type; thus Arduinna, goddess of the forest of the Ardennes, was represented, like Artemis and Diana, with a bow and quiver.[4] In any case the custom described by Arrian is good evidence of a belief that the wild beasts belong to the goddess of the wilds, who must be compensated for their destruction; and, taken with what he says of the need of purifying the hounds after a successful chase, the Celtic practice of crowning them at the annual festival of Artemis may have been meant to purge them of the stain they had contracted by killing the creatures of the goddess. The same explanation would naturally apply to the same custom observed by the Italians at the festival of Diana.

Cattle crowned to protect them from witchcraft.

But why, it may be asked, should crowns or garlands cleanse dogs from the taint of bloodshed? An answer to this question is indicated by the reason which the South Slavonian peasant assigns for crowning the horns of his cows with wreaths of flowers on St. George's Day, the twenty-third of April. He does it in order to guard the cattle against witchcraft; cows that have no crowns are regarded

[1] Arrian, *Cynegeticus*, 33 *sq.*

[2] The Galatians retained their Celtic speech as late as the fourth century of our era, for Jerome says that in his day their language hardly differed from that of the Treveri, a Celtic tribe on the Moselle, whose name survives in *Treves*. See Jerome, *Commentar. in Epist. ad Galatas*, lib. ii. praef. (Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. xxvi. col. 357).

[3] See below, p. 363.

[4] H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, No. 4633; Ihm, in Pauly-Wissowa's *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, ii. 616, *s.v.* "Arduinna"; compare *id.* i. 104, *s.v.* "Abnoba."

as given over to the witches. In the evening the chaplets are fastened to the door of the cattle-stall, and remain there throughout the year. A herdsman who fails to crown his beasts is scolded and sometimes beaten by his master.[1] The German and French custom of crowning cattle on Midsummer Day[2] probably springs from the same motive. For on Midsummer Eve, just as on Walpurgis Night, witches are very busy holding their nocturnal assemblies and trying to steal the milk and butter from the cows. To guard against them some people at this season lay besoms crosswise before the doors of the stalls. Others make fast the doors and stop up the chinks, lest the witches should creep through them on their return from the revels. In Swabia all the church bells used to be kept ringing from nine at night till break of day on Midsummer morning to drive away the infernal rout from honest folk's houses. South Slavonian peasants are up betimes that morning, gather the dew from the grass, and wash the cows with it; that saves their milk from the hellish charms of the witches.[3]

Similarly the crowning of hunting dogs may

Now when we observe that garlands of flowers, like hawthorn and other green boughs,[4] avail to ward off the unseen powers of mischief, we may conjecture that the practice of crowning dogs at the festival of a huntress

[1] F. S. Krauss, *Volksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven* (Münster i. W., 1890), p. 125.

[2] J. H. Schmitz, *Sitten und Bräuche, Lieder, Sprüchwörter und Räthsel des Eifler Volkes* (Treves, 1856-1858), i. 42 *sq.*; A. Kuhn und W. Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, pp. 393 *sq.*; Ch. Beauquier, *Les Mois en Franche-Comté* (Paris, 1900), p. 90. In Sweden and parts of Germany cattle are crowned on the day in spring when they are first driven out to pasture, which is sometimes at Whitsuntide (A. Kuhn, *Die Herabkunft des Feuers*,[2] pp. 163 *sq.*; L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, pp. 246 *sq.*, A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, pp. 315 *sq.*, 327 *sq.*; P. Drechsler, *Sitte, Brauch und Volksglaube in Schlesien*, i. 123). Amongst the Romans cattle were crowned at the Ambarvalia (Tibullus, ii. 1. 7 *sq.*: Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 663); and asses and mill-stones were crowned at Vesta's festival on the ninth of June (Propertius, v. 1. 21; Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 311 *sq.*). The original motive of all these customs may have been the one indicated in the text. Perhaps the same explanation might be found to apply to certain other cases of wearing wreaths or crowns.

[3] Tettau und Temme, *Die Volkssagen Ostpreussens, Litthauens und Westpreussens*, pp. 263 *sq.*; A. Kuhn und W. Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 392; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Das festliche Jahr*, p. 181; *id.*, *Calendrier belge*, i. 423 *sq.*; A. Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, i. p. 278, § 437; R. Eisel, *Sagenbuch des Voigtlandes*, p. 210; F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Ehsten*, p. 363; F. S. Krauss, *Volksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 128.

[4] See above, pp. 52-55.

have been meant to protect them against the angry spirits of the beasts they had killed.

goddess was intended to preserve the hounds from the angry and dangerous spirits of the wild beasts which they had killed in the course of the year. Fantastical as this explanation may sound to us, it is perfectly in accordance with the ideas of the savage, who, as we shall see later on, resorts to a multitude of curious expedients for disarming the wrath of the animals whose life he has been obliged to take. Thus conceived, the custom in question might still be termed a purification; but its original purpose, like that of many other purificatory rites, would be not so much to cleanse moral guilt, as to raise a physical barrier against the assaults of malignant and mischievous spirits.[1]

Conceived as the moon. Diana was also a goddess of crops and of childbirth.

But Diana was not merely a patroness of wild beasts, a mistress of woods and hills, of lonely glades and sounding rivers; conceived as the moon, and especially, it would seem, as the yellow harvest moon, she filled the farmer's grange with goodly fruits, and heard the prayers of women in travail.[2] In her sacred grove at Nemi, as we have seen, she was especially worshipped as a goddess of childbirth, who bestowed offspring on men and women.[3] Thus Diana, like the Greek Artemis, with whom she was constantly identified, may be described as a goddess of nature in general and of fertility in particular.[4] We need not wonder, therefore, that in her sanctuary on the Aventine she was represented by an image copied from the many-breasted idol of the Ephesian Artemis, with all its crowded emblems of exuberant fecundity.[5] Hence too we can understand why an ancient

[1] In Nepaul a festival known as Khichâ Pûjâ is held, at which worship is offered to dogs, and garlands of flowers are placed round the necks of every dog in the country (W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India*, Westminster, 1896, ii. 221). But as the custom is apparently not limited to hunting dogs, the explanation suggested above would hardly apply.

[2] Catullus, xxxiv. 9-20; Cicero, *De natura deorum*, ii. 26. 68 *sq.*; Varro, *De lingua Latina*, v. 68 *sq.* It deserves to be remembered that Diana's day was the thirteenth of August, which in general would be the time when the splendid harvest moon was at the full. Indian women in Peru used to pray to the moon to grant them an easy delivery. See P. J. de Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la idolatria del Piru* (Lima, 1621), p. 32.

[3] See above, vol. i. p. 12.

[4] In like manner the Greeks conceived of the goddess Earth as the mother not only of corn but of cattle and of human offspring. See the Homeric *Hymn to Earth* (No. 30).

[5] Strabo, iv. 1. 4 and 5, pp. 179 *sq.* The image on the Aventine was copied from that at Marseilles, which in turn was copied from the one at Ephesus.

Roman law, attributed to King Tullius Hostilius, prescribed that, when incest had been committed, an expiatory sacrifice should be offered by the pontiffs in the grove of Diana.[1] For we know that the crime of incest is commonly supposed to cause a dearth;[2] hence it would be meet that atonement for the offence should be made to the goddess of fertility.

As a goddess of fertility Diana had herself to be fertile, and for that purpose needed a male partner.

Now on the principle that the goddess of fertility must herself be fertile, it behoved Diana to have a male partner. Her mate, if the testimony of Servius may be trusted, was that Virbius who had his representative, or perhaps rather his embodiment, in the King of the Wood at Nemi.[3] The aim of their union would be to promote the fruitfulness of the earth, of animals, and of mankind; and it might naturally be thought that this object would be more surely attained if the sacred nuptials were celebrated every year, the parts of the divine bride and bridegroom being played either by their images or by living persons. No ancient writer mentions that this was done in the grove at Nemi; but our knowledge of the Arician ritual is so scanty that the want of information on this head can hardly count as a fatal objection to the theory. That theory, in the absence of direct evidence, must necessarily be based on the analogy of similar customs practised elsewhere. Some modern examples of such customs, more or less degenerate, were described in the last chapter. Here we shall consider their ancient counterparts.

§ 2. *The Marriage of the Gods*

Marriages of the gods in Babylonia and Assyria.

At Babylon the imposing sanctuary of Bel rose like a pyramid above the city in a series of eight towers or stories, planted one on the top of the other. On the highest tower, reached by an ascent which wound about all the rest, there stood a spacious temple, and in the temple a great bed, magnificently draped and cushioned, with a golden table beside it. In the temple no image was to be seen, and no human being passed the night there, save a single woman, whom, according to the Chaldean priests, the god chose

[1] Tacitus, *Annals*, xii. 8. The Romans feared that the marriage of Claudius with his paternal cousin Agrippina, which they regarded as incest, might result in some public calamity (Tacitus, *Annals*, xii. 5).

[2] See above, pp. 107 *sqq.*

[3] See above, vol. i. pp. 20 *sq.*, 40.

Marriages of the gods in Babylonia and Assyria.

from among all the women of Babylon. They said that the deity himself came into the temple at night and slept in the great bed; and the woman, as a consort of the god, might have no intercourse with mortal man.[1] As Bel at Babylon was identified with Marduk, the chief god of the city,[2] the woman who thus shared his bed was doubtless one of the "wives of Marduk" mentioned in the code of Hammurabi.[3] At Calah, which was for some time the capital of Assyria before it was displaced by Nineveh,[4] the marriage of the god Nabu appears to have been annually celebrated on the third of the month Iyyar or Airu, which corresponded to May. For on that day his bed was consecrated in the city, and the god entered his bedchamber, to return to his place on the following day. The ceremonies attending the consecration of the couch are minutely described in a liturgical text. After the appropriate offerings had been presented, the officiating priestess purified the feet of the divine image with a sprig of reed and a vessel of oil, approached the bed thrice, kissed the feet of the image, then retired and sat down. After that she burned cedar wood dipped in wine, set before the image the heart of a sheep wrapped in a cloth, and offered libations. Aromatic woods were consecrated and burnt, more libations and offerings were made, tables were spread for various divinities, and the ceremony ended with a prayer for the King. The god also went in procession to a grove, riding in a chariot beside his charioteer.[5]

Marriage of the god Ammon to the Queen of Egypt.

At Thebes in Egypt a woman slept in the temple of Ammon as the consort of the god, and, like the human wife of Bel at Babylon, she was said to have no commerce with

[1] Herodotus, i. 181 *sq.*

[2] M. Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, pp. 117 *sq.*; L. W. King, *Babylonian Mythology and Religion*, pp. 18, 21.

[3] H. Winckler, *Die Gesetze Hammurabis* [2] (Leipsic, 1903), p. 31 § 182. The expression is translated "votary of Marduk" by Mr C. H. W. Johns (*Babylonian and Assyrian Laws, Contracts, and Letters*, Edinburgh, 1904, p. 60). "The votary of Marduk is the god's wife vowed to perpetual chastity, and is therefore distinct from the devotees of Ištar. Like the ordinary courtesan, these formed a separate class and enjoyed special privileges" (S. A. Cook, *The Laws of Moses and the Code of Hammurabi*, London, 1903, p. 148).

[4] M. Jastrow, *op. cit.* pp. 42 *sq.*

[5] C. Johnston in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, xviii. First Half (1897), pp. 153-155; R. F. Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Literature* (New York, 1901), p. 249. For the equivalence of Iyyar or Airu with May see *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, *s.v.* "Months," iii. coll. 3193 *sq.*

a man.[1] In Egyptian texts she is often mentioned as "the divine consort," and usually she was no less a personage than the Queen of Egypt herself. For, according to the Egyptians, their monarchs were actually begotten by the god Ammon, who assumed for the time being the form of the reigning king, and in that disguise had intercourse with the queen. The divine procreation is carved and painted in great detail on the walls of two of the oldest temples in Egypt, those of Deir el Bahari and Luxor; and the inscriptions attached to the paintings leave no doubt as to the meaning of the scenes. The pictures at Deir el Bahari, which represent the begetting and birth of Queen Hatshopsitou, are the more ancient, and have been reproduced with but little change at Luxor, where they represent the begetting and birth of King Amenophis III. The nativity is depicted in about fifteen scenes, which may be grouped in three acts: first, the carnal union of the god with the queen; second, the birth; and third, the recognition of the infant by the gods. The marriage of Ammon with the queen is announced by a prologue in heaven; Ammon summons his assessors, the gods of Heliopolis, reveals to them the future birth of a new Pharaoh, a royal princess, and requests them to make ready the fluid of life and of strength, of which they are masters. Then the god is seen approaching the queen's bedchamber; in front of him marches Thoth, with a roll of papyrus in his hand, who, to prevent mistakes, recites the official names of the queen, the spouse of the reigning king (Thothmes I. at Deir el Bahari, Thothmes IV. at Luxor), the fairest of women. Then Thoth withdraws behind Ammon, lifting his arm behind the god in order to renew his vital fluid at this critical moment. Next, according to the inscription, the mystery of incarnation takes place. Ammon lays aside his godhead and becomes flesh in the likeness of the king, the human spouse of the queen. The consummation of the divine union follows immediately. On a bed of state the god and the queen appear seated opposite each other, with their legs crossed. The queen receives from her husband the symbols of life and strength, while two goddesses, Neit and Selkit, the patronesses of matrimony, support the

[1] Herodotus, i. 182.

Marriage of the god Ammon to the Queen of Egypt.

feet of the couple and guard them from harm. The text which encloses the scene sets forth clearly the reality of this mystic union of the human with the divine. "Thus saith Ammon-Ra, king of the gods, lord of Karnak, he who rules over Thebes, when he took the form of this male, the King of Upper and Nether Egypt, Thothmes I. (or Thothmes IV.), giver of life. He found the queen then when she lay in the glory of her palace. She awoke at the fragrance of the god, and marvelled at it. Straightway his Majesty went towards her, took possession of her, placed his heart in her, and shewed himself to her in his divine form. And upon his coming she was uplifted at the sight of his beauty, the love of the god ran through all her limbs, and the smell of the god and his breath were full of the perfumes of Pounit. And thus saith the royal spouse, the royal mother Ahmasi (or Moutemouaa), in presence of the majesty of this glorious god, Ammon, lord of Karnak, lord of Thebes, 'Twice great are thy souls! It is noble to behold thy countenance when thou joinest thyself to my majesty in all grace! Thy dew impregnates all my limbs.' Then, when the majesty of the god had accomplished all his desire with her, Ammon, the lord of the two lands, said to her: '*She who is joined to Ammon, the first of the nobles*, verily, such shall be the name of the daughter who shall open thy womb, since such is the course of the words that came forth from thy mouth. She shall reign in righteousness in all the earth, for my soul is hers, my heart is hers, my will is hers, my crown is hers, truly, that she may rule over the two lands, that she may guide the souls of all living.'"

Nativity of the divine Egyptian kings represented on the monuments.

After the begetting of the divine child—for we must remember that the kings and queens of Egypt were regarded as divinities in their lifetime—another series of scenes represents the fashioning of its body and its birth. The god Khnoumou, who in the beginning of time moulded gods and men on his potter's wheel, is seen seated at his wheel modelling the future king or queen and their doubles—those spiritual duplicates or external souls which were believed to hover invisible about both men and gods all through life. In front of Khnoumou kneels Hiqit, the frog-headed goddess, "the great magician"; she is holding out to the newly-

created figures the symbol of life, the *crux ansata* ☥, in order that they may breathe and live. Another scene represents the birth. At Deir el Bahari the queen has already been delivered, and is presenting her daughter to several goddesses, who have acted the part of midwives. At Luxor the double of the royal infant is born first; the goddesses who serve as nurses have him in their arms, and the midwives are preparing to receive the real child. Behind the queen are the goddesses who watch over childbirth, led by Isis and Nephthys; and all around the spirits of the East, the West, the North, and the South are presenting the symbol of life or uttering acclamations. In a corner the grotesque god Bes and the female hippopotamus Api keep off all evil influence and every malignant spirit.

These representations probably copied from the life.

We shall probably not err in assuming, with some eminent authorities, that the ceremonies of the nativity of the Pharaohs, thus emblazoned on the walls of Egyptian temples, were copied from the life; in other words, that the carved and painted scenes represent a real drama, which was acted by masked men and women whenever a queen of Egypt was brought to bed. "Here, as everywhere else in Egypt," says Professor Maspero, "sculptor and painter did nothing but faithfully imitate reality. Theory required that the assimilation of the kings to the gods should be complete, so that every act of the royal life was, as it were, a tracing of the corresponding act of the divine life. From the moment that the king was Ammon, he wore the costume and badges of Ammon—the tall hat with the long plumes, the cross of life, the greyhound-headed sceptre—and thus arrayed he presented himself in the queen's bedchamber to consummate the marriage. The assistants also assumed the costume and appearance of the divinities whom they incarnated; the men put on masks of jackals, hawks, and crocodiles, while the women donned masks of cows or frogs, according as they played the parts of Anubis, Khnoumou, Sovkou, Hathor, or Hiqit; and I am disposed to believe that the doubles of the new-born child were represented by as many puppets as were required by the ceremonies. Some of the rites were complicated, and must have tired excessively the mother and child who underwent them; but

they are nothing to those that have been observed in similar circumstances in other lands. In general, we are bound to hold that all the pictures traced on the walls of the temples, in which the person of the king is concerned, correspond to a real action in which disguised personages played the part of gods."[1]

Human wives of Ammon in the decline of Egypt.

In the decline of Egypt from the eleventh century onward, the wives of Ammon at Thebes were called on to play a conspicuous part in the government of the country. The strong grip of the Pharaohs was relaxed and under their feeble successors the empire crumbled away into a number of petty independent states. In this dissolution of the central authority the crafty high priests of Ammon at Thebes contrived to usurp regal powers and to reign far and wide in the name of the deity, veiling their rescripts under the guise of oracles of the god, who, with the help of a little jugglery, complacently signified his assent to their wishes by nodding his head or even by speech. But curiously enough under this pretended theocracy the nominal ruler was not the priest himself, but his wife, the earthly consort of Ammon. Thus Thebes became for a time a ghostly principality governed ostensibly by a dynasty of female popes. Their office was hereditary, passing by rights from mother to daughter. But probably the entail was often broken by the policy or ambition of the men who stood behind the scenes and worked the religious puppet-show by hidden wires to the awe and astonishment of the gaping vulgar. Certainly we know that on one occasion King Psammetichus First foisted his own daughter into the Holy See by dedicating her to Ammon under a hypocritical profession of gratitude for favours bestowed on him by the deity. And the female pope had to submit to the dictation with the

[1] G. Maspero, in *Journal des Savants*, année 1899, pp. 401-406; A. Moret, *Du caractère religieux de la royauté Pharaonique* (Paris, 1902), pp. 48-73; A. Wiedemann, *Herodots zweites Buch* (Leipsic, 1890), pp. 268 *sq.* M. Moret shares the view of Prof. Maspero that the pictures, or rather painted reliefs, were copied from masquerades in which the king and other men and women figured as gods and goddesses. As to the Egyptian doctrine of the spiritual double or external soul (*Ka*), see A. Wiedemann, *The Ancient Egyptian Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul* (London, 1895), pp. 10 *sqq.*

best grace she could assume, protesting her affection for the adopted daughter who had ousted her own daughter from the throne.[1]

Human concubines of Ammon in Roman times.

At a later period, when Egypt lay under the heel of Rome, the character of "the divine consort" of Ammon at Thebes had greatly changed. For at the beginning of our era the custom was to appoint a young and beautiful girl, the scion of one of the noblest houses, to serve Ammon as his concubine. The Greeks called these maidens Pallades, apparently after their own virgin goddess Pallas; but the conduct of the girls was by no means maidenly, for they led the loosest of lives till puberty. Then they were mourned over and given in marriage.[2] Their graves were shown near Thebes.[3] The reason why their services ended at puberty may have been that as concubines of the god they might not bear children to mortal fathers; hence it was deemed prudent to terminate their relations with the divinity before they were of an age to become mothers. It was an Egyptian doctrine that a mortal woman could conceive by a god, but that a goddess could not conceive by a mortal man.[4] The certainty of maternity and the uncertainty of paternity suggest an obvious and probably sufficient ground for this theological distinction.

Apollo and his prophetess at Patara.

Apollo was said to spend the winter months at Patara in Lycia and the summer months in the island of Delos, and accordingly he gave oracles for one half of the year in the one place, and for the other half in the other.[5] So long as he tarried at Patara, his prophetess was shut up with him in the temple every night.[6]

The Essenes of Artemis at Ephesus.

At Ephesus there was a college of sacred men called Essenes or King Bees who held office for a year, during which they had to observe strict chastity and other rules of ceremonial purity.[7] How many of them

[1] A. Erman, *Die ägyptische Religion* (Berlin, 1905, pp. 75, 165 *sq.*; compare *id.*, *Ägypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, pp. 400 *sq.* As to the ghostly rule of the high priests of Ammon at Thebes see further G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique, les premières mêlées des peuples* (Paris, 1897), pp. 559 *sqq.*; J. H. Breasted, *A History of the Ancient Egyptians* (London, 1908), pp. 350 *sq.*, 357 *sq.*; C. P. Tiele, *Geschichte der Religion im Altertum*, i. (Gotha, 1896) p. 66.

[2] Strabo, xvii. 1. 46, p. 816.

[3] Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca*, i. 47.

[4] Plutarch, *Quaestiones conviviales*, viii. 1. 6 *sq.*; *id.*, *Numa*, 4.

[5] Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* iv. 143. Compare Horace, *Odes*, iii. 62 *sqq.*

[6] Herodotus, i. 182.

[7] Pausanias, viii. 13. 1. As to the

The Essenes of Artemis at Ephesus.

there were at a time we do not know, but there must have been several, for in Ephesian inscriptions they are regularly referred to in the plural. They cannot have been bound to lifelong celibacy, for in one of the inscriptions an Essen mentions his wife.[1] Possibly they were deemed the annual husbands of Artemis, the great many-breasted goddess of fertility at Ephesus, whose association with the bee is vouched for by the figures of bees which appear commonly both on her statues and on the coins of Ephesus.[2] If this conjecture is right, the King Bees and their bee-goddess Artemis at Ephesus would be closely parallel to the King of the Wood and his woodland-goddess Diana at Nemi, as these latter are interpreted by me. The rule of chastity imposed on the King Bees during their year of office would be easily explicable on this hypothesis. As the temporary husbands of the goddess they would be expected for the time being to have no intercourse with mortal women, just as the human wives of Bel and Ammon were supposed to have no commerce with mortal men.

Marriage of Dionysus to the Queen at Athens.

At Athens the god of the vine, Dionysus, was annually married to the Queen, and it appears that the consummation of the divine union, as well as the espousals, was enacted at the ceremony; but whether the part of the god was played by a man or an image we do not know. Attic law required that the Queen should be a burgess and should never have known any man but her husband. She had to offer certain

meaning of the title Essen see Callimachus, *Hymn to Zeus*, 16; Hesychius, Suidas, and *Etymologicum Magnum*, *s.v.* Ἐσσήν. The ancients mistook the Queen bee for a male, and hence spoke of King bees. See Aristotle, *Histor. animal.* v. 21 *sq.*, ix. 40, pp. 553, 623 *sqq.*, ed. Bekker; *id.*, *De animalium generatione*, iii. 10, p. 760, ed. Bekker; Aelian, *Nat. animal.* i. 10, v. 10 *sq.*; Virgil, *Georg.* iv. 21, 68; W. Walter-Tornow, *De apium mellisque apud veteres significatione* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 30 *sqq.* The Essenes or King Bees are not to be confounded with the nominal kings (*Basileis*) of Ephesus, who probably held office for life. See above, vol. i. p. 47.

[1] J. T. Wood, *Discoveries at Ephesus*, *Inscriptions from the Temple of Diana*, pp. 2, 14; *Inscriptions from the Augusteum*, p. 4; *Inscriptions from the City and Suburbs*, p. 38.

[2] See B. V. Head, *Coins of Ephesus* (London, 1880), and above, vol. i. pp. 37 *sq.* Modern writers sometimes assert that the priestesses of the Ephesian Artemis were called Bees. Certain other Greek priestesses were undoubtedly called Bees, and it seems not improbable that the priestesses of the Ephesian Artemis bore the same title and represented the goddess in her character of a bee. But no ancient writer, so far as I know, affirms it. See my note on Pausanias, viii. 13. 1.

secret sacrifices on behalf of the state, and was permitted to see what no foreign woman might ever behold, and to enter where no other Athenian might set foot. She was assisted in the discharge of her solemn functions by fourteen sacred women, one for each of the altars of Dionysus. The old Dionysiac festival was held on the twelfth day of the month Anthesterion, corresponding roughly to our February, at the ancient sanctuary of Dionysus in the Marshes, which was never opened throughout the year save on that one day. At this festival the Queen exacted an oath of purity and chastity from the fourteen sacred women at the altar. Possibly her marriage was celebrated on the same day, though of that we have no positive evidence, and we learn from Aristotle that the ceremony took place, not at the sanctuary in the marshes, but in the old official residence of the King, known as the Cattle-stall, which stood near the Prytaneum or Town-hall on the north-eastern slope of the Acropolis.[1] But whatever the date of the wedding, its object can hardly have been any other than that of ensuring the fertility of the vines and other fruit-trees, of which Dionysus was the god. Thus both in form and in meaning the ceremony would answer to the nuptials of the King and Queen of May. Again, the story, dear to poets

[1] Demosthenes, *Contra Neaer.* 73-78, pp. 1369-1371; Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*, iii. 5; Hesychius, *s.vv.* Διονύσου γάμος and γεραραί; *Etymologicum Magnum*, *s.v.* γεραῖραι; Pollux, viii. 108; K. F. Hermann, *Gottesdienstliche Alterthümer*,[2] § 32. 15, § 58. 11 *sqq.*; Aug. Mommsen, *Feste der Stadt Athen im Altertum* (Leipsic, 1898), pp. 391 *sqq.* From Demosthenes, *l.c.*, compared with Thucydides, ii. 15, it seems certain that the oath was administered by the Queen at the time and place mentioned in the text. Formerly it was assumed that her marriage to Dionysus was celebrated at the same place and time; but the assumption as to the place was disproved by the discovery of Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens*, and with it the assumption as to the time falls to the ground. As the Greek months were commonly named after the festivals which were held in them, it is tempting to conjecture that the sacred marriage took place in the Marriage Month (*Gamelion*), answering to our January. But more probably that month was named after the sacred marriage of Zeus and Hera, which was celebrated at Athens and elsewhere. See below, p. 143. This is the view of W. H. Roscher (*Juno und Hera*, p. 73, n. 217) and Aug. Mommsen (*Feste der Stadt Athen*, p. 383). From the name Cattle-stall, applied to the scene of the marriage, Miss J. E. Harrison ingeniously conjectured that in the rite Dionysus may have been represented as a bull (*Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, p. 537). The conjecture was anticipated by Prof. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Aristoteles und Athen* (Berlin, 1893), ii. 42. Dionysus was often conceived by the Greeks in the form of a bull.

Dionysus and Ariadne.

and artists, of the forsaken and sleeping Ariadne, waked and wedded by Dionysus, resembles so closely the little drama acted by French peasants of the Alps on May Day,[1] that, considering the character of Dionysus as a god of vegetation, we can hardly help regarding it as the reflection of a spring ceremony like the French one. In point of fact the marriage of Dionysus and Ariadne was believed by Preller to have been acted every spring in Crete.[2] His evidence, indeed, is inconclusive, but the view itself is probable. If I am right in comparing the two, the chief difference between the French and the Greek ceremonies appears to have been that in the former the sleeper was a forsaken bridegroom, in the latter a forsaken bride; and the group of stars in the sky, in which fancy saw Ariadne's wedding crown,[3] may have been only a translation to heaven of the garland worn by the Greek girl who played the Queen of May.

Marriage of Zeus with Demeter at Eleusis.

If at Athens, and probably elsewhere, the vine-god was married to a queen in order that the vines might be loaded with clusters of grapes, there is reason to think that a marriage of a different kind, intended to make the fields wave with yellow corn, was annually celebrated not many miles off, beyond the low hills that bound the plain of Athens on the west. In the great mysteries solemnised at Eleusis in the month of September the union of the sky-god Zeus with the corn-goddess Demeter appears to have been represented by the union of the hierophant with the priestess of Demeter, who acted the parts of god and goddess. But their intercourse was only dramatic or symbolical, for the hierophant had temporarily deprived himself of his virility by an application of hemlock. The torches having been extinguished, the pair descended into a murky place, while the throng of worshippers awaited in anxious suspense the result of the mystic congress, on which they believed their own salvation to depend. After a time the hierophant reappeared, and in a blaze of light silently exhibited to the assembly a reaped ear of corn, the fruit of the divine marriage. Then in a loud voice he proclaimed,

[1] Above, pp. 92 *sq.*

[2] L. Preller, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze* (Berlin, 1864), pp. 293-296; compare his *Griechische Mythologie*,[4] ed. C. Robert, i. 681 *sqq.*

[3] Hyginus, *Astronomica*, i. 5.

"Queen Brimo has brought forth a sacred boy Brimos," by which he meant, "The Mighty One has brought forth the Mighty." The corn-mother in fact had given birth to her child, the corn, and her travail-pangs were enacted in the sacred drama.[1] This revelation of the reaped corn appears to have been the crowning act of the mysteries. Thus through the glamour shed round these rites by the poetry and philosophy of later ages there still looms, like a distant landscape through a sunlit haze, a simple rustic festival

[1] Tertullian, *Ad nationes*, ii. 7, "*Cur rapitur sacerdos Cereris si non tale Ceres passa est?*" Asterius Amasenus, *Encomium in sanctos martyres*, in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, xl. col. 324, Οὐκ ἐκεῖ (at Eleusis) τὸ καταβάσιον τὸ σκοτεινόν, καὶ αἱ σεμναὶ τοῦ ἱεροφάντου πρὸς τὴν ἱερείαν συντυχίαι, μόνου πρὸς μόνην; Οὐχ αἱ λαμπάδες σβέννυνται, καὶ ὁ πολὺς καὶ ἀναρίθμητος δῆμος τὴν σωτηρίαν αὐτῶν εἶναι νομίζουσι τὰ ἐν τῷ σκότῳ παρὰ τῶν δύο πραττόμενα; Psellus, *Quaenam sunt Graecorum opiniones de daemonibus*, p. 39, ed. J. F. Boissonade, τὰ δέ γε μυστήρια τούτων, οἷα αὐτίκα τὰ Ἐλευσίνια, τὸν μυθικὸν ὑποκρίνεται Δία μιγνύμενον τῇ Δηοῖ, ἤγουν τῇ Δήμητρι . . . Ὑποκρίνεται δὲ καὶ τὰς τῆς Δηοῦς ὠδῖνας. Ἱκετηρίαι γοῦν αὐτίκα Δηοῦς καὶ χολῆς πόσις καὶ καρδιαλγίαι. Ἐφ' οἷς καί τι τραγοσκελὲς μίμημα παθαινόμενον περὶ τοῖς διδύμοις, ὅτιπερ ὁ Ζεύς, δίκας ἀποτινυὺς τῆς βίας τῇ Δήμητρι, τράγου βρχεις ἀποτεμών, τῷ κόλπῳ ταύτης κατέθετο ὥσπερ δὴ καὶ ἑαυτοῦ (compare Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, v. 20-23); Schol. on Plato, *Gorgias*, p. 497 C, Ἐτελεῖτο δὲ ταῦτα (the Eleusinian mysteries) καὶ Δηοῖ καὶ Κορῇ, ὅτι ταύτην μὲν Πλούτων ἁρπάξειε, Δηοῖ δὲ μιγεὶη Ζεύς; Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, v. 8, pp. 162, 164, ed. Duncker and Schneidewin, Λέγουσι δὲ αὐτόν (God), φησί, Φρύγες καὶ χλοερὸν στάχυν τεθερισμένον, καὶ μετὰ τοὺς Φρύγας Ἀθηναῖοι μυοῦντες Ἐλευσίνια, καὶ ἐπιδεικνύντες τοῖς ἐποπτεύουσι τὸ μέγα καὶ θαυμαστὸν καὶ τελειότατον ἐποπτικὸν ἐκεῖ μυστήριον ἐν σιωπῇ, τεθερισμένον στάχυν. Ὁ δὲ στάχυς οὗτός ἐστι καὶ παρὰ Ἀθηναίοις ὁ παρὰ τοῦ ἀχαρακτηρίστου φωστὴρ τέλειος μέγας, καθάπερ αὐτὸς ὁ ἱεροφάντης, οὐκ ἀποκεκομμένος μέν, ὡς ὁ Ἄττις, εὐνουχισμένος δὲ διὰ κωνείου καὶ πᾶσαν παρῃτημένος τὴν σαρκικὴν γένεσιν, νυκτὸς ἐν Ἐλευσῖνι ὑπὸ πολλῷ πυρὶ τελῶν τὰ μεγάλα καὶ ἄρρητα μυστήρια βοᾷ καὶ κέκραγε λέγων· ἱερὸν ἔτεκε πότνια κοῦρον Βριμὼ Βριμόν, τουτέστιν ἰσχυρὰ ἰσχυρόν. In combining and interpreting this fragmentary evidence I have followed Mr. P. Foucart (*Recherches sur l'origine et la nature des mystères d'Eleusis*, Paris, 1895, pp. 48 *sq.*; *id.*, *Les Grands Mystères d'Eleusis*, Paris, 1900, p. 69), and Miss J. E. Harrison (*Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, pp. 549 *sqq.*). In antiquity it was believed that an ointment or plaster of hemlock applied to the genital organs prevented them from discharging their function. See Dioscorides, *De materia medica*, iv. 79; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxv. 154. Dr. J. B. Bradbury, Downing Professor of Medicine in the University of Cambridge, informs me that this belief is correct. "Although *conium* [hemlock] is not used as an anaphrodisiac at the present day, there can be no doubt that it has this effect. When rubbed into the skin it depresses sensory nerve-endings and is absorbed. After absorption it depresses all sympathetic nerve-cells. Both these effects would tend to diminish organic reflexes such as aphrodisia" (Dr. W. E. Dixon, Pharmacological Laboratory, Cambridge). Pausanias seems to imply that the hierophant was forbidden to marry (ii. 14. 1). It may have been so in his age, the second century of our era; but an inscription of the first century B.C. shews that at that time it was lawful for him to take a wife. See P. Foucart, *Les Grands Mystères d'Eleusis*, pp. 26 *sqq.* (extract from the *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, vol. xxxvii.).

designed to cover the wide Eleusinian plain with a plenteous harvest by wedding the goddess of the corn to the sky-god, who fertilised the bare earth with genial showers.

Marriage of Zeus and Hera at Plataea.

But Zeus was not always the sky-god, nor did he always marry the corn-goddess. If in antiquity a traveller, quitting Eleusis and passing through miles of olive-groves and corn-fields, had climbed the pine-clad mountains of Cithaeron and descended through the forest on their northern slope to Plataea, he might have chanced to find the people of that little Boeotian town celebrating a different marriage of the great god to a different goddess. The ceremony is described by a Greek antiquary whose note-book has fortunately preserved for us not a few rural customs of ancient Greece, of which the knowledge would otherwise have perished.

Every few years the people of Plataea held a festival which they called the Little Daedala. On the day of the festival they went out into an ancient oak forest, the trees of which were of gigantic girth. There they set some boiled meat on the ground, and watched the birds that gathered round it. When a raven was observed to carry off a piece of the meat and perch on an oak, the people followed it and cut down the tree. With the wood of the tree they made an image, dressed it as a bride, and placed it on a bullock-cart with a bridesmaid beside it. It seems then to have been drawn to the banks of the river Asopus and back to the town, attended by a piping and dancing crowd. After the festival the image was put away and kept till the celebration of the Great Daedala, which fell only once in sixty years, and was held by all the people of Boeotia. On this occasion all the images, fourteen in number, that had accumulated from the celebrations of the Little Daedala were dragged on wains in procession to the river Asopus, and then to the top of Mount Cithaeron. There an altar had been constructed of square blocks of wood fitted together, with brushwood heaped over it. Animals were sacrificed by being burned on the altar, and the altar itself, together with the images, was consumed by the flames. The blaze, we are told, rose to a prodigious height and was seen for many miles. To explain the origin of the festival a story ran that once

upon a time Hera had quarrelled with Zeus and left him in high dudgeon. To lure her back Zeus gave out that he was about to marry the nymph Plataea, daughter of the river Asopus. He had a fine oak cut down, shaped and dressed as a bride, and conveyed on a bullock-cart. Transported with rage and jealousy, Hera flew to the cart, and tearing off the veil of the pretended bride, discovered the deceit that had been practised on her. Her rage now turned to laughter, and she became reconciled to her husband Zeus.[1]

Resemblance of the Plataean ceremony to the spring and midsummer festivals of modern Europe.

The resemblance of this festival to some of the European spring and midsummer festivals is tolerably close. We have seen that in Russia at Whitsuntide the villagers go out into the wood, fell a birch-tree, dress it in woman's clothes, and bring it back to the village with dance and song. On the third day it is thrown into the water.[2] Again, we have seen that in Bohemia on Midsummer Eve the village lads fell a tall fir or pine-tree in the wood and set it up on a height, where it is adorned with garlands, nosegays, and ribbons, and afterwards burnt.[3] The reason for burning the tree will appear afterwards; the custom itself is not uncommon in modern Europe. In some parts of the Pyrenees a tall and slender tree is cut down on May Day and kept till Midsummer Eve. It is then rolled to the top of a hill, set up, and burned.[4] In Angoulême on St. Peter's Day, the twenty-ninth of June, a tall leafy poplar is set up in the market-place and burned.[5] Near Launceston in Cornwall there is a large tumulus known as Whiteborough, with a fosse round it. On this tumulus "there was formerly a great bonfire on Midsummer Eve; a large summer pole was fixed in the centre, round which the fuel was heaped up. It had a large bush on the top of it. Round this were parties of wrestlers contending for small prizes." The rustics believed that giants were buried in such mounds, and nothing would tempt them to disturb their bones.[6] In Dublin on May-

[1] Pausanias, ix. 3; Plutarch, quoted by Eusebius, *Praepar. Evang.* iii. 1 *sq.*

[2] Above, p. 64.

[3] Above, p. 66.

[4] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 177.

[5] W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 177 *sq.*

[6] J. Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 318 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 178.

morning boys used to go out and cut a May-bush, bring it back to town, and then burn it.[1]

All such ceremonies were originally magical rites intended to bring about the effects which they dramatically represented.

Probably the Boeotian festival belonged to the same class of rites. It represented the marriage of the powers of vegetation—the union of the oak-god with the oak-goddess[2]—in spring or midsummer, just as the same event is represented in modern Europe by a King and Queen or a Lord and Lady of the May. In the Boeotian, as in the Russian, ceremony the tree dressed as a woman stands for the English May-pole and May-queen in one. All such ceremonies, it must be remembered, are not, or at least were not originally, mere spectacular or dramatic exhibitions. They are magical rites designed to produce the effect which they dramatically set forth. If the revival of vegetation in spring is mimicked by the awakening of a sleeper, the mimicry is intended actually to quicken the growth of leaves and blossoms; if the marriage of the powers of vegetation is simulated by a King and Queen of May, the idea is that the powers thus personated will really be rendered more productive by the ceremony. In short, all these spring and midsummer festivals fall under the head of homoeopathic or imitative magic. The thing which people wish to bring about they represent dramatically, and the very representation is believed to effect, or at least to contribute to, the production of the desired result. In the case of the Daedala the story of Hera's quarrel with Zeus and her sullen retirement may perhaps without straining be interpreted as a mythical expression for a bad season and the failure of the crops. The same disastrous effects were attributed to the anger and seclusion of Demeter after the loss of her daughter Proserpine.[3] Now the institution of a festival is often explained by a mythical story, which relates how upon a particular occasion those very calamities occurred which it is the real

[1] W. Hone, *Every Day Book*, ii. 595 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 178.

[2] With regard to Zeus as an oak-god see below, pp. 358 *sq.* Hera appears with an oak-tree and her sacred bird the peacock perched on it in a group which is preserved in the Palazzo degli Conservatori at Rome. In the same group Pallas is represented with her olive-tree and her owl; so that the conjunction of the oak with Hera cannot be accidental. See W. Helbig, *Führer durch die öffentlichen Sammlungen klassischen Altertümer in Rom*[2] (Leipsic, 1899), i. 397, No. 587.

[3] Pausanias, viii. 42.

object of the festival to avert; so that if we know the myth told to account for the historical origin of the festival, we can often infer from it the real intention with which the festival was celebrated. If, therefore, the origin of the Daedala was explained by a story of a failure of crops and consequent famine, we may infer that the real object of the festival was to prevent the occurrence of such disasters; and, if I am right in my interpretation of the festival, the object was supposed to be effected by dramatically representing the marriage of the divinities most concerned with the production of trees and plants. The marriage of Zeus and Hera was acted at annual festivals in various parts of Greece,[1] and it is at least a fair conjecture that the nature and intention of these ceremonies were such as I have assigned to the Plataean festival of the Daedala; in other words, that Zeus and Hera at these festivals were the Greek equivalents of the Lord and Lady of the May. Homer's glowing picture of Zeus and Hera couched on fresh hyacinths and crocuses,[2] like Milton's description of the dalliance of Zephyr with Aurora, "as he met her once a-Maying," was perhaps painted from the life.

The god Frey and his human wife in Sweden.

The sacred marriage of Zeus and Hera had, as was natural, its counterpart among the northern kinsfolk of the Greeks. In Sweden every year a life-size image of Frey, the god of fertility, both animal and vegetable, was drawn about the country in a waggon attended by a beautiful girl who was called the god's wife. She acted also as his

[1] At Cnossus in Crete, Diodorus Siculus, v. 72; at Samos, Lactantius, *Instit.* i. 17 (compare Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, vi. 7); at Athens, Photius, *Lexicon*, *s.v.* ἱερὸν γάμου; *Etymologicum Magnum*, *s.v.* ἱερομνήμονες, p. 468. 52. A fragment of Pherecydes relating to the marriage of Zeus and Hera came to light some years ago. See Grenfell and Hunt, *New Classical and other Greek and Latin Papyri* (Oxford, 1897), p. 23; H. Weil, in *Revue des Études grecques*, x. (1897) pp. 1-9. The subject has been discussed by W. H. Roscher (*Juno und Hera*, Leipsic, 1875, pp. 72 *sqq.*). From the wide prevalence of the rite he infers that the custom of the sacred marriage was once common to all the Greek tribes.

[2] *Iliad*, xiv. 347 *sqq.* Hera was worshipped under the title of Flowery at Argos (Pausanias, ii. 22. 1; compare *Etymol. Magn.* *s.v.* Ἄνθεια, p. 108, line 48), and women called Flower-bearers served in her sanctuary (Pollux, iv. 78). A great festival of gathering flowers was celebrated by Peloponnesian women in spring (Hesychius, *s.v.* ἡροσάνθεια, compare Photius, *Lexicon*, *s.v.* Ἡροάνθια). The first of May is still a festival of flowers in Peloponnese. See *Folk-lore*, i. (1890) pp. 518 *sqq.*

The god Frey and his human wife in Sweden.

priestess in his great temple at Upsala. Wherever the waggon came with the image of the god and his blooming young bride, the people crowded to meet them and offered sacrifices for a fruitful year. Once on a time a Norwegian exile named Gunnar Helming gave himself out to be Frey in person, and rode about on the sacred waggon dressed up in the god's clothes. Everywhere the simple folk welcomed him as the deity, and observed with wonder and delight that a god walked about among men and ate and drank just like other people. And when the months went by, and the god's fair young wife was seen to be with child, their joy waxed greatly, for they thought, "Surely this is an omen of a fruitful season." It happened that the weather was then so mild, and the promise of a plenteous harvest so fair, that no man ever remembered such a year before. But one night the god departed in haste, with his wife and all the gold and silver and fine raiment which he had got together; and though the Swedes made after him, they could not catch him. He was over the hills and far away in Norway.[1]

Similar customs in Gaul.

Similar ceremonies appear to have been observed by the peasantry of Gaul in antiquity; for Gregory of Tours, writing in the sixth century of our era, says that at Autun the people used to carry about an image of a goddess in a waggon drawn by oxen. The intention of the ceremony was to ensure the safety of the crops and vines, and the rustics danced and sang in front of the image.[2] The old historian identifies the goddess with Cybele, the Great Mother goddess of Phrygia, and the identification would seem to be correct. For we learn from another source that men wrought up to a pitch of frenzy by the shrill music of flutes and the clash of cymbals, sacrificed their virility

[1] J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] i. 176; P. Herrmann, *Nordische Mythologie* (Leipsic, 1903), pp. 198 *sqq.*, 217, 520, 529; E. H. Meyer, *Mythologie der Germanen* (Strasburg, 1903), pp. 366 *sq.* The procession of Frey and his wife in the waggon is doubtless the same with the procession of Nerthus in a waggon which Tacitus describes (*Germania*, 40). Nerthus seems to be no other than Freya, the wife of Frey. See the commentators on Tacitus *l.c.*, and especially K. Müllenhoff, *Deutsche Altertumskunde*, iv. (Berlin, 1900) pp. 468 *sq.*

[2] Gregory of Tours, *De gloria confessorum*, 77 (Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, lxxi. col. 884). Compare Sulpicius Severus, *Vita S. Martini*, 12: "*Quia esset haec Gallorum rusticis consuetudo, simulacra daemonum candido tecta velamine misera per agros suos circumferre dementia.*"

to the goddess, dashing the severed portions of themselves against her image.[1] Now this religious castration was a marked feature of the Phrygian worship of Cybele, but it is alien to Western modes of thought, although it still finds favour with a section of the barbarous, fanatical, semi-Oriental peasantry of Russia.[2] But whether of native or of Eastern origin the rites of the goddess of Autun closely conformed to those of the great Phrygian goddess and appear to have been, like them, a perverted form of the Sacred Marriage, which was designed to fertilise the earth, and in which eunuchs, strange as it may seem, personated the lovers of the goddess.[3]

The custom of marrying gods to images or to living persons is found also among uncivilised peoples.

Thus the custom of marrying gods either to images or to human beings was widespread among the nations of antiquity. The ideas on which such a custom is based are too crude to allow us to doubt that the civilised Babylonians, Egyptians, and Greeks inherited it from their barbarous or savage forefathers. This presumption is strengthened when we find rites of a similar kind in vogue among the lower races. Thus, for example, we are told that once upon a time the Wotyaks of the Malmyz district in Russia were distressed by a series of bad harvests. They did not know what to do, but at last concluded that their powerful but mischievous god Keremet must be angry at being unmarried. So a deputation of elders visited the Wotyaks of Cura and came to an understanding with them on the subject. Then they returned home, laid in a large stock of brandy, and having made ready a gaily decked waggon and horses, they drove in procession with bells ringing, as they do when they are fetching home a bride, to the sacred grove at Cura. There they ate and drank merrily all night, and next morning they cut a square piece of turf in the grove and took it home with them. After this, though it fared well with the people of Malmyz, it fared ill with the people of Cura; for in Malmyz the bread was good, but in Cura it was bad.

Custom of the Wotyaks.

[1] "Passio Sancti Symphoriani," chs. 2 and 6 (Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, v. 1463, 1466).

[2] These crazy wretches castrate men and mutilate women. Hence they are known as the Skoptsy ("mutilated"). See N. Tsakni, *La Russie sectaire*, pp. 74 *sqq*.

[3] As to this feature in the ritual of Cybele, see *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, Second Edition, pp. 219 *sqq*.

Hence the men of Cura who had consented to the marriage were blamed and roughly handled by their indignant fellow-villagers. "What they meant by this marriage ceremony," says the writer who reports it, "it is not easy to imagine. Perhaps, as Bechterew thinks, they meant to marry Keremet to the kindly and fruitful Mukylćin, the Earth-wife, in order that she might influence him for good."[1] This carrying of turf, like a bride, in a waggon from a sacred grove resembles the Plataean custom of carting an oak log as a bride from an ancient oak forest; and we have seen ground for thinking that the Plataean ceremony, like its Wotyak counterpart, was intended as a charm to secure fertility. When wells are dug in Bengal, a wooden image of a god is made and married to the goddess of water.[2]

Custom of the Peruvian Indians.

Often the bride destined for the god is not a log or a clod, but a living woman of flesh and blood. The Indians of a village in Peru have been known to marry a beautiful girl, about fourteen years of age, to a stone shaped like a human being, which they regarded as a god (*huaca*). All the villagers took part in the marriage ceremony, which lasted three days, and was attended with much revelry. The girl thereafter remained a virgin and sacrified to the idol for the people. They shewed her the utmost reverence and deemed her divine.[3]

Marriage of a woman to the Sun among the Blackfoot Indians.

The Blackfoot Indians of North America used to worship the Sun as their chief god, and they held a festival every year in his honour. Four days before the new moon of August the tribe halted on its march, and all hunting was suspended. Bodies of mounted men were on duty day and night to carry out the orders of the high priest of the Sun. He enjoined the people to fast and to take vapour baths during the four days before the new moon. Moreover, with the help of his council, he chose the Vestal who was to represent the Moon and to be married to the Sun at the festival. She might be either a virgin or a woman who had had but one husband. Any girl or woman found to have discharged the sacred duties without fulfilling the prescribed conditions was put to death. On the third

[1] Max Buch, *Die Wotjäken* (Stuttgart, 1882), p. 137.

[2] E. A. Gait, in *Census of India, 1901*, vol. vi. part i. p. 190.

[3] P. J. de Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la idolatria del Piru* (Lima, 1621), p. 20.

day of preparation, after the last purification had been observed, they built a round temple of the Sun. Posts were driven into the ground in a circle; these were connected with cross-pieces, and the whole was covered with leaves. In the middle stood the sacred pole, supporting the roof. A bundle of many small branches of sacred wood, wrapped in a splendid buffalo robe, crowned the summit of the temple. The entrance was on the east, and within the sanctuary stood an altar on which rested the head of a buffalo. Beside the altar was the place reserved for the Vestal. Here, on a bed prepared for her, she slept "the sleep of war," as it was called. Her other duties consisted in maintaining a sacred fire of fragrant herbs, in presenting a lighted pipe to her husband the Sun, and in telling the high priest the dream she dreamed during "the sleep of war." On learning it the priest had it proclaimed to the whole nation to the beat of drum.[1] Every year about the middle of March, when the season for fishing with the drag-net began, the Algonquins and Hurons married their nets to two young girls, aged six or seven. At the wedding feast the net was placed between the two maidens, and was exhorted to take courage and catch many fish. The reason for choosing the brides so young was to make sure that they were virgins. The origin of the custom is said to have been this. One year, when the fishing season came round, the Algonquins cast their nets as usual, but took nothing. Surprised at their want of success, they did not know what to make of it, till the soul or genius (*oki*) of the net appeared to them in the likeness of a tall well-built man, who said to them in a great passion, "I have lost my wife and I cannot find one who has known no other man but me; that is why you do not succeed, and why you never will succeed till you give me satisfaction on this head." So the Algonquins held a council and resolved to appease the spirit of the net by marrying him to two such very young girls that he could have no ground of complaint on that score for the future. They did so, and the fishing turned out all that could be wished. The thing got wind among their neighbours the Hurons, and they adopted the custom. A share of the

Marriage of girls to fishing nets among the Hurons and Algonquins.

[1] Father Lacombe, in *Missions Catholiques*, ii. (1869) pp. 359 *sq.*

catch was always given to the families of the two girls who acted as brides of the net for the year.[1]

Sacred Marriage of the Sun-god and Earth-goddess among the Oraons.

The Oraons of Bengal worship the Earth as a goddess, and annually celebrate her marriage with the Sun-god Dharmē at the time when the *sāl* tree is in blossom. The ceremony is as follows. All bathe, then the men repair to the sacred grove (*sarnā*), while the women assemble at the house of the village priest. After sacrificing some fowls to the Sun-god and the demon of the grove, the men eat and drink. "The priest is then carried back to the village on the shoulders of a strong man. Near the village the women meet the men and wash their feet. With beating of drums and singing, dancing, and jumping, all proceed to the priest's house, which has been decorated with leaves and flowers. Then the usual form of marriage is performed between the priest and his wife, symbolizing the supposed union between Sun and Earth. After the ceremony all eat and drink and make merry; they dance and sing obscene songs, and finally indulge in the vilest orgies. The object is to move the mother earth to become fruitful."[2] Thus the Sacred Marriage of the Sun and Earth, personated by the priest and his wife, is celebrated as a charm to ensure the fertility of the ground; and for the same purpose, on the principle of homoeopathic magic, the people indulge in a licentious orgy. Among the Sulka of New Britain, at the village of Kolvagat, a certain man has charge of two stone figures which are called respectively "Our grandfather" (*ngur es*) and "Our grandmother" (*ngur pei*). They are said to be kept in a house built specially for the purpose. Fruits of the field are offered to them and left beside them to rot. When their guardian puts the two figures with their faces turned towards each other, the plantations are believed to flourish; but when he sets them back to back, there is dearth and the people suffer from eruptions on the skin.[3]

[1] *Relations des Jésuites, 1636*, p. 109, and *1639*, p. 95 (Canadian reprint); Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, v. 225; Chateaubriand, *Voyage en Amérique* (Paris, 1870), pp. 140-142.

[2] Rev. F. Hahn, "Some Notes on the Religion and Superstitions of the Oraōs," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, lxxii. part iii. (Calcutta, 1904) p. 12. For another account of the ceremonies held by the Oraons in spring see above, pp. 76 *sq.*

[3] *P.* Rascher, "Die Sulka," *Archiv für Anthropologie*, xxix. (1904) p. 217.

This turning of the two images face to face may be regarded as a simple form of Sacred Marriage between the two divine powers represented by them, who are clearly supposed to control the fertility of the plantations.

Marriage of women to gods in India and Africa.

At the village of Bas Doda, in the Gurgaon district of North-Western India, a fair is held on the twenty-sixth of the month Chait and the two following days. We are told that formerly girls of the Dhinwar class used to be married to the god at these festivals, and that they always died soon afterwards. Of late years the practice is said to have been discontinued.[1] In Behar during the month of Sawan (August) crowds of women, calling themselves Nagin or "wives of the snake," go about for two and a half days begging; during this time they may neither sleep under a roof nor eat salt. Half the proceeds of their begging is given to Brahmans, and the other half spent in salt and sweetmeats, which are eaten by all the villagers.[2] Amongst the Ewe-speaking peoples of the Slave Coast in West Africa human wives of gods are very common. In Dahomey they swarm, and it has even been estimated that every fourth woman is devoted to the service of some deity. The chief business of these female votaries is prostitution. In every town there is at least one seminary where the handsomest girls, between ten and twelve years of age, are trained. They stay for three years, learning the chants and dances peculiar to the worship of the gods, and prostituting themselves to the priests and the inmates of the male seminaries. At the end of their noviciate they become public harlots. But no disgrace attaches to their profession, for it is believed that they are married to the god, and that their excesses are caused and directed by him. Strictly speaking, they should confine their favours to the male worshippers at the temple, but in practice they bestow them indiscriminately. Children born of such unions belong to the deity. As the wives of a god, these sacred women may not marry. But they are not bound to the service of the divinity for life. Some only bear his name and

[1] W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), ii. 118.

[2] W. Crooke, *op. cit.* ii. 138.

sacrifice to him on their birthdays.[1] Amongst these polygamous West African gods the sacred python seems to be particularly associated with the fertility of the earth; for he is invoked in excessively wet, dry, and barren seasons, and the time of year when young girls are sought out to be his brides is when the millet is beginning to sprout.[2]

Women married to water-gods.

It deserves to be remarked that the supernatural being to whom women are married is often a god or spirit of water. Thus Mukasa, the god of the Victoria Nyanza lake, who was propitiated by the Baganda every time they undertook a long voyage, had virgins provided for him to serve as his wives. Like the Vestals they were bound to chastity, but unlike the Vestals they seem to have been often unfaithful. The custom lasted until Mwanga was converted to Christianity.[3] The Akikuyu of British East Africa worship the snake of a certain river, and at intervals of several years they marry the snake-god to women, but especially to young girls. For this purpose huts are built by order of the medicine-men, who there consummate the sacred marriage with the credulous female devotees. If the girls do not repair to the huts of their own accord in sufficient numbers, they are seized and dragged thither to the embraces of the deity. The offspring of these mystic unions appears to be fathered on God (*Ngai*); certainly there are children among the Akikuyu who pass for children of God.[4] In Kengtung, one of the principal Shan states of Upper Burma, the spirit of the Nawng Tung lake is regarded as very powerful, and is propitiated with offerings in the eighth month (about July) of each year. A remarkable feature of the worship of this spirit consists in the dedication to him of four virgins in marriage. Custom requires that this should be done once in every three years. It was actually done by the late king or chief (Ṣawbwa) in 1893, but down to 1901 the rite had not been performed by his successor. The following are the chief features of the ceremony. The virgins who are to wed the spirit of the lake must be of pure Hkön race. Orders are sent out for all the Hkön of

[1] A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, pp. 139-142.

[2] *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, Second Edition, pp. 58 *sq.*

[3] Sir Harry Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate* (London, 1902), ii. 677.

[4] From notes sent to me by Mr. A. C. Hollis, 21st May 1908.

the valley to attend. From the unmarried women of suitable age, ten are selected. These are as beautiful as may be, and must be without spot or blemish. Four maidens out of the ten are chosen by lot, and carefully dressed in new garments. A festival is held, usually at the house of the Chief Minister, where the girls sit on a raised platform. Four old women, thought to be possessed by spirits, enter and remain as long as the feast lasts. During this time anything they may want, such as food, betel, or cheroots, is handed to them by the four girls. Apparently the old women pass for representatives of the spirit, and hence they are waited on by the maidens destined to be his wives. Dotage, blindness, or any great infirmity of age seems to be accounted possession by a spirit for the purposes of this function. When the feast is over, the maidens are formally presented to the spirit, along with the various sacrifices and offerings. They are next taken to the chief's residence, where strings are tied round their wrists by the ministers and elders to guard them against ill-luck. Usually they sleep a night or two at the palace, after which they may return to their homes. There seems to be no objection to their marrying afterwards. If nothing happens to any of the four, it is believed that the spirit of the lake loves them but little; but if one of them dies soon after the ceremony, it shews that she has been accepted by him. The spirit is propitiated with the sacrifice of pigs, fowls, and sometimes a buffalo.[1]

Egyptian custom of drowning a girl as a sacrifice to the Nile.

In this last custom the death of the woman is regarded as a sign that the god has taken her to himself. Sometimes, apparently, it has not been left to the discretion of the divine bridegroom to take or leave his human bride; she was made over to him once for all in death. When the Arabs conquered Egypt they learned that at the annual rise of the Nile the Egyptians were wont to deck a young virgin in gay apparel and throw her into the river as a sacrifice, in order to obtain a plentiful inundation. The Arab general abolished the barbarous custom.[2] It is

[1] J. G. Scott and J. P. Hardiman, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, part ii. vol. i. (Rangoon, 1901) p. 439.

[2] E. W. Lane, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (Paisley and London, 1895), chap. xxvi. p. 500. The authority for the statement is the Arab historian Makrizi.

said that under the Tang dynasty the Chinese used to marry a young girl to the Yellow River once a year by drowning her in the water. For this purpose the witches chose the fairest damsel they could find and themselves superintended the fatal marriage. At last the local mandarin, a man of sense and humanity, forbade the custom. But the witches disregarded his edicts and made their preparations for the usual murder. So when the day was come, the magistrate appeared on the scene with his soldiers and had all the witches bound and thrown into the river to drown, telling them that no doubt the god would be able to choose his bride for himself from among them.[1]

Girls sacrificed as brides of crocodiles.

The princes of Koepang, a state in the East Indian island of Timor, deemed themselves descended from crocodiles; and on the coronation of a new prince a solemn sacrifice was made to the crocodiles in presence of the people. The offerings consisted of a pig with red bristles and a young girl prettily dressed, perfumed, and decked with flowers. She was taken down to the bank of the river and set on a sacred stone in a cave. Then one of the prince's guards summoned the crocodiles. Soon one of the beasts appeared and dragged the girl down into the water. The people thought that he married her, and that if he did not find her a maid he would bring her back.[2] On festal occasions in the same state a new-born girl was sometimes dedicated to a crocodile, and then, with certain ceremonies of consecration, brought up to be married to a priest.[3] It is said that once, when the inhabitants of Cayeli in Buru—another East Indian island—were threatened with destruction by a swarm of crocodiles, they ascribed the misfortune to a passion which the prince of the crocodiles had conceived for a certain girl. Accordingly, they compelled the damsel's father to dress her in bridal array and deliver her over to the clutches of her crocodile lover.[4]

A usage of the same sort is reported to have prevailed

[1] *The North China Herald*, 4th May 1906, p. 235.

[2] G. A. Wilken, "Het animisme bij de volken van den Indischen Archipel," *De Indische Gids*, June 1884, p. 994 (referring to Veth, *Het eiland Timor*, p. 21); A. Bastian, *Indonesien*, ii. (Berlin, 1885) p. 8.

[3] A. Bastian, *op. cit.* p. 11.

[4] A. Bastian, *Indonesien* i. (Berlin, 1884) p. 134.

in the Maldive Islands before the conversion of the inhabitants to Islam. The famous Arab traveller Ibn Batutah has described the custom and the manner in which it came to an end. He was assured by several trustworthy natives, whose names he gives, that when the people of the islands were idolaters there appeared to them every month an evil spirit among the jinn, who came from across the sea in the likeness of a ship full of burning lamps. The wont of the inhabitants, as soon as they perceived him, was to take a young virgin, and, having adorned her, to lead her to a heathen temple that stood on the shore, with a window looking out to sea. There they left the damsel for the night, and when they came back in the morning they found her a maid no more, and dead. Every month they drew lots, and he upon whom the lot fell gave up his daughter to the jinnee of the sea. In time there came to them a Berber named Abu 'lberecat, who knew the Coran by heart. He lodged in the house of an old woman of the isle of Mahal. One day, visiting his hostess, he found that she had gathered her family about her, and that the women were weeping as if there were a funeral. On enquiring into the cause of their distress, he learned that the lot had fallen on the old woman, and that she had an only daughter, who must be slain by the evil jinnee. Abu 'lberecat said to the old dame, "I will go this night instead of thy daughter." Now he was quite beardless. So when the night was come they took him, and after he had performed his ablutions, they put him in the temple of idols. He set himself to recite the Coran; then the demon appeared at the window, but the man went on with his recitation. No sooner was the jinnee within hearing of the holy words than he dived into the sea. When morning broke, the old woman and her family and the people of the island came, according to their custom, to carry away the girl and burn her body. They found the stranger repeating the Coran, and took him to their king, whose name was Chenourazah, and made him relate his adventure. The king was astonished at it. The Berber proposed to the king that he should embrace Islam. Chenourazah said to him, "Tarry with us till next month; if thou shalt do what thou hast done, and shalt escape from the evil jinnee, I will

Virgin sacrificed as a bride to a jinnee of the sea in the Maldive Islands.

The jinnee of the sea and his bride in the Maldive Islands.

be converted." The stranger abode with the idolaters, and God disposed the king's heart to receive the true faith. So before the month was out he became a Mussalman, he and his wives and his children and the people of his court. And when the next month began, the Berber was conducted to the temple of idols; but the demon did not appear, and the Berber set himself to recite the Coran till break of day. Then the Sultan and his subjects broke the idols and demolished the temple. The people of the island embraced Islam and sent messengers to the other isles, and their inhabitants were converted likewise. But by reason of the demon many of the Maldive Islands were depopulated before their conversion to Islam. When Ibn Batutah himself landed in the country he knew nothing of these things. One night, as he was going about his business, he heard of a sudden people saying in a loud voice, "There is no God but God," and "God is great." He saw children carrying copies of the Coran on their heads, and women beating on basins and vessels of copper. He was astonished at what they did, and he said, "What has happened?" They answered, "Dost thou not behold the sea?" He looked towards the sea, and beheld in the darkness, as it were, a great ship full of burning lamps and cressets. They said to him, "That is the demon. It is his wont to shew himself once a month; but after we have done that which thou hast seen, he returns to his place and does us no manner of harm."[1]

The story based on the phosphorescence of the sea.

It occurred to me that this myth of the demon lover may have been based on some physical phenomenon, electrical, lunar, or otherwise, which is periodically seen at night in the Maldive Islands. Accordingly I consulted Professor J. Stanley Gardiner, our foremost authority on the archipelago. His answer, which confirms my conjecture, runs thus: "A peculiar phosphorescence, like the glow of a lamp hidden by a roughened glass shade, is occasionally visible on lagoon shoals in the Maldives. I imagine it to have been due to some single animal with a greater phosphorescence than any at present known to us. A periodical appearance at some

[1] *Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah, texte arabe, accompagné d'une traduction,* par C. Defrémery et B. R. Sanguinetti (Paris, 1853-1858), iv. 126-130.

phase of the moon due to reproduction is not improbable and has parallels. The myth still exists in the Maldives, but in a rather different form." He adds that "a number of these animals might of course appear on some shoal near Male," the principal island of the group. To the eyes of the ignorant and superstitious such a mysterious glow, suddenly lighting up the sea in the dusk of the evening, might well appear a phantom ship, hung with burning lamps, bearing down on the devoted islands, and in the stillness of night the roar of the surf on the barrier reef might sound in their ears like the voice of the demon calling for his prey.[1]

§ 3. *Sacrifices to Water-spirits*

Stories of the Perseus and Andromeda type.

Ibn Batutah's narrative of the demon lover and his mortal brides closely resembles a well-known type of folk-tale, of which versions have been found from Japan and Annam in the East to Senegambia, Scandinavia, and Scotland in the West. The story varies in details from people to people, but as commonly told it runs thus. A certain country is infested by a many-headed serpent, dragon, or other monster, which would destroy the whole people if a human victim, generally a virgin, were not delivered up to him periodically. Many victims have perished, and at last it has fallen to the lot of the king's own daughter to be sacrificed. She is exposed to the monster, but the hero of the tale, generally a young man of humble birth, interposes in her behalf, slays the monster, and receives the hand of the princess as his reward. In many of the tales the monster, who is sometimes described as a serpent, inhabits the water of a sea, a lake, or a fountain. In other versions he is a serpent or dragon who takes possession of the springs of water, and only allows the water to flow or the people to make use of it on condition of receiving a human victim.[2]

[1] The Thanda Pulayans, on the west coast of India, think that the phosphorescence on the surface of the sea indicates the presence of the spirits of their ancestors, who are fishing in the backwaters. See E. Thurston, *Ethnographic Notes in Southern India*, p. 293. Similarly the Sulkas of New Britain fancy that the mysterious glow comes from souls bathing in the water. See *P.* Rascher, "Die Sulka," *Archiv für Anthropologie*, xxix. (1904) p. 216.

[2] For a list of these tales, with references to the authorities, see my note on Pausanias, ix. 26. 7. To the examples there referred to add I. V.

Water-spirits conceived as serpents or dragons.

It would probably be a mistake to dismiss all these tales as pure inventions of the story-teller. Rather we may suppose that they reflect a real custom of sacrificing girls or women to be the wives of water-spirits, who are very often conceived as great serpents or dragons. Elsewhere I have cited many instances of this belief in serpent-shaped spirits of water;[1] here it may be worth while to add a few more. Thus the Warramunga of Central Australia perform elaborate ceremonies to appease or coerce a gigantic, but purely mythical water-snake who is said to have destroyed a number of people.[2] Some of the natives of western Australia fear to approach large pools, supposing them to be inhabited by a great serpent, who would kill them if they dared to drink or draw water there by night.[3] The Indians of New Granada believed that when the mother of all mankind, named Bachue, was grown old, she and her husband plunged into the Lake of Iguague, where they were changed into two enormous serpents, which still live in the lake and sometimes shew themselves.[4] The Oyampi Indians of French Guiana imagine that each waterfall has a guardian in the shape of a monstrous snake, who lies hidden under the eddy of the cascade, but has sometimes been seen to lift up its huge head. To see it is fatal. Canoe and Indians are then dragged down to the bottom, where the monster swallows all the men, and sometimes the canoe also. Hence the Oyampis never name a waterfall till they have passed it, for fear that the snake at the bottom of the water might hear its name and attack the rash intruders.[5] The Huichol Indians of Mexico adore water. Springs are sacred, and the gods in them are mothers or serpents, that rise with the clouds and descend as fructifying rain.[6] The Tarahumares, another Indian tribe of Mexico, think

Zingerle, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen aus Tirol*, Nos. 8, 21, 35, pp. 35 *sqq.*, 100 *sqq.*, 178 *sqq.*; G. F. Abbott, *Macedonian Folk-lore*, pp. 270 *sqq.* This type of story has been elaborately investigated by Mr. E. S. Hartland (*The Legend of Perseus*, London, 1894-1896), but he has not discussed the custom of the sacred marriage, on which the story seems to be founded.

[1] Note on Pausanias, ix. 10. 5.

[2] Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 226 *sqq.*

[3] R. Salvado, *Mémoires historiques sur l'Australie* (Paris, 1854), p. 262.

[4] H. Ternaux-Compans, *Essai sur l'ancien Cundinamarca*, pp. 6 *sq.*

[5] H. Coudreau, *Chez nos Indiens* (Paris, 1895), pp. 303 *sq.*

[6] C. Lumholtz, *Unknown Mexico* (London, 1903), ii. 57.

that every river, pool, and spring has its serpent, who causes the water to come up out of the earth. All these water-serpents are easily offended; hence the Tarahumares place their houses some little way from the water, and will not sleep near it when they are on a journey. Whenever they construct weirs to catch fish, they take care to offer fish to the water-serpent of the river; and when they are away from home and are making pinole, that is, toasted maize-meal, they drop the first of the pinole into the water as an offering to the serpents, who would otherwise try to seize them and chase them back to their own land.[1] In Basutoland the rivers Ketane and Maletsunyane tumble, with a roar of waters and a cloud of iridescent spray, into vast chasms hundreds of feet deep. The Basutos fear to approach the foot of these huge falls, for they think that a spirit in the shape of a gigantic snake haunts the seething cauldron which receives the falling waters.[2]

Sacrifices of human beings to water-spirits.

The perils of the sea, of floods, of rapid rivers, of deep pools and lakes, naturally account for the belief that water-spirits are fickle and dangerous beings, who need to be appeased by sacrifices. Sometimes these sacrifices consist of animals, such as horses and bulls,[3] but often the victims are human beings. Thus at the mouth of the Bonny River there is a dangerous bar on which vessels trading to the river have been lost. This is bad for business, and accordingly the negroes used to sacrifice a young man annually to the spirit of the bar. The handsomest youth was chosen for the purpose, and for many months before the ceremony he lodged with the king. The people regarded him as sacred or ju-ju, and whatever he touched, even when he passed casually through the streets, shared his sanctity and

[1] C. Lumholtz, *op. cit.* i. 402 *sq.*

[2] T. I. Fairclough, "Notes on the Basutos," *Journal of the African Society*, No. 14, January 1905, p. 201.

[3] To the examples given in my note on Pausanias viii. 7. 2, add Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas, die geistige Cultur der Danâkil, Galla und Somâl* (Berlin, 1896), pp. 46, 50; "De Dajaks op Borneo," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xiii. (1869) p. 72; A. D'Orbigny, *Voyage dans l'Amérique Méridionale*, ii. 93, 160 (see above, pp. 16 *sq.*); F. Blumentritt, "Über die Eingeborenen der Insel Palawan und der Inselgruppe der Talamianen," *Globus*, lix. (1891) p. 167; W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 46; Father Guillemé, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, lx. (1888) p. 252.

Sacrifices of human beings to water-spirits.

belonged to him. Hence whenever he appeared in public the inhabitants fled before him, lest he should touch their garments or anything they might be carrying. He was kept in ignorance of the fate in store for him, and no one might inform him of it under pain of death. On an appointed day he was taken out to the bar in a canoe and induced to jump into the water. Then the rowers plied their paddles and left him to drown. A similar ceremony used to be performed at the New Calabar River, but the victim was a culprit. He was thrown into the water to be devoured by the sharks, which are there the principal fetish or ju-ju.[1] The chiefs of Duke Town, on the same coast of Guinea, were wont to make an annual offering to the river. A young woman of a light colour, or an albino, was chosen as the victim. On a set day they decked her with finery, took her down to Parrot Island, and with much ceremony plunged her in the stream. The fishermen of Efiat, at the mouth of the river, are said still to observe the rite in order to ensure a good catch of fish.[2] The King of Dahomey used to send from time to time a man, dressed out with the insignia of office, to Whydah to be drowned at the mouth of the river. The intention of the sacrifice was to attract merchant ships.[3] When a fisherman has been carried off by a crocodile, some of the natives on the banks of Lake Tanganyika take this for a sign that the spirit deems himself slighted, since he is obliged to come and find victims for himself instead of having them presented to him. Hence the sorcerers generally decide that a second victim is wanted; so, having chosen one, they bind him hand and foot and fling him into the lake to feed the crocodiles.[4] The crater of the volcano Tolucan in Mexico encloses two lakes of clear cold water, surrounded by gloomy forests of pine. Here, in the eighteenth month of the Toltec year, answering to February, children beautifully dressed and decked with flowers and gay feathers used to be drowned as

[1] W. F. W. Owen, *Narrative of Voyages to explore the Shores of Africa, Arabia, and Madagascar* (London, 1833), ii. 354 *sq.*

[2] H. Goldie, *Calabar and its Mission*, New Edition (Edinburgh and London, 1901), p. 43.

[3] *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xxxiii. (1861) p. 152.

[4] Father Guillemé, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, lx. (1888) p. 253.

an offering to Tlaloc, the god of the waters, who had a fine temple on the spot.[1] The Chams of Annam have traditions of a time when living men were thrown into the sea every year in order to propitiate the deities who looked after the fishing, and when children of good family were drowned in the water-channels in order that the rice-fields might be duly irrigated.[2]

Water-spirits conceived as beneficent beings who dispense fertility.

This last instance brings out a more kindly aspect of the water-spirits. If these beings are dreaded by the fisherman and the mariner who tempt the angry sea, and by the huntsman who has to swim or ford the rushing rivers, they are viewed in a different light by the shepherd and the husbandman in hot and arid lands, where the pasture for the cattle and the produce of the fields alike depend on the supply of water, and where prolonged drought means starvation and death for man and beast. To men in such circumstances the spirits of the waters are beneficent beings, the dispensers of life and fertility, whether their blessings descend as rain from heaven or well up as springs of bubbling water in the parched desert. In the Semitic East, for example, where the rainfall is precarious or confined to certain seasons, the face of the earth is bare and withered for most of the year, except where it is kept fresh by irrigation or by the percolation of underground water. Here, accordingly, the local gods or Baalim had their seats originally in spots of natural fertility, by fountains and the banks of rivers, in groves and tangled thickets and green glades of mountain hollows and deep watercourses. As lords of the springs and subterranean waters they were supposed to be the sources of all the gifts of the land, the corn, the wine and the oil, the wool and the flax, the vines and the fig-trees.[3]

Water-spirits conceived as bestowing offspring on women

Where water-spirits are thus conceived as the authors of fertility in general, it is natural that they should be held to extend the sphere of their operations to men and animals; in other words, that the power of bestowing offspring on barren women and cattle should be ascribed to them. This ascription comes out clearly in a custom observed by Syrian

[1] Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, i. 327 *sq.*

[2] E. Aymonier, "Les Tchames et leurs religions," *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, xxiv. (1891) p. 213.

[3] W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,[2] pp. 96-104.

Water-spirits conceived as bestowing offspring on women.

women at the present day. Some of the channels of the Orontes are used for irrigation, but at a certain season of the year the streams are turned off and the dry bed of the channels is cleared of mud and any other matter that might clog the flow of the water. The first night that the water is turned on again, it is said to have the power of procreation. Accordingly barren women take their places in the channel, waiting for the embrace of the water-spirit in the rush of the stream.[1] Again, a pool of water in a cave at Juneh enjoys the same reputation. The people think a childless couple who bathe in the water will have offspring.[2] In India many wells are supposed to cure sterility, which is universally attributed to the agency of evil spirits. The water of seven wells is collected on the night of the Diwali or feast of lamps, and barren women bathe in it in order to remove their reproach. There is a well in Orissa where the priests throw betel-nuts into the mud. Childless women scramble for the nuts, and she who finds them will be a happy mother before long. For the same reason, after childbirth an Indian mother is taken to worship the village well. She walks round it in the course of the sun and smears the platform with red lead, which may be a substitute for blood. A Khandh priest will take a childless woman to the meeting of two streams, where he makes an offering to the god of births and sprinkles the woman with water in order to rid her of the influence of the spirit who hinders conception.[3] In the Punjaub a barren woman who desires to become a mother will sometimes be let down into a well on a Sunday or Tuesday night during the Diwali festival. After stripping herself of her clothes and bathing in the water, she is drawn up again and performs the *chaukpurna* ceremony with incantations taught by a wizard. When this ceremony has been performed, the well is supposed to run dry; its quickening and fertilising virtue has been abstracted by the woman.[4] The Indian sect of the Vallabhacharyas or Maharajas believe that bathing in a sacred well is a remedy for

[1] S. I. Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion To-day* (Chicago, 1902), p. 117.

[2] S. I. Curtiss, *op. cit.* p. 119.

[3] W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), ii. 50 *sq.*, 225 *sq.*

[4] *Census of India. 1901*, vol. xvii., *Punjab*, p. 164.

barrenness in women.[1] In antiquity the waters of Sinuessa in Campania were thought to bless childless wives with offspring.[2] To this day Syrian women resort to hot springs in order to obtain children from the saint or jinnee of the waters.[3] In Scotland the same fertilising virtue used to be, and probably still is, ascribed to certain springs. Wives who wished to become mothers formerly resorted to the well of St. Fillan at Comrie, and to the wells of St. Mary at Whitekirk and in the Isle of May.[4] In the Aran Islands, off the coast of Galway, women desirous of children pray at St. Eany's Well, by the Angels' Walk, and the men pray at the rag well by the church of the Four Comely Ones at Onaght.[5] Child's Well in Oxford was supposed to have the virtue of making barren women to bring forth.[6] Near Bingfield in Northumberland there is a copious sulphur spring known as the Borewell. On the Sunday following the fourth day of July, that is about Midsummer Day, according to the old style, great crowds of people used to assemble at the well from all the surrounding hamlets and villages. The scene was like a fair, stalls for the sale of refreshments being brought and set up for the occasion. The neighbouring slopes were terraced, and seats formed for the convenience of pilgrims and visitors. Barren women prayed at the well that they might become mothers. If their faith was strong enough, their prayers were heard within the year.[7]

Water-spirits conceived as bestowing offspring on women.

In Greek mythology similar ideas of the procreative power of water meet us in the stories of the loves of rivers for women and in the legends which traced the descent of heroes and heroines from river-gods.[8] In Sophocles's play of *The Trachinian Women* Dejanira tells how she was

Love of river-spirits for women in Greek mythology.

[1] W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, iv. 425. As to the sect of the Maharajas, see above, vol. i. pp. 406 *sq.*

[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxi. 8.

[3] S. I. Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion To-day*, pp. 116 *sq.*; Mrs. H. H. Spoer, "The Powers of Evil in Jerusalem," *Folk-lore*, xviii. (1907) p. 55; A. Jaussen, *Coutumes des Arabes au pays de Moab* (Paris, 1908), p. 360.

[4] J. M. Mackinlay, *Folk-lore of Scottish Lochs and Springs* (Glasgow, 1893), p. 112.

[5] A. C. Haddon and C. R. Browne, "The Ethnography of the Aran Islands," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, ii. (1893) p. 819.

[6] R. C. Hope, *The Legendary Lore of the Holy Wells of England* (London, 1893), p. 122.

[7] R. C. Hope, *op. cit.* pp. 107 *sq.*

[8] See, for example, Pausanias, ii. 15. 5, v. 7. 2 *sq.*, vi. 22. 9, vii. 23. 1 *sq.*, viii. 43. 1, ix. 1. 1 *sq.*, ix. 34. 6 and 9.

Love of river-spirits for women in Greek mythology.

wooed by the river Achelous, who came to her father and claimed her hand, appearing in the likeness now of a bull, now of a serpent, and now of a being with the body of a man and the front of an ox, while streams of water flowed from his shaggy beard. She relates, too, how glad she was when Hercules presented himself and vanquished the river-god in single combat and took her to wife.[1] The legend perhaps preserves a reminiscence of that custom of providing a water-god with a human wife which has been practised elsewhere. The motive of such a custom may have varied with the particular conception which happened to prevail of the character of the water-god. Where he was supposed to be a cruel and destructive being, who drowned men and laid waste the country, a wife would be offered simply to keep him in good humour, and so prevent him from doing mischief. But where he was viewed as the procreative power on whom the fertility of the earth and the fecundity of men and animals depended, his marriage would be deemed necessary for the purpose of enabling him to discharge his beneficent functions. This belief in the amorous character of rivers comes out plainly in a custom which was observed at Troy down to classical times. Maidens about to marry were wont to bathe in the Scamander, saying as they did so, "Scamander, take my virginity." A similar custom appears to have been observed at the river Maeander, and perhaps in other parts of the Greek world. Occasionally, it would seem, young men took advantage of the practice to ravish the girls, and the offspring of such a union was fathered on the river-god.[2] The bath which a Greek bride and bridegroom regularly took before marriage appears to have been intended to bless their union with offspring through the fertilising influence of the water-nymphs.[3]

Thus it would appear that in many parts of the world a

[1] Sophocles, *Trachiniae*, 6 *sqq.* The combat of Hercules with the bull-shaped river-god in presence of Dejanira is the subject of a red-figured vase painting. See Miss J. E. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*[2] (Cambridge, 1908), Fig. 133, p. 434.

[2] Aeschines, *Epist.* x. The letters of Aeschines are spurious, but there is no reason to doubt that the custom here described was actually observed.

[3] See the evidence collected by Mr. Floyd G. Ballentine, "Some Phases of the Cult of the Nymphs," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, xv. (1904) pp. 97 *sqq.*

custom has prevailed of sacrificing human beings to water-spirits, and that in not a few cases the ceremony has taken the form of making over a woman to the spirit to be his wife, in order either to pacify his fury or to give play to his generative powers. Where the water-spirit was regarded as female, young men might be presented to her for a similar purpose, and this may be the reason why the victims sacrificed to water-spirits are sometimes males. Among civilised peoples these customs survive for the most part only in popular tales, of which the legend of Perseus and Andromeda, with its mediaeval counterpart of St. George and the Dragon, is the most familiar example. But occasionally they appear to have left traces of themselves in ceremonies and pageants. Thus at Furth in Bavaria a drama called the Slaying of the Dragon used to be acted every year about Midsummer, on the Sunday after Corpus Christi Day. Crowds of spectators flocked from the neighbourhood to witness it. The scene of the performance was the public square. On a platform stood or sat a princess wearing a golden crown on her head, and as many silver ornaments on her body as could be borrowed for the purpose. She was attended by a maid of honour. Opposite her was stationed the dragon, a dreadful monster of painted canvas stretched on a wooden skeleton and moved by two men inside. From time to time the creature would rush with gaping jaws into the dense crowd of spectators, who retreated hastily, tumbling over each other in their anxiety to escape. Then a knight in armour, attended by his men-at-arms, rode forth and asked the princess what she did "on this hard stone," and why she looked so sad. She told him that the dragon was coming to eat her up. On that the knight bade her be of good cheer, for that with his sword he would rid the country of the monster. With that he charged the dragon, thrusting his spear into its maw and taking care to stab a bladder of bullock's blood which was there concealed. The gush of blood which followed was an indispensable part of the show, and if the knight missed his stroke he was unmercifully jeered and taunted by the crowd. Having despatched the monster with sword and pistol, the knight then hastened to the princess and told her that he

In Europe the custom of marrying a woman to a water-spirit survives only in tales and pageants.

Mid-summer custom of slaying the dragon at Furth in Bavaria.

had slain the dragon who had so long oppressed the town. In return she tied a wreath round his arm, and announced that her noble father and mother would soon come to give them half the kingdom. The men-at-arms then escorted the knight and the princess to the tavern, there to end the day with dance and revelry. Bohemians and Bavarians came from many miles to witness this play of the Slaying of the Dragon, and when the monster's blood streamed forth they eagerly mopped it up, along with the blood-soaked earth, in white cloths, which they afterwards laid on the flax-fields, in order that the flax might thrive and grow tall. For the "dragon's blood" was thought to be a sure protection against witchcraft.[1] This use of the blood suffices to prove that the Slaying of the Dragon at Furth was not a mere popular spectacle, but a magical rite designed to fertilise the fields. As such it probably descended from a very remote antiquity, and may well have been invested with a character of solemnity, if not of tragedy, long before it degenerated into a farce.

St. Romain delivers Rouen from a dragon.

More famous was the dragon from which, according to legend, St. Romain delivered Rouen, and far more impressive was the ceremony with which, down to the French Revolution, the city commemorated its deliverance. The stately and beautiful edifices of the Middle Ages, which still adorn Rouen, formed a fitting background for a pageant which carried the mind back to the days when Henry II. of England and Richard Cœur-de-Lion, Dukes of Normandy, still had their palace in this ancient capital of their ancestral domains. Legend ran that about the year 520 A.D. a forest or marsh near the city was infested by a

[1] F. Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. 107-110, ii. 550. At Ragusa in Sicily an enormous effigy of a dragon, with movable tail and eyes, is carried in procession on St. George's Day (April 23rd); and along with it two huge sugar loaves, decorated with flowers, figure in the procession. At the end of the festival these loaves are broken into little bits, and every farmer puts one of the pieces in his sowed fields to ensure a good crop. See G. Pitrè, *Feste patronali in Sicilia* (Turin and Palermo, 1900), pp. 323 *sq.* In this custom the fertility charm remains, though the marriage ceremony appears to be absent. As to the mummers' play of St George, see E. K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage* (Oxford, 1903), i. 205 *sqq.*; A. Beatty, "The St. George, or Mummers', Plays," *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters*, xv. part ii. (October, 1906) pp. 273-324. A separate copy of the latter work was kindly sent to me by the author.

monstrous beast in the shape of a serpent or dragon, which every day wrought great harm to Rouen and its neighbourhood, devouring man and beast, causing boats and mariners on the river Seine to perish, and inflicting other woes innumerable on the commonwealth. At last the archbishop, St. Romain, resolved to beard the monster in his den. He could get none to accompany him but a prisoner condemned to death for murder. On their approach the dragon made as though he would swallow them up; but the archbishop, relying on the divine help, made the sign of the cross, and at once the monster became so gentle that he suffered the saint to bind him with his stole and the murderer to lead him like a lamb to the slaughter. Thus they went in procession to a public place in Rouen, where the dragon was burnt in the presence of the people and its ashes cast into the river. The murderer was pardoned for his services; and the fame of the deed having gone abroad, St. Romain, or his successor St. Ouen, whose memory is enshrined in a church of dreamlike beauty at Rouen, obtained from King Dagobert in perpetuity a privilege for the archbishop, dean, and canons of the cathedral, to wit, that every year on Ascension Day, the anniversary of the miracle, they should pardon and release from prison a malefactor, whomsoever they chose, and whatever the crime of which he had been guilty. This privilege, unique in France, was claimed by the chapter of the cathedral as early as the beginning of the thirteenth century; for in 1210, the governor of the castle of Rouen having boggled at giving up a prisoner, the chapter appealed to King Philip Augustus, who caused an enquiry to be made into the claim. At this enquiry nine witnesses swore that never in the reigns of Henry II. and Richard Cœur-de-Lion, Dukes of Normandy, had there been any difficulty raised on the point in question. Henceforward the chapter seems to have enjoyed the right without opposition down to 1790, when it exercised its privilege of mercy for the last time. Next year the face of things had changed; there was neither archbishop nor chapter at Rouen. A register of the names of the prisoners who were pardoned, together with an account of their crimes, was kept and still exists. Only a few of the names in the thirteenth century

In memory of this deliverance the archbishop and chapter of Rouen were annually allowed to pardon a malefactor on Ascension Day.

are known, and there are many gaps in the first half of the fourteenth century; but from that time onward the register is nearly complete. Most of the crimes appear to have been murder or homicide.

Ceremony of the annual pardon and release of a prisoner at Rouen.

The proceedings, on the great day of pardon, varied somewhat in different ages. The following account is based in great part on a description written in the reign of Henry III. and published at Rouen in 1587. Fifteen days before Ascension Day the canons of the cathedral summoned the king's officers to stop all proceedings against criminals detained in prison. Afterwards, on the Monday of Rogations, two canons examined the prisoners and took their confessions, going from prison to prison till Ascension Day. On that day, about seven o'clock in the morning, all the canons assembled in the chapter-house and invoked the grace of the Holy Spirit by the hymn *Veni creator Spiritus*, and other prayers. Also they made oath to reveal none of the depositions of the criminals, but to hold them sacred under the seal of confession. The depositions having been taken and the commissioners heard, the chapter, after due deliberation, named him or her among the prisoners who was to receive the benefit of the privilege. A card bearing the prisoner's name and sealed with the seal of the chapter was then sent to the members of parliament, who were sitting in full assembly, clad in their red robes, in the great hall of the palace to receive the nomination of the prisoner and to give it legal effect. The criminal was then released and pardoned. Immediately the minster bells began to ring, the doors of the cathedral were flung open, the organ pealed, hymns were sung, candles lit, and every solemnity observed in token of joy and gladness. Further, in presence of the conclave all the depositions of the other prisoners were burnt on the altar of the chapter-house. Then the archbishop and the whole of the clergy of the cathedral went in procession to the great square known as the Old Tower near the river, carrying the shrines and reliquaries of the minster, and accompanied by the joyous music of hautboys and clarions. Apparently the Old Tower occupies the site of the ancient castle of the Dukes of Normandy, and the custom of going thither in procession

came down from a time when the prisoners were detained in the castle-dungeons. In the square there stood, and still stands, a platform of stone raised high above the ground and approached by flights of steps. Thither they brought the shrine (*fierte*) of St. Romain, and thither too was led the pardoned prisoner. He ascended the platform, and after confessing his sins and receiving absolution he thrice lifted the shrine of St. Romain, while the innumerable multitude assembled in the square cried aloud, each time the shrine was lifted, "*Noel! Noel! Noel!*" which was understood to mean "God be with us!" That done, the procession re-formed and returned to the cathedral. At the head walked a beadle clad in violet, who bore on a pole the wicker effigy of the winged dragon of Notre Dame, holding a large fish in its mouth. The whispers and cries excited by the appearance of the monster were drowned in the loud fanfares of cornets, clarions, and trumpets. Behind the musicians, who wore the liveries of the Master of the Brotherhood of Notre Dame with his arms emblazoned on an ensign of taffeta, came the carved silver-gilt shrine of Notre Dame. After it followed the clergy of the cathedral to the number of two hundred, clad in robes of violet or crimson silk, bearing banners, crosses, and shrines, and chanting the hymn *De resurrectione Domini.* Then came the archbishop, giving his blessing to the great multitude who thronged the streets. The prisoner himself walked behind, bareheaded, crowned with flowers, carrying one end of the litter which supported the shrine of St. Romain; the fetters he had worn hung from the litter; and with him paced, with lighted torches in their hands, the men or women who, for the last seven years, had in like manner received their pardon. Another beadle, in a violet livery, marched behind bearing aloft on a pole the wicker effigy of the dragon (*Gargouille*) destroyed by St. Romain; in its mouth the dragon sometimes held a live animal, such as a young fox, a rabbit, or a sucking pig, and it was attended by the Brotherhood of the Gargouillards. The clergy of the thirty-two parishes of Rouen also took part in the procession, which moved from the Old Tower to the cathedral amid the acclamations of the crowd, while from every

church tower in the city the bells rang out a joyous peal, the great *Georges d'Amboise* thundering above them all. After mass had been performed in the cathedral, the prisoner was taken to the house of the Master of the Brotherhood of St. Romain, where he was magnificently feasted, lodged, and served, however humble his rank. Next morning he again presented himself to the chapter, where, kneeling in the presence of a great assembly, he was severely reproved for his sins and admonished to give thanks to God, to St. Romain, and to the canons for the pardon he had received in virtue of the privilege.

History and meaning of the privilege of the *Fierte* or shrine of St. Romain at Rouen.

What was the origin and meaning of this remarkable privilege of the *Fierte*, as the shrine of St. Romain was called? Its history has been carefully investigated by A. Floquet, Chief Registrar of the Royal Court of Rouen, with the aid of all the documentary evidence, including the archives both at Rouen and Paris. He appears to have shewn conclusively that the association of St. Romain with the custom is comparatively late. We possess a life of the saint in Latin verse, dating from the eighth century, in which the miracles said to have been wrought by him are set forth in a strain of pompous eulogy. Yet neither in it nor in any of the other early lives of St. Romain and St. Ouen, nor in any of the older chronicles and martyrologies, is a single word said about the destruction of the dragon and the deliverance of the prisoner. It is not till 1394 that we meet for the first time with a mention of the miracle. Moreover, the deliverance of the prisoner can hardly have been instituted in honour of St. Romain, else it would have taken place on the twenty-third of October, the day on which the Church of Rouen celebrates the translation of the saint's bones to the cathedral. St. Romain died in 638, and his bones were transferred to the cathedral of Rouen at the end of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfth century. Further, Floquet has adduced strong grounds for believing that the privilege claimed by the chapter of Rouen of annually pardoning a condemned criminal on Ascension Day was unknown in the early years of the twelfth century, and that it originated in the reign of Henry I. or Stephen, if not in that of Henry II. He supposes the ceremony to

have been in its origin a scenic representation of the triumph of Christ over sin and death, the deliverance of the condemned prisoner symbolising the deliverance of man from the yoke of corruption, and bringing home to the people in a visible form the great mystery which the festival of the Ascension was instituted to commemorate. Such dramatic expositions of Christian doctrine, he points out, were common in the Middle Ages.

Suggested origin of the custom.

Plausible as is this solution of the problem, it can scarcely be regarded as satisfactory. Had this been the real origin of the privilege, we should expect to find the Ascension of Christ either plainly enacted, or at least distinctly alluded to in the ceremony; but this, so far as we can learn, was not so. Again, would it not savour of blasphemy to represent the sinless and glorified Redeemer by a ruffian stained with the blackest crimes? Moreover, the part played by the dragon in the legend and in the spectacle seems too important to allow us to explain it away, with Floquet, as a mere symbol of the suppression of paganism by St. Romain. The tale of the conquest of the dragon is older than Christianity, and cannot be explained by it. At Rouen the connexion of St. Romain with the story seems certainly to be late, but that does not prove the story itself to be late also. Judging from the analogy of similar tales elsewhere, we may conjecture that in the Rouen version the criminal represents a victim annually sacrificed to a water-spirit or other fabulous being, while the Christian saint has displaced a pagan hero, who was said to have delivered the victim from death and put an end to the sacrifice by slaying the monster. Thus it seems possible that the custom of annually pardoning a condemned malefactor may have superseded an older practice of treating him as a public scapegoat, who died to save the rest of the people. In the sequel we shall see that such customs have been observed in many lands. It is not incredible that at Rouen a usage of this sort should have survived in a modified shape from pagan times down to the twelfth century, and that the Church should at last have intervened to save the wretch and turn a relic of heathendom to the glory of God and St. Romain. But

this explanation of the famous privilege of the *Fierte* is put forward with a full sense of the difficulties attending it, and with no wish to dogmatise on so obscure a subject.[1]

[1] See F. N. Taillepied, *Recueil des Antiquitez et singularitez de la ville de Rouen* (Rouen, 1587), pp. 93-105; A. Floquet, *Histoire du privilége de Saint Romain* (2 vols. 8vo, Rouen, 1833). Briefer notices of the custom and legend will be found in A. Bosquet's *La Normandie romanesque et merveilleuse* (Paris and Rouen, 1845), pp. 405-409; and A. de Nore's *Coutumes, mythes, et traditions des provinces de France* (Paris and Lyons, 1846), pp. 245-250. The gilt *fierte*, or portable shrine of St. Romain, is preserved in the Chapter Library of the Cathedral at Rouen, where I saw it in May 1902. It is in the form of a chapel, on the roof of which the saint stands erect, trampling on the winged dragon, while the condemned prisoner kneels in front of him. This, however, is not the original shrine, which was so decayed that in 1776 the Chapter decided to replace it by another. See Floquet, *op. cit.* ii. 338-346. The custom of carrying the dragons in procession was stopped in 1753 because of its tendency to impair the solemnity of the ceremony (Floquet, *op. cit.* ii. 301). Even more famous than the dragon of Rouen was the dragon of Tarascon, an effigy of which used to be carried in procession on Whitsunday. See A. de Nore, *op. cit.* pp. 47 *sqq.* As to other French dragons see P. Sébillot, *Le Folk-lore de France*, i. (Paris, 1904) pp. 468-470.

CHAPTER XIII

THE KINGS OF ROME AND ALBA

§ 1. *Numa and Egeria*

Egeria at Nemi a nymph of water and of the oak, perhaps a form of Diana.

FROM the foregoing survey of custom and legend we may infer that the sacred marriage of the powers both of vegetation and of water has been celebrated by many peoples for the sake of promoting the fertility of the earth, on which the life of animals and men ultimately depends, and that in such rites the part of the divine bridegroom or bride is often sustained by a man or woman. The evidence may, therefore, lend some countenance to the conjecture that in the sacred grove at Nemi, where the powers of vegetation and of water manifested themselves in the fair forms of shady woods, tumbling cascades, and glassy lake, a marriage like that of our King and Queen of May was annually celebrated between the mortal King of the Wood and the immortal Queen of the Wood, Diana. In this connexion an important figure in the grove was the water-nymph Egeria, who was worshipped by pregnant women because she, like Diana, could grant them an easy delivery.[1] From this it seems fairly safe to conclude that, like many other springs, the water of Egeria was credited with a power of facilitating conception as well as delivery. The votive offerings found on the spot, which clearly refer to the begetting of children,[2] may possibly have been dedicated to Egeria rather than to Diana, or perhaps we should rather say that the water-nymph Egeria is only another form of the great nature-goddess Diana herself, the mistress of sounding

[1] See above, vol. i. pp. 17 *sq.*

[2] See above, vol. i. p. 12.

rivers as well as of umbrageous woods,[1] who had her home by the lake and her mirror in its calm waters, and whose Greek counterpart Artemis loved to haunt meres and springs.[2] The identification of Egeria with Diana is confirmed by a statement of Plutarch that Egeria was one of the oak-nymphs[3] whom the Romans believed to preside over every green oak-grove;[4] for while Diana was a goddess of the woodlands in general she appears to have been intimately associated with oaks in particular, especially at her sacred grove of Nemi.[5] Perhaps, then, Egeria was the fairy of a spring that flowed from the roots of a sacred oak. Such a spring is said to have gushed from the foot of the great oak at Dodona, and from its murmurous flow the priestess drew oracles.[6] Among the Greeks a draught of water from certain sacred springs or wells was supposed to confer prophetic powers.[7] This would explain the more than mortal wisdom with which, according to tradition, Egeria inspired her royal husband or lover Numa.[8] When we remember how very often in early society the king is held responsible for the fall of rain and the fruitfulness of the earth, it seems hardly rash to conjecture that in the legend of the nuptials of Numa and Egeria we have a reminiscence of a sacred marriage which the old Roman kings regularly contracted with a goddess of vegetation and water for the purpose of enabling him to discharge his divine or magical functions. In such a rite the part of the goddess might be played either by an image or a woman, and if by a woman, probably by the Queen. If there is any truth in this conjecture, we may

The legend of the nuptials of Numa and Egeria may be a reminiscence of a sacred marriage which the kings of Rome contracted with a goddess of water and of vegetation.

[1] Catullus, xxxiv. 9 *sqq.*

[2] Wernicke, in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyklopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, ii. coll. 1343, 1351.

[3] Plutarch, *De fortuna Romanorum*, 9. This statement would be strongly confirmed by etymology if we could be sure that, as Mr. A. B. Cook has suggested, the name Egeria is derived from a root *aeg* meaning "oak." The name is spelt *Aegeria* by Valerius Maximus (i. 2. 1). See A. B. Cook, "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xviii. (1904) p. 366; *id.* "The European Sky-God," *Folk-lore*, xvi. (1905) pp. 283 *sq.*; and as to the root *aeg* see O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Atertumskunde* (Strasburg, 1901), p. 164.

[4] Festus, *s.v.* "Querquetulanae," pp. 260, 261, ed. C. O. Müller.

[5] See below, p. 380.

[6] Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* iii. 466.

[7] Tacitus, *Annals*, ii. 54; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 232; Pausanias, ix. 2. 11, x. 24. 7; Lucian, *Bis accusatus*, 1.

[8] See above, vol. i. p. 18.

suppose that the King and Queen of Rome masqueraded as god and goddess at their marriage, exactly as the King and Queen of Egypt appear to have done.[1] The legend of Numa and Egeria points to a sacred grove rather than to a house as the scene of the nuptial union, which, like the marriage of the King and Queen of May, or of the vine-god and the Queen of Athens, may have been annually celebrated as a charm to ensure the fertility not only of the earth but of man and beast. Now, according to some accounts, the scene of the marriage was no other than the sacred grove of Nemi, and on quite independent grounds we have been led to suppose that in that same grove the King of the Wood was wedded to Diana. The convergence of the two distinct lines of enquiry suggests that the legendary union of the Roman king with Egeria may have been a reflection or duplicate of the union of the King of the Wood with Egeria or her double Diana. This does not imply that the Roman kings ever served as Kings of the Wood in the Arician grove, but only that they may originally have been invested with a sacred character of the same general kind, and may have held office on similar terms. To be more explicit, it is possible that they reigned, not by right of birth, but in virtue of their supposed divinity as representatives or embodiments of a god, and that as such they mated with a goddess, and had to prove their fitness from time to time to discharge their divine functions by engaging in a severe bodily struggle, which may often have proved fatal to them, leaving the crown to their victorious adversary. Our knowledge of the Roman kingship is far too scanty to allow us to affirm any one of these propositions with confidence; but at least there are some scattered hints or indications of a similarity in all these respects between the priests of Nemi and the kings of Rome, or perhaps rather between their remote predecessors in the dark ages which preceded the dawn of legend.[2]

[1] See above, pp. 130 *sqq.*

[2] The first, I believe, to point out a parallelism in detail between Rome and Aricia was Mr. A. B. Cook (*Classical Review*, xvii. (1902) pp. 376 *sqq.*); but from the similarity he inferred the humanity of the Arician priests rather than the divinity of the Roman kings. A fuller consideration of all the evidence has since led him, rightly as I conceive, to reverse the inference. See his articles "Zeus,

§ 2. *The King as Jupiter*

The Roman king seems to have personated Jupiter and worn his costume.

In the first place, then, it would seem that the Roman king personated no less a deity than Jupiter himself. For down to imperial times victorious generals celebrating a triumph, and magistrates presiding at the games in the Circus, wore the costume of Jupiter, which was borrowed for the occasion from his great temple on the Capitol; and it has been held with a high degree of probability both by ancients and moderns that in so doing they copied the traditionary attire and insignia of the Roman kings.[1] They rode a chariot drawn by four laurel-crowned horses through the city, where every one else went on foot;[2] they wore

Jupiter, and the Oak," *The Classical Review*, xviii. (1904) pp. 360-375; "The European Sky-God," *Folk-lore*, xvi. (1905) pp. 260-332. In the first and second editions of this work I had suggested that the *regifugium* at Rome may have been a relic of a rule of succession to the throne like that which obtained at Nemi. The following discussion of the religious position of the old Latin kings owes much to Mr. Cook's sagacity and learning, of which he freely imparted to me.

[1] Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* iii. 61 *sq.*, iv. 74, v. 35; B. G. Niebuhr, *History of Rome*, ii. 36; Th. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, New Edition (London, 1894), i. 83; A. J. H. Greenidge, *Roman Public Life* (London, 1901), pp. 44 *sq.* But Mommsen, while he held that the costume of a Roman god and of the Roman king was the same, denied that the king personated the god. A truer historical insight is displayed by K. O. Müller in his treatment of the subject (*Die Etrusker*, Stuttgart, 1877, i. 348 *sq.*). For a discussion of the evidence see Th. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht*,[3] i. 372 *sq.*, ii. 5 *sq.*; J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, ii. 566 *sq.*, iii.[2] 507 *sq.*; *id.*, *Privatleben der Römer*,[2] 542 *sq.*; K. O. Müller, *op. cit.* i. 344-350, ii. 198-200; Aust, *s.v.* "Juppiter," in W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, ii. coll. 633, 725-728. Among the chief passages of ancient authors on the subject are Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *ll.cc.*; Strabo, v. 2. 2, p. 220; Diodorus Siculus, v. 40; Appian, *Pun.* 66; Zonaras, *Annal.* vii. 8 and 21; Livy, i. 8. 1 *sq.*, v. 23. 4 *sq.*, v. 41. 2, x. 7. 9 *sq.*; Florus, i. 5. 6; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* viii. 195, xv. 127, 130, 137, xxxiii. 11. 111 *sq.*; Juvenal, x. 36-43; Ovid, *Ex Ponto*, ii. 57 *sq.*; Macrobius, *Saturn.* i. 6. 7-9; Servius on Virgil, *Ecl.* vi. 22, x. 27; Ael. Lampridius, *Alexander Severus*, 40. 8; Jul. Capitolinus, *Gordiani tres*, 4. 4; Aulus Gellius, v. 6. 5-7; Tertullian, *De corona militis*, 13. The fullest descriptions of a Roman triumph are those of Appian and Zonaras (vii. 21).

[2] Camillus triumphed in a chariot drawn by white horses like the sacred white horses of Jupiter and the Sun. His Republican contemporaries were offended at what they regarded as a too close imitation of the gods (Livy, v. 23. 5 *sq.*; Plutarch, *Camillus*, 7; Dio Cassius, lii. 13); but the Roman emperors followed his example, or perhaps revived the old custom of the kings. See Dio Cassius, xliii. 14; Suetonius, *Nero*, 25; Pliny, *Panegyric*, 22; Propertius, v. 1. 32; Ovid, *Ars amat.* i. 214. On the sanctity of white horses among various branches of the Aryan stock, see J. von Negelein, "Die volksthümliche Bedeutung der weissen Farbe," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxiii. (1901) pp. 62-66; W. Ridgeway, *The Origin and Influence of the Thoroughbred Horse* (Cambridge,

purple robes embroidered or spangled with gold; in the right hand they bore a branch of laurel and in the left hand an ivory sceptre topped with an eagle; a wreath of laurel crowned their brows; their face was reddened with vermilion; and over their head a slave held a heavy crown of massy gold fashioned in the likeness of oak leaves.[1] In this attire the assimilation of the man to the god comes out above all in the eagle-topped sceptre, the oaken crown, and the reddened face. For the eagle was the bird of Jove, the oak was his sacred tree, and the face of his image standing in his four-horse chariot on the Capitol was in like manner regularly dyed red on festivals; indeed, so important was it deemed to keep the divine features properly rouged that one of the first duties of the censors was to contract for having this done.[2] The Greeks sometimes painted red the face or the whole body of the wine-god Dionysus.[3] These customs may have been a substitute for an older practice of feeding a god by smearing the face, and especially the lips,

1905), pp. 105, 186, 187, 294, 295, 419. As to the horses of the Sun, see above, vol. i. pp. 315 *sq.*

[1] Tertullian, *De corona militis*, 13, "*Coronant et publicos ordines laureis publicae causae magistratus vero insuper aureis. Praeferuntur etiam illis Hetruscae. Hoc vocabulum est coronarum, quas gemmis et foliis ex auro quercinis ob Jovem insignes ad deducendas thensas cum palmatis togis sumunt.*" The *thensae* were the sacred cars in which the images of the gods were carried at the procession of the Circensian games (see W. Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*,[3] *s.v.*). That the Etruscan crown described by Tertullian was the golden crown held by a slave over the head of a general on his triumph may be inferred from Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxiii. 11, "*Vulgoque sic triumphabant, et cum corona ex auro Etrusca sustineretur a tergo, anulus tamen in digito ferreus erat aeque triumphantis et servi fortasse coronam sustinentis.*" Compare Zonaras, *Annal.* vii. 21; Juvenal, x. 38 *sqq.* Mommsen says that the triumphal golden crown was made in the shape of laurel leaves (*Römisches Staatsrecht*, i.[3] 427); but none of the ancient authors cited by him appears to affirm this, with the exception of Aulus Gellius (v. 6. 5-7, "*Triumphales coronae sunt aureae, quae imperatoribus ob honorem triumphi mittuntur. Id vulgo dicitur aurum coronarium. Haec antiquitus e lauru erant, post fieri ex auro coeptae*"). Gellius may have confused the wreath of real laurel which the general wore on his head (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxiii. 127, 130, 137) with the golden crown which was held over him by a slave. The two crowns are clearly distinguished by Zonaras (*l.c.*), though he does not describe the shape of the golden crown. Thus there is no good ground for rejecting the express testimony of Tertullian that the golden crown was shaped like oak-leaves. This seems to have been Mommsen's own earlier opinion, since he mentions "a chaplet of oaken leaves in gold" as part of the insignia of the Roman kings (*Roman History*, London, 1894, i. 83).

[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxiii. 111 *sq.*; Servius on Virgil, *Ecl.* vi. 22, x. 27.

[3] Pausanias, ii. 2. 6, vii. 26. 11, viii. 39. 6. For other examples of idols painted red see my note on Pausanias, ii. 2. 6.

of his idol with the blood of a sacrificial victim. Many examples of such a practice might be adduced from the religion of barbarous peoples.[1] As the triumphal procession always ended in the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol, it was peculiarly appropriate that the head of the victor should be graced by a crown of oak leaves, for not only was every oak consecrated to Jupiter,[2] but the Capitoline temple of the god was said to have been built by Romulus beside a sacred oak, venerated by shepherds, to which the king attached the spoils won by him from the enemy's general in battle.[3] We are expressly told that the oak crown was sacred to Capitoline Jupiter;[4] a passage of Ovid proves that it was regarded as the god's special emblem. Writing in exile on the shores of the Black Sea, the poet sends the book which he has just composed to Rome to be published there; he personifies the volume and imagines it passing along the Sacred Way and up to the door of the emperor's stately palace on the Palatine hill. Above the portal hung shining arms and a crown of oak leaves. At the sight the poet starts: "Is this, quoth I, the house of Jove? For sure to my prophetic soul the oaken crown was reason good to think it so."[5] The senate had granted Augustus the right

The oak crown as an emblem of Jupiter and of the Roman emperors.

[1] For instances see Fr. Kunstmann, "Valentin Ferdinand's Beschreibung der Serra Leoa," *Abhandlungen d. histor. Classe d. kön. Bayer. Akademie d. Wissenschaften*, ix. (Munich, 1866) p. 131; J. B. Labat, *Relation historique de l'Éthiopie Occidentale* (Paris, 1732), i. 250; Gmelin, *Reise durch Sibirien*, ii. 476; "Ueber den religiösen Glauben und die Ceremonien der heidnischen Samojeden im Kreise Mesen," *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, N.F. viii. (1860) p. 59; E. Rae, *The White Sea Peninsula*, p. 150; J. B. Müller, "Les Mœurs et usages des Ostiackes," *Recueil de voiages au Nord*, viii. (Amsterdam, 1727) pp. 414 *sq.*; Delamare, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xii. (1840) p. 482; Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle-Espagne* (Paris, 1880), p. 185; J. de Velasco, *Histoire du royaume de Quito*, p. 121 (Ternaux-Compans, *Voyages, relations et mémoires*, xviii., Paris, 1840); E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. 374 n. 1; F. B. Jevons, *Introduction to the History of Religion* (London, 1896), p. 158. Often we are merely told that the blood is smeared or sprinkled on the image. See A. B. Ellis, *Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, pp. 42, 79; *id.*, *Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, pp. 102, 106; A. F. Mockler-Ferryman, *British Nigeria* (London, 1902), p. 255; Fr. Kramer, "Der Götzendienst der Niasser," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxiii. (1890) p. 496. For more examples see my note on Pausanias, ii. 2. 6.

[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xii. 3; Phaedrus, iii. 17. 1 *sqq.*; Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 332, and on *Ecl.* i. 17.

[3] Livy, i. 10. 4 *sqq.*

[4] Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 92.

[5] Ovid, *Tristia*, iii. 31 *sqq.*

to have the wreath of oak always suspended over his door;[1] and elsewhere Ovid counts this among the more than mortal honours bestowed on the emperor.[2] On the Capitol at Cirta there stood a silver image of Jupiter wearing a silver crown of oak leaves and acorns.[3] Similarly at Dodona, the most famous sanctuary of the oak in Greece, the image of Zeus appears to have worn a chaplet of oak leaves; for the god is constantly thus portrayed on coins of Epirus.[4] And just as Roman kings appear to have personated the oak-god Jupiter, so Greek kings appear to have personated the oak-god Zeus. The legendary Salmoneus of Elis is certainly reported to have done so;[5] Periphas, an ancient king of Athens, is said to have been styled Zeus by his people, and to have been changed into an eagle by his jealous namesake.[6] In Homer kings are often spoken of as nurtured by Zeus and divine.[7] Indeed we are told that in ancient days every Greek king was called Zeus.[8]

To the Romans the breach between the human and the divine was not so wide as it seems to us.

Thus we may fairly assume that on certain solemn occasions Roman generals and magistrates personated the supreme god, and that in so doing they revived the practice of the early kings. To us moderns, for whom the breach which divides the human and the divine has deepened into an impassable gulf, such mimicry may appear impious, but it was otherwise with the ancients. To their thinking gods and men were akin, for many families traced their descent from a divinity, and the deification of a man

[1] Dio Cassius, liii. 19.

[2] Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 607 *sqq.*, iv. 953 *sq.* Tiberius refused a similar honour (Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 26); but Domitian seems to have accepted it (Martial, viii. 82. 7). Two statues of Claudius, one in the Vatican, the other in the Lateran Museum, represent the emperor as Jupiter wearing the oak crown (W. Helbig, *Führer durch die öffentlichen Sammlungen klassischer Altertümer in Rom*,[2] i. Nos. 312, 673).

[3] *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, viii. No. 6981.

[4] J. Overbeck, *Griechische Kunstmythologie*, Besonderer Theil, i. 232 *sqq.*; L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, i. 107 *sq.*

[5] See above, vol. i. p. 310.

[6] Antoninus Liberalis, *Transform.* 6. For this and the two following passages of Tzetzes I am indebted to Mr. A. B. Cook. See further his articles, "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xvii. (1903) p. 409; "The European Sky-god," *Folk-lore*, xv. (1904) pp. 299 *sqq.*

[7] H. Ebeling, *Lexicon Homericum*, *s.vv.* βασιλεύς, διοτρεφής, and θεῖος.

[8] J. Tzetzes, *Antehomerica*, 102 *sq.*:

οἱ πρὶν γάρ τε Δίας πάντας κάλεον βασιλῆας,
οὕνεκά μιν καλὸς Διὸς ἀστὴρ σκῆπτρον ὀπάζει.

id., *Chiliades*, i. 474:

τοὺς βασιλεῖς δ' ἀνέκαθε Δίας ἐκάλουν πάντας.

probably seemed as little extraordinary to them as the canonisation of a saint seems to a modern Catholic. The Romans in particular were quite familiar with the spectacle of men masquerading as spirits; for at the funerals of great houses all the illustrious dead of the family were personated by men specially chosen for their resemblance to the departed. These representatives wore masks fashioned and painted in the likeness of the originals: they were dressed in rich robes of office, resplendent with purple and gold, such as the dead nobles had worn in their lifetime: like them, they rode in chariots through the city preceded by the rods and axes, and attended by all the pomp and heraldry of high station; and when at last the funeral procession, after threading its way through the crowded streets, defiled into the Forum, the maskers solemnly took their seats on ivory chairs placed for them on the platform of the Rostra, in the sight of the people, recalling no doubt to the old, by their silent presence, the memories of an illustrious past, and firing the young with the ambition of a glorious future.[1]

Roman custom of representing dead ancestors by masked men.

According to a tradition which we have no reason to reject, Rome was founded by settlers from Alba Longa, a city situated on the slope of the Alban hills, overlooking the lake and the Campagna.[2] Hence if the Roman kings claimed to be representatives or embodiments of Jupiter, the god of the sky, of the thunder, and of the oak, it is natural to suppose that the kings of Alba, from whom the founder of Rome traced his descent, may have set up the same claim before them. Now the Alban dynasty bore the name of Silvii or Wood, and it can hardly be without significance that in the vision of the historic glories of Rome revealed to Aeneas in the underworld, Virgil, an antiquary as well as a poet, should represent all the line of Silvii as crowned with oak.[3] A chaplet of oak leaves would thus seem to

The kings of Alba seem also to have claimed to represent Jupiter.

The Silvii and the Julii.

[1] Polybius, vi. 53 *sq.*

[2] As to the situation, see Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* i. 66; H. Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde*, ii. 582 *sq.*

[3] Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 772. I have to thank Mr. A. B. Cook for directing my attention to the Alban kings and their interesting legends. See his articles "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xviii. (1904) pp. 363 *sq.*; "The European Sky-god," *Folk-lore*, xvi. (1905) pp. 285 *sqq.*

have been part of the insignia of the old kings of Alba Longa as of their successors the kings of Rome; in both cases it marked the monarch as the human representative of the oak-god. With regard to Silvius, the first king of the Alban dynasty, we are told that he got his name because he had been born or brought up in the forest, and that when he came to man's estate he contested the kingdom with his kinsman Julus, whose name, as some of the ancients themselves perceived, means the Little Jupiter. The people decided in favour of Silvius, but his rival Julus was consoled for the loss of the crown by being invested with religious authority and the office of chief pontiff, or perhaps rather of Flamen Dialis, the highest dignity after the kingship. From this Julus or Little Jupiter, the noble house of the Julii, and hence the first emperors of Rome, believed themselves to be sprung.[1] The legend of the dispute between Silvius and Julus may preserve a reminiscence of such a partition of spiritual and temporal powers in Alba Longa as afterwards took place in Rome, when the old regal office was divided between the Consuls and the King of the Sacred Rites.[2] Many more instances of such a schism will meet us later on. That the Julian house worshipped Vejovis, the Little Jupiter, according to the ancient rites of Alba Longa is proved by the inscription on an altar which they dedicated to him at their ancestral home of Bovillae, a colony of Alba Longa, situated at the foot of the Alban hills.[3] The

Julus, the little Jupiter.

[1] Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 760 *sqq.*, with the commentary of Servius; Livy, i. 3. 6 *sqq.*; Ovid, *Metam.* xiv. 609 *sqq.*; *id.*, *Fasti*, iv. 39 *sqq.*; Festus, *s.v.* "Silvi," p. 340, ed. C. O. Müller; Aurelius Victor, *Origo gentis Romanae*, 15-17; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* i. 70; Diodorus Siculus, in Eusebius, *Chronic.* i. coll. 285, 287, ed. A. Schoene; Diodorus Siculus, vii. 3a and 3b, vol. ii. pp. 110-112, ed. L. Dindorf (Teubner edition); Joannes Lydus, *De magistratibus*, i. 21. As to the derivation of the name Julus, see Aurelius Victor, *op. cit.* 15, "*Igitur Latini Ascanium ob insignem virtutem non solum Jove ortum crediderunt, sed etiam per diminutionem, declinato paululum nomine, primo Jobum, dein postea Julum appellarant*"; also Steuding, in W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon d. griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, ii. 574. Compare W. M. Lindsay, *The Latin Language* (Oxford, 1894), p. 250. According to Diodorus, the priesthood bestowed on Julus was the pontificate; but the name Julus or Little Jupiter suggests that the office was rather that of Flamen Dialis, who was a sort of living embodiment of Jupiter (see below, pp. 191 *sq.*), and whose name of *Dialis* is derived from the same root as Julus. On the Julii and their relation to Vejovis see R. H. Klausen, *Aeneas und die Penaten*, ii. 1059 *sqq.*

[2] See above, p. 1, and vol. i. p. 44.

[3] *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*,

Caesars, the most illustrious family of the Julian house, took their name from their long hair (*caesaries*),[1] which was probably in those early days, as it was among the Franks long afterwards, a symbol of royalty.[2]

The Alban kings seem to have been expected to make thunder and rain for the good of their subjects.

But in ceding the pontificate to their rivals, it would seem that the reigning dynasty of the Silvii or Woods by no means renounced their own claim to personate the god of the oak and the thunder; for the Roman annals record that one of them, Romulus, Remulus, or Amulius Silvius by name, set up for being a god in his own person, the equal or superior of Jupiter. To support his pretensions and overawe his subjects, he constructed machines whereby he mimicked the clap of thunder and the flash of lightning. Diodorus relates that in the season of fruitage, when thunder is loud and frequent, the king commanded his soldiers to drown the roar of heaven's artillery by clashing their swords against their shields. But he paid the penalty of his impiety, for he perished, he and his house, struck by a thunderbolt in the midst of a dreadful storm. Swollen by the rain, the Alban lake rose in flood and drowned his palace. But still, says an ancient historian, when the water is low and the surface unruffled by a breeze, you may see the ruins of the palace at the bottom of the clear lake.[3] Taken along with

xiv. No. 2387; L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 263 *sq.* On Vejovis as the Little Jupiter see Festus, *s.v.* "Vesculi," p. 379, "*Ve enim syllabam rei parvae praeponebant, unde Veiovem parvum Iovem et vegrandem fabam minutam dicebant*"; also Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 429-448. At Rome the sanctuary of Vejovis was on the saddle between the two peaks of the Capitoline hill (Aulus Gellius, v. 12. 1 *sq.*; Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 429 *sq.*); thus he appropriately dwelt on the same hill as the Great Jupiter, but lower down the slope. On coins of the Gargilian, Ogulnian and Vergilian houses Vejovis is represented by a youthful beardless head, crowned with oak. See E. Babelon, *Monnaies de la République Romaine*, i. 532, ii. 266, 529. On other Republican coins his head is crowned with laurel. See E. Babelon, *op. cit.* i. 77, 505-508, ii. 6, 8. Circensian games were held at Bovillae in honour of the Julian family, and Tiberius dedicated a chapel to them there. See Tacitus, *Annals*, ii. 41, xv. 23.

[1] Festus, *s.v.* "Caesar," p. 57, ed. C. O. Müller. Other but less probable explanations of the name are suggested by Aelius Spartianus (*Helius*, ii. 3 *sq.*).

[2] As to the Frankish kings see Agathias, *Hist.* i. 3; J. Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, pp. 239 *sqq.*; *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, i. 368 *sq.*

[3] Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Roman.* i. 71; Diodorus Siculus, in Eusebius, *Chronic.* bk. i. coll. 287, 289, ed. A. Schoene; Diodorus Siculus, vii. 3a and 4, ed. L. Dindorf; Zonaras, *Annal.* vii. 1; Aurelius Victor, *Origo gentis Romanae*, 18; Ovid, *Metam.* xiv. 616-618; *id.*, *Fasti*, iv. 50; Livy,

the similar story of Salmoneus, king of Elis,[1] this legend points to a real custom observed by the early kings of Greece and Italy, who like their fellows in Africa down to modern times may have been expected to produce rain and thunder for the good of the crops.[2] The priestly king Numa passed for an adept in the art of drawing down lightning from the sky.[3] Mock thunder, we know, has been made by various peoples as a rain-charm in modern times;[4] why should it not have been made by kings in antiquity?

The legends of the deaths of Roman kings point to a close connexion between the king and the thunder-god.

In this connexion it deserves to be noted that, according to the legend, Salmoneus, like his Alban counterpart, was killed by a thunderbolt; and that one of the Roman kings, Tullus Hostilius, is reported to have met with the same end in an attempt to draw down Jupiter in the form of lightning from the sky.[5] Aeneas himself, the legendary ancestor both of the Alban and the Roman kings, vanished from the world in a violent thunderstorm, and was afterwards worshipped as Jupiter Indiges. A mound of earth, encircled with fine trees, on the bank of the little river Numicius was pointed out as his grave.[6] Romulus, too, the first king of Rome, disappeared in like manner. It was the seventh of July, and the king was reviewing his army at the Goat's Marsh, outside the walls of the city. Suddenly the sky lowered and a tempest burst, accompanied by peals of thunder. Soon the storm had swept by, leaving the brightness and

i. 3. 9. The king is called Romulus by Livy, Remulus by Ovid, Aremulus by Aurelius Victor, Amulius by Zonaras, Amulius or Arramulius by Diodorus, and Allodius by Dionysius. A tale of a city submerged in the Alban lake is still current in the neighbourhood. See the English translators' note to Niebuhr's *History of Rome*,[3] i. 200. Similar stories are told in many lands. See my note on Pausanias, vii. 24. 6.

[1] See above, vol. i. p. 310.

[2] See above, vol. i. pp. 342 *sqq.*

[3] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 140, xxviii. 13 *sq.* Other writers speak only of Numa's skill in expiating the prodigy or evil omen of thunderbolts. See Livy, i. 20. 7; Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 285-348; Plutarch, *Numa*, 15; Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, v. 1-4.

[4] See above, vol. i. pp. 248, 251.

[5] Apollodorus, i. 9. 7; Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 592 *sqq.*; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 140, xxviii. 14 (referring to the first book of L. Piso's *Annals*); Livy, i. 31. 8; Aurelius Victor, *De viris illustribus*, 4; Zonaras, *Annal.* vii. 6. According to another account Tullus Hostilius was murdered by his successor Ancus Martius during a violent storm (Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* iii. 35; Zonaras, *l.c.*).

[6] Livy, i. 2. 6; Ovid, *Metam.* xiv. 598-608; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* iii. 56; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* i. 64; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* i. 259; Aurelius Victor, *Origo gentis Romanae*, 14. Only the last writer mentions the thunderstorm.

Death and deification of Romulus.

serenity of the summer day behind. But Romulus was never seen again. Those who had stood by him said they saw him caught up to heaven in a whirlwind; and not long afterwards a certain Proculus Julius, a patrician of Alban birth and descent, declared on oath that Romulus had appeared to him clad in bright armour, and announced that the Romans were to worship him as a god under the name of Quirinus, and to build him a temple on the spot. The temple was built and the place was henceforth known as the Quirinal hill.[1] In this legend it is significant that the annunciation of the king's divinity should be put in the mouth of a member of the Julian house, a native of Alba; for we have seen reason to believe that at Alba the Julii had competed with the Silvii, from whom Romulus was descended, for the kingship, and with it for the honour of personating Jupiter. If, as seems to be philologically possible, the word Quirinus is derived from the same root as *quercus*, "an oak," the name of the deified Romulus would mean no more than "the oak-god," that is, Jupiter.[2] Thus the tradition would square perfectly with the other indications of custom and legend which have led us to conclude that the kings both of Rome and of Alba claimed to embody in their own persons the god of the sky, of thunder, and of the oak. Certainly the stories which associated the deaths of so many of them with thunderstorms point to a close

[1] Livy, i. 16; Cicero, *De legibus*, i. 1. 3; *id.*, *De re publica*, i. 16. 25, ii. 10. 20; Ovid, *Fasti*, ii. 475-512; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 27 *sq.*; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* ii. 56 and 63; Zonaras, *Annal.* vii. 4; Aurelius Victor, *De viris illustribus*, 2; Florus, *Epitoma*, i. 1. 16-18. From Cicero (*De legibus*, i. 1. 3) we learn that the apparition of Romulus to Proculus Julius took place near the spot where the house of Atticus afterwards stood, and from Cornelius Nepos (*Atticus*, 13. 2) we know that Atticus had an agreeable villa and shady garden on the Quirinal. As to the temple of Quirinus see also Varro, *De lingua Latina*, v. 51; Festus, pp. 254, 255, ed. C. O. Müller; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xv. 120. As to the site of the temple and the question whether it was identical with the temple dedicated by L. Papirius Cursor in 293 B.C. (Livy, x. 46. 7; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 213) see O. Richter, *Topographie der Stadt Rom*,[2] pp. 286 *sqq.*; G. Wissowa, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen* (Munich, 1904), pp. 144 *sqq.*

[2] See A. B. Cook, "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xviii. (1904) pp. 368 *sq.*; *id.* "The European Sky-god," *Folk-lore*, xvi. (1905) p. 281. But a serious argument against the proposed derivation of Quirinus from *quercus* is that, as I am informed by my learned philological friend the Rev. Prof. J. H. Moulton, it is inconsistent with the much more probable derivation of Perkunas from *quercus*. See below, p. 367, note 3.

connexion with the god of thunder and lightning. A king who had been wont to fulminate in his lifetime might naturally be supposed at death to be carried up in a thunder-storm to heaven, there to discharge above the clouds the same duties which he had performed on earth. Such a tale would be all the more likely to attach itself to the twin Romulus, if the early Romans shared the widespread superstition that twins have power over the weather in general and over rain and wind in particular.[1] That tempests are caused by the spirits of the dead is a belief of the Araucanians of Chili. Not a storm bursts upon the Andes or the ocean which these Indians do not ascribe to a battle between the souls of their fellow-countrymen and the dead Spaniards. In the roaring of the wind they hear the trampling of the ghostly horses, in the peal of the thunder the roll of the drums, and in the flashes of lightning the fire of the artillery.[2]

Every Latin town probably had its local Jupiter.

Thus, if the kings of Alba and Rome imitated Jupiter as god of the oak by wearing a crown of oak leaves, they seem also to have copied him in his character of a weather-god by pretending to make thunder and lightning. And if they did so, it is probable that, like Jupiter in heaven and many kings on earth, they also acted as public rain-makers, wringing showers from the dark sky by their enchantments whenever the parched earth cried out for the refreshing moisture. At Rome the sluices of heaven were opened by means of a sacred stone, and the ceremony appears to have formed part of the ritual of Jupiter Elicius, the god who elicits from the clouds the flashing lightning and the dripping rain.[3]

[1] See above, vol. i. pp. 262 *sqq.*

[2] J. I. Molina, *Geographical, Natural, and Civil History of Chili* (London, 1809), ii. 92 *sq.* The savage Conibos of the Ucayali river in eastern Peru imagine that thunder is the voice of the dead (W. Smyth and F. Lowe, *Journey from Lima to Para*, London, 1836, p. 240); and among them when parents who have lost a child within three months hear thunder, they go and dance on the grave, howling turn about (De St. Cricq, "Voyage du Pérou au Brésil," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, ivme série, vi., Paris, 1853, p. 294). The Yuracares of eastern Peru threaten the thunder-god with their arrows and defy him when he thunders (A. D'Orbigny, *L'Homme américain*, i. 365), just as the Thracians did of old (Herodotus, iv. 94). So the Kayans of Borneo, on hearing a peal of thunder, have been seen to grasp their swords for the purpose of keeping off the demon who causes it (A. W. Nieuwenhuis, *In Centraal Borneo*, i. 140 *sq.*, 146 *sq.*).

[3] See above, vol. i. p. 310; and for the connexion of the rite with Jupiter Elicius see O. Gilbert, *Geschichte und*

And who so well fitted to perform the ceremony as the king, the living representative of the sky-god?

Many local Jupiters in Latium.

The conclusion which we have reached as to the kings of Rome and Alba probably holds good of all the kings of ancient Latium: each of them, we may suppose, represented or embodied the local Jupiter. For we can hardly doubt that of old every Latin town or settlement had its own Jupiter, as every town and almost every church in modern Italy has its own Madonna; and like the Baal of the Semites the local Jupiter was commonly worshipped on high places. Wooded heights, round which the rain-clouds gather, were indeed the natural sanctuaries for a god of the sky, the rain, and the oak. At Rome he occupied one summit of the Capitoline hill, while the other summit was assigned to his wife Juno, whose temple, with the long flight of stairs leading up to it, has for ages been appropriately replaced by the church of St. Mary "in the altar of the sky" (*in Araceli*).[1] That both heights were originally wooded seems certain, for down to imperial times the saddle which joins them was known as the place "between the two groves."[2] Virgil tells us that the hilltop where gilded temples glittered in his day had been covered of old by shaggy thickets, the haunt of woodland elves and savage men, "born of the tree-trunks and the heart of oak."[3] These thickets were probably composed of oaks, for the oak crown was sacred to Capitoline Juno as well as to Jupiter;[4] it was to a sacred oak on the Capitol that Romulus fastened the spoils,[5] and there is evidence that in early times oak-woods clothed other of the hills on which Rome was afterwards built. Thus

Capitoline Jupiter and Juno.

The hills of Rome once wooded with oaks.

Topographie der Stadt Rom im Altertum, ii. 154 *sq.*; Aust, in W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, ii. 657 *sq.* As to the connexion of Jupiter with the rain-making ceremony (*aquaelicium*), the combined evidence of Petronius (*Sat.* 44) and Tertullian (*Apologeticus*, 40) seems to me conclusive.

[1] Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 637 *sq.*, vi. 183 *sqq.*; Livy, vii. 28. 4 *sq.*; Cicero, *De divinatione*, i. 45. 101; Solinus, i. 21. Although the temple was not dedicated until 344 B.C., the worship of the goddess of the hill appears to have been very ancient. See H. Jordan, *Topographie der Stadt Rom im Altertum*, i. 2, pp. 109 *sq.*; W. H. Roscher, *Lexikon d. griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, ii. coll. 592 *sq.*

[2] Livy, i. 8. 5; Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 430; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* ii. 15.

[3] Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 314-318, 347-354.

[4] Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 92.

[5] Livy, i. 10. 5.

Oak woods on the Roman hills in antiquity.

the Caelian hill went originally by the name of the Mountain of the Oak Grove on account of the thickets of oak by which it was overgrown,[1] and Jupiter was here worshipped in his character of the oak-god;[2] one of the old gates of Rome, apparently between the Caelian and the Esquiline hills, was called the Gate of the Oak Grove for a similar reason;[3] and within the walls hard by was a Chapel of the Oak Grove dedicated to the worship of the oak-nymphs.[4] These nymphs appear on coins of the Accoleian family as three women supporting on their shoulders a pole from which rise leafy branches.[5] The Esquiline hill seems also to have derived its name from its oaks. After mentioning the Chapel of the Oak and other hallowed groves which still dotted the hill in his time, the antiquary Varro tells us that their bounds were now much curtailed, adding with a sigh that it was no wonder the sacred old trees should give way to the modern worship of Mammon.[6] Apparently the Roman nobles of those days sold the ancient woods, as their descendants sell their beautiful gardens, for building-land. To this list of oak-clad hills on the left bank of the Tiber must be added the Quirinal, if Quirinus, who had a very ancient shrine on the hill, was the oak-god.[7] Under the Aventine was a grove of evergreen oaks,[8] which appears to have been no other than the grove of Egeria outside the Porta Capena.[9] The old grove of Vesta, which once skirted the foot of the Palatine hill on the side of the Forum,[10] must surely have been a grove of oaks; for not only

[1] *Mons Querquetulanus;* see Tacitus, *Annals*, iv. 65.

[2] A monument found at Rome represents Jupiter beside an oak, and underneath is the dedication: *Jovi Caelio.* See H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, No. 3080.

[3] *Porta Querquetulana* or *Querquetularia;* see Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 37; Festus, pp. 260, 261, ed. C. O. Müller.

[4] Festus, *ll.cc.*; Varro, *De lingua Latina*, v. 49.

[5] E. Babelon, *Monnaies de la République Romaine*, i. 99 *sq.*

[6] Varro, *De lingua Latina*, v. 49, where, however, "*alii ab aesculetis*" is a conjecture of C. O. Müller's. I do not know what authority O. Richter has for reading *aesculis consitae* ("planted with oaks") for *excultae* in this passage (*Topographie der Stadt Rom*,[2] p. 302, n. 4). Modern topographers prefer to derive the name from *ex-colere* in the sense of "the hill outside the city" (O. Richter, *l.c.*; O. Gilbert, *Geschichte und Topographie der Stadt Rom im Altertum*, i. 166 *sq.*).

[7] See above, p. 182.

[8] Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 295 *sq.*

[9] See above, vol. i. p. 18; and. for the identification, O. Gilbert, *Geschichte und Topographie der Stadt Rom im Altertum*, ii. 152 *sqq.*; A. B. Cook, "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xviii. (1904) p. 366.

[10] Cicero, *De divinatione*, i. 45. 101.

does an oak appear growing beside the temple of Vesta on a fine relief preserved in the gallery of the Uffizi at Florence, but charred embers of the sacred Vestal fire have in recent years been discovered at the temple of Vesta in the Forum, and a microscopic analysis of them has proved that they consist of the pith or heart of trunks or great branches of oak (*quercus*).[1] The full significance of this discovery will appear later on. When the plebeians seceded to the Janiculum in the third century before Christ, the dictator Q. Hortensius summoned a meeting of the people and passed a law in an oak grove, which perhaps grew on the hill.[2] In this neighbourhood there was a street called the Street of the Oak Grove; it is mentioned in an inscription found in its original position near the modern Garibaldi bridge.[3] On the Vatican hill there stood an evergreen oak which was believed to be older than Rome; an inscription in Etruscan letters on a bronze tablet proclaimed the sanctity of the tree.[4] Finally, that oak woods existed at or near Rome in the earliest times has lately been demonstrated by the discovery in the Forum itself of a prehistoric cemetery, which contains amongst other sepultures the bones of several young children deposited in rudely hollowed trunks of oak.[5] With all this evidence before us we need not wonder that Virgil should speak of the primitive inhabitants of Rome as "born of the tree-trunks and the heart of oak," and that the Roman kings

The sacred Vestal fire fed with oak-wood.

[1] G. Boni, in *Notizie degli Scavi*, May 1900, pp. 161, 172; *id.*, *Aedes Vestae*, p. 14 (extract from the *Nuova Antologia*, 1st August 1900). Copies of these and other papers containing Commendatore Boni's account of his memorable excavations and discoveries were kindly given me by him during my stay in Rome in the winter of 1900-1901. That the fire in question was a sacrificial one is proved by the bones, potsherds, and rude copper money found among the ashes. Commend. Boni thinks that the charred remains of the wood prove that the fire was extinguished, probably by libations, and that therefore it cannot have been the perpetual holy fire of Vesta, which would have burned up completely all the fuel. But a new fire was annually lit on the first of March (Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 143 *sq.*; Macrobius, *Saturn.* i. 12. 6), which may imply that the old fire was ceremonially extinguished, as often happens in such cases.

[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 37.

[3] O. Richter, *Topographie der Stadt Rom*,[2] p. 211.

[4] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 237. The inscription was probably not in the Etruscan language, but only in an archaic alphabet like that employed in the inscription on the pyramidal stone which has been found under the Black Stone in the Forum.

[5] G. Boni, "Bimbi Romulei," *Nuova Antologia*, 16th February 1904, pp. 5 *sqq.* (separate reprint); E. Burton-Brown, *Recent Excavations in the Roman Forum* (London, 1904), p. 150.

should have worn crowns of oak leaves in imitation of the oak-god Jupiter, who dwelt in his sacred grove on the Capitol.

The Alban kings may have imitated Latian Jupiter, who dwelt on the top of the Alban Mount.

If the kings of Rome aped Capitoline Jove, their predecessors the kings of Alba probably laid themselves out to mimic the great Latian Jupiter, who had his seat above the city on the summit of the Alban Mountain. Latinus, the legendary ancestor of the dynasty, was said to have been changed into Latian Jupiter after vanishing from the world in the mysterious fashion characteristic of the old Latin kings.[1] The sanctuary of the god on the top of the mountain was the religious centre of the Latin League, as Alba was its political capital till Rome wrested the supremacy from its ancient rival. Apparently no temple, in our sense of the word, was ever erected to Jupiter on this his holy mountain; as god of the sky and thunder he appropriately received the homage of his worshippers in the open air. The massive wall, of which some remains still enclose the old garden of the Passionist monastery, seems to have been part of the sacred precinct which Tarquin the Proud, the last king of Rome, marked out for the solemn annual assembly of the Latin League.[2] The god's oldest sanctuary on this airy mountain-top was a grove;[3] and bearing in mind not merely the special consecration of the oak to Jupiter, but also the traditional oak crown of the Alban kings and the analogy of the Capitoline Jupiter at Rome, we may suppose that the trees in the grove were oaks.[4] We know that in antiquity Mount Algidus, an outlying group of the Alban hills, was covered with dark forests of oak;[5] and among the

The woods of Latium in antiquity.

[1] Festus, *s.v.* "Oscillantes," p. 194, ed. C. O. Müller.

[2] Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* iv. 49; A. Schwegler, *Römische Geschichte*, i. 341; H. Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde*, ii. 580. It is to be observed that Dionysius does not here speak of the dedication of a temple to Jupiter; when he describes the foundation of the temple of Capitoline Jupiter by Tarquin (iv. 59 and 61) his language is quite different. The monastery, founded in 1777 by Cardinal York, the last of the Stuarts, has now been converted into a meteorological station and an inn (K. Baedeker, *Central Italy and Rome*,[13] p. 400). It is fitting enough that the atmospheric phenomena should be observed by modern science on the spot where they were worshipped by ancient piety.

[3] Livy, i. 31. 3.

[4] According to tradition, the future site of Alba Longa was marked out by a white sow and her litter, which were found lying under evergreen oaks (Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 43), as Mr. A. B. Cook has pointed out (*Classical Review*, xviii. 363). The tradition seems to shew that the neighbourhood of the city was wooded with oaks.

[5] See below, p. 380.

tribes who belonged to the Latin League in the earliest days, and were entitled to share the flesh of the white bull sacrificed on the Alban Mount, there was one whose members styled themselves the Men of the Oak,[1] doubtless on account of the woods among which they dwelt.

Theophrastus's description of the woods of Latium.

But we should err if we pictured to ourselves the country as covered in historical times with an unbroken forest of oaks. Theophrastus has left us a description of the woods of Latium as they were in the fourth century before Christ. He says: "The land of the Latins is all moist. The plains produce laurels, myrtles, and wonderful beeches; for they fell trees of such a size that a single stem suffices for the keel of a Tyrrhenian ship. Pines and firs grow in the mountains. What they call the land of Circe is a lofty headland thickly wooded with oak, myrtle, and luxuriant laurels. The natives say that Circe dwelt there, and they shew the grave of Elpenor, from which grow myrtles such as wreaths are made of, whereas the other myrtle-trees are tall."[2] Thus the prospect from the top of the Alban Mount in the early days of Rome must have been very different in some respects from what it is to-day. The purple Apennines, indeed, in their eternal calm on the one hand, and the shining Mediterranean in its eternal unrest on the other, no doubt looked then much as they look now, whether bathed in sunshine, or chequered by the fleeting shadows of clouds; but instead of the desolate brown expanse of the fever-stricken Campagna, spanned by its long lines of ruined aqueducts, like the broken arches of the bridge in the vision of Mirza, the eye must have ranged over woodlands that stretched away, mile after mile, on all sides, till their varied hues of green or autumnal scarlet and gold melted insensibly into the blue of the distant mountains and sea.

The prospect from the Alban Mount in antiquity.

Thus the Alban Mount was to the Latins what Olympus was to the Greeks, the lofty abode of the sky-god, who hurled his thunderbolts from above the clouds. The white

[1] *Querquetulani.* See Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* iii. 69; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* v. 61. As to the white bulls sacrificed at the great Latin festival and partaken of by the members of the League, see Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, ii. 68; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* iv. 49. Compare Cicero, *Pro Plancio*, ix. 23; Varro, *De lingua Latina*, vi. 25.

[2] Theophrastus, *Histor. plant.* v. 8. 3.

steers which were here sacrificed to him in his sacred grove, as in the Capitol at Rome,[1] remind us of the white bulls which the Druids of Gaul sacrificed under the holy oak when they cut the mistletoe;[2] and the parallel would be all the closer if, as we have seen reason to think, the Latins worshipped Jupiter originally in groves of oak. Other resemblances between ancient Gaul and Latium will meet us later on. When we remember that the ancient Italian and Celtic peoples spoke languages which are nearly related to each other,[3] we shall not be surprised at discovering traces of community in their religion, especially in what concerns the worship of the god of the oak and the thunder. For that worship, as we shall see presently, belongs to the oldest stratum of Aryan civilisation in Europe.

Resemblance between the Latin worship of Jupiter and the Druidical worship of the oak.

But Jupiter did not reign alone on the top of his holy mountain. He had his consort with him, the goddess Juno, who was worshipped here under the same title, Moneta, as on the Capitol at Rome.[4] As the oak crown was sacred to Jupiter and Juno on the Capitol,[5] so we may suppose it was on the Alban Mount, from which the Capitoline worship was derived. Thus the oak-god would have his oak-goddess in the sacred oak grove. So at Dodona the oak-god Zeus was coupled with Dione, whose very name is only a dialectically different form of Juno;[6] and so on the top of Mount Cithaeron he was periodically wedded to an oaken

Sacred marriage of Jupiter and Juno.

[1] Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, ii. 68; Livy, xxii. 10. 7; Ovid, *Ex Ponto*, iv. 4. 31; Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 146; Horace, *Carmen Saeculare*, 49.

[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 250 *sq.*

[3] "Italic and Keltic are so closely bound together by important phonetic and morphological affinities that they are sometimes spoken of as one branch" of Aryan speech (J. H. Moulton, *Two Lectures on the Science of Language*, Cambridge, 1903, p. 6, note). "The connection of the Celtic and Italic languages is structural. It is much deeper than that of Celts and Teutons, and goes back to an earlier epoch. Celts and Latins must have dwelt together as an undivided people in the valley of the Danube, and it must have been at a much later time—after the Umbrians and Latins had crossed the Alps—that the contact of Celts and Teutons came about" (Isaac Taylor, *The Origin of the Aryans*, p. 192; compare *id.* p. 257). See also P. Giles, *Manual of Comparative Philology*[2] (London, 1901), p. 26.

[4] Livy, xlii. 7. 1, xlv. 15. 10. Compare Dio Cassius, xxxix. 20. 1. The temple on the Alban Mount was dedicated in 168 B.C., but the worship was doubtless far older.

[5] See above, pp. 176, 184.

[6] Strabo, vii. 7. 12, p. 329; Hyperides, *Or.* iii. coll. 35-37, pp. 43 *sq.*, ed. Blass; G. Curtius, *Griech. Etymologie*,[6] p. 236; W. H. Roscher, *Juno und Hera* (Leipsic, 1875), pp. 17 *sq.*; *id.*, *Lexikon d. griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, ii. coll. 576, 578 *sq.* See below, p. 381.

image of Hera.[1] It is probable, though it cannot be positively proved, that the sacred marriage of Jupiter and Juno was annually celebrated by all the peoples of the Latin stock in the month which they named after the goddess, the midsummer month of June.[2] Now on the first of June the Roman pontiffs performed certain rites in the grove of Helernus beside the Tiber, and on the same day, and perhaps in the same place, a nymph of the grove, by name Carna, received offerings of lard and bean-porridge. She was said to be a huntress, chaste and coy, who gave the slip to her lovers in the depths of the wood, but was caught by Janus. Some took her to be Diana herself.[3] If she were indeed a form of that goddess, her union with Janus, that is, Dianus, would be appropriate; and as she had a chapel on the Caelian hill, which was once covered with oak-woods,[4] she may have been, like Egeria, an oak-nymph. Further, Janus, or Dianus, and Diana, as we shall see later on, were originally mere doubles of Jupiter and Juno, with whom they coincide in name and to some extent in function. Hence it appears to be not impossible that the rite celebrated by the pontiffs on the first of June in the

Janus and Carna.

[1] See above, pp. 140 *sqq.*

[2] W. H. Roscher, *Juno und Hera*, pp. 64 *sqq.*; *id.*, *Lexikon d. griech. u. röm Mythologie*, ii. 575 *sq.*, 591 *sqq.* At Falerii the image of Juno was annually carried in procession from her sacred grove, and in some respects the ceremony resembled a marriage procession (Ovid, *Amores*, iii. 13; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* i. 21). The name of June was *Junius* at Rome, *Junonius* at Aricia, Laurentum and Lavinia, and *Junonalis* at Tibur and Praeneste (Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 59-63; Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 12. 30). The forms *Junonius* and *Junonalis* are recognised by Festus (p. 103, ed. C. O. Müller). Their existence among the Latins seems to render the derivation of *Junius* from Juno quite certain, though that derivation is doubted by Mr. W. Warde Fowler (*Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*, pp. 99 *sq.*).

[3] Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 101-168; Macrobius, *Sat* i. 12. 31-33; Tertullian, *Ad nationes*, ii. 9; Varro, quoted by Nonius Marcellus, *De compendiosa doctrina*, p. 390, ed. L. Quicherat. There was a sacred beechen grove of Diana on a hill called Corne near Tusculum (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 242). But *Corne* has probably no connection with *Carna*. The grove of Helernus was crowded with worshippers on the first of February (Ovid, *Fasti*, ii. 67, where *Helerni* is a conjectural emendation for *Averni* or *Asyli*). Nothing else is known about Helernus, unless with Merkel (in his edition of Ovid's *Fasti*, pp. cxlviii. *sq.*) we read *Elerno* for *Eterno* in Festus, p. 93, ed. C. O. Müller. In that case it would seem that black oxen were sacrificed to him. From the association of Carna with Janus it was inferred by Merkel (*l.c.*) that the grove of Helernus stood on or near the Janiculum, where there was a grove of oaks (see above, p. 186). But the language of Ovid (*Fasti*, ii. 67) points rather to the mouth of the Tiber.

[4] See above, p. 185.

sacred grove of Helernus was the marriage of Jupiter and Juno under the forms of Janus and Diana. It would be some confirmation of this view if we could be sure that, as Ovid seems to imply, the Romans were in the habit of placing branches of white thorn or buckthorn in their windows on the first of June to keep out the witches;[1] for in some parts of Europe precisely the same custom is observed, for the same reason, a month earlier, on the marriage day of the King and Queen of May.[2] The Greeks certainly believed that branches of white thorn or buckthorn fastened to a door or outside the house had power to disarm the malignant arts of sorcerers[3] and to exclude spirits. Hence they hung up branches of it before the door when sacrifices were being offered to the dead, lest any of the prowling ghosts should be tempted to revisit their old homes or to invade those of other people.[4] When the atheist Bion lay adying, he not only caused sacrifices to be offered on his behalf to the gods whose existence he had denied, but got an old hag to mumble incantations over him and to bind magical thongs about his arms, and he had boughs of buckthorn and laurel attached to the lintel to keep out death.[5] However, the evidence as to the rites observed by the Romans on the first of June is too slight and dubious to allow us to press the parallel with May Day.

Ancient use of white thorn or buckthorn to ward off witchcraft.

If at any time of the year the Romans celebrated the sacred marriage of Jupiter and Juno, as the Greeks commonly celebrated the corresponding marriage of Zeus and Hera,[6] we may suppose that under the Republic the ceremony was either performed over images of the divine pair or acted by the Flamen Dialis and his wife the Flaminica. For the Flamen Dialis was the priest of Jove; indeed, ancient and modern writers have regarded him, with much

At the sacred marriage of Jupiter and Juno in later times the parts of the deities may have been acted by the

[1] Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 129-168. A Roman bride on the way to her husband's house was preceded by a boy bearing a torch of buckthorn (*spina alba*, Festus, *s.v.* "Patrimi," p. 245, ed. C. O. Müller; Varro, quoted by Nonius Marcellus, *De compendiosa doctrina*, *s.v.* "Fax," p. 116, ed. L. Quicherat). The intention probably was to defend her from enchantment and evil spirits. Branches of buckthorn were also thought to protect a house against thunderbolts (Columella, *De re rustica*, x. 346 *sq.*).

[2] See above, p. 54.

[3] Dioscorides, *De arte medica*, i. 119.

[4] Scholiast on Nicander, *Theriaca*, 861.

[5] Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, iv. 54-57.

[6] See above, p. 143.

Flamen Dialis and the Flaminica

probability, as a living image of Jupiter, a human embodiment of the sky-god.[1] In earlier times the Roman king, as representative of Jupiter, would naturally play the part of the heavenly bridegroom at the sacred marriage, while his queen would figure as the heavenly bride, just as in Egypt the king and queen masqueraded in the character of deities, and as at Athens the queen annually wedded the vine-god Dionysus. That the Roman king and queen should act the parts of Jupiter and Juno would seem all the more natural because these deities themselves bore the title of King and Queen.[2] Even if the office of Flamen Dialis existed under the kings, as it appears to have done, the double representation of Jupiter by the king and the flamen need not have seemed extraordinary to the Romans of the time. The same sort of duplication, as we saw, appears to have taken place at Alba, when the Julii were allowed to represent the supreme god in the character of Little Jupiters, while the royal dynasty of the Silvii continued to wield the divine thunder and lightning.[3] And long ages afterwards, history repeating itself, another member of the Julian house, the first emperor of Rome, was deified in his lifetime under the title of Jupiter, while a flamen was appointed to do for him what the Flamen Dialis did for the heavenly Jove.[4] It is said that Numa, the typical priestly king, at first himself discharged the functions of Flamen Dialis, but afterwards appointed a separate priest of Jupiter with that title, in order that the kings, untrammeled by the burdensome religious observances attached to the priesthood, might be free to lead their armies to battle.[5] The tradition may be substantially correct; for analogy shews that the functions

The Flamen and Flaminica may have been the deputies of the king and queen.

[1] Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 111 εἰκὸς μὲν οὖν ἐστι καὶ τὸν ἱερέα τοῦ Διὸς ὥσπερ ἔμψυχον καὶ ἱερὸν ἄγαλμα καταφύξιμον ἀνεῖσθαι τοῖς δεομένοις; L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 201; F. B. Jevons, Plutarch's *Romane Questions*, p. lxxiii.; C. Julian, in Daremberg et Saglio, *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*, ii. 1156 *sqq.*

[2] Cicero, *De re publica*, iii. 13. 22; Virgil, *Aen.* x. 112; Horace, *Sat.* ii. 1. 42 *sq.*; Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 37; Varro, *De lingua Latina*, v. 6. 7; Livy, v. 21. 2, v. 23. 7; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxv. 115; Flavius Vopiscus, *Probus*, xii. 7; L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 205, 284; W. H. Roscher, *Lexikon d. griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, ii. 600 *sqq.*

[3] See above, pp. 179 *sq.*

[4] Cicero, *Philippics*, ii. 43. 110; Suetonius, *Divus Julius*, 76; Dio Cassius, xliv. 6. The coincidence has been pointed out by Mr. A. B. Cook (*Classical Review*, xviii. 371).

[5] Livy, i. 20. 1 *sq.*

of a priestly king are too harassing and too incongruous to be permanently united in the same hands, and that sooner or later the holder of the office seeks to rid himself of part of his burden by deputing to others, according to his temper and tastes, either his civil or his religious duties. Hence we may take it as probable that the fighting kings of Rome, tired of parading as Jupiter and of observing all the elaborate ritual, all the tedious restrictions which the character of godhead entailed on them, were glad to relegate these pious mummeries to a substitute, in whose hands they left the crosier at home while they went forth to wield the sharp Roman sword abroad. This would explain why the traditions of the later kings, from Tullus Hostilius onwards, exhibit so few traces of sacred or priestly functions adhering to their office. Among the ceremonies which they henceforward performed by deputy may have been the rite of the sacred marriage.

At the sacred marriage the King and Queen of Rome probably personated the god and goddess of the oak.

Whether that was so or not, the legend of Numa and Egeria appears to embody a reminiscence of a time when the priestly king himself played the part of the divine bridegroom; and as we have seen reason to suppose that the Roman kings personated the oak-god, while Egeria is expressly said to have been an oak-nymph, the story of their union in the sacred grove raises a presumption that at Rome in the regal period a ceremony was periodically performed exactly analogous to that which was annually celebrated at Athens down to the time of Aristotle.[1] The marriage of the King of Rome to the oak-goddess, like the wedding of the vine-god to the Queen of Athens, must have been intended

[1] Numa was not the only Roman king who is said to have enjoyed the favours of a goddess. Romulus was married to Hersilia, who seems to have been a Sabine goddess. Ovid tells us how, when the dead Romulus had been raised to the rank of a god under the name of Quirinus, his widow Hersilia was deified as his consort. Thus, if Quirinus was a Sabine oak-god, his wife would be an oak-goddess, like Egeria. See Ovid, *Metam.* xiv. 829-851. Compare Livy, i. 11. 2; Plutarch, *Numa*, 14. On Hersilia as a goddess see A. Schwegler, *Römische Geschichte*, i. 478, note 10; L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 372. Again, of King Servius Tullius we read how the goddess Fortuna, smitten with love of him, used to enter his house nightly by a window. See Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 569 *sqq.*; Plutarch, *Quaestiones Romanae*, 36; *id.*, *De fortuna Romanorum*, 10. However, the origin and nature of Fortuna are too obscure to allow us to base any conclusions on this legend. For various more or less conjectural explanations of the goddess see W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*, pp. 161-172.

to quicken the growth of vegetation by homoeopathic magic. Of the two forms of the rite we can hardly doubt that the Roman was the older, and that long before the northern invaders met with the vine on the shores of the Mediterranean their forefathers had married the tree-god to the tree-goddess in the vast oak forests of Central and Northern Europe. In the England of our day the forests have mostly disappeared, yet still on many a village green and in many a country lane a faded image of the sacred marriage lingers in the rustic pageantry of May Day.

CHAPTER XIV

THE KING'S FIRE

Sacred Marriage of the Fire-god with a woman.

THUS far we have dealt mainly with those instances of the Sacred Marriage in which a human being is wedded to the divine powers of vegetation or water. Now we pass to the consideration of a different class of cases, in which the divine bridegroom is the fire and his bride a human virgin. And these cases are particularly important for our present enquiry into the early Latin kingship, since it appears that the old Latin kings were commonly supposed to be the offspring of the fire-god by mortal mothers. The evidence which points to this conclusion is as follows.

Legend of the birth of King Servius Tullius from the fire.

First, let us take the legend of the birth of King Servius Tullius. It is said that one day the virgin Ocrisia, a slave-woman of Queen Tanaquil, the wife of King Tarquin the elder, was offering as usual cakes and libations of wine on the royal hearth, when a flame in the shape of the male member shot out from the fire. Taking this for a sign that her handmaiden was to be the mother of a more than mortal son, the wise Queen Tanaquil bade the girl array herself as a bride and lie down beside the hearth. Her orders were obeyed; Ocrisia conceived by the god or spirit of the fire, and in due time brought forth Servius Tullius, who was thus born a slave, being the reputed son of a slave mother and a divine father, the fire-god. His birth from the fire was attested in his childhood by a lambent flame which played about his head as he slept at noon in the king's palace.[1] This story, as others have pointed

[1] Plutarch, *De fortuna Romanorum*, 10; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* iv. 1 *sq.*; Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 627-636; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 241, xxxvi. 204; Livy, i. 39; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 683;

out before,[1] seems clearly to imply that the mother of Servius was a Vestal Virgin charged with the care and worship of the sacred fire in the king's house. Now, in Promathion's *History of Italy*, cited by Plutarch, a similar tale was told of the birth of Romulus himself. It is said that in the house of the King of Alba a flame like to the male organ of generation hung over the hearth for many days. Learning from an oracle that a virgin should conceive by this phantom and bear a son of great valour and renown, the king bade one of his daughters submit to its embraces, but she disdained to do so, and sent her handmaid instead. Angry at her disobedience, her father ordered both the maidens to be put to death. But Vesta appeared to him in a dream, forbade the execution, and commanded that both the girls should be imprisoned until they had woven a certain web, after which they were to be given in marriage. But the web was never finished, for as fast as they wove it by day, other maidens, in obedience to the king's orders, unwove it at night. Meantime the handmaiden conceived by the flame of fire, and gave birth to Romulus and Remus.[2] In this legend, as in the story of the birth of Servius Tullius, it is plain that the mother of the future King of Rome was both a slave and a priestess of Vesta. Orthodox Roman tradition always admitted that she was a Vestal, but naturally enough represented her as the king's daughter rather than his slave.

Legend of the birth of Romulus from the fire.

Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, v. 18. According to the Etruscan annals, Servius Tullius was an Etruscan by name Mastarna, who came to Rome with his friend Caeles Vibenna, and, changing his name, obtained the kingdom. This was stated by the Emperor Claudius in a speech of which fragments are engraved on a bronze tablet found at Lyons. See Tacitus, *Annals*, ed. Orelli,[2] p. 342. As the emperor wrote a history of Etruria in twenty books (Suetonius, *Divus Claudius*, 42) he probably had some authority for the statement, and the historical, or at least legendary, character of Mastarna and Caeles Vibenna is vouched for by a painting inscribed with their names, which was found in 1857 in an Etruscan tomb at Vulci. See G. Dennis, *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*,[3] ii. 506 *sq.* But from this it by no means follows that the identification of Mastarna with Servius Tullius was correct. Schwegler preferred the Roman to the Etruscan tradition (*Römische Geschichte*, i. 720 *sq.*), and so, after long hesitation, did Niebuhr (*History of Rome*,[3] i. 380 *sqq.*). It is fair to add that both these historians wrote before the discovery of the tomb at Vulci.

[1] A. Schwegler, *Römische Geschichte*, i. 715; L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] ii. 344.

[2] Plutarch, *Romulus*, 2.

The god Mars, it was said, got her with child as she drew water in his sacred grove.[1] However, when we compare this legend with the similar story of the birth of Servius, we may suspect that Promathion has preserved, though perhaps in a perverted form, an old feature of the Latin kingship, namely, that one of the king's parents might be, and sometimes was, a slave. Whether that was so or not, such tales at least bear witness to an old belief that the early Roman kings were born of virgins and of the fire. Similarly Caeculus, the founder of Praeneste, passed for a son of Vulcan. It was said that his mother conceived him through a spark, which leapt from the fire and struck her as she sat by the hearth. She exposed the child near a temple of Jupiter, and he was found there beside a fire by some maidens who were going to draw water. In after-life he proved his divine birth by working an appropriate miracle. When an infidel crowd refused to believe that he was the son of a god, he prayed to his father, and immediately the unbelievers were surrounded with a flame of fire.[2] More than this, the whole of the Alban dynasty appear to have traced their descent from a Vestal, for the wife of King Latinus, their legendary ancestor, was named Amata[3] or Beloved, and this was the regular title bestowed on a Vestal after her election,[4] a title which cannot be fully understood except in the light of the foregoing traditions, which seem to shew that the Vestals were regularly supposed to be beloved by the fire-god. Moreover, fire is said to have played round the head of Amata's daughter Lavinia,[5] just as it played round the head of the fire-born Servius Tullius. As the same prodigy was reported of Julus or Ascanius, the son of Aeneas,[6] we may suspect that a similar legend was told of his miraculous conception at the hearth.

Legend of the birth of Caeculus from the fire.

[1] Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* i. 76 *sq.*; Livy, i. 3 *sq.*; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 3; Zonaras, *Annal.* vii. 1; Justin, xliii. 2. 1-3.

[2] Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 678.

[3] Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 343.

[4] Aulus Gellius, i. 12. 14 and 19. Compare L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] ii. 161, 344. There was a very ancient worship of Vesta at Lavinium, the city named after Amata's daughter Lavinia, the ancestress of the Alban kings. See above, vol. i. p. 14.

[5] Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 71-77.

[6] Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 680-686. We may compare the halo with which the vainglorious and rascally artist of genius, Benvenuto Cellini, declared his head to be encircled. "Ever since the time of my strange vision until now," says he, "an aureole of glory (marvellous to relate) has rested on my head. This

The Vestal Virgins seem to have been regarded as the wives of the fire-god.

Now we may take it as certain that the Romans and Latins would never have traced the descent of their kings from Vestal Virgins unless they had thought that such a descent, far from being a stain, was, under certain circumstances, highly honourable. What the circumstances were that permitted a Vestal to become a mother, not only with impunity but with honour and glory, appear plainly from the stories of the birth of Caeculus, Romulus, and Servius Tullius. If she might not know a mortal man, she was quite free, and indeed was encouraged, to conceive and bear a son to the fire-god. In fact the legends suggest that the Vestals were regularly regarded as the fire-god's wives. This would explain why they were bound to chastity during their term of service: the bride must be true to her divine bridegroom. And the theory of chastity could be easily reconciled with the practice of maternity by allowing a man to masquerade as the fire-god at a sacred marriage, just as in Egypt the king disguised himself as the god Ammon when he wedded the queen,[1] or as among the Ewe tribes the priest poses as the python-god when he goes in to the human brides of the serpent.[2] Thus the doctrine of the divine birth of kings presents no serious difficulty to people who believe that a god may be made flesh in a man, and that a virgin may conceive and bear him a son. Of course the theory of the divine motherhood of the Vestals applies only to the early regal and therefore prehistoric period. Under the Republic the demand for kings had ceased, and with it, therefore, the supply. Yet a trace of the old view of the Vestals as virgin mothers lingered down to the latest times in the character of Vesta herself, their patroness and type; for Vesta always bore the official title of Mother, never that of Virgin.[3] We may surmise that a similar belief and practice once obtained in Attica. For

is visible to every sort of men to whom I have chosen to point it out; but those have been very few. This halo can be observed above my shadow in the morning from the rising of the sun for about two hours, and far better when the grass is drenched with dew. It is also visible at evening about sunset. I became aware of it in France at Paris; for the air in those parts is so much freer from mist, that one can see it there far better manifested than in Italy, mists being far more frequent among us." See *The Life of Benvenuto Cellini*, translated by J. Addington Symonds[3] (London, 1889), pp. 279 *sq.*

[1] See above, pp. 131 *sqq.*

[2] A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa*, p. 60. See above, pp. 149 *sq.*

[3] See below, p. 220.

Erichthonius, king of Athens, is said to have been a son of the fire-god Hephaestus by the virgin goddess Athena: the story told of his miraculous birth from the ground, which had been impregnated by the seed of the fire-god, is clearly a later version devised to save the virginity of his mother.[1] The perpetual lamp of Athena, which burned in the Erechtheum or house of Erechtheus (who was identical with Erichthonius) on the acropolis of Athens,[2] may have answered to the perpetual fire of Vesta at Rome; and it is possible that the maidens called Arrephoroi or Errephoroi, who dwelt close to the Erechtheum,[3] may at one time have personated Athena and passed, like the Vestals, for wives of the fire-god.

Rationalistic theory of the duties of the Vestals rejected.

It has, indeed, been held that the Vestals were of old the king's daughters, who were kept at home and forbidden to marry for no other reason than that they might devote themselves to the domestic duties of drawing water, mopping the house, tending the fire, and baking cakes.[4] But this rationalistic theory could hardly explain the superstitious horror which the infidelity of a Vestal always excited in the Roman mind. Customs which begin in reason seldom end in superstition. It is likely, therefore, that the rule of chastity imposed on the Vestals was based from the first on a superstition rather than on a mere consideration of practical convenience. The belief that the Vestals were the spouses of the fire-god would explain the rule.[5] We have seen that the practice of marrying women to gods has been by no means uncommon. If the spirit of the water has his human wife, why not the spirit of the fire? Indeed, primitive man has a special reason for thinking that the fire-god should always be married. What that reason is, I will now try to explain.

[1] Apollodorus iii. 14. 6; Schol. on Homer, *Iliad*, ii. 547; J. Tzetzes, *Chiliades*, v. 669 *sq.*; Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, xviii. 12.

[2] Pausanias i. 26. 6 *sq.*; Strabo ix. 1. 16, p. 396; Plutarch, *Numa*, 9; *id.*, *Sulla*, 13. As to the identity of Erechtheus and Erichthonius see my note on Pausanias, i. 18. 2 (vol. ii. p. 169).

[3] Pausanias, i. 27. 3, with my note.

[4] The theory was formerly advocated by me (*Journal of Philology*, xiv. (1885) pp. 154 *sqq.*) As to the duties of the Vestals see J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] pp. 342 *sqq.*

[5] This explanation was first, so far as I know, given by me in my *Lectures on the Early History of the Kingship* (London, 1905), p. 221. It has since been adopted by Mr. E. Fehrle (*Die kultische Keuschheit im Altertum*, Giessen, 1910, pp. 210 *sqq.*).

The Vestal fire of later times was a continuation of the fire on the king's hearth.

But first it is necessary to apprehend clearly that the Vestal fire of republican and imperial Rome was strictly the successor or continuation of the fire which in the regal period had burned on the king's hearth. That it was so appears plainly from the stories of the birth of Romulus and Servius Tullius, which shew that Vesta was believed to be worshipped at the royal fireside by maidens who were either the king's daughters or his slaves. This conclusion is amply confirmed by a study of the temple of Vesta and the adjoining edifices in the Roman Forum. For the so-called temple of the goddess never was, strictly speaking, a temple at all. This fact we have on the authority of Varro himself, the greatest of Roman antiquaries.[1] The little round building in which the sacred fire always burned was merely a copy of the round hut in which the king, like his subjects, had dwelt in days of old. Tradition preserved a memory of the time when its walls were made of wattled osiers and the roof was of thatch;[2] indeed, with that peculiar clinging to the forms of the past which is characteristic of royalty and religion, the inmost shrine continued down even to late times to be fashioned of the same simple materials.[3] The hut of Romulus, or what passed for it, constructed of wood, reeds, and straw, was always preserved and carefully repaired in the original style. It stood on the side of the Palatine hill facing the Circus Maximus.[4] A similar hut, roofed with thatch, was in like manner maintained on the Capitoline hill, and traditionally associated with Romulus.[5] The so-called temple of Vesta in historical times stood not on any of the hills, but in the Forum, at the northern foot of the Palatine. Its situation in the flat ground is quite consistent with the view that the building represents the king's house of early, though not of the very earliest, times; for, according to tradition, it was

The round temple of Vesta a copy of the ancient Italian hut.

[1] Aulus Gellius, xiv. 7. 7. Compare Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 153, ix. 4.

[2] Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 261 *sq.*

[3] Festus, *s.v.* "penus," p. 250, ed. C. O. Müller, where for *saepius* we must obviously read *saeptus*.

[4] Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 199, iii. 183 *sq.*; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* i. 79. 11. For the situation of the hut see also Plutarch, *Romulus*, 20.

[5] Conon, *Narrationes*, 48; Vitruvius, ii. 1. 5, p. 35, ed. Rose and Müller-Strübing; Macrobius, *Saturn.* i. 15. 10. Compare Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 653 *sq.* As to the two huts on the Palatine and the Capitol see A. Schwegler, *Römische Geschichte*, i. 394; L. Jahn on Macrobius, *l.c.*

built by Numa in this position between the Palatine and the Capitol, at the time when he united the two separate towns on these hills and turned the low swampy ground between them into their common place of assembly. Here, too, beside the temple of Vesta, the king built himself a house, which was ever afterwards known as the Regia or palace; formerly he had dwelt on the Quirinal.[1] In after-times this old palace of the kings was perhaps the official residence of their successor, the King of the Sacred Rites.[2] Adjoining it was the house of the Vestals,[3] at first, no doubt, a simple and unpretentious edifice, but afterwards a stately pile gathered round a spacious open court which must have resembled the cloister of a mediaeval monastery. We may assume that the kernel of this group of buildings was the round temple of Vesta, and that the hearth in it, on which burned the sacred fire, was originally the hearth of the king's house. That the so-called temple was built on the model of the round huts of the old Latins is proved by the discoveries made at an ancient necropolis near Albano. The ashes of the dead were here deposited in urns, which are shaped like little round huts with conical roofs, obviously in order that the souls of the dead might live in houses such as they had inhabited during life. The roofs of these miniature dwellings are raised on cross-beams, sometimes with one or more holes to let out the smoke. The door is fastened by a crossbar, which is passed through a ring on the outside and tied to the two side-posts. In some of these hut-urns the side-posts are duplicated, or even triplicated, for the sake of

Hut-urns found at Albano and Rome

[1] Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* ii. 66; Plutarch, *Numa*, 11 and 14; Solinus, i. 21; Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 263 *sqq.*; *id.*, *Tristia*, iii. 1. 29 *sq.*; Tacitus, *Annals*, xv. 41.

[2] Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 363. Festus, however, distinguishes the old royal palace (*Regia*) from the house of the King of the Sacred Rites (*s.v.* "Sacram viam," pp. 290, 293, ed. C. O. Müller). In classical times the *Regia* was the residence or office of the Pontifex Maximus; but we can hardly doubt that formerly it was the house of the *Rex Sacrorum*. See O. Gilbert, *Geschichte und Topographie der Stadt Rom im Altertum*, i. 225, 235 *sq.*, 341, 344. As to the existing remains of the *Regia*, the temple of Vesta, and the house of the Vestals, see O. Richter, *Topographie der Stadt Rom*,[2] pp. 88 *sqq.*; Ch. Huelsen, *Die Ausgrabungen auf dem Forum Romanum*[2] (Rome, 1903), pp. 62 *sqq.*, 88 *sqq.*; Mrs. E. Burton-Brown, *Recent Excavations in the Roman Forum* (London, 1904), pp. 26 *sqq.*

[3] Dio Cassius, liv. 27, who tells us that Augustus annexed the house of the King of the Sacred Rites to the house of the Vestals, on which it abutted.

Hut-urns found in ancient Latium.

ornament; and it is probable that the ring of columns which encircled the little temple of Vesta in historical times was merely an extension of the door-posts of the prehistoric hut. The necropolis in which these urns were found must be very ancient, since it was buried under the streams of lava vomited by the Alban Mountain in eruption. But the mountain has not been an active volcano within historical times, unless, indeed, the showers of stones and the rain of blood often recorded as ominous prodigies by Roman writers may be explained as jets of pumice and red volcanic dust discharged by one of the craters.[1] The prehistoric burial-ground lately discovered in the Roman Forum has yielded several hut-urns of precisely the same shape as those of the Alban cemetery. Hence we may infer with tolerable certainty that the earliest Latin settlers both on the Alban hills and at Rome dwelt in round huts built of wattle and dab, with peaked roofs of thatch.[2]

"Numa's crockery," the primitive earthenware vessels used by the Vestals.

If further evidence were needed to convince us that the round temple of Vesta merely reproduced a Roman house of the olden time, it might be supplied by the primitive vessels of coarse earthenware in which the Vestals always presented their offerings, and which, in memory of the artlessness of an earlier age, went by the name of "Numa's crockery."[3] A Greek historian, writing when Rome was at the height of her power and glory under Augustus, praises the Romans for the austere simplicity with which, in an age of vulgar wealth and ostentation, they continued to honour the gods of their fathers. "I have seen," said he, "meals set before the gods on old-fashioned wooden tables, in mats and earthenware dishes, the food consisting of barley loaves and cakes and spelt and firstfruits and such-like things, all plain and

[1] Many such phenomena are noted by Julius Obsequens in his book of prodigies, appended to W. Weissenborn's edition of Livy, vol. x. 2, pp. 193 *sqq.* (Berlin, 1881).

[2] W. Helbig, *Die Italiker in der Poebene*, pp. 50-55; E. Burton-Brown, *Recent Excavations in the Roman Forum*, pp. 30, 152, 154. For pictures of these hut-urns see G. Boni in *Notizie degli Scavi*, May 1900, p. 191, fig. 52; *id.*, in *Nuova Antologia*, August 1900, p. 22.

[3] Valerius Maximus, iv. 4.11; Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 310; Acron on Horace, *Odes*, i. 31, quoted by G. Boni in *Notizie degli Scavi*, May 1900, p. 179; Cicero, *Paradoxa*, i. 2; *id.*, *De natura deorum*, iii. 17. 43; Persius, *Sat.* ii. 59 *sq.*; Juvenal, *Sat.* vi. 342 *sqq.*

inexpensive and free from any touch of vulgarity. And I have seen libations offered, not in vessels of silver and gold, but in little earthen cups and jugs; and I heartily admired a people which thus walked in the ways of their fathers, not deviating from the ancient rites into extravagance and display."[1] Specimens of this antique pottery have come to light of late years at the house of the Vestals, the temple of Vesta, and other religious centres in the Forum;[2] others had been found previously on the Esquiline hill and in the necropolis of Alba Longa.[3] We may conjecture that if the Romans continued to serve the gods their meals in simple earthenware dishes long after they themselves quaffed their wine from goblets of crystal and gold or from murrhine cups with their cloudy iridescent hues of purple and white,[4] they did so, not from any principle of severe good taste, but rather from that superstitious fear of innovation which has embalmed in religious ritual, as in amber, so many curious relics of the past. The old forms and materials of the vessels were consecrated by immemorial usage and might not be changed with impunity. Indeed, in the ritual of the Arval Brothers the holy pots themselves appear to have been an object of worship.[5] Specimens of these pots have been found on the site of the sacred grove where the Brothers performed their quaint service, and they shed an interesting light on the conservatism of the Roman religion. Some of them are moulded in the most primitive fashion by the hand without any mechanical appliance. But most of them belong to a stage of art, later indeed than this rude beginning, yet earlier than the invention of the potter's wheel. In order to give the vessels their proper shape and prevent the sides from collapsing, wooden hoops were

Rude pottery used by the Arval Brothers.

[1] Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* ii. 23. On earthenware vessels used in religious rites see also Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxv. 108, "*In sacris quidem etiam inter has opes hodie non murrinis crystallinisve, sed fictilibus prolibatur simpulis*"; Apuleius, *De magia*, 18, "*Eadem paupertas etiam populo Romano imperium a primordio fundavit, proque eo in hodiernum diis immortalibus simpuvio et catino fictili sacrificat.*"

[2] G. Boni in *Notizie degli Scavi*, May 1900, p. 179; E. Burton-Brown, *Recent Excavations in the Roman Forum*, pp. 23 *sq.*, 41.

[3] W. Helbig, *Die Italiker in der Poebene*, pp. 82 *sqq.*

[4] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxvii. 21 *sq.*

[5] G. Henzen, *Acta Fratrum Arvalium* (Berlin, 1874), pp. 26, 30; H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, No. 5039; J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] 456.

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inserted in them, and the marks made by these hoops in the soft clay may still be seen on the inside of most of the pots found in the grove. We may suppose that when the potter's wheel came into universal use, the old art of making pottery by the hand was lost; but as religion would have nothing to do with pots made in the new-fangled way, the pious workman had to imitate the ancient ware as well as he could, eking out his imperfect skill with the aid of wooden hoops.[1] Perhaps the *fictores Vestalium* and the *fictores Pontificum*, of whom we read in inscriptions,[2] were those potters who, combining a retrograde art with sound religious principles, provided the Vestals and Pontiffs with the coarse crockery so dear to gods and to antiquaries.

Savage superstitions as to the making of pottery.

If that was so, they may have had in the exercise of their craft to observe some such curious rules as are still observed in similar circumstances by the savage Yuracares, a tribe of Indians living dispersed in the depths of beautiful tropical forests, at the eastern foot of the Bolivian Andes. We are told by an explorer that "the manufacture of pottery is not an everyday affair with this superstitious people, and accordingly they surround it with singular precautions. The women, who alone are entrusted with the duty, go away very solemnly to look for the clay, but they do so only when there is no crop to be gathered. In the fear of thunder they betake themselves to the most sequestered spots of the forest in order not to be seen. There they build a hut. While they are at work they observe certain ceremonies and never open their mouth, speaking to each other by signs, being persuaded that one word spoken would infallibly cause all their pots to break in the firing; and they do not go near their husbands, for if they did, all the sick people would die."[3] Among the

[1] W. Helbig, *Die Italiker in der Poebene*, p. 87.

[2] G. Wilmanns, *Exempla inscriptionum Latinarum*, Nos. 311, 986, 1326, 1331; H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, Nos. 456, 3314, 4926, 4933, 4936, 4942, 4943. Modern writers, following Varro (*De lingua Latina*, vii. 44, "*fictores dicti a fingendis libis*"), explain these *fictores* as bakers of sacred cakes. See Ch. A. Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, pp. 1084 *sq.*; J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] 249. They may be right, but it is to be observed that Varro does not expressly refer to the *fictores* of the Vestals and Pontiffs, and further, that in Latin *fictor* commonly means a potter, not a baker, for which the regular word is *pistor*.

[3] A. d'Orbigny, *Voyage dans l'Amérique Méridionale*, iii. (Paris

Ba-Ronga of South Africa pottery is made by women only, and they prefer to employ a child under puberty to light the fire in which the pots are to be baked, because the child has pure hands and the pots are therefore less likely to crack in the furnace than if the woman lit the fire herself.[1] If the reader objects that Roman potters cannot have been trammelled by superstitions like those which hamper the savage potters of America and Africa, I would remind him of the rules laid down by grave Roman writers for the moral guidance of cooks, bakers, and butlers. After mentioning a number of these writers by name, Columella informs us that "all of them are of opinion that he who engages in any one of these occupations is bound to be chaste and continent, since everything depends on taking care that neither the dishes nor the food should be handled by any one above the age of puberty, or at least by any one who is not exceedingly abstemious in sexual matters. Therefore a man or woman who is sexually unclean ought to wash in a river or running water before he touches the contents of the storeroom. That is why there should be a boy or a maid to fetch from the storeroom the things that are needed."[2] When Roman cooks, bakers, and butlers were expected to be so strict in the service of their human masters, it might naturally be thought that the potters should be not less so whose business it was to fashion the rude yet precious vessels meet for the worship of the gods.

Chastity required in persons who handle dishes and food.

If the storeroom (*penus*) of a Roman house was deemed so holy that its contents could only be handled by persons ceremonially clean, the reason was that the Penates or gods of the storeroom dwelt in it.[3] The domestic hearth, where the household meals were cooked in the simple days of old,

Sanctity of the storeroom (*penus*) and of the Penates in a Roman house.

and Strasburg, 1844) p. 194. Much of d'Orbigny's valuable information as to this tribe was drawn from the manuscript of Father Lacueva, a Spanish Franciscan monk of wealthy family and saint-like character, who spent eighteen or twenty years among the Yuracares in a vain attempt to convert them. With regard to the crops mentioned in the text, these savages plant banana-trees, manioc, sugar-cane, and vegetables round about their huts, which they erect in clearings of the forest. See d'Orbigny, *op. cit.* iii. 196 *sq.*

[1] H. A. Junod, "Les Conceptions physiologiques des Bantou Sud-Africains et leurs tabous," *Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie*, i. (1910), p. 147.

[2] Columella, *De re rustica*, xii. 4. 2 *sq.*

[3] Cicero, *De natura deorum*, ii. 27. 68.

was the natural altar of the Penates;[1] their images, together with those of the Lares, stood by it and shone in the cheerful glow of the fire, when the family gathered round it in the evening.[2] Thus in every house Vesta, the goddess of the hearth, was intimately bound up with the Penates or gods of the storeroom; indeed, she was reckoned one of them.[3] Now the temple of Vesta, being nothing more than a type of the oldest form of Roman house, naturally had, like an ordinary house, its sacred storeroom, and its Penates or gods of the storeroom.[4] Hence if in every common house strict chastity was, theoretically at least, expected of all who entered the storeroom, we can well understand why such an obligation should have been laid on the Vestals, who had in their charge the holiest of all storerooms, the chamber in which were popularly supposed to be preserved the talismans on which the safety of the state depended.[5]

Thus the temple of Vesta, with its perpetual fire and its sacred storeroom, was merely a copy of the Roman king's house.

Thus on the whole we may regard it as highly probable that the round temple of Vesta in the Forum, with its sacred storeroom and perpetual fire, was merely a survival, under changed conditions, of the old house of the Roman kings, which again may have been a copy of the still older house of the kings of Alba. Both were modelled on the round huts of wattled osiers in which the early Latins dwelt among the woods and hills of Latium in the days when the Alban Mountain was still an active volcano. Hence it is legitimate to compare the old legends of the royal hearth with the later practice in regard to the hearth of Vesta, and from the comparison to explain, if we can, the meaning both of the legends and of the practice.

[1] Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* xi. 211.

[2] Horace, *Epodes*, ii. 65 *sq.*; Martial, iii. 58. 3 *sq.*; L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] ii. 105 *sqq.*, 155 *sqq.* See also A. De-Marchi, *Il Culto privato di Roma antica*, i. (Milan, 1896) p. 67, with plate iii.

[3] Macrobius, *Saturn.* iii. 4. 11; G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, pp. 145 *sq.*

[4] Festus, *s.v.* "penus," pp. 250, 251, ed. C. O. Müller; Tacitus, *Annals*, xv. 41; J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] 252 *sq.*

[5] Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* ii. 66; Livy, xxvi. 27. 14; J. Marquardt, *op. cit.* iii.[2] 250 *sq.*

CHAPTER XV

THE FIRE-DRILL

Mode of rekindling the Vestal fire at Rome by means of the fire-drill.

IN historical times, whenever the Vestal fire at Rome happened to be extinguished, the virgins were beaten by the pontiff; after which it was their custom, apparently with the aid of the pontiff, to rekindle the fire by drilling a hole in a board of lucky wood till a flame was elicited by friction. The new fire thus obtained was carried into the temple of Vesta by one of the virgins in a bronze sieve.[1] As this mode of producing fire is one of the most primitive known to man, and has been commonly employed by many savage tribes down to modern times,[2] we need have no difficulty in

Use of the fire-drill by savages.

[1] Festus, *s.v.* "Ignis," p. 106, ed. C. O. Müller: "*Ignis Vestae si quando interstinctus esset, virgines verberibus afficiebantur a pontifice, quibus mos erat tabulam felicis materiae tamdiu terebrare, quousque exceptum ignem cribro aeneo virgo in aedem ferret.*" In this passage it is not clear whether *quibus* refers to the virgins alone or to the virgins and the pontiff together; but the strict grammatical construction is in favour of the latter interpretation. The point is not unimportant, as we shall see presently. From a passage of Plutarch (*Numa*, 9) it has sometimes been inferred that the Vestal fire was rekindled by sunlight reflected from a burning-glass. But in this passage Plutarch is describing a Greek, not a Roman, mode of making fire, as has been rightly pointed out by Professor M. H. Morgan ("De ignis eliciendi modis apud antiquos," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, i. (1890) pp. 56 *sqq.*). In this memoir Professor Morgan has collected and discussed the passages of Greek and Latin writers which refer to the kindling of fire.

[2] See E. B. Tylor, *Early History of Mankind*,[3] pp. 238 *sqq.* More evidence might easily be given. See, for example, J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, pp. 15 *sq.*; C. Lumholtz, *Among Cannibals*, p. 191; A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 770-773; Maximilian Prinz zu Wied-Newied, *Reise nach Brasilien*, ii. 18 *sq.*; E. F. im Thurn, *Among the Indians of Guiana*, pp. 257-259; K. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens*, pp. 223 *sqq.*; H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 375 *sqq.*; A. Maass, *Bei liebenswürdigen Wilden, ein Beitrag zur Kenntniss der Mentawai-Insulaner* (Berlin, 1902), pp. 114, 116; Mgr. Le Roy, "Les Pygmées," *Missions Catholiques*, xxix. (1897), p. 137; E. Thurston, *Ethnographic Notes in Southern India* (Madras, 1906), pp. 464-470; W. A. Reed, *Negritos of Zambales* (Manila, 1904), p. 40.

believing that its use in the worship of Vesta was a survival from prehistoric ages, and that whenever the fire on the hearth of the Latin kings went out it was regularly relit in the same fashion. In its simplest form the fire-drill, as the apparatus has been appropriately named by Professor E. B. Tylor, consists of two sticks, the one furnished with a point and the other with a hole. The point of the one stick is inserted into the hole of the other, which is laid flat on the ground, while the operator holds the pointed stick upright in position and twirls it rapidly between his hands till the rubbing of the two sticks against each other produces sparks and at last a flame.

The fire-drill.

Many savages see in this operation a resemblance to the union of the sexes, and have accordingly named the pointed stick the man and the holed stick the woman. Thus we are told that among the Thompson Indians of British Columbia "fire was obtained by means of the fire-drill, which consisted of two dried sticks, each over a foot in length, and rounded off to less than an inch in diameter. One stick was sharpened at one end; while the other was marked with a couple of notches close to each other—one on the side, and the other on top. The sharpened end of the first stick was placed in the top notch of the other stick, and turned rapidly between the straightened palms of both hands. The heat thus produced by the friction of the sticks caused sparks to fall down the side notch upon tinder placed underneath, which, when it commenced to smoke, was taken in the hands, and blown upon until fanned into a flame. The tinder was dry grass, the shredded dry bark of the sagebrush, or cedar-bark. The sharpened stick was called the 'man,' and was made of black-pine root, tops of young yellow pine, heart of yellow-pine cones, service-berry wood, etc. The notched stick was called the 'woman,' and was generally made of poplar-root. However, many kinds of wood were used for this purpose. When hot ashes or a spark fell upon the tinder, they said, 'The woman has given birth.'"[1] The Hopi Indians kindle fire ceremonially by the friction of two sticks, which are

Many savages regard the two sticks of the fire-drill as male and female, and the rubbing of the two together as a sexual union.

[1] J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," pp. 203, 205 (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. i. part 4).

regarded respectively as male and female. The female stick has a notch in it and is laid flat on the floor; the point of the male stick is inserted in the notch of the female stick and is made to revolve rapidly by twirling the stick between the hands. Pollen is added as a male symbol, and the spark is caught in a tinder of shredded cedar bark.[1] The Urabunna tribe of Central Australia, who also make fire by means of the fire-drill, call the upright piece "the child-stick," while they give to the horizontal or notched piece the name of "the mother-stick" or "the mother of the fire."[2] So in the Murray Islands, Torres Straits, the upright stick is called the child (*werem*), and the horizontal stick the mother (*apu*). In Mabuiag, Torres Straits, on the other hand, the vertical stick is known as the male organ (*ini*), and the horizontal stick as the hole (*sakai*).[3]

The fire-drill among the Arabs.

"The ancient Bedouins kindled fire by means of the fire-drill, which was composed of a horizontal stick, the *zenda*, and an upright stick, the *zend*. The science of language furnishes us with many parallels for this mode of regarding the two parts as male and female; the two parts of the lock are distinguished in like manner; the spark is then the child, *tifl*; compare also our German *Schraubenmutter*, *Muttergewinde*. The sticks for making fire by friction are not taken from the same tree; on the contrary, they choose one as hard and tough as possible, and the other soft, which allows the hard one to fit into it more easily and catches fire the quicker on account of its loose texture. The soft wood was naturally the horizontal stick, the *zenda*, which the Arabs made out of *Calotropis procera* (*'oshar*), while for the upright stick they used a hard branch of *markh*."[4]

[1] J. Walter Fewkes, "The Lesser New-fire Ceremony at Walpi," *American Anthropologist*, N.S. iii. (1901) p. 445.

[2] Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 621.

[3] For this information I am indebted to Mr. S. H. Ray.

[4] G. Jacob, *Altarabisches Beduinenleben*[2] (Berlin, 1897), p. 91. In his *Arabic-English Lexicon*, book i. p. 1257, E. W. Lane gives the following account of the subject: "*zand*, a piece of stick or wood, for producing fire; the upper one of the two pieces of stick, or wood, with which fire is produced: . . . and *zanda* is the appellation of the lower one thereof, in which is the notch or hollow, or in which is a hole. . . . One end of the *zand* is put into the *fard* (notch) of the *zanda*, and the *zand* is then rapidly twirled round in producing fire. . . . The best kind of *zand* is made of *'afār*

The fire-drill in Africa.

The Ngumbu of South Cameroons, in West Africa, formerly made fire by rubbing two sticks against each other. Of the sticks the one, called the male *nschio*, was put into a hole of the other, which was called the female *nschio*.[1] In East Africa the Masai men make fire by drilling a hole in a flat piece of wood with a hard pointed stick. They say that the hard pointed stick is a man and that the flat piece of wood is his wife. The former is cut from *Ficus sycomorus* and *Ekebergia sp.*, the latter from any fibrous tree, such as *Kigelia africana*, *Cordia ovalis*, or *Acacia albida*. The women get their fire from the one which has thus been kindled by the men.[2] The Nandi similarly produce fire by rapidly drilling a hard pointed stick into a small hole in a flat piece of soft wood. The hard stick is called the male (*kirkit*) and the piece of soft wood the female (*kôket*). Among the Nandi, as apparently among the Masai, fire-making is an exclusive privilege of the men of the tribe.[3] The Baganda of Central Africa also made fire by means of the fire-drill; they called the upright stick the male, and the horizontal stick the female.[4] Among the Bantu tribes of south-eastern Africa, "when the native Africans use special fire, either in connection with sacrifice or the festival of first-fruits, it is produced by a doctor, and in the following manner:— Two sticks, made of the *Uzwati* tree, and called the 'husband and wife,' are given to him by the chief. These sticks are prepared by the magicians, and are the exclusive property of the chief, the 'wife' being the shorter of the two. The doctor cuts a piece off each stick, and proceeds to kindle fire in the usual manner, by revolving the one rapidly between the palms of his hands, while its end rests in a small hollow dug in the side of the other. After he has

and the best kind of *sanda* of *markh*." It will be observed that the two writers differ as to *markh* wood, Jacob saying that it is used to make the upright (male) stick, and Lane that it is used to make the horizontal (female) stick. My learned friend Professor A. A. Bevan, who directed my attention to both passages and transliterated for me the Arabic words in Lane, has kindly consulted the original authorities on this point and informs me that Lane is right.

[1] L. Concradt, "Die Ngumbu in Südkamerun," *Globus*, lxxxi. (1902) p. 354.

[2] A. C. Hollis, *The Masai* (Oxford, 1905), p. 342.

[3] A. C. Hollis, *The Nandi* (Oxford, 1909), p. 85.

[4] Letter of the Rev. J. Roscoe, dated Mengo, Uganda, 3rd August 1904.

obtained fire, he gives it to his attendant, who gets the pots in order, and everything ready for cooking the newly-reaped fruits. The sticks are handed back to the chief by the doctor—no other hand must touch them—and put away till they are required next season. They 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. After being repeatedly used for fire-making, the doctor disposes of what remains, and new ones are made and consecrated by the magician. A special pot is used for the preparation of the feast, and no other than it may be set on a fire produced from the 'husband and wife.' When the feast is over, the fire is carefully extinguished, and the pot placed along with the sticks, where it remains untouched for another year."[1] But even for the purposes of daily life these tribes still kindle fire in this manner, if they happen to be without matches. "A native takes two special sticks, made of a light wood. One of these he points: this is called the male stick. He then makes a conical hole in the centre of the other stick, which is called the female. Placing the female stick on the ground, he holds it firmly by his feet—a native finds no difficulty in this, as he can easily pick things off the ground with his toes if his hands are full. He then places the pointed stick into the conical hole, and slowly twirls the male stick between his hands. He does this while using a good deal of pressure, and the wood becomes powdered, lying round the revolving point in a little heap of dust. When he thinks he has made sufficient of the wood dust, he twirls the stick very fast, and in a moment the powder bursts into flame, which he uses to set fire to some dried grass."[2]

Fire-customs of the Herero.

The Damaras or Herero of Damaraland, in south-western Africa, maintain sacred fires in their villages, and their customs and beliefs in this respect present a close resemblance to the Roman worship of Vesta. Fortunately the Herero fire-worship has been described by a number of independent witnesses, and as their accounts agree substantially with each other, we may assume that they are

[1] J. Macdonald, *Light in Africa*[2] (London, 1890), pp. 216 *sq.*

[2] Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir* (London, 1904), pp. 51 *sq.*

The country of the Herero.

correct. The people are a tall, finely-built race of nomadic herdsmen belonging to the Bantu stock, who seem to have migrated into their present country from the north and east about a hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago. The desert character of the country and its seclusion from the outer world long combined to preserve the primitive manners of the inhabitants.[1] In their native state the Herero are a purely pastoral people, possessing immense herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats, which are the pride and joy of their hearts, almost their idols. They subsist chiefly on the milk of their herds, which they commonly drink sour. Of the flesh they make but little use, for they seldom kill any of their cattle, and never a cow, a calf, or a lamb. Even oxen and weathers are only slaughtered on solemn and festal occasions, such as visits, burials, and the like. Such slaughter is a great event in a village, and young and old flock from far and near to partake of the meat.[2] Their huts are of a round beehive shape, about ten feet in diameter. The framework consists of stout branches, of which the lower ends are rammed into the ground, while the upper ends are bent together and tied with bark. A village is composed of a number of these round huts arranged in a circle about the calves' pen as a centre and surrounded by an artificial hedge of thorn-bushes.[3] At night the cattle are driven in through

The Herero a pastoral people.

Huts and villages of the Herero.

[1] J. Irle, *Die Herero* (Gütersloh, 1906), pp. 49 *sqq.*, 53 *sqq.* Compare Josaphat Hahn, "Die Ovaherero," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, iv. (1869) pp. 227 *sqq.*; H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika* (Oldenburg and Leipsic, N.D.), pp. 142 *sq.*; E. Dannert, *Zum Rechte der Herero* (Berlin, 1906), pp. 1 *sqq.* The people call themselves *Ovaherero* (plural); the singular form is *Omuherero*. The name Damaras was given them by the English and Dutch. Under the influence of the missionaries most of the heathen customs described in the text seem now to have disappeared. See P. H. Brincker, "Character, Sitten, und Gebräuche, speciell der Bantu Deutsch-Südwestafrikas," *Mittheilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, iii. (1900) Dritte Abtheilung, p. 72.

[2] C. J. Andersson, *Lake Ngami* (London, 1856), p. 230; J. Chapman, *Travels in the Interior of South Africa* (London, 1868), i. 325; J. Hahn, "Die Ovaherero," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, iv. (1869) pp. 244-247, 250; C. J. Büttner *Das Hinterland von Walfischbai und Angra Pequena* (Heidelberg, 1884), pp. 228 *sq.*; H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, pp. 158-161; J. Irle, *Die Herero*, pp. 32 *sqq.*, 113.

[3] Francis Galton, *Narrative of an Explorer in Tropical South Africa* [3] (London, 1890), p. 116; J. Hahn, *op. cit.* iv. (1869) p. 247; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 155; J. Irle, *Die Herero*, pp. 111 *sq.*

the hedge and take up their quarters in the open space round the calves' pen.[1]

Sacred fire of the Herero village maintained in or before the hut of the chief's principal wife.

The hut of the great or principal wife of the chief, built and furnished in a more elaborate style than the rest, regularly stands to the east of the calves' pen, in the direction of sunrise, so that from its position we can always learn approximately the season of the year when the village was founded. The chief or headman of the village has no special hut of his own; he passes the day in the hut of the great wife, and the night commonly in one of the huts of his other wives in the northern semicircle. Between the house of the great wife and the calves' pen, but somewhat nearer to the pen, is a large heap of ashes on which, in good weather, a small, faintly glimmering fire may be seen to burn at any time of the day. The heap of ashes is the sacred hearth (*okuruo*); the fire is the holy fire (*omurangere* or *omurangerero*) of the village. The open space between the sacred hearth and the house of the great wife is known as the holy ground or the holy house (*otyizero*).[2] Betwixt the hearth and the calves' fold stands a great withered branch of the *omumborombonga* (*Combretum primigenum*), the sacred tree of the Herero, from which they believe that both they and their cattle

[1] H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 159.

[2] H. Schinz, *op. cit.* pp. 155-157; compare J. Hahn, *op. cit.* iv. (1869) p. 499; J. Irle, *Die Herero*, p. 78; E. Dannert, *Zum Rechte der Herero*, pp. 4 *sq.* At first sight Dr. Schinz's account appears to differ slightly from that given by the Rev. G. Viehe, who says: "In the werfts of the Ovaherero, the houses of the chief are on the eastern side. Next to these, towards the west, follow, one after another, the holy house (*otyizero*), the place of the holy fire (*okuruo*), and the kraal [*i.e.* the calves' pen] (*otyunda*); thus the *otyizero* is on the east, and the *otyunda* on the west side of the *okuruo*" ("Some Customs of the Ovaherero," *South African Folk-lore Journal*, i. (1879) p. 62). But it seems clear that by the chief's house Mr. Viehe means what Dr. Schinz calls the house of the great wife; and that what Mr. Viehe calls the holy house is the open space between the sacred hearth and the house of the great wife or chief. That space is described as the holy ground by Dr. Schinz, who uses that phrase ("*der geweihte Boden*") as the equivalent of the native *otyizero*. Thus the two writers are in substantial agreement with each other. On the other hand Dr. C. H. Hahn gives the name of *otyizero* or sacred house to "the chief house of the chief, in front of which is the place of the holy fire." He adds that "the chief has several houses, according to the number of wives, each wife having her own hut" (*South African Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880) p. 62, note †). The name *otyizero* seems to be derived from *zera*, "sacred," "taboo." See G. Viehe, *op. cit.* pp. 39, 41, 43; Rev. E. Dannert, in (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880) pp. 63, 65, 105, and the editor's note, *ib.* p. 93.

The sacred fire and hearth among the Herero.

are descended. When a branch of this tree cannot be obtained its place is taken by a bough of the *omwapu* tree (*Grevia spec.*).[1] At night and in rainy weather the fire is transferred to the hut of the great wife, where it is carefully kept alight.[2] According to another account, the fire is regularly preserved in the house, and a brand is only brought out into the open air when the cattle are being milked at morning and evening in order that in presence of the fire the cow may be healthy and give much milk.[3] The custom in this respect perhaps varies in different villages, and may be determined in some measure by the climate. The sacred fire is regarded as the centre of the village; from it at evening the people fetch a light to kindle the fire on their own hearths, for every householder has his own private hearth in front of his hut. At the holy hearth are kept the most sacred possessions of the tribe, to wit, the bundle of sticks which represent their ancestors; here sacrifices are offered and enchantments performed; here the flesh of the victims is cooked; here is the proper place of the chief; here the elders assemble in council, and judgment is given; here strangers are received and ambassadors entertained. At the banquets held on solemn occasions all may partake of the flesh, whether they be friends or foes; the stranger's curse would rest on the churl who should refuse him his just share; and this curse the Herero dreads above everything because he believes its effect to be infallible. So great is the veneration felt by the natives for the sacred hearth, with its hallowed bough, that they dare not approach it without testifying the deepest respect. They take off their sandals, throw themselves on the ground, and pray their great ancestor (*Tate Mukuru*) to be gracious to them. The horns of the oxen slaughtered at festivals lie beside the hearth; the chief sits on the largest pair when he is engaged in performing his magical rites. Near the fire, too, is a stone on which none but the chief has the right to sit.[4]

[1] H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 155.

[2] C. J. Andersson, *Lake Ngami*, p. 223; J. Hahn, *op. cit.* iv. (1869) p. 500; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 165.

[3] H. Brincker, *Wörterbuch und kurzgefasste Grammatik des Otji-herero* (Leipsic, 1886), *s.v.* "*okuruo*"; *id.* "Pyrolatrie in Südafrika," *Globus*, lxvii. (January 1895) p. 97; Meyer, quoted by J. Kohler, "Das Recht der Herero," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, xiv. (1900) p. 315.

[4] J. Hahn, *op. cit.* iv. (1869) pp. 499 *sq.*; Rev. H. Beiderbecke, in

The duty of maintaining the sacred fire and preserving it from extinction is entrusted to the eldest unmarried daughter of the chief by his great wife; if he has no daughter, the task devolves on the unmarried girl who is next of kin to him. She bears the title of *ondangere*, derived from the name of the sacred fire (*omurangere*).[1] Besides keeping up the fire she has other priestly functions to discharge. Before the men start on a dangerous expedition, she rubs the holy ashes on their foreheads.[2] When a woman brings her new-born infant to the sacred hearth to receive its name, the maiden priestess or Vestal, as we may call her, sprinkles water on both mother and child.[3] Every morning, when the cattle walk out of the fold, she besprinkles the fattest of them with a brush dipped in water.[4] When an ox dies by accident at the village, she lays a piece of wood on its back, praying at the same time for long life, plenty of cattle, and so forth. Moreover, she ties a double knot in her apron for the dead beast, for a curse would follow if she neglected to do so.[5] Lastly, when the site of the village is changed, the priestess walks at the head of the people and of the herds, carrying a firebrand from the old sacred hearth and taking the utmost care to keep it alight.[6]

The sacred fire among the Herero is watched and fed by the chief's eldest unmarried daughter, who performs other priestly duties.

The chief or headman of the village is also the priest; he alone may perform religious ceremonies except such as

(*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880) p. 84; C. G. Büttner, "Ueber Handwerke und technische Fertigkeiten der Eingeborenen in Damaraland," *Ausland*, 7th July 1884, p. 522; P. H. Brincker, in *Mittheilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, iii. (1900) Dritte Abtheilung, p. 75; *id.*, *Wörterbuch des Otji-herero*, *s.v.* "*okuruo*"; *id.* "Pyrolatrie in Südafrika," *Globus*, lxvii. (January 1895) p. 97; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 183; Meyer, *l.c.*

[1] C. J. Andersson, *op. cit.* p. 223; J. Hahn, *op. cit.* iv. (1869) p. 500; Rev. E. Dannert, in (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880) p. 66; Rev. H. Beiderbecke, *ibid.* p. 83, note 4; C. G. Büttner, *l.c.*; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 165; J. Irle, *Die Herero*, pp. 78 *sq.*; E. Dannert, *Zum Rechte der Herero*, p. 5. According to Meyer (*l.c.*) and E. Dannert (*Zum Rechte der Herero*, p. 5), if the chief's eldest daughter marries, the duty of tending the fire passes to his eldest wife. This statement is at variance with all the other testimony on the subject, and for reasons which will appear presently I regard it as improbable. At least it can hardly represent the original custom.

[2] Rev. H. Beiderbecke, in (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880) p. 84.

[3] Rev. E. Dannert, in (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880) p. 66; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 168.

[4] Francis Galton, *op. cit.* p. 115.

[5] C. J. Andersson, *Lake Ngami*, p. 223.

[6] C. J. Andersson, *l.c.*; J. Hahn, *op. cit.* iv. (1869) p. 500; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 167.

The Herero chief acts as a priest.

fall within the province of the Vestal priestess, his daughter. In his capacity of priest he keeps the sacred bundle of sticks which represent the ancestors, and at sacrifices he offers meat to them that they may consecrate it. When the old village is abandoned, it is his duty to carry, like Aeneas quitting the ruins of Troy,[1] these rude penates to the new home. However, it is deemed enough if he merely places the holy bundle on his back, and then hands it to a servant, who carries it for him. As a priest he introduces the newborn children to the spirits of the ancestors at the sacred hearth, and gives the infants their names; and as a priest he has a cow to himself, whose milk no one else may drink. This milk is kept in vessels which differ from the ordinary milk vessels, not only in shape and size, but also in being marked with the badge of his paternal clan. When a man goes forth from the village with his family and servants to herd the cattle on a distant pasture, or to found another village, he takes with him a burning brand from the sacred hearth wherewith to kindle the holy fire in his new home. By doing so he acknowledges himself the vassal of the chief from whose hearth he took the fire. In this way a single village may give out swarm after swarm, till it has become the metropolis or capital of a whole group of villages, the inhabitants of which recognise the supremacy of the parent community, and regard themselves as all sitting round its sacred fire. It is thus that a village may grow into a tribe and its headman into a powerful chief, who, by means of marriage alliances and the adhesion of weaker rivals, may extend his sway over alien communities, and so gradually acquire the rank and authority of a king.[2] The political evolution of the Herero has indeed stopped short of this final stage; but among the more advanced branches of the Bantu race, such as the Zulus and the Matabeles, it is possible that the kingship has developed along these lines.

Fire taken from the chief's hearth by the founder of a new village.

[1] Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 717 *sqq.*, 747.

[2] C. J. Andersson, *Lake Ngami*, p. 224; Rev. G. Viehe, in (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, i. (1879) p. 43; Rev. E. Dannert, in (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880) p. 67; C. G. Büttner, *l.c.*; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* pp. 166, 167, 186; Meyer, quoted by J. Kohler, *op. cit.* p. 315; P. H. Brincker, in *Mittheilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, iii. (1900) Dritte Abtheilung, pp. 75 *sq.*; J. Irle, *Die Herero*, p. 80; E. Dannert, *Zum Rechte der Herero* (Berlin, 1906), p. 5.

The possession of the sacred fire and of the ancestral sticks, carrying with it both political authority and priestly dignity, descends in the male line, and hence generally passes from father to son. In any case, whether the deceased had a son or not, the double office of chief and priest must always remain in his paternal clan (*oruzo*). If it should happen that the clan becomes extinct by his death, the sacred fire is put out, the hearth destroyed, no brand is taken from it, and the sticks representing the ancestors are laid with the dead man in the grave. But should there be an heir, as usually happens, he takes a fire-brand from the sacred hearth and departs with all the people to seek a new home, abandoning the old village for years. In time, however, they return to the spot, rebuild the huts on the same sites, and inhabit them again. But in the interval none of the kinsmen of the deceased may approach the deserted village under pain of incurring the wrath of the ghost. When the return at last takes place, and the people have announced their arrival to the dead chief at his grave, which is generally in the cattle-pen, they make a new fire by the friction of the two sacred fire-sticks on the old hearth; for it is not lawful to bring with them a brand from their last settlement.[1]

The combined office of chief and priest among the Herero descends in the male line.

A chief's sacred hearth abandoned for some time after his death.

If the sacred fire should go out through the neglect of the priestess, a sudden shower of rain, or any other accident, the Herero deem it a very evil omen. The whole tribe is immediately summoned and large offerings of cattle are made as an expiation. Then the fire is relit by means of the friction of two sacred fire-sticks, which have been handed down from father to son. Every chief possesses such fire-sticks, and keeps them tied up with the bundle of holy sticks that represent the ancestors. One of the fire-sticks is pointed, the other has a hole in the middle, and sometimes also a notch cut round it. In the notch some fungus or rotten wood is placed as tinder. The holed stick is held

The sacred Herero fire rekindled by the fire-drill.

[1] C. J. Andersson, *Lake Ngami*, pp. 228 *sq.*; Rev. G. Viehe, *op. cit.* i. (1879) pp. 61 *sq.*; C. G. Büttner, *l.c.*; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* pp. 165, 180. The Herero have a curious twofold system of paternal clans (*otuzo*, plural; *oruzo*, singular) and maternal clans (*omaanda*, plural; *eanda*, singular). Every person inherits an *oruzo* from his father and an *eanda* from his mother. See my *Totemism and Exogamy*, ii. 357 *sqq.*

fast on the ground by the knees of the operator, who inserts the point of the other stick in the hole and twirls it rapidly between the palms of his hands in the usual way. As soon as a spark is emitted it catches the tinder, which can then easily be blown up into a flame. Thus it is from the tinder, we are told, and not from the sticks, that the flame is elicited. In this fashion, if everything is very dry, as it generally is in Hereroland, the native gets fire in about a minute. The names applied to the two sticks indicate that the pointed stick (*ondume*) is regarded as male and the holed stick (*otyiya*) as female, and that the process of making fire by the friction of the two is compared to the intercourse of the sexes. As to the wood of which the fire-sticks are made accounts differ. According to Dr. H. Schinz the holed or female stick is of a soft wood, the pointed or male stick of a hard wood, generally of the sacred *omumborombonga* tree (*Combretum primigenum*). According to Mr. C. G. Büttner, neither of the sticks need be of a special tree, and any wood that happens to be at hand may be employed for the purpose; only the wood of the thorny acacias, which abound in the country, appears to be unsuitable.[1] Probably the rule mentioned by Dr. Schinz is the original one, and if in some places the wood of the

The male fire-stick made of the sacred *omumborombonga* tree.

[1] C. J. Andersson, *Lake Ngami*, pp. 223 *sq.*; J. Hahn, *op. cit.* iv. (1869) p. 500; Rev. G. Viehe, *op. cit.* i. (1879) pp. 39, 61; C. G. Büttner, *l.c.*; H. Brincker, *Wörterbuch des Otji-herero*, *s.vv.* *ondume* and *otjija*; *id.* "Character, Sitten, und Gebräuche, speciell der Bantu Deutsch-Südwest-afrikas," *Mittheilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, iii. (1900) Dritte Abtheilung, p. 75; *id.* "Pyrolatrie in Südafrika," *Globus*, lxvii. (January, 1895) p. 96; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* pp. 165 *sq.*; J. Kohler, *op. cit.* pp. 305, 315; J. Irle, *Die Herero*, pp. 79 *sq.* According to Dr. Schinz, the meaning of the names applied to the fire-sticks has been much disputed; he himself adopts the view given in the text, and supports it by weighty reason which, taken along with analogous designations in many other parts of the world, may be regarded as conclusive. He tells us that *otyisa* means *pudendum muliebre*, and this is actually the name of the holed stick according to Mr. Viehe (*ll.cc.*), though Dr. Schinz gives *otyia* as the name. I have followed Dr. Brincker in accepting *otyiya* (*otjija*) as the correct form of the word. Further, Dr. Schinz derives *ondume*, the name of the pointed stick, from a verb *ruma*, meaning "to have intercourse with a woman." Moreover, he reports that the Ai San Bushmen, near Noihas, in the Kalahari desert, call the vertical fire-stick *tau doro* and the horizontal fire-stick *gai doro*, where *tau* is the masculine prefix and *gai* the feminine. Finally, a Herero explained to him the significance of the names by referring in an unmistakable manner to the corresponding relations in the animal kingdom. That the two sticks are regarded as male and female is positively affirmed by Mr. Viehe, Mr. Meyer (quoted by J. Kohler), and Dr. Brincker.

sacred tree has ceased to be used to light the holy fire, the reason may be simply that the tree does not grow there, and that accordingly the people are obliged to use such wood as they can find. We have seen that a branch of the sacred *omumborombonga* tree is regularly planted beside the village hearth, but that in default of it the people have to put up with a bough of another kind of tree, the *omuwapu* (*Grevia spec*).[1] Such substitutions were especially apt to be forced on the Herero in the southern part of the country, where the *omumborombonga* tree is very rare and forests do not exist, the larger trees growing singly or in clumps. In the north, on the other hand, vegetation is much richer, and regular woods are to be found. Here, in particular, the *omumborombonga* tree is one of the ornaments of the landscape. It grows only beside water-courses, and generally stands solitary, surpassing a tall oak in height, and rivalling it in girth; indeed, so thick is the trunk that were it hollowed out a family could lodge in it. Unlike most trees in the country it is thornless. Whole forests of it grow to the eastward of Hereroland, in the direction of Lake Ngami. So close is the grain and so heavy the wood that some of the early explorers gave it the name of the "iron tree."[2] Hence it is well adapted to form the upright stick of the fire-drill, for which a hard wood is required.

Herero tradition of the origin of men and cattle from the sacred *omumborombonga* tree.

The Herero have a tradition that in the beginning they and their cattle and all four-footed beasts came forth from the *omumborombonga* tree in a single day, whereas birds, fish, and creeping things sprang from the rain. However, slightly different versions of the Herero genesis appear to be current. As to the origin of men and cattle from the tree, public opinion is unanimous; but some dissenters hold that sheep and perhaps goats, but certainly sheep, issued from a flat rock in the north of the country. For some time past, unfortunately, the tree has ceased to be prolific; it is of no

[1] See above, pp. 213 *sq.* Mr. G. Viehe says that the *omuwapu* tree "acts a very important part in almost all the religious ceremonies" of the Herero (*op. cit.* i. 45). Probably it is only used where the *omumborombonga* cannot be had.

[2] J. Hahn, "Das Land der Herero," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, iii. (1868) pp. 200, 213, 214 *sq.*; C. J. Andersson, *Lake Ngami*, pp. 218, 221; *id.*, *The Okavango River* (London, 1861), pp. 21 *sq.*; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 182.

use waiting beside it in the hope of capturing such oxen and sheep as it might bear. Yet still the Herero testify great respect for the tree which they regard as their ancestor (*omukuru*). To injure it is deemed a sacrilege which the ancestor will punish sooner or later. In passing it they bow reverently and stick a bunch of green twigs or grass into the trunk or throw it down at the foot. They address the tree, saying, "*U-zera tate mukururume*, Thou art holy, grandfather!" and they even enter into conversation with it, giving the answers themselves in a changed voice. They hardly dare to sit down in its shadow. All this reverence they display for every tree of the species.[1]

Migration from one country to another sometimes involves a change of sacred tree.

On the whole, then, we may infer that so long as the Herero dwelt in a land where their ancestral tree abounded, they made the male fire-stick from its wood; but that as they gradually migrated from a region of tropical rains and luxuriant forests to the arid mountains, open grass lands, and dry torrid climate of their present country,[2] they had in some places to forgo its use and to take another tree in its stead. Similarly the Aryan invaders of Greece and Italy were obliged, under a southern sky, to seek substitutes for the sacred oak of their old northern home; and more and more, as time went on and the deciduous woods retreated up the mountain slopes, they found what they sought in the laurel, the olive, and the vine. Zeus himself had to put up with the white poplar at his great sanctuary of Olympia in the hot lowlands of Elis;[3] and on summer days, when the light leaves of the poplar hardly stirred in the languid air and the buzz of the flies was more than usually exasperating,

[1] C. J. Andersson, *Lake Ngami*, p. 221; Francis Galton, *op. cit.* p. 115; J. Hahn, *op. cit.* iii. (1868) p. 215, iv. (1869) p. 498, note; Rev. H. Beiderbecke, in (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880) pp. 92 *sq.*; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* pp. 182 *sq.*; Meyer, quoted by J. Kohler, *op. cit.* p. 297; P. H. Brincker, in *Mittheilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin* (1900), Dritte Abtheilung, p. 73; J. Irle, *Die Herero*, pp. 75 *sq.*, 77; E. Dannert, *Zum Rechte der Herero*, pp. 3 *sq.*

[2] On the evidence for this migration see J. Chapman, *Travels in the Interior of South Africa*, i. 325-327; J. Hahn, *op. cit.* iii. (1868) pp. 227 *sqq.* As to the physical features and climate of Hereroland, see J. Hahn, "Das Land der Ovaherero," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, iii. (1868) pp. 193 *sqq.*; J. Irle, *Die Herero*, pp. 9 *sqq.*, 19 *sqq.*

[3] Pausanias, v. 13. 3, v. 14. 2. On the substitution of the poplar for the oak, see Mr. A. B. Cook in *Folk-lore*, xv. (1904) pp. 297 *sq.*

he perhaps looked wistfully away to the Arcadian mountains, looming blue in the distance through a haze of heat, and sighed for the shadow and the coolness of their oak woods.

The worship of the chief's fire a form of ancestor-worship.

Thus it appears that the sanctity ascribed by the Herero to the chief's fire springs from a custom of kindling it with the wood of their ancestral tree; in fact, the cult of the fire resolves itself into a form of ancestor-worship. For the religion of the Herero, like that of all Bantu peoples, is first and foremost a propitiation of the spirits of their forefathers conceived as powerful beings able and willing to harm them. From youth to death the Herero live in constant dread of their ancestors (*ovakuru*, plural of *omukuru*), who, sometimes seen and sometimes unseen, return to earth and play their descendants many a spiteful trick. They glide into the village, steal the milk, drive the cattle from the fold, and waylay women. More than that, they can inflict disease and death, decide the issue of war, and send or withhold rain at pleasure. They are the cause of every vexation and misfortune, and the whole aim of the living is by frequent sacrifices to mollify and appease the dead.[1]

The sacred hearth a special seat of the ancestral spirits.

Now the sacred hearth seems to be in a special sense the seat of the worship paid to the ancestral spirits. Here the head of the family sits and communes with his forefather, giving himself the answers he thinks fit.[2] Hither the newborn child is brought with its mother to be introduced to the spirits and to receive its name, and the chief, addressing his ancestors, announces, "To you a child is born in your village; may this village never come to an end!"[3] Hither the bride is conducted at her marriage, and a sheep having been sacrificed, its flesh is placed on the holy bushes at the

[1] Rev. G. Viehe, "Some Customs of the Ovaherero," (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, i. (1879) pp. 64-66; Rev. H. Beiderbecke, in (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880) p. 91; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* pp. 183 *sq.*; P. H. Brincker, in *Mittheilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, iii. (1900) Dritte Abtheilung, pp. 89 *sq.*; J. Irle, *Die Herero*, pp. 74, 75, 77. Apparently it is only a powerful or eminent man who becomes an *omukuru* after his death. Or rather, perhaps, though all dead men become *ovakuru*, only the strong and brave are feared and worshipped.

[2] H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 183.

[3] Rev. E. Dannert, "Customs of the Ovaherero at the Birth of a Child," (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880) pp. 66 *sq.* Compare Rev. G. Viehe, *op. cit.* i. (1879) p. 41; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 168.

hearth.[1] Hither the sick are carried to be commended to the care of their ghostly kinsmen, and as the sufferer is borne round and round the fire his friends chant:—

"*See, Father, we have come here,*
With this sick man to you,
That he may soon recover."[2]

Sacred sticks representing the deceased ancestors of the Herero.

But the most tangible link between the worship of the fire and the worship of the dead is furnished by the sacred sticks representing the ancestors, which are kept in a bundle together with the two sticks used for kindling the fire by friction. Each of these rude idols or Lares, as we may call them, "symbolises a definite ancestor of the paternal clan, and, taken together, they may be regarded as the most sacred possession of a family. They stand in the closest relation to the holy hearth, or rather to the priestly dignity, and must therefore always remain in the same paternal clan."[3] These sticks "are cut from trees or bushes which are dedicated to the ancestors, and they represent the ancestors at the sacrificial meals, for the cooked flesh of the victims is always set before them first. Many people always keep these sticks, tied up in a bundle with straps and hung with amulets, in the branches of the sacrificial bushes which stand on the sacred hearth (*okuruo*). The sacrificial bush serves to support the severed pieces of the victim, and thus in a measure represents an altar or table of sacrifice."[4] When after an absence of years the people return to a village where a chief died and was buried, a new fire is kindled by friction on the old hearth, the flesh of the first animal slaughtered here is cooked in a particular vessel, and the chief hands a portion of it to every person present. "An image, consisting of two pieces of wood, supposed to represent the household deity, or rather the deified parent, is then produced, and moistened in the platter of each individual. The chief then takes the image, and, after affixing a piece of meat to the upper end of it, he plants it in the ground, on the identical spot where his parent

[1] Rev. G. Viehe, in (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, i. (1879) pp. 49 *sq.*

[2] Rev. G. Viehe, *op. cit.* i. 51.

[3] H. Schinz, *op. cit.* p. 166. Compare J. Irle, *Die Herero*, p. 77.

[4] J. Hahn, *op. cit.* iv. (1869) p. 500, note.

was accustomed to sacrifice. The first pail of milk produced from the cattle is also taken to the grave; a small quantity is poured on the ground, and a blessing asked on the remainder." Each clan, the writer adds, has a particular tree or shrub consecrated to it, and of this tree or shrub the two sticks representing the deceased are made.[1]

The sacred sticks representing the ancestors are probably the fire-sticks which were used to kindle fresh fire in the village after a death.

In these accounts the sacred sticks which stand for the ancestors, and to which the meat of sacrifices is first offered, are distinguished, expressly or implicitly, from the sacred sticks which are used to make the holy fire.[2] Other writers, however, identify the two sets of sticks. Thus we are told that the Herero "make images of their ancestors as follows. They take the two sticks with which they make fire and tie them together with a fresh wisp of corn. Then they worship this object as their ancestor. They may approach it only on their knees. For hours together they sit before it and talk with it. If you ask them where they imagine their ancestors to be, since they cannot surely be these sticks, they answer that they do not know. The sticks are kept in the house of the great wife."[3] Again, another writer defines the *ondume* or male fire-stick as a "stick representing an *omukuru*, *i.e.* ancestor, deity, with which and the *otyiza* the holy fire is made."[4] Again, the Rev. G. Viehe, in describing the ceremonies observed at the return to a deserted village where an ancestor (*omukuru*) is buried, tells us that they bring no fire with them, "but holy fire must now be obtained from the *omukuru*. This is done with the *ondume* and the

[1] C. J. Andersson, *Lake Ngami*, pp. 228 *sq.* The ceremony is described more fully by the Rev. G. Viehe, "Some Customs of the Ovaherero," (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, i. (1879) pp. 61 *sq.*, from whose account some of the details in the text are borrowed.

[2] The distinction is made also by Mr. J. Irle. According to him, while the fire-sticks are called *ozondume* (plural of *ondume*), the sticks which represent the ancestors are called *ozohongue* and are made from the *omuvapu* bush. In every chief's house there is a bundle of about twenty of these ancestral sticks. When a chief dies, the sticks are wrapped in a portion of the sacred bull (*omusisi*) which is slaughtered on this occasion, and a new stick is added to the bundle. At the same time Mr. Irle tells us that the fire-sticks (*ozondume*) also represent the ancestors and are made like them from the *omuvapu* bush. See J. Irle, *Die Herero*, pp. 77, 79.

[3] Bensen, quoted by J. Kohler, "Das Recht der Herero," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, xiv. (1900) p. 305.

[4] Rev. G. Viehe, or his editor, *op. cit.* i. (1879) p. 39. The *otyiza* (*otyiya*) is the female fire-stick. See above, p. 218 note 1.

The sacred sticks representing ancestors are probably old fire-sticks.

otyiza. The meaning of these two words plainly shows that the first represents the *omukuru*, and the other his wife."[1] The same excellent authority defines the *ozondume* as "sticks which represent the *ovakuru*, *i.e.* ancestors, deities";[2] and *ozondume* is simply the plural of *ondume*, the male fire-stick.[3] Hence it appears highly probable that the sticks representing the ancestors are, in fact, nothing but the male fire-sticks, each of which was cut to make a new fire on the return to the old village after a chief's death. The stick would be an appropriate emblem of the deceased, who had been in his lifetime the owner of the sacred fire, and who now after his death bestowed it on his descendants by means of the friction of his wooden image. And the symbolism will appear all the more natural when we remember that the male fire-stick is generally made from the ancestral tree, that the process of fire-making is regarded by the Herero as the begetting of a child, and that their name for the stick, according to the most probable etymology, signifies "the begetter." Such sticks would be far too sacred to be thrown away when they had served their immediate purpose of kindling a new fire, and thus in time a whole bundle of them would accumulate, each of them recalling, and in a sense representing, one of the great forefathers of the tribe. When the old sticks had ceased to be used as fire-lighters, and were preserved merely as memorials of the dead, it is not surprising that their original function should be overlooked by some European observers, who have thus been led to distinguish them from the sticks by which the fire is actually produced at the present day.[4] Amongst the

[1] Rev. G. Viehe, in (*South African*) *Folk-lore Journal*, i. (1879) p. 61.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 43, compare p. 50.

[3] J. Irle, *Die Herero*, p. 79.

[4] I have assumed that the ancestral sticks, whatever their origin, represent only men. This is plainly implied by Dr. Brincker, who tells us that "each of these sticks represents the male member of generation and in the Bantu sense a personality, which stands for the presence of the deceased chief on all festive occasions and especially at religious ceremonies" ("Character, Sitten, und Gebräuche, speciell der Bantu Deutsch-Südwestafrikas," *Mittheilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, iii. (1900) Dritte Abtheilung, p. 74). In savage society women are of too little account for their ghosts to be commonly worshipped. Speaking of the Bantu peoples, a writer who knows them well observes: "This lack of respect for old women is a part of the natives' religious system, and is connected with their conception of a future life, in which women play a subordinate part, their spirits not being able to cause much trouble, and therefore not being

Koryaks of north-eastern Asia, when the sacred fire-boards, roughly carved in human form, are so full of holes that they can no longer be used for the purpose of kindling fire, they are still kept as holy relics in a shrine near the door of the house; and a stranger who observed the respect with which they are treated, but who did not know their history, might well mistake them for figures of worshipful ancestors and never guess the practical purpose which they once served as fire-lighters. A Koryak family regards its sacred fire-board not only as the deity of the household fire, the guardian of the family hearth, but also as the guardian of the reindeer, and they call it the "master of the herd." It is supposed to protect the reindeer from wolves and from sickness and to prevent the animals from straying away and being lost. When a reindeer is slaughtered, the sacred fire-board is taken out and smeared with the blood. The maritime Koryaks, who do not live by reindeer, regard the sacred fire-board as the master of the underground house and the helper in the hunt of sea-mammals. They call it "father" and feed it from time to time with fat, which they smear on its mouth.[1] Among the neighbouring Chuckchees in the north-eastern extremity of Asia similar ideas and customs obtain in respect of the fire-boards. These are roughly carved in human form and personified, almost deified, as the supernatural guardians of the reindeer. The holes made by drilling in the board are deemed the eyes of the figure and the squeaking noise produced by the friction of the fire-drill in the hole is thought to be its voice. At every sacrifice the mouth of the figure is greased with tallow or with the marrow of bones. When a new fire-board is made, it is consecrated by being smeared with the blood of a slaughtered reindeer, and the owner says, "Enough! Take up your abode here!" Then the other fire-boards are brought to the same place and set side by side on the ground. The owner says, "Ho! these are your companions. See that I always find easily every kind of game!" Next he slaughters another reindeer and says,

Sacred fire-boards among the Koryaks and Chuckchees of north-eastern Asia.

of much account" (Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, p. 23).

[1] W. Jochelson, "The Koryak," pp. 32-36 (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. vi., Leyden and New York, 1908).

"Hi! Since you are one of my young men, go and drive the herd hither!" Then after a pause he asks the fire-board, "Have you brought it?" to which in the name of the fire-board he answers, "I have." Thereupon, speaking in his own person, he says, "Then catch some reindeer! It seems that you will keep a good watch over the herd. There, from the actual chief of the fire-boards, you may learn wisdom." These sacred fire-boards are often handed down from generation to generation as family heir-looms. During the calving-season they are taken from their bag and placed behind the frame in the outer tent in order that they may protect the dams.[1]

The evolution of a fire-god or fire-goddess.

These Koryak and Chuckchee customs illustrate the evolution of a fire-god into the patron deity of a family and his representation in human form by the board which is used in fire-making. As the fire-board is that part of the kindling apparatus which is commonly regarded as female in contradistinction to the drill, which is regarded as male, we can easily understand why the deity of the fire should sometimes, as at Rome, be conceived as a goddess rather than as a god; whereas if the drill itself were viewed as the essential part of the apparatus we should expect to find a fire-god and not a fire-goddess.

[1] W. Bogaras, "The Chukchee Religion," pp. 349-353 (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. vii. part ii., Leyden and New York, 1904).

CHAPTER XVI

FATHER JOVE AND MOTHER VESTA

Similarity between the fire-customs of the Herero and the ancient Latins.

THE reader may remember that the preceding account of the fire-customs of the Herero was introduced for the sake of comparison with the Latin worship of Vesta. The points of similarity between the two will now be indicated. In the first place we have seen reason to hold that the ever-burning Vestal fire at Rome was merely a survival of the fire on the king's hearth. So among the Herero the sacred fire of the village is the chief's fire, which is kept burning or smouldering in his house by day and by night. In Rome, as in Hereroland, the extinction of the fire was regarded as an evil omen, which had to be expiated by sacrifices,[1] and new fire was procured in primitive fashion by twirling the point of one stick in the hole of another. The Roman fire was fed with the wood of the sacred oak tree, just as the African fire is kindled with the wood of the sacred *omumborombonga* tree. Beside both were kept the images of the ancestors, the Lares at Rome, the *ozondume* in Hereroland. The king's house which sheltered the fire and the images was originally in Italy what the chief's hut still is in Hereroland, a circular hut of osiers, not as ancient dreamers thought, because the earth is round,[2] nor yet because a circle is the symbol of rest, but simply because it is both easier and cheaper to build a round hut than a square.[3]

[1] Livy, xxviii. 11. 6 *sq.*; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* ii. 67. 5.

[2] Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 265 *sqq.*; Festus, p. 262, ed. C. O. Müller.

[3] Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, pp. 11 *sq.* On the diffusion of the round hut in Africa Sir H. H. Johnston says: "The original form of house throughout all British Central

The Roman Vestals, or some of them, appear to have been originally the king's daughters.

Further, in Rome the sacred fire was tended, as it still is in Hereroland, by unmarried women, and as the Herero priestesses are the chief's daughters, so, we may conjecture, it was with some at least of the Vestals among the ancient Latins. The Roman Vestals appear to have been under the *patria potestas* of the king, and, in republican times, of the Pontifex Maximus, who succeeded to some of the king's functions.[1] But if they were under the *patria potestas* of the king, they must have been either his wives or daughters; as virgins they cannot have been his wives; it remains, therefore, that they were his daughters. Various circumstances confirm this view. Their house at Rome, as we saw, always adjoined the Regia, the old palace of the kings; they were treated with marks of respect usually accorded to royalty;[2] and the most famous of all the Vestals, the mother of Romulus, was said to be a daughter of the King of Alba.[3] The custom of putting an unfaithful Vestal to death by immuring her in a subterranean chamber[4] may have been adopted in order to avoid the necessity of taking the life of a princess by violence;[5] for, as we shall learn later on, there is a very widespread reluctance to spill royal blood.

Africa was what the majority of the houses still are—circular and somewhat like a beehive in shape, with round walls of wattle and daub and thatched roof. This style of house is characteristic of (*a*) all Africa south of the Zambezi; (*b*) all British Central Africa; as much of the Portuguese provinces of Zambezia and Moçambique as are not under direct Portuguese or Muhammedan influence which may have introduced the rectangular dwelling; (*c*) all East Africa up to and including the Egyptian Sudan, where Arab influence has not introduced the oblong rectangular building; (*d*) the Central Nigerian Sudan, much of Senegambia, and perhaps the West Coast of Africa as far east and south as the Gold Coast, subject, of course, to the same limitations as to foreign influence" (*British Central Africa*, London, 1897, p. 453).

[1] J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] pp. 250, 341 *sq.*

[2] J. Marquardt, *op. cit.* iii.[2] pp. 340 *sq.*; *Journal of Philology*, xiv. (1885) pp. 155 *sq.*

[3] Livy, i. 3 *sq.*; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* i. 76 *sq.*; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 3.

[4] Plutarch, *Numa*, 10; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* ii. 67. 4, viii. 89. 5.

[5] The suggestion is due to Mr. M. A. Bayfield (*Classical Review*, xv. 1901, p. 448). He compares the similar execution of the princess Antigone (Sophocles, *Antigone*, 773 *sqq.*). However, we must remember that a custom of burying people alive has been practised as a punishment or a sacrifice by Romans, Persians, and Germans, even when the victims were not of royal blood. See Livy, xxii. 57. 6; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 12; Plutarch, *Marcellus*, 3; *id.*, *Quaest. Rom.* 83; Herodotus, vii. 114; J. Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*,[3] pp. 694 *sq.* As to the objection to spill royal blood, see *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, i. 354 *sq.*

Rites performed by the Vestals for the fertility of the earth and the fecundity of cattle.

Amongst the Herero the chief's daughter who tends the holy fire has also to perform certain priestly rites, which have for their object the prosperity and multiplication of the cattle.[1] So, too, it was with the Roman Vestals. On the fifteenth of April every year pregnant cows were sacrificed to the Earth goddess; the unborn calves were torn from their mothers' wombs, the chief Vestal burned them and kept their ashes for use at the shepherds' festival of the Parilia. This sacrifice of pregnant cows was a fertility charm designed, by a curious application of homoeopathic magic, to quicken both the seed in the ground and the wombs of the cows and the ewes.[2] At the Parilia, held on the twenty-first of April, the Vestals mixed the ashes of the unborn calves with the blood of a horse which had been sacrificed in October, and this mixture they distributed to shepherds, who fumigated their flocks with it as a means of ensuring their fecundity and a plentiful supply of milk.[3]

The Vestals were probably regarded as embodiments of Vesta, who was a mother-goddess, the bestower of offspring on cattle and women.

Strange as at first it may seem to find holy virgins assisting in operations intended to promote the fertility of the earth and of cattle, this reproductive function accords perfectly with the view that they were of old the wives of the fire-god and the mothers of kings. On that view, also, we can understand why down to imperial times the Vestals adored the male emblem of generation,[4] and why Vesta herself, the goddess of whom they were the priestesses and probably the embodiments, was worshipped by the Romans not as a virgin but as a mother.[5] She was sometimes identified with Venus.[6] Like Diana, with whom she was identified at Nemi, she appears to have been a goddess of fecundity, who bestowed offspring both on cattle and on women. That she was supposed to multiply cattle is

[1] See above, p. 215.

[2] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 629-672. Compare Varro, *De lingua Latina*, vi. 15; Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iv. 49.

[3] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 731-782. See below, p. 326.

[4] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 39: "*Quamquam religione tutatur et fascinus, imperatorum quoque, non solum infantium custos, qui deus inter sacra Romana Vestalibus colitur.*"

[5] Virgil, *Georg.* i. 498; Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 828; G. Henzen, *Acta fratrum Arvalium*, pp. 124, 147; H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, Nos. 5047, 5048. Ennius represented Vesta as the mother of Saturn and Titan. See Lactantius, *Divin. inst.* i. 14.

[6] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, iv. 10.

indicated by the ceremonies which the Vestals performed in April; that she made women to be mothers is hinted at not obscurely by the legends of the birth of the old Latin kings.[1] The ancient Aryan practice of leading a bride thrice round the hearth of her new home[2] may have been intended not merely to introduce her to the ancestral spirits who had their seats there, but also to promote conception, perhaps by allowing one of these very spirits to enter into her and be born again. When the ancient Hindoo bridegroom led his bride round the fire, he addressed the fire-god Agni with the words, "Mayst thou give back, Agni, to the husbands the wife together with offspring."[3] When a Slavonian bride enters her husband's house after marriage she is led thrice round the hearth; then she must stir the fire with the poker, saying, "As many sparks spring up, so many cattle, so many male children shall enliven the new home."[4] At Mostar, in Herzogovina, the bride seats herself on a bag of fruit beside the hearth in her new home and pokes the fire thrice. While she does so, they bring her a small

Custom of leading a bride round the fire perhaps a fertility charm.

[1] See above, pp. 195 *sqq.*

[2] *Grihya Sûtras*, translated by H. Oldenberg, vol. i. pp. 37, 168, 279, 283, 382, 384, vol. ii. pp. 46, 191, 260; M. Winternitz, "Das altindische Hochzeitsrituell," pp. 4, 56-62 (*Denkschriften der kaiserl. Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien*, xl., Vienna, 1892); H. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, p. 312; G. A. Grierson, *Bihār Peasant Life* (Calcutta, 1885), p. 368; F. S. Krauss, *Sitte und Brauch der Südslaven*, pp. 386, 436, cp. 430; J. Lasicius, "De diis Samagitarum caeterorumque Sarmatarum," in *Magazin herausgegeben von der Lettisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft*, xiv. 99; J. Maeletius (Maletius), "De sacrificiis et idolatria veterum Borussorum Livonum aliarumque vicinarum gentium," in *Mitteilungen der Litterarischen Gesellschaft Masovia*, viii. (1902) pp. 191, 204 (this work is also reprinted under the name of J. Menecius in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, ii. (Riga and Leipsic, 1848) pp. 389-392); F. Woeste, in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, ii. (1855) p. 91; A. Kuhn und W. Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, pp. 433, 522; A. Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, ii. 38; J. H. Schmitz, *Sitten und Sagen, etc., des Eifler Volkes*, i. 67; Montanus, *Die deutsche Volksfeste, Volksbräuche und deutscher Volksglaube*, p. 85; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Hochzeitsbuch* (Leipsic, 1871), p. 222; L. v. Schroeder, *Die Hochzeitsbräuche der Esten* (Berlin, 1888), pp. 127 *sqq.*; E. Samter, *Familienfeste der Griechen und Römer* (Berlin, 1901), pp. 59-62; O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Altertumskunde*, pp. 356 *sq.* This evidence proves that the custom has been practised by the Indian, Slavonian, Lithuanian, and Teutonic branches of the Aryan race, from which we may fairly infer that it was observed by the ancestors of the whole family before their dispersion.

[3] *Grihya-Sûtras*, translated by H. Oldenberg, vol. i. p. 283 (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxix.).

[4] Prof. Vl. Titelbach, "Das heilige Feuer bei den Balkanslaven," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, xiii. (1900) p. 1.

boy and set him on her lap. She turns the child thrice round in order that she may give birth to male children.[1] Still more clearly does belief in the impregnation of a woman by fire come out in another South Slavonian custom. When a wife wishes to have a child, she will hold a vessel full of water beside the fire on the hearth, while her husband knocks two burning brands together so that the sparks fly out. When some of them have fallen into the vessel, the woman drinks the water which has thus been fertilised by the fire.[2] The same belief seems still to linger in England; for there is a Lincolnshire saying that if a woman's apron is burned above the knee by a spark or red-hot cinder flying out of a fire, she will become a mother.[3] Thus the superstition which gave rise to the stories of the birth of the old Roman kings holds its ground to this day in Europe, even in our own country. So indestructible are the crude fancies of our savage forefathers. Thus we may safely infer that the old practice of leading a bride formally to or round the hearth was designed to make her fruitful through the generative virtue ascribed to the fire. The custom is not confined to peoples of the Aryan stock, for it is observed also by the Esthonians and the Wotyaks of Russia[4] and, as we have seen, by the Herero of South Africa.[5] It expresses in daily life the same idea which is embodied in the myths of the birth of Servius Tullius and the other Latin kings, whose virgin mothers conceived through contact with a spark or tongue of fire.[6]

Accordingly, where beliefs and customs of this sort have

[1] F. S. Krauss, *Sitte und Brauch der Südslaven* (Vienna, 1885), p. 430.

[2] F. S. Krauss, *op. cit.* p. 531.

[3] This saying was communicated to me by Miss Mabel Peacock in a letter dated Kirton-in-Lindsey, Lincolnshire, 30th October 1905.

[4] Max Buch, *Die Wotjäken* (Stuttgart, 1882), pp. 52, 59; L. v. Schroeder, *op. cit.* pp. 129, 132.

[5] Above, pp. 221 *sq.*

[6] As it is believed that fire may impregnate human beings, so conversely some people seem to imagine that it may be impregnated by them. Thus Mr. T. R. Glover, Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, writes to me (18th June 1906): "A curious and not very quotable instance of (I suppose) Sacred Marriage was brought to my notice by Mr. Brown of the Canadian Baptist Mission to the Telugus. He said that in Hindoo temples (in South India chiefly?) sometimes a scaffolding is erected over a fire. A man and a woman are got to copulate on it and allow the human seed to fall into the fire." But perhaps this ceremony is only another way of conveying the fertilising virtue of the fire to the woman, in other words, of getting her with child.

New-born children brought to the hearth as a mode of introducing them to the ancestral spirits.

prevailed, it is easy to understand why new-born children should be brought to the hearth, and why their birth should there be solemnly announced to the ancestors. This is done by the Herero,[1] and in like manner on the fifth or seventh day after a birth the ancient Greeks used to run naked round the hearth with the new-born babe in their arms.[2] This Greek ceremony may perhaps be regarded as merely a purification, in other words as a means of keeping at bay the demons who lie in wait for infants. Certainly in other parts of the world a custom has prevailed of passing a newly born child backwards and forwards through the smoke of the fire for the express purpose of warding off evil spirits or other baleful influences.[3] Yet on the analogy of the preceding customs we may conjecture that a practice of solemnly bringing infants to the domestic hearth has also been resorted to as a mode of introducing them to the spirits of their fathers.[4] In Russia the old belief that the souls of the ancestors were somehow in the fire on the hearth has left traces of itself down to the present time. Thus in the Nijegorod Government it is still forbidden to break up the smouldering faggots in a stove, because to do so might cause the ancestors to fall through into hell. And when a Russian family moves from one house to another, the fire is raked out of the old stove into a jar and solemnly

[1] Above, pp. 215, 221.

[2] Suidas, Harpocration, and *Etymologicum Magnum*, *s.v.* Ἀμφιδρόμια; Hesychius, *s.v.* δρομάφιον ἦμαρ; Schol. on Plato, *Theaetetus*, p. 160 E. On this custom see S. Reinach, *Cultes, mythes, et religions*, i. (Paris, 1905) pp. 137-145. He suggests that the running of the naked men who carried the babies was intended, by means of sympathetic magic, to impart to the little ones in after-life the power of running fast. But this theory does not explain why the race took place round the hearth.

[3] The custom has been practised with this intention in Scotland, China, New Britain, the Tenimber and Timorlaut Islands, and by the Ovambo of South Africa. See Pennant's "Second Tour in Scotland," Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 383; Miss C. F. Gordon Cumming, *In the Hebrides*, ed. 1883, p. 101; *China Review*, ix. (1880-1881) p. 303; R. Parkinson, *Im Bismarck-Archipel*, pp. 94 *sq.*; J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 303; H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, p. 307. A similar custom was observed, probably for the same reason, in ancient Mexico and in Madagascar. See Clavigero, *History of Mexico*, translated by Cullen, i. 31; W. Ellis. *History of Madagascar*, i. 152. Compare my note, "The Youth of Achilles," *Classical Review*, vii. (1893) pp. 293 *sq.*

[4] Compare E. Samter, *Familienfeste der Griechen und Römer* (Berlin, 1901), pp. 59-62

conveyed to the new one, where it is received with the words, "Welcome, grandfather, to the new home!"[1]

Reasons why a procreative virtue was ascribed to fire.

But why, it may be asked, should a procreative virtue be attributed to the fire, which at first sight appears to be a purely destructive agent? and why in particular should the ancestral spirits be conceived as present in it? Two different reasons perhaps led savage philosophers to these conclusions. In the first place the common mode of making fire by means of the fire-drill has suggested, as we have seen, to many savages the notion that fire is the child of the fire-sticks, in other words that the rubbing of the fire-sticks together is a sexual union which begets offspring in the shape of a flame. This of itself suffices to impress on the mind of a savage the idea that a capacity of reproduction is innate in the fire, and consequently that a woman may conceive by contact with it. Strictly speaking, he ought perhaps to refer this power of reproduction not to the fire but to the fire-sticks; but savage thought is in general too vague to distinguish clearly between cause and effect. If he thinks the matter out, as he may do if he is more than usually reflective, the savage will probably conclude that fire exists unseen in all wood, and is only elicited from it by friction,[2] so that the spark or flame is the child, not so much of the fire-sticks, as of the parent fires in them. But this refinement of thought may well be above the reach even of a savage philosopher. The second reason which seems to have led early man to associate the fire with the souls of his ancestors was a superstitious veneration for the ancestral tree which furnished either the fuel for the sacred fire or the material out of which he carved one or both of the fire-sticks. Among the Herero, as we saw, the male fire-stick commonly is, or used to be, made out of the holy *omumborombonga* tree, from which they believe that they and their cattle sprang in days of old. Hence nothing could be more natural than that they should regard the fire, produced by the friction of a

The process of making fire by friction seems to the savage an act of generation.

Again, the fire was associated with the ancestors through the sacred ancestral tree which furnished either the fuel or the fire-sticks.

[1] W. R. S. Ralston, *The Songs of the Russian People*, pp. 120 *sq.* Ralston held that the Russian house-spirit Domovoy, who is supposed to live behind the stove, is the modern representative of an ancestral spirit. Compare *ibid.* pp. 84, 86, 119.

[2] Evidence of this view will be adduced later on. See *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, iii. 456.

piece of the ancestral tree, as akin to themselves, the offspring of the same mighty forefather, to wit, the sacred tree. Similarly, the Vestal fire at Rome was fed with the wood of the oak, the sacred tree of Jupiter, and the first Romans are described as "born of the tree trunks and the heart of oak."[1] No wonder, then, that the Latin kings, who claimed to represent Jupiter, and in that capacity masqueraded in his costume and made mock thunder, should have prided themselves on being sprung from a fire which was fed with the wood of the god's holy tree; such an origin was only another form of descent from the oak and from the god of the oak, Jupiter himself.

Esthonian marriage custom.

The theory that impregnation by fire is really impregnation by the wood of the tree with which the fire is kindled, derives some confirmation from a custom which is observed at marriage by some of the Esthonians in the neighbourhood of Oberpahlen. The bride is escorted to a tree, which is thereupon cut down and burned. When the fire blazes up, she is led thrice round it and placed between three armed men, who clash their swords over her head, while the women sing a song. Then some coins are thrown into the fire, and when it has died out they are recovered and knocked into the stump of the tree, which was cut down to serve as fuel.[2] This is clearly a mode of rewarding, first the fire, and next the tree, for some benefit they have conferred on the bride. But in early society husband and wife desire nothing so much as offspring; this therefore may very well be the benefit for which the Esthonian bride repays the tree.

The conception of the Fire-mother intimately bound up with that of the female fire-stick in the fire-drill.

Thus far we have regarded mainly the paternal aspect of the fire, which the Latins mythically embodied in Jupiter, that is literally Father Jove, the god of the oak. The maternal aspect of the fire was for them represented by Mother Vesta, as they called her; and as the Roman king stood for Father Jove, so his wife or daughter—the practice on this point appears to have varied—stood for Mother Vesta. Sometimes, as we have seen, the Vestal virgins, the priestesses or rather incarnations of Vesta, appear to have been the daughters, not the wives, of the king. But, on the other

[1] See above, pp. 185 *sq.*

[2] L. v. Schroeder, *Die Hochzeitsbräuche der Esten* (Berlin, 1888), pp. 129 *sq.*

hand, there are grounds for thinking that the wife of King Latinus, the legendary ancestor of the Latins, was traditionally regarded as a Vestal,[1] and the analogy of the Flamen Dialis with his wife the Flaminica, as I shall shew presently, points also to a married pair of priestly functionaries concerned with the kindling and maintenance of the sacred fire. However that may have been, we may take it as probable that the notion of the fire-mother was intimately associated with, if it did not spring directly from, the female fire-stick of the fire-drill, just as the conception of the fire-father was similarly bound up with the male fire-stick.

The Fire-father and the Fire-mother represented by a priest and priestess who together made the sacred fire by means of the fire-drill.

Further, it seems that these mythical beings, the fire-father and the fire-mother, were represented in real life by a priest and a priestess, who together made the sacred fire, the priest appropriately twirling the pointed male stick, while the priestess held fast on the ground the holed female stick, ready to blow up into a flame the spark which fell on the tinder. In the composite religion of Rome, formed like the Roman state by the fusion of several tribes, each with its own gods and priests, such pairs of fire-priests may at first have been duplicated. In one or more of the tribes which afterwards made up the Roman commonwealth the function of kindling the holy fire of oak was perhaps assigned to the Flamen Dialis and his wife the Flaminica, the living representatives of Jupiter and Juno; and if, as some scholars think, the name *flamen* comes from *flare*, "to blow up,"[2] the derivation would fit well with this theory. But in historical Rome the duty of making the sacred fire lay with the Vestal virgins and the chief pontiff.[3] The mode in which they shared the work between them is not described by ancient writers, but we may suppose that one of the virgins held the board of lucky wood on the ground while the pontiff inserted the point of a peg into the hole of the board and made the peg revolve rapidly between the palms of his hands. When the likeness of this mode of producing fire to the intercourse of the sexes had once struck people,

[1] See above, p. 197.

[2] Th. Mommsen, *History of Rome*, New Edition (London, 1894), i. 215 *sq.*; J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] p. 326; W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*, p. 147. For another derivation of their name see below, p. 247.

[3] See above, p. 207.

they would deem it unnatural, and even indecent, for a woman to usurp the man's function of twirling the pointed male stick. But the Vestals certainly helped to make fire by friction; it would seem, therefore, that the part they took in the process can only have been the one I have conjecturally assigned to them. At all events, the conjecture is supported by the following analogies.

Among the Djakuns fire is made by the leader and his unmarried daughter.

The Djakuns, a wild tribe of the Malay Peninsula, are in the habit of making fire by friction. A traveller has described the custom as follows: "When a troop was on a journey and intended either to pitch a temporary camp, or to make a longer settlement, the first camp fire was kindled for good luck by an unmarried girl with the help of the fire-drill. Generally this girl was the daughter of the man who served the troop as leader. It was deemed of special importance that on the first night of a settlement the fire of every band should be lit by the unmarried daughter of a leader. But she might only discharge this duty if she had not her monthly sickness on her at the time. This custom is all the more remarkable inasmuch as the Djakuns in their migrations always carried a smouldering rope of bark with them." "When the fire was to be kindled, the girl took the piece of soft wood and held it on the ground, while her father, or any other married man, twirled the vertical borer upon it. She waited for the spark to spring from the wood, and fanned it into a flame either by blowing on it or by waving the piece of wood quickly about in her hand. For this purpose she caught the spark in a bundle of teased bark and exposed it to a draught of air." "Fire so produced was employed to kindle the other fires for that night. They ascribed to it good luck in cooking and a greater power of keeping off tigers and so forth, than if the first fire had been kindled by a spark from the smouldering bark rope."[1] This

[1] H. Vaughan Stevens, "Mitteilungen aus dem Frauenleben der Ôrang Belendas, der Ôrang Djâkun und der Ôrang Lâut," bearbeitet von Dr. Max Bartels, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxviii. (1896) pp. 168 *sq.* The writer adds that any person, boy, man, or woman (provided she was not menstruous) might light the fire, if it were more convenient that he or she should do so. Thus the co-operation of a married man and an unmarried girl, though apparently deemed the best, was not the only permissible way of igniting the wood. The good faith or at all events the accuracy of the late German traveller H. Vaughan Stevens is not, I understand, above

account suggests a reason why a holy fire should be tended by a number of virgins: one or more of them might at any time be incapacitated by a natural infirmity for the discharge of the sacred duty.

Among the Slavs of the Balkans fire is made by a young girl and boy.

Again, the Slavs of the Balkan Peninsula ascribe a healing or protective power to "living fire," and when an epidemic is raging in a village they will sometimes extinguish all the fires on the hearths and procure a "living fire" by the friction of wood. At the present day this is done by various mechanical devices, but the oldest method, now almost obsolete, is said to be as follows:—A girl and a boy between the ages of eleven and fourteen, having been chosen to make the fire, are led into a dark room, where they must strip themselves of all their clothes without speaking a word. Then two perfectly dry cylindrical pieces of lime-wood are given them, which they must rub rapidly against each other, turn about, till they take fire. Tinder is then lit at the flame and used for the purpose of healing. This mode of kindling the "living fire" is still practised in the Schar Mountains of Old Servia. The writer who describes it witnessed some years ago the use of the sacred fire at the village of Setonje, at the foot of the Homolye Mountains, in the heart of the great Servian forest. But on that occasion the fire was made in the manner described, not by a boy and girl, but by an old woman and an old man. Every fire in the village had previously been extinguished, and was afterwards relit with the new fire.[1]

Among the Kachins fire is made by a man and woman jointly.

Among the Kachins of Burma, when people take solemn possession of a new house, a new fire is made in front of it by a man and woman jointly. A dry piece of bamboo is pegged down on the ground; the two fire-makers sit down

suspicion; but Mr. Nelson Annandale, joint author of *Fasciculi Malayenses*, writes to me of him that "he certainly had a knowledge and experience of the wild tribes of the Malay region which few or none have excelled, for he lived literally as one of themselves."

[1] Prof. Vl. Titelbach, "Das heilige Feuer bei den Balkanslaven," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, xiii. (1900) pp. 2-4. The ceremony witnessed by Prof. Titelbach will be described later on in this work. Kinglake rode through the great Servian forest on his way from Belgrade to Constantinople, and from his description (*Eothen*, ch. ii.) we gather that it is chiefly composed of oak. He says: "Endless and endless now on either side the tall oaks closed in their ranks, and stood gloomily lowering over us."

facing each other at either end of it, and together rub another piece of bamboo on the horizontal piece, one of them holding the wrists of the other and both pressing down firmly till fire is elicited.[1]

Thus the conception of the fire-sticks as male and female is carried out by requiring the male stick to be worked by a man and the female stick to be worked by a woman. But opinions differ as to whether the fire-makers should be married or single.

In the first at least of these customs, it is plain, the conception of the fire-sticks as male and female has been logically carried out by requiring the male fire-stick to be worked by a man and the female fire-stick to be held by a woman. But opinions seem to differ on the question whether the fire-makers should be wedded or single. The Djakuns prefer that the man should be married and the woman unmarried; on the other hand, the Slavs of the Schar Mountains clearly think it better that both should be single, since they entrust the duty of making the fire to a boy and girl. In so far as the man's part in the work is concerned, some of our Scottish Highlanders agree with the Djakuns at the other end of the world; for the natives of Lewis "did also make use of a fire called *Tin-egin*, *i.e.* a forced fire, or fire of necessity, which they used as an antidote against the plague or murrain in cattle; and it was performed thus: all the fires in the parish were extinguished, and then eighty-one married men, being thought the necessary number for effecting this design, took two great planks of wood, and nine of them were employed by turns, who by their repeated efforts rubbed one of the planks against the other until the heat thereof produced fire; and from this forced fire each family is supplied with new fire, which is no sooner kindled than a pot full of water is quickly set on it, and afterwards sprinkled upon the people infected with the plague, or upon the cattle that have the murrain. And this they all say they find successful by experiment: it was practised in the main land, opposite to the south of Skie, within these thirty years."[2] On the other hand, the Germans of Halberstadt sided with the South Slavs on this point, for they caused the forced fire, or need fire, as it is commonly called, to be made by two chaste boys, who pulled at a rope which ran round a wooden

[1] Ch. Gilhodes, "La Culture matérielle des Katchins (Birmanie)," *Anthropos*, v. (1910) p. 629.

[2] M. Martin's "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 611. The first edition of Martin's work was published in 1703, and the second in 1716.

cylinder.[1] The theory and practice of the Basutos in South Africa were similar. After a birth had taken place they used to kindle the fire of the hut afresh, and "for this purpose it was necessary that a young man of chaste habits should rub two pieces of wood quickly one against another, until a flame sprung up, pure as himself. It was firmly believed that a premature death awaited him who should dare to take upon himself this office, after having lost his innocence. As soon, therefore, as a birth was proclaimed in the village, the fathers took their sons to undergo the ordeal. Those who felt themselves guilty confessed their crime, and submitted to be scourged rather than expose themselves to the consequences of a fatal temerity." [2]

Reasons for entrusting the making of fire to unmarried boys and girls.

It is not hard to divine why the task of twirling the male fire-stick in the hole of the female fire-stick should by some people be assigned to married men. The analogy of the process to the intercourse of the sexes furnishes an obvious reason. It is less easy to understand why other people should prefer to entrust the duty to unmarried boys. But probably the preference is based on a belief that chastity leaves the boys with a stock of reproductive energy which they may expend on the operation of fire-making, whereas married men dissipate the same energy in other channels. A somewhat similar train of thought may explain a rule of virginity enjoined on women who assist in the production of fire by holding the female fire-stick on the ground. As a virgin's womb is free to conceive, so, it might be thought, will be the womb of the female fire-stick which she holds; whereas had the female fire-maker been already with child, she could not be reimpregnated, and consequently the female fire-stick could not give birth to a spark. Thus, in the sympathetic connexion between the fire-sticks and the fire-makers we seem to reach the ultimate origin of the order of the Vestal Virgins: they had to be chaste, because otherwise they could not light the fire. Once when the sacred fire had gone out, the Vestal in charge of it was suspected of having brought about the calamity by her unchastity, but she triumphantly repelled the suspicion by eliciting a flame from the cold

[1] J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] i. 504.

[2] E. Casalis, *The Basutos*, pp. 267 *sq.*

ashes.[1] Ideas of the same primitive kind still linger among the French peasantry, who think that if a girl can blow up a smouldering candle into a flame she is a virgin, but that if she fails to do so, she is not.[2] In ancient Greece none but persons of pure life were allowed to blow up the holy fire with their mouths; a vile man who had polluted his lips was deemed unworthy to discharge the duty.[3]

The holy fire and virgins of St. Brigit in Ireland.

The French superstition, which I have just mentioned, may well date from Druidical times, for there are some grounds for thinking that among the old Celts, as among their near kinsmen the Latins, holy fires were tended by virgins. In our own country perpetual fires were maintained in the temple of a goddess whom the Romans identified with Minerva,[4] but whose native Celtic name seems to have been Brigit. Like Minerva, Brigit was a goddess of poetry and wisdom, and she had two sisters also called Brigit, who presided over leechcraft and smithcraft respectively. This appears to be only another way of saying that Brigit was the patroness of bards, physicians, and smiths.[5] Now, at Kildare in Ireland the nuns of St. Brigit tended a perpetual holy fire down to the suppression of the monasteries under Henry VIII.; and we can hardly doubt that in doing so they merely kept up, under a Christian name, an ancient pagan worship of Brigit in her character of a fire-goddess or patroness of smiths. The nuns were nineteen in number. Each of them had the care of the fire for a single night in turn; and on the twentieth evening the last nun, having

[1] Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* ii. 68; Valerius Maximus, i. 1. 7.

[2] J. Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. (Condé-sur-Noireau, 1887) p. 27; B. Souché, *Croyances, présages et traditions diverses* (Niort, 1880), p. 12.

[3] Polybius, xii. 13. In Darfur a curious power over fire is ascribed to women who have been faithful to their husbands. "It is a belief among the Forians, that if the city takes fire, the only means of arresting the progress of the flames is to bring near them a woman, no longer young, who has never been guilty of intrigue. If she be pure, by merely waving a mantle, she puts a stop to the destruction. Success has sometimes rewarded a virtuous woman" (*Travels of an Arab Merchant* [Mohammed Ibn-Omar El-Tounsy] *in Soudan*, abridged from the French by Bayle St. John (London, 1854), p. 112). Compare R. W. Felkin, "Notes on the For Tribe of Central Africa," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, xiii. (1884-1886) p. 230.

[4] Solinus, xxii. 10. The Celtic Minerva, according to Caesar (*De bello Gallico*, vi. 17), was a goddess of the mechanical arts.

[5] J. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, pp. 73-77; P. W. Joyce, *Social History of Ancient Ireland*, i. 260 *sq.*

heaped wood on the fire, used to say, "Brigit, take charge of your own fire; for this night belongs to you." She then went away, and next morning they always found the fire still burning and the usual quantity of fuel consumed. Like the Vestal fire at Rome in the old days, the fire of St. Brigit burned within a circular enclosure made of stakes and brushwood, and no male might set foot inside the fence. The nuns were allowed to fan the fire or blow it up with bellows, but they might not blow on it with their breath.[1] Similarly it is said that the Balkan Slavs will not blow with their mouths on the holy fire of the domestic hearth;[2] a Brahman is forbidden to blow a fire with his mouth;[3] and among the Parsees the priests have to wear a veil over their mouth lest they should defile the sacred fire by their breath.[4]

Not to breathe on a holy fire.

The custom of maintaining a perpetual fire was not peculiar to Kildare, but seems to have been common in Ireland, for the native records shew that such fires were kept up in several monasteries, in each of which a small church or oratory was set apart for the purpose. This was done, for

Other perpetual fires in Ireland.

[1] Giraldus Cambrensis, *The Topography of Ireland*, chaps. xxxiv.-xxxvi., translated by Thomas Wright; P. W. Joyce, *Social History of Ancient Ireland*, i. 334 *sq.* It is said that in the island of Sena (the modern *Sein*), off the coast of Brittany, there was an oracle of a Gallic deity whose worship was cared for by nine virgin priestesses. They could raise storms by their incantations, and turn themselves into any animals they pleased (*Mela*, iii. 48); but it is not said that they maintained a perpetual holy fire, though Ch. Elton affirms that they did (*Origins of English History*, p. 27). M. Salomon Reinach dismisses these virgins as a fable based on Homer's description of the isle of Circe (*Odyssey*, x. 135 *sqq.*), and he denies that the Gauls employed virgin priestesses. See his article, "Les Vierges de Sena," *Revue Celtique*, xviii. (1897) pp. 1-8; *id.*, *Cultes, mythes, et religions*, i. (Paris, 1905) pp. 195 *sqq.* To me the nuns of St. Brigit seem to be most probably the successors of a Celtic order of Vestals. That there were female Druids is certain, but it does not appear whether they were virgins. See Lampridius, *Alexander Severus*, 60; Vopiscus, *Aurelianus*, 44; *id.*, *Numerianus*, 14 *sq.*

[2] Prof. Vl. Titelbach, "Das heilige Feuer bei den Balkanslaven," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, xiii. (1900) p. 1.

[3] *Laws of Manu*, iv. 53, translated by G. Bühler (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxv. p. 137).

[4] Martin Haug, *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of the Parsees*[3] (London, 1884), p. 243, note 1. Strabo describes the mouth-veil worn by the Magian priests in Cappadocia (xiv. 3. 15, p. 733). At Arkon, in the island of Rügen, there was a shrine so holy that none but the priest might enter it, and even he might not breathe in it. As often as he needed to draw in or give out breath, he used to run out of the door lest he should taint the divine presence with his breath. See Saxo Grammaticus, *Historia Danica*, bk. xiv. p. 824, ed. P. E. Müller (p. 393 of Elton's English translation).

example, at the monasteries of Seirkieran, Kilmainham, and Inishmurray.[1] We may conjecture that these holy fires were merely survivals of the perpetual fires which in pagan times had burned in honour of Brigit. The view that Brigit was a fire-goddess is confirmed by the observation that in the Christian calendar her festival falls the day before Candlemas, and the customs observed at that season by Celtic peasantry seem to prove that she was a goddess of the crops as well as of fire.[2] If that was so, it is another reason for comparing her to Vesta, whose priestesses performed ceremonies to fertilise both the earth and the cattle.[3] Further, there are some grounds for connecting Brigit, like Vesta, with the oak; for at Kildare her Christian namesake, St. Brigit, otherwise known as St. Bride or St. Bridget, built her church under an oak-tree, which existed till the tenth century, and gave its name to the spot, for Kildare is *Cill-dara*, "the church of the oak-tree."[4] The "church of the oak" may well have displaced a temple or sanctuary of the oak, where in Druidical days the holy fire was fed, like the Vestal fire at Rome, with the wood of the sacred tree.

St. Brigit's fire perhaps fed with oak-wood.

We may suspect that a conversion of this sort was often effected in Ireland by the early Christian missionaries. The monasteries of Derry and Durrow, founded by St. Columba, were both named after the oak groves amidst which they were built; and at Derry the saint spared the beautiful trees and strictly enjoined his successors to do the same. In his old age, when he lived an exile on the shores of the bleak storm-swept isle of Iona, his heart yearned to the home of his youth among the oak groves of Ireland, and he gave expression to the yearning in passionate verse:—

Early Irish monasteries built in oak groves.

> "*That spot is the dearest on Erin's ground,*
> *For the treasures that peace and purity lend,*
> *For the hosts of bright angels that circle it round,*
> *Protecting its borders from end to end.*

[1] P. W. Joyce, *Social History of Ancient Ireland*, i. 335 *sq.*; Standish H. O'Grady, *Sylva Gadelica*, translation (London, 1892), pp. 15, 16, 41.

[2] See above, pp. 94 *sq.*

[3] See above, p. 229.

[4] Douglas Hyde, *A Literary History of Ireland* (London, 1899), p. 158. The tradition of the oak of Kildare survives in the lines,

> "*That oak of Saint Bride, which nor Devil nor Dane*
> *Nor Saxon nor Dutchman could rend from her fane,*"

which are quoted by Mr. D. Fitzgerald in *Revue Celtique*, iv. (1879-1880) p. 193.

"*The dearest of any on Erin's ground,*
For its peace and its beauty I gave it my love;
Each leaf of the oaks around Derry is found
To be crowded with angels from heaven above.

"*My Derry! my Derry! my little oak grove,*
My dwelling, my home, and my own little cell,
May God the Eternal in Heaven above
Send death to thy foes, and defend thee well." [1]

A feeling of the same sort came over a very different exile in a very different scene, when growing old amid the turmoil, the gaieties, the distractions of Paris, he remembered the German oak woods of his youth.

"*Ich hatte einst ein schönes Vaterland.*
Der Eichenbaum
Wuchs dort so hoch, die Veilchen nickten sanft.
Es war ein Traum."

Virgin priestesses of fire among the Incas of Peru.

Far from the oaks of Erin and the saint's last home among the stormy Hebrides, a sacred fire has been tended by holy virgins, with statelier rites and in more solemn fanes, under the equinoctial line. The Incas of Peru, who deemed themselves the children of the Sun, procured a new fire from their great father at the solstice in June, our Midsummer Day. They kindled it by holding towards the sun a hollow mirror, which reflected his beams on a tinder of cotton wool. But if the sky happened to be overcast at the time, they made the new fire by rubbing two sticks against each other; and they looked upon it as a bad omen when they were obliged to do this, for they said the Sun must be angry with them, since he refused to kindle the flame with his own hand. The sacred fire, however obtained, was deposited at Cuzco, the capital of Peru, in the temple of the Sun, and also in a great convent of holy virgins, who guarded it carefully throughout the year, and it was an evil augury if they suffered it to go out. These

[1] Douglas Hyde, *op. cit.* pp. 169-171. At Kells, also, St. Columba dwelt under a great oak-tree. The writer of his Irish life, quoted by Mr. Hyde, says that the oak-tree "remained till these latter times, when it fell through the crash of a mighty wind. And a certain man took somewhat of its bark to tan his shoes with. Now, when he did on the shoes, he was smitten with leprosy from his sole to his crown."

Wives of the Sun in Peru.

virgins were regarded as the wives of the Sun, and they were bound to perpetual chastity. If any of them proved unfaithful to her husband the Sun, she was buried alive, like a Roman Vestal, and her paramour was strangled. The reason for putting her to death in this manner was probably, as at Rome, a reluctance to shed royal blood; for all these virgins were of the royal family, being daughters of the Incas or of his kinsmen. Besides tending the holy fire, they had to weave and make all the clothes worn by the Inca and his legitimate wife, to bake the bread that was offered to the Sun at his great festivals, and to brew the wine which the Inca and his family drank on these occasions. All the furniture of the convent, down to the pots, pans, and jars, were of gold and silver, just as in the temple of the Sun, because the virgins were deemed to be his wives. And they had a golden garden, where the very clods were of fine gold; where golden maize reared its stalks, leaves and cobs, all of the precious metal; and where golden shepherds, with slings and crooks of gold, tended golden sheep and lambs.[1] The analogy of these virgin guardians

[1] Garcilasso de la Vega, *Royal Commentaries of the Yncas*, pt. i. bk. iv. chaps. 1-3, bk. vi. chaps. 20-22 (vol. i. pp. 292-299, vol. ii. pp. 155-164, Markham's translation); P. de Cieza de Leon, *Travels*, p. 134 (Markham's translation); *id.*, *Second Part of the Chronicle of Peru*, pp. 85 *sq.* (Markham's translation); Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, bk. v. chap. 15 (vol. ii. pp. 331-333, Hakluyt Society). Professor E. B. Tylor discredits Garcilasso's description of these Peruvian priestesses on the ground that it resembles Plutarch's account of the Roman Vestals (*Numa*, 9 *sq.*) too closely to be independent; he thinks that "the apparent traces of absorption from Plutarch invalidate whatever rests on Garcilasso de la Vega's unsupported testimony." See his *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*,[3] pp. 249-253. In particular, he stumbles at the statement that an unfaithful Peruvian priestess was buried alive. But that statement was made by Cieza de Leon, who travelled in Peru when Garcilasso was a child, and whose book, or rather the first part of it, containing the statement, was published more than fifty years before that of Garcilasso. Moreover, when we understand that the punishment in question was based on a superstition which occurs independently in many parts of the world, the apparent improbability of the coincidence vanishes. As to the mode of kindling the sacred fire, Professor Tylor understands Plutarch to say that the sacred fire at Rome was kindled, as in Peru, by a burning-glass. To me it seems that Plutarch is here speaking of a Greek, not a Roman usage, and this is made still clearer when his text is read correctly. For the words ὑπὸ Μήδων, περὶ δὲ τὰ Μιθριδιατικά should be altered to ὑπὸ Μαίδων περὶ τὰ Μιθριδιατικά. See H. Pomtow in *Rheinisches Museum*, N.F. li. (1896) p. 365, and my note on Pausanias, x. 19. 4 (vol. v. p. 331). Thus Plutarch gives two instances when a sacred fire was extinguished and had to be relit with a burning-glass; but both instances are Greek, neither is Roman. The Greek

of the sacred flame furnishes an argument in favour of the view set forth in the preceding pages; for if the Peruvian Vestals were the brides of the Sun, may not the Roman Vestals have been the brides of the Fire?

Virgin priestesses of fire in Mexico and Yucatan.

On the summit of the great pyramidal temple at Mexico two fires burned continually on stone hearths in front of two chapels, and dreadful misfortunes were supposed to follow if the fires were allowed to go out. They were kept up by priests and maidens, some of whom had taken a vow of perpetual virginity. But most of these girls seem to have served only for a year or more until their marriage. They offered incense to the idols, wove cloths for the service of the temple, swept the sacred area, and baked the cakes which were presented to the gods but eaten by their priests. They were clad all in white, without any ornament. A broom and a censer were their emblems. Death was the penalty inflicted on the faithless virgin who polluted by her incontinence the temple of the god.[1] In Yucatan there was an order of

mode of lighting a sacred fire by means of a crystal is described also in the Orphic poem on precious stones, verses 177 *sqq.* (*Orphica*, ed. E. Abel, p. 115). Nor were the Greeks and Peruvians peculiar in this respect. The Siamese and Chinese have also been in the habit of kindling a sacred fire by means of a metal mirror or burning-glass. See Pallegoix, *Description du royaume Thaï ou Siam*, ii. 55; A. Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iii. 516; J. H. Plath, "Die Religion und der Cultus der alten Chinesen," *Abhandlungen der k. bayer. Akademie der Wissen.* i. Cl. ix. (1863) pp. 876 *sq.* Again, the full description of the golden garden of the Peruvian Vestals, which may sound to us fabulous, is given by Cieza de Leon in a work (the *Second Part of the Chronicle of Peru*) which it is unlikely that Garcilasso ever saw, since it was not printed till 1873, centuries after his death. Yet Garcilasso's brief description of the garden agrees closely with that of Cieza de Leon, differing from it just as that of an independent witness naturally would—namely, in the selection of some other details in addition to those which the two have in common. He says that the virgins "had a garden of trees, plants, herbs, birds and beasts, made of gold and silver, like that in the temple" (vol. i. p. 298, Markham's translation). Thus the two accounts are probably independent and therefore trustworthy, for a fiction of this kind could hardly have occurred to two romancers separately. A strong confirmation of Garcilasso's fidelity is furnished by the close resemblance which the fire customs, both of Rome and Peru, present to the well-authenticated fire customs of the Herero at the present day. There seems to be every reason to think that all three sets of customs originated independently in the simple needs and superstitious fancies of the savage. On the whole, I see no reason to question the good faith and accuracy of Garcilasso.

[1] B. de Sahagun, *Histoire des choses de la Nouvelle Espagne*, pp. 196 *sq.*, 386; Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, bk. v. ch. 15 (vol. ii. pp. 333 *sq.*, Hakluyt Society); A. de Herrera, *General History of the vast Continent and Islands of America*, iii. 209 *sq.*, Stevens's translation (London, 1725, 1726); Clavigero, *History of Mexico*, i. 264, 274 *sq.*

Vestals instituted by a princess, who acted as lady-superior and was deified after her death under the title of the Virgin of the Fire. The members enrolled themselves voluntarily either for life or for a term of years, after which they might marry. Their duty was to tend the sacred fire, the emblem of the sun. If they broke their vow of chastity or allowed the fire to go out, they were shot to death with arrows.[1]

Virgin priestesses of fire among the Baganda.

Amongst the Baganda of Central Africa there used to be an order of Vestal Virgins (*bakaja*) who were attached to the temples of the gods. Their duties were to keep the fire of the god burning all night, to see that there was a good supply of firewood, and to watch that the suppliants did not bring to the deity anything that was tabooed to him. These maidens are also said to have had charge of some of the vessels. All of them were young girls; no man might touch them; and when they reached the age of puberty, the god ordered them to be given in marriage. The place of a girl who thus vacated office had to be supplied by another girl taken from the same clan.[2]

Resemblance between the Flamen Dialis of the Romans and the *Agnihotri* or fire-priest of the Brahmans.

We have seen that some people commit the task of making fire by friction to married men; and following the opinion of other scholars I have conjectured that in some of the Latin tribes the duty of kindling and feeding the sacred fire may have been assigned to the Flamen Dialis, who had always to be married; if his wife died, he vacated his office.[3] The sanctity of his fire is proved by the rule that no brand might be taken from his house except for the purpose of a

Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique Centrale*, i. 289, iii. 661; H. H. Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 204 *sqq.*, 245, 583, iii. 435 *sq.* However, Sahagun (pp. 186, 194), Acosta (vol. ii. p. 336) and Herrera seem to imply that the duty of maintaining the sacred fire was discharged by men only.

[1] Brasseur de Bourbourg, *op. cit.* ii. 6; H. H. Bancroft, *op. cit.* iii. 473. Fire-worship seems to have lingered among the Indians of Yucatan down to about the middle of the nineteenth century, and it may still survive among them. See D. G. Brinton, "The Folk-lore of Yucatan," *Folk-lore Journal*, i. (1883) pp. 247 *sq.*

[2] Letter of the Rev. J. Roscoe, dated Kampala, Uganda, 9th April 1909.

[3] Aulus Gellius, x. 15. 22; Ateius Capito, cited by Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 50. On the other hand, Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* iv. 29, says that the Flamen might marry another wife after the death of the first. But the statement of Aulus Gellius and Ateius Capito is confirmed by other evidence. See J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] 329, note 8. As to the rule see my note, "The Widowed Flamen," *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, Second Edition, pp. 407 *sqq.*

sacrifice.[1] Further, the importance ascribed to the discharge of his duties is attested by another old rule which forbade him to be absent from his house in Rome for a single night.[2] The prohibition would be intelligible if one of his duties had formerly been to superintend the maintenance of a perpetual fire. However that may have been, the life of the priest was regulated by a whole code of curious restrictions or taboos, which rendered the office so burdensome and vexatious that, in spite of the high honours attached to the post, for a period of more than seventy years together no man was found willing to undertake it.[3] Some of these restrictions will be examined later on.[4] Their similarity to the rules of life still observed in India by the Brahmans who are fire-priests (*Agnihotris*) seems to confirm the view that the Flamen also was originally a fire-priest. The parallel between the two priesthoods would be all the more remarkable if, as some scholars hold, the very names Brahman and Flamen are philologically identical.[5] As to these Brahmanical fire-priests or Agnihotris we are told that the number of them nowadays is very limited, because the ceremonies involve heavy expenditure, and the rules which regulate them are very elaborate and difficult. The offering of food to the fire at meals is, indeed, one of the five daily duties of every Brahman; but the regular fire-service is the special duty of the Agnihotri. In order that he may be ceremonially pure he is bound by certain obligations not to travel or remain away from home for any long time; to sell nothing which is produced by himself or his

The *Agnihotris* or fire-priests of the Brahmans.

[1] Aulus Gellius, x. 15. 7; Festus, p. 106, ed. C. O. Müller.

[2] Livy, v. 52. 13 *sq.* In later times the rule was so far relaxed that he was allowed to be absent from Rome for two nights or even longer, provided he got leave from the chief pontiff on the score of ill-health. See Aulus Gellius, x. 15. 14; Tacitus, *Annals*, iii. 71.

[3] Tacitus, *Annals*, iii. 58; Dio Cassius, liv. 36. As to the honours attached to the office, see Livy, xxvii. 8. 8; Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 113.

[4] See *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, i. 241 *sqq.*

[5] P. Kretschmer, *Einleitung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache* (Göttingen, 1896), pp. 127 *sqq.*; O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Altertumskunde*, pp. 637 *sq.* For a different derivation of the name Flamen see above, p. 235. Being no philologer, I do not pretend to decide between the rival etymologies. My friend Prof. J. H. Moulton prefers the equation *Flamen* = *Brahman*, which he tells me is philologically correct, because if *Flamen* came from *flare* we should expect a form like *flator* rather than *flamen*. The form *flator* was used in Latin, though not in this sense.

The *Agnihotris* or fire-priests of the Brahmans.

family; to pay little attention to worldly affairs; to speak the truth; to bathe and worship the deities in the afternoon as well as in the morning; and to sacrifice to his deceased ancestors on the fifteenth of every month. He is not allowed to take food at night. He may not eat alkaline salt, meat, honey, and inferior grain, such as some varieties of pulse, millet, and the egg plant. He never wears shoes nor sleeps on a bed, but always on the ground. He is expected to keep awake most of the night and to study the Shâstras. He may have no connexion with, nor unholy thoughts regarding, any woman but his wife; and he must abstain from every other act that involves personal impurity.[1] With these rules we may compare some of the obligations laid on the Flamen Dialis. In the old days, as we saw, he was bound never to be absent from his house for a single night. He might not touch or even name raw meat, beans, ivy, and a she-goat; he might not eat leavened bread, nor touch a dead body; and the feet of his bed had always to be smeared with mud.[2] This last rule seems to be a mitigation of an older custom of sleeping on the ground, a custom which is still observed by the fire-priest in India, as it was in antiquity by the priests of Zeus at Dodona.[3] Similarly the priest of the old Prussian god Potrimpo was bound to sleep on the bare earth for three nights before he sacrificed to the deity.[4]

Mode in which the *Agnihotri* procures fresh fire by the friction of fire-sticks.

Every Agnihotri has a separate room in his house where the sacred fire is kept burning in a small pit of a cubit square. Should the fire chance to go out, the priest must get fresh fire from another priest or procure it by the friction of fire-sticks (*arani*). These comprise, first, a block of *sami* wood (*Prosopis spicigera*) in which a small hole is made emblematical of the female principle (*sakti yoni*), and, second, an upright shaft which is made to revolve in the

[1] W. Crooke, *The Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, i. 30-32. Compare Monier Williams, *Religious Thought and Life in India*, pp. 364, 365, 392.

[2] Aulus Gellius, x. 15.

[3] Homer, *Iliad*, xvi. 233-235; Sophocles, *Trachiniae*, 1166 *sq.*; Callimachus, *Hymn to Delos*, 284-286.

[4] Ch. Hartknoch, *Selectae dissertationes historicae de variis rebus Prussicis*, p. 163 (bound up with his edition of Düsburg's *Chronicon Prussiae*, Frankfort and Leipsic, 1679); Simon Grunau, *Preussischer Chronik*, ed. M. Perlbach, i. (Leipsic, 1876) p. 95.

hole of the block by means of a rope. The point in the drill where the rope is applied to cause it to revolve is called *deva yoni*. Two priests take part in the operation. Before they begin they sing a hymn in honour of the fire-god Agni. When the fire has been kindled they place it in a copper vessel and sprinkle it with powdered cow-dung. When it is well alight, they cover it with another copper vessel, sprinkle it with drops of water, and sing another hymn in honour of Agni. Finally, the new fire is consigned to the fire-pit.[1] According to another description of the modern Indian fire-drill, the lower block is usually made of the hard wood of the *khadira* or *khair* tree (*Acacia catechu*), and it contains two shallow holes. In one of these holes the revolving drill works and produces sparks by friction; the other hole contains tinder which is ignited by means of the sparks. This latter hole is known as the *yoni*, the female organ of generation. The upper or revolving portion of the drill is called the *pramantha*. It consists of a round shaft of hard wood, with a spike of softer wood inserted in its lower end. One priest causes the shaft to revolve by pulling a cord, while another priest presses the spike down into the hole in the block by leaning hard upon a flat board placed on the top of the shaft. The spike is generally made of the peepul or sacred fig-tree. When it has become charred by friction, it is replaced by another.[2] According to one account, the fire is made in this fashion, not by two priests, but by the Brahman and his wife; she pulls the cord, while he holds the borer in the hole and recites the spells necessary for the production of the fire.[3]

The Indian fire-sticks made from the sacred fig and *sami* wood.

This practice of the modern Agnihotri or fire-priest of India is in general accord with the precepts laid down in the ancient sacred books of his religion. For these direct that the upper or male stick of the fire-drill should be made of the sacred fig-tree (*asvattha*), and the lower or female stick of *sami* wood (*Prosopis spicigera*); and they draw out the analogy between the process of fire-making and the intercourse of the sexes in minute detail.[4] It deserves to be

[1] W. Crooke, *op. cit.* i. 31-33.

[2] W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), ii. 194 *sq.*

[3] J. C. Nesfield, in *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 12, § 77.

[4] *Rigveda*, iii. 29, translated by R. T. H. Griffith (Benares, 1889-1892),

The male fire-stick made by preference from a sacred fig-tree growing as a parasite on the female *sami* tree.

noted that the male fire-stick was cut by preference from a sacred fig-tree which grew as a parasite on a *sami* or female tree. The reason for this preference is obvious to the primitive mind. A parasite clasping a tree with its tendrils is conceived as a man embracing a woman, hence a pair of fire-sticks made from a pair of trees thus interlaced will naturally possess the power of procreating fire by friction in an unusually high degree.[1] So completely, in the Hindoo mind, does the process of making fire by friction blend with the union of the human sexes that it is actually employed as part of a charm to procure male offspring.[2] Such a confusion of thought helps us to understand the part played by the domestic fire in the ritual of marriage and birth as well as in the legends of the miraculous origin of the Latin kings.[3] In ancient India the male and the female fire-stick were identified with King Pururavas and the nymph Urvasi, whose loves and sorrows formed the theme of a beautiful tale.[4]

vol. ii. pp. 25-27; *Satapatha Brâhmana*, translated by J. Eggeling, part i. p. 389, note 3, part ii. pp. 90 *sq.*, part v. pp. 68-74; *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda*, translated by M. Bloomfield, pp. 91, 97 *sq.*, 334, 460; W. Caland, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, pp. 115 *sq.*; A. Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*,[2] pp. 40, 64-78, 183-185; H. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, pp. 58, 59. The *sami* wood is sometimes identified with the *Acacia Suma* (*Mimosa Suma*); but the modern Bengalee name of *Prosopis spicigera* is *shami* or *somi*, which seems to be conclusive evidence of the identity of *Prosopis spicigera* with *sami*. The *Prosopis spicigera* is a deciduous thorny tree of moderate size, which grows in the arid zones of the Punjaub, Rajputana, Gujarat, Bundelcund, and the Deccan. The heart of the wood is of a purplish brown colour and extremely hard. It is especially valued for fuel, as it gives out much heat. See G. Watt, *Dictionary of the Economic Products of India*, *s.v.* "Prosopis spicigera." For a reference to this work I am indebted to the kindness of the late Professor H. Marshall Ward.

[1] A. Kuhn, *op. cit.* pp. 40, 66, 175.

[2] *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda*, translated by M. Bloomfield, pp. 97 *sq.*, 460; W. Caland, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, pp. 115 *sq.*

[3] See above, pp. 195 *sqq.*, 230 *sqq.*

[4] *Rigveda*, x. 95, translated by R. T. H. Griffith, *Satapatha Brâhmana*, translated by J. Eggeling, part v. pp. 68-74. Compare H. Oldenberg, *Die Literatur des alten Indien* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1903), pp. 53-55. On the story see A. Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*,[2] pp. 71 *sqq.*; F. Max Müller *Selected Essays on Language, Religion, and Mythology* (London, 1881), i. 408 *sqq.*; Andrew Lang, *Custom and Myth* (London, 1884), pp. 64 *sqq.*; K. F. Pischel and Geldner, *Vedische Studien*, i. (Stuttgart, 1889), pp. 243-295. It belongs to the group of tales which describe the marriage of a human with an animal mate, of a mortal with a fairy, and often, though not always, their unhappy parting. The story seems to have its roots in totemism. See my *Totemism and Exogamy*, ii. 566 *sqq.* It will be illustrated more at length in a later part of *The Golden Bough*.

Like the ancient Indians, the Greeks seem to have preferred that one of the two fire-sticks should be made from a parasitic or creeping plant. They recommended that the borer of the fire-drill should be made of laurel and the board of ivy or another creeper, apparently a kind of wild vine which grew like ivy upon trees; but in practice both the borer and the board were sometimes made of other woods, among which buckthorn, the evergreen oak, and the lime are particularly mentioned.[1] When we consider the analogy of the Indian preference for a borer made from a parasite, and remember how deeply rooted in the primitive mind is the comparison of the friction of the fire-sticks to the union of the sexes, we shall hardly doubt that the Greeks originally chose the ivy or wild vine for a fire-stick from motives of the sort which led the Hindoos to select the wood of a parasitic fig-tree for the same purpose. But while the Hindoos regarded the parasite as male and the tree to which it clung as female, the Greeks of Theophrastus's time seem to have inverted this conception, since they recommended that the board, which plays the part of the female in the fire-drill, should be made of ivy or another creeper, whereas the borer, which necessarily represents the male, was to be fashioned out of laurel. This would imply that the ivy was a female and the laurel a male. Yet in Greek, on the contrary, the word for ivy is masculine, and the plant was identified mythologically with the male god Dionysus;[2] whereas the word for laurel is feminine and the tree was identified with a nymph. Hence we may conjecture that at first the Greeks, like the Hindoos, regarded the clinging

The Greeks also preferred to make one of the fire-sticks from a parasitic plant.

The reason for such a preference is the analogy of the union of the sexes.

[1] Homer, *Hymn to Mercury*, 108-111 (where a line has been lost; see the note of Messrs. Allen and Sikes); Theophrastus, *Histor. plant.* v. 9. 6; *id.*, *De igne*, ix. 64; Hesychius, *s.v.* στορεύς; Schol. on Apollonius Rhodius, *Argon.* i. 1184; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 208; Seneca, *Nat. Quaest.* ii. 22; A. Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*,[2] pp. 35-41; H. Blumner, *Technologie und Terminologie der Gewerbe und Künste*, ii. 354-356. Theophrastus gives the name of *athragene* to the plant which, next to or equally with ivy, makes the best board; he compares it to a vine. Pliny (*l.c.*) seems to have identified it with a species of wild vine. According to Sprengel, the *athragene* is the *Clematis cirrhosa* of Linnaeus, the French *clématite à vrilles*. See Dioscorides, ed. C. Sprengel, vol. ii. p. 641. As to the kinds of wood employed by the Romans in kindling fire we have no certain evidence, as Pliny and Seneca may have merely copied from Theophrastus.

[2] Pausanias, i. 31. 6, with my note.

Ancient Greek fire-sticks.

creeper as the male and the tree which it embraced as the female, and that of old, therefore, they made the borer of the fire-drill out of ivy and the board out of laurel. If this was so, the reasons which led them to reverse the usage can only be guessed at. Perhaps practical convenience had a share in bringing about the change. For the laurel is, as the late Professor H. Marshall Ward kindly informed me, a harder wood than the ivy, and to judge by general, though not universal, practice most people find it easier to make fire by the friction of a hard borer on a soft board than by rubbing a hard board with a soft point. This, therefore, would be a reason for making the borer of laurel and the board of ivy. If such a change took place in the history of the Greek fire-drill, it would be an interesting example of superstition modified, if not vanquished, by utility in the struggle for existence.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ORIGIN OF PERPETUAL FIRES

The custom of maintaining a perpetual fire probably originated in the difficulty of making fire by friction. Some races said to be ignorant of the means of making fire.

WHATEVER superstitions may have gathered about it in the course of ages, the custom of maintaining a perpetual fire probably sprang from a simple consideration of practical convenience. The primitive mode of making fire by the friction of wood is laborious at all times, and it is especially so in wet weather. Hence the savage finds it convenient to keep a fire constantly burning or smouldering in order to spare himself the troubling of kindling it. This convenience becomes a necessity with people who do not know how to make fire. That there have been such tribes down to our own time is affirmed by witnesses whose evidence we have no reason to doubt. Thus Mr. E. H. Man, who resided eleven years in the Andaman Islands and was intimately acquainted with the natives, tells us that, being ignorant of the art of making fire, they take the utmost pains to prevent its extinction. When they leave a camp intending to return in a few days, they not only take with them one or more smouldering logs, wrapped in leaves if the weather be wet, but they also place a large burning log or faggot of suitable wood in some sheltered spot, where it smoulders for several days and can be easily rekindled when it is needed. While it is the business of the women to gather the wood, the duty of keeping up the fires both at home and in travelling by land or sea is not confined to them, but is undertaken by persons of either sex who have most leisure or are least burdened.[1] The Russian traveller, Baron

[1] E. H. Man, *On the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands* (London, N.D.), p. 82. Mr. Man's evidence is confirmed by a German traveller.

Tribes reported to be ignorant of the means of making fire.

Miklucho-Maclay, who lived among the natives of the Maclay coast of northern New Guinea at a time when they had hardly come into contact with Europeans, writes: "It is remarkable that here almost all the inhabitants of the coast possess no means whatever of making fire, hence they always and everywhere carry burning or glowing brands about with them. If they go in the morning to the plantation they carry a half-burnt brand from their hearth in order to kindle a fire at the corner of the plantation. If they go on a longer journey into the mountains, they again take fire with them for the purpose of smoking, since their cigars, wrapped in green leaves, continually go out. On sea voyages they usually keep glowing coals in a half-broken pot partly filled with earth. The people who remain behind in the village never forget to keep up the fire." They repeatedly told him that they had often to go to other villages to fetch fire when the fires in all the huts of their own village had chanced to go out. Yet the same traveller tells us that the mountain tribes of this part of New Guinea, such as the Englam-Mana and Tiengum-Mana, know how to make fire by friction. They partially cleave a log of dry wood with a stone axe and then draw a stout cord, formed of a split creeper, rapidly to and fro in the cleft, till sparks fly out and set fire to a tinder of dry coco-nut fibres.[1] It is

Mr. Jagor, who says of the Andaman Islanders: "The fire must never go out. Here also I am again assured that the Andamanese have no means of making fire." See *Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie*, 1877, p. (54) (bound with *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, ix.). I regret that on this subject I did not question Mr. A. R. Brown, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, who resided for about two years among the Andaman Islanders, studying their customs and beliefs. Mr. Brown is now (December 1910) in West Australia.

[1] N. von Miklucho-Maclay, "Ethnologische Bemerkungen über die Papuas der Maclay-Küste in Neu-Guinea," *Natuurkundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indie*, xxxv. (1875), pp. 82. 83. Compare C. Hager, *Kaiser Wilhelms-Land und der Bismarck-Archipel*, p. 69; M. Krieger, *Neu-Guinea*, p. 153. The natives of the Maclay Coast are said to have traditions of a time when they were ignorant even of the use of fire; they ate fruits raw, which set up a disease of the gums, filling their mouths with blood; they had a special name for the disease. See N. von Miklucho-Maclay, in *Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, 1882*, p. (577) (bound with *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xiv.). The reports of people living in ignorance of the use of fire have hitherto proved, on closer examination, to be fables. See E. B. Tylor, *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*,[3] pp. 229 *sqq*. The latest repetition of the story that I know of is by an American naturalist, Mr. Titian R. Peale, who confirms the exploded statement that down to 1841

odd that the people of the coast should not have learned this mode of producing fire from their neighbours in the mountains. The Russian explorer's observations, however, have been confirmed by German writers. One of them, a Mr. Hoffmann, says of these people: "In every house care is taken that fire burns day and night on the hearth. For this purpose they choose a kind of wood which burns slowly, but glimmers for a long time and retains its glow. When a man sets out on a journey or goes to the field he has always a glimmering brand with him. If he wishes to make fire, he waves the smouldering wood to and fro till it bursts into a glow." On frequented paths, crossways, and so forth, you may often see trunks of trees lying which have been felled for the purpose of being ignited and furnishing fire to passers-by. Such trees continue to smoulder for weeks.[1] Similarly the dwarf tribes of Central Africa "do not know how to kindle a fire quickly, and in order to get one readily at any moment they keep the burning trunks of fallen trees in suitable spots, and watch over their preservation like the Vestals of old."[2] It seems to be at least doubtful whether these dwarfs of the vast and gloomy equatorial forests are acquainted with the art of making fire at all. A German traveller observes that the care which they take to preserve fire is extremely remarkable. "It appears," he says, "that the pygmies, as other travellers have reported, do not know how to kindle fire by rubbing sticks against each other. Like the Wambuba of the forest, in leaving a camp, they take with them a thick glowing brand, and carry it, often for hours, in order to light a fire at their next halting place."[3]

Tribes reported to be ignorant of the means of making fire.

Whether or not tribes ignorant of the means of making fire have survived to modern times, it seems likely that mankind possessed and used fire long before they learned how to

the natives of Bowditch Island had not seen fire. See *The American Naturalist*, xviii. (1884) pp. 229-232.

[1] B. Hagen, *Unter den Papuas* (Wiesbaden, 1899), pp. 203 *sq.* Mr. Hagen's account applies chiefly to the natives of Astrolabe Bay. He tells us that for the most part they now use Swedish matches.

[2] G. Casati, *Ten Years in Equatoria* (London and New York, 1891), i. 157. Another writer says that these dwarfs "keep fire alight perpetually, starting it in some large tree, which goes on smouldering for months at a time" (Captain Guy Burrows, *The Land of the Pigmies* (London, 1898), p. 199).

[3] F. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 451 *sq.*

Fire kindled by natural causes was probably used by men long before they learned to make it for themselves.

kindle it. In the violent thunderstorms which accompany the end of the dry season in Central and Eastern Africa, it is not uncommon for the lightning to strike and ignite a tree, from which the fire soon spreads to the withered herbage, till a great conflagration is started. From a source of this sort a savage tribe may have first obtained fire, and the same thing may have happened independently in many parts of the world.[1] Other people, perhaps, procured fire from volcanoes, the lava of which will, under favourable circumstances, remain hot enough to kindle shavings of wood years after an eruption has taken place.[2] Others again may have lit their first fire at the jets of inflammable gas which spring from the ground in various parts of the world, notably at Baku on the Caspian, where the flames burn day and night, summer and winter, to a height of fifteen or twenty feet.[3] It is harder to conjecture how man first learned the great secret of making fire by friction. The discovery was perhaps made by jungle or forest races, who saw dry bamboos or branches thus ignited by rubbing against each other in a high wind. Fires are sometimes started in this way in the forests of New Zealand.[4] It has also been suggested that

[1] Sir Harry H. Johnston, *British Central Africa* (London, 1897), p. 439; *id.*, *The Uganda Protectorate* (London, 1902), ii. 540. If we may trust Diodorus Siculus (i. 13. 3), this was the origin of fire alleged by the Egyptian priests. Among the Winamwanga and Wiwa tribes of East Africa, to the south of Lake Tanganyika, "when lightning sets fire to a tree, all the fires in a village are put out, and fireplaces freshly plastered, while the head men take the fire to the chief, who prays over it. It is then sent to all his villages, the people of the villages rewarding his messengers." See Dr. J. A. Chisholm, "Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Winamwanga and Wiwa," *Journal of the African Society*, No. 36 (July 1910), p. 363. The Parsees ascribe peculiar sanctity to fire which has been obtained from a tree struck by lightning. See D. J. Karaka, *History of the Modern Parsis* (London, 1884), ii. 213. In Siam and Cambodia such fire is carefully preserved and used to light the funeral pyres of kings and others. See Pallegoix, *Description du royaume Thai ou Siam*, i. 248; J. Moura, *Le Royaume du Cambodge*, i. 360.

[2] Oscar Peschel, *Völkerkunde*[6] (Leipsic, 1885), p. 138. Mr. Man thinks it likely that the Andaman Islanders got their fire from one of the two volcanoes which exist in their island (*On the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands*, p. 82). The Creek Indians of North America have a tradition that some of their ancestors procured fire from a volcano. See A. S. Gatschet, *A Migration Legend of the Creek Indians*, ii. (St. Louis, 1888) p. 11 [43].

[3] O. Peschel, *loc. cit.* As to the fires of Baku see further, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, Second Edition, p. 159.

[4] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*,[2] p. 367; W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India*

savages may have accidentally elicited a flame for the first time in the process of chipping flints over dry moss, or boring holes with hard sticks in soft wood.[1]

Many savages carry fire constantly with them as a matter of convenience.

But even when the art of fire-making has been acquired, the process itself is so laborious that many savages keep fire always burning rather than be at the trouble of extracting it by friction. This, for example, was true of the roving Australian aborigines before they obtained matches from the whites. On their wanderings they carried about with them pieces of smouldering bark or cones of the Banksia tree wherewith to kindle their camp fires.[2] The duty of thus transporting fire from one place to another seems commonly to have fallen to the women. "A stick, a piece of decayed wood, or more often the beautiful seed-stem of the Banksia, is lighted at the fire the woman is leaving; and from her bag, which, in damp weather, she would keep filled with dry cones, or from materials collected in the forest, she would easily, during her journey, preserve the fire got at the last encampment."[3] Another writer tells us that the Australian native always had his fire-stick with him, and if his wife let it go out, so much the worse for her. The dark brown velvety-looking core of the Banksia is very retentive of fire and burns slowly, so that one of these little fire-sticks would last a considerable time, and a bag of them would suffice for a whole day.[4] The Tasmanians knew how to make fire

(Westminster, 1896), ii. 194; A. Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*,[2] pp. 92, 102. Lucretius thought that the first fire was procured either from lightning or from the mutual friction of trees in a high wind (*De rerum natura*, v. 1091-1101). The latter source was preferred by Vitruvius (*De architectura*, ii. 1. 1).

[1] Sir Harry H. Johnston, *ll.cc.* Professor K. von den Steinen conjectures that savages, who already possessed fire, and were wont to use tinder to nurse a smouldering brand into a blaze, may have accidentally discovered the mode of kindling fire in an attempt to make tinder by rubbing two dry sticks or reeds against each other. See K. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens*, pp. 219-228.

[2] J. Dumont D'Urville, *Voyage autour du monde et à la recherche de la Perouse*, i. (Paris, 1832) pp. 95, 194; Scott Nind, "Description of the Natives of King George's Sound," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, i. (1832) p. 26; E. J. Eyre, *Journals of Expeditions of Discovery into Central Australia*, ii. 357; A. Oldfield, "The Aborigines of Australia," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S., iii. (1865) pp. 283 *sq.*; J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 15; *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xvii. (1845) pp. 76 *sq.*

[3] R. Brough Smyth, *The Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 396.

[4] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*,[2] p. 567. Other writers confirm the statement that the carrying of the

Fire carried by savages for the sake of convenience.

by twirling the point of a stick in a piece of soft bark; "but as it was difficult at times to obtain fire by this means, especially in wet weather, they generally, in their peregrinations, carried with them a fire-stick lighted at their last encampment."[1] With them, as with the Australians, it was the special task of the women to keep the fire-brand alight and to carry it from place to place.[2] When the natives of Materbert, off New Britain, are on a voyage they carry fire with them. For this purpose they press some of the soft fibrous husk of the ripe coco-nut into a coco-nut shell, and then place a red-hot ember in the middle of it. This will smoulder for three or four days, and from it they obtain a light for their fires wherever they may land.[3] The Polynesians made fire by the friction of wood, rubbing a score in a board with a sharp-pointed stick till the dust so produced kindled into sparks, which were caught in a tinder of dry leaves or grass. While they rubbed, they chanted a prayer or hymn till the fire appeared. But in wet weather the task of fire-making was laborious, so at such times the natives usually carried fire about with them in order to avoid the trouble of kindling it.[4] The Fuegians make fire by striking two lumps of iron pyrites together and letting the sparks fall on birds' down or on dry moss, which serves as tinder. But rather than be at the pains of doing this they carry fire with them everywhere, both by sea and land, taking great care to prevent its extinction.[5] The Caingua Indians of Paraguay make fire in the usual way by the fire-drill, but to save themselves trouble they keep fire

fire-sticks is the special duty of the women. See W. Stanbridge, "On the Aborigines of Victoria," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S., i. (1861) p. 291; J. F. Mann, "Notes on the Aborigines of Australia," *Proceedings of the Geographical Society of Australasia*, i. (1885) p. 29.

[1] Melville, quoted by H. Ling Roth, *The Aborigines of Tasmania* (London, 1890), p. 97. It has sometimes been affirmed that the Tasmanians did not know how to kindle fire; but the evidence collected by Mr. Ling Roth (*op. cit.*, pp. xii. *sq.*, 96 *sq.*), proves that they were accustomed to light it both by the friction of wood and by striking flints together.

[2] Mr. Dove, quoted by James Bonwick, *Daily Life and Origin of the Tasmanians*, p. 20.

[3] Wilfred Powell, *Wanderings in a Wild Country* (London, 1883), p. 196.

[4] Captain J. Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean* (London, 1799), p. 357.

[5] J. G. Wood, *Natural History of Man*, ii. 522; J. G. Garson, "On the Inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xv. (1886), p. 145; *Mission scientifique du Cap Horn, 1882-1883*, vii. (Paris, 1891) p. 345.

constantly burning in their huts by means of great blocks of wood.[1] The Indians of Guiana also produce fire by twirling the point of one stick in the hole of another, but they seldom need to resort to this laborious process, for they keep fire burning in every house, and on long journeys they usually carry a large piece of smouldering timber in their canoes. Even in walking across the savannah an Indian will sometimes take a fire-brand with him.[2] The Jaggas, a Bantu tribe in the Kilimanjaro district of East Africa, keep up fire day and night in their huts on account of their cattle. If it goes out, the women fetch glowing brands from a neighbour's house; these they carry wrapped up in banana leaves. Thus they convey fire for great distances, sometimes the whole day long. Hence they seldom need to kindle fire, though the men can make it readily by means of the fire-drill.[3] The tribes of British Central Africa also know how to produce fire in this fashion, but they do not often put their knowledge in practice. For there is sure to be a burning brand on one or other of the hearths of the village from which a fire can be lit; and when men go on a journey they take smouldering sticks with them and nurse the glowing wood rather than be at the trouble of making fire by friction.[4] In the huts of the Ibos on the lower Niger burning embers are always kept and never allowed to go out.[5] And this is the regular practice among all the tribes of West Africa who have not yet obtained matches. If the fire in a house should go out, a woman will run to a neighbour's hut and fetch a burning stick from the hearth. Hence in most of their villages fire has probably not needed to be made for years and years. Among domesticated tribes, like the Effiks or Agalwa, when the men are going out to the plantation they will enclose a burning stick in a hollow piece of a certain kind of wood, which has a lining of its pith left in it, and they will carry this "fire-box" with them.[6]

Fire carried by savages for the sake of convenience.

[1] J. B. Ambrosetti, "Los Indios Caingua del alto Paraná (misiones)," *Boletino del Instituto Geografico Argentino*, xv. (1895) pp. 703 *sq.*

[2] E. F. im Thurn, *Among the Indians of Guiana*, pp. 257 *sq.*

[3] A. Widenmann, *Die Kilimandscharo-Bevölkerung* (Gotha, 1899), pp. 68 *sq.* (*Petermann's Mittheilungen: Ergänzungsheft*, No. 129).

[4] Sir Harry H. Johnston, *British Central Africa* (London, 1897), p. 438.

[5] A. F. Mockler-Ferryman, *Up the Niger* (London, 1892), p. 37.

[6] Miss Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, pp. 599 *sq.*

Before the introduction of matches Greek peasants used to convey fire from place to place in a stalk of giant fennel. The stalks of the plant are about five feet long by three inches thick, and are encased in a hard bark. The core of the stalk consists of a white pith which, when it is dry, burns slowly like a wick without injury to the bark.[1] Thus when Prometheus, according to the legend, stole the first fire from heaven and brought it down to earth hidden in a stalk of giant fennel,[2] he carried his fire just as every Greek peasant and mariner did on a journey.

The theft of fire by Prometheus.

When people settled in villages, it would be convenient to keep up a perpetual fire in the house of the head man.

When a tribe ceased to be nomadic and had settled in more or less permanent villages, it would be a convenient custom to keep a fire perpetually burning in every house. Such a custom, as we have seen, has been observed by various peoples, and it appears to have prevailed universally among all branches of the Aryans.[3] Arnobius implies that it was formerly practised by the Romans, though in his own time the usage had fallen into abeyance.[4] But it would be obviously desirable that there should be some one place in the village where every housewife could be sure of obtaining fire without having to kindle it by friction, if her own should chance to go out. The most natural spot to look for it would be the hearth of the head man of the village, who would come in time to be regarded as responsible for its maintenance. This is what seems to have happened not only among the Herero of South Africa and the Latin peoples of Italy, but also among the ancestors of the Greeks; for in ancient Greece the perpetual fire kept up in the Prytaneum, or town-hall, was at first apparently the fire

[1] P. de Tournefort, *Relation d'un voyage du Levant* (Amsterdam, 1718), i. 93 (Lettre vi.); Sibthorp, in R. Walpole's *Memoirs relating to European and Asiatic Turkey* (London, 1817), pp. 284 *sq.*; W. G. Clark, *Peloponnesus* (London, 1858), p. 111; J. T. Bent, *The Cyclades* (London, 1885), p. 365. The giant fennel (*Ferula communis*, L.) is still known in Greece by its ancient name, hardly modified (*nartheka* instead of *narthex*), though W. G. Clark says the modern name is *kalami*. Bent speaks of the plant as a reed, which is a mistake. The plant is described by Theophrastus (*Histor. plant.* vi. 2. 7 *sq.*).

[2] Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 50-52; *id.*, *Theogony*, 565-567; Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, 107-111; Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, i. 7. 1; Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 144; *id.*, *Astronomica*, ii. 15.

[3] See my article, "The Prytaneum, the Temple of Vesta, the Vestals, Perpetual Fires," *Journal of Philology*, xiv. (1885) pp. 169-171.

[4] Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, ii. 67.

on the king's hearth.[1] From this simple origin may have sprung the custom which in various parts of the world associates the maintenance of a perpetual fire with chiefly or royal dignity. Thus it was a distinguishing mark of the chieftainship of one of the Samoan nobility, that his fire never went out. His attendants had a particular name, from their special business of keeping his fire ablaze all night long while he slept.[2] Among the Gallas the maintenance of a perpetual fire, even when it serves no practical purpose, is a favourite mode of asserting high rank, and the chiefs often indulge in it.[3] The Chitomé, a grand pontiff in the kingdom of Congo, of whom we shall hear more hereafter, kept up in his hut, day and night, a sacred fire, of which he dispensed brands to such as came to ask for them and could pay for them. He is said to have done a good business in fire, for the infatuated people believed that it preserved them from many accidents.[4] In Uganda a perpetual sacred fire, supposed to have come down to earth with the first man Kintu, is maintained by a chief, who is put to death if he suffers it to be extinguished. From this sacred fire the king's fire (*gombolola*) is lighted and kept constantly burning at the gate of the royal enclosure during the whole of his reign. By day it burns in a small hut, but at night it is brought out and set in a little hole in the ground, where it blazes brightly till daybreak, whatever the weather may be. When the king journeys the fire goes with him, and when he dies it is extinguished. The death of a king is indeed announced to the people by the words, "The fire has gone out." A man who bears a special title is charged with the duty of maintaining the fire, and of looking after all the fuel and torches used in the royal enclosure. When the king dies the guardian of his fire is strangled near the hearth.[5] Similarly in Dageou, a country to the west of Darfur, it is

Hence the maintenance of a perpetual fire came to be associated with chiefly or royal dignity.

[1] See my article, "The Prytaneum, the Temple of Vesta, the Vestals, Perpetual Fires," *Journal of Philology*, xiv. (1885) pp. 145 *sqq.*

[2] G. Turner, *Nineteen Years in Polynesia* (London, 1861), p. 326.

[3] Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas, die materielle Cultur der Danâkil, Galla und Somâl* (Berlin, 1893), p. 145.

[4] J. B. Labat, *Relation historique de l'Éthiopie Occidentale*, i. 256 *sq.*

[5] J. Roscoe, "Further Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 43, 51 *sq.*; *id.*, in a letter to me dated Mengo, Uganda, 3rd August 1904.

said that a custom prevailed of kindling a fire on the inauguration of a king and keeping it alight till his death.[1] Among the Mucelis of Angola, when the king of Amboin or Sanga dies, all fires in the kingdom are extinguished. Afterwards the new king makes new fire by rubbing two sticks against each other.[2] Such a custom is probably nothing more than an extension of the practice of putting out a chief's own fire at his death. Similarly, when a new Muata Jamwo, a great potentate in the interior of Angola, comes to the throne, one of his first duties is to make a new fire by the friction of wood, for the old fire may not be used.[3] Before the palace gate of the king of Siam there burns, or used to burn, a perpetual fire, which was said to have been lit from heaven with a fiery ball.[4]

Perpetual fire maintained by the chief called the Great Sun among the Natchez Indians.

Among the Natchez Indians of the lower Mississippi a perpetual fire, supposed to have been brought down from the sun, was maintained in a square temple which stood beside the hut of the supreme chief of the nation. He bore the title of the Great Sun, and believed himself to be a descendant or brother of the luminary his namesake. Every morning when the sun rose he blew three whiffs of his pipe towards it, and raising his hands above his head, and turning from east to west, he marked out the course which the bright orb was to pursue in the sky. The sacred fire in the temple was fed with logs of walnut or oak, and the greatest care was taken to prevent its extinction; for such an event would have been thought to put the whole nation in jeopardy. Eight men were appointed to guard the fire, two of whom were bound to be always on watch; and the Great Sun himself looked to the maintenance of the fire with anxious attention. If any of the guardians of the fire failed to do his duty, the rule was that he should be put to death. When the great chief died his bones were deposited in the temple, along with the bones of many attendants who were strangled in order that their souls might wait upon him in the spirit land. On such an occasion the chief's fire was

[1] W. G. Browne, *Travels in Africa, Egypt, and Syria* (London, 1799), p. 306.

[2] J. J. Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo* (London, 1875), ii. 167.

[3] P. Pogge, *Im Reiche des Muata Jamwo* (Berlin, 1880), p. 234.

[4] A. Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iii. 515 *sq.*

extinguished, and this was the signal for putting out all the other fires in the country. Every village had also its own temple in which a perpetual fire was maintained under the guardianship of a subordinate chief. These lesser chiefs also bore the title of Suns, but acknowledged the supremacy of the head chief, the Great Sun. All of these Suns were supposed to be descended from a man and woman who had come down from the luminary from which they took their names. There were female Suns as well as male Suns, but they might not marry among themselves; they had always to mate with a woman or a man of lower rank. Their nobility was transmitted in the maternal line; that is, the children of a female Sun, both sons and daughters, were Suns, but the children of a male Sun were not. Hence a chief was never succeeded by his own son, but always by the son either of his sister or of his nearest female relation. The Natchez knew how to produce fire by means of the fire-drill; but if the sacred fire in the temple went out, they relit it, not by the friction of wood, but by a brand brought from another temple or from a tree which had been ignited by lightning.[1] In these customs of the Natchez we have clearly fire-worship and sun-worship of the same general type which meets us again at a higher state of evolution among the Incas of Peru. Both sets of customs probably sprang originally from the perpetual fire on the chief's domestic hearth.

Fire carried before chiefs and kings as a symbol of royalty.

When a perpetual fire has thus become a symbol of royalty, it is natural that it should be carried before the king or chief on the march. Among the Indians of the Mississippi a lighted torch used to be borne in front of a chief, and no commoner would dare to walk between a chief

[1] Du Pratz, *History of Louisiana* (London, 1774), pp. 330-334, 346 *sq.*, 351-358; Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 172 *sqq.*; Lafitau, *Mœurs des sauvages Ameriquains*, i. 167 *sq.*; *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, Nouvelle Édition, vii. (Paris, 1781) pp. 7-16 (reprinted in *Recueil de voyages au nord*, ix. Amsterdam, 1737, pp. 3-13); "Relation de la Louisianne," *Receuil de voyages au Nord*, v. (Amsterdam, 1734) pp. 23 *sq.*; Bossu, *Nouveaux Voyages aux Indes Occidentales* (Paris, 1768), i. 42-44; Chateaubriand, *Voyage en Amérique* (Paris, 1870), pp. 227 *sqq.*; H. R. Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, v. 68. The accounts differ from each other in some details. Thus Du Pratz speaks as if there were only two fire-temples in the country, whereas the writer in the *Lettres édifiantes* says that there were eleven villages each with its fire-temple, and that formerly there had been sixty villages and temples. The account in the text is based mainly on the authority of Du Pratz, who lived among the Natchez on terms of intimacy for eight years, from the end of 1718 to 1726.

Fire carried before chiefs and kings.

and his torch-bearer.[1] A sacred fire, supposed to have descended from heaven, was carried in a brazier before the Persian kings,[2] and the custom was adopted as a badge of imperial dignity by later Roman emperors.[3] The practice appears to have been especially observed in time of war. Amongst the Ovambo of South Africa the chief appoints a general to lead the army to battle, and next to the general the greatest officer is he who carries a fire-brand at the head of the warriors. If the fire goes out on the march, it is an evil omen and the army beats a retreat.[4] When the king of Monomotapa, or Benomotapa, was at war, a sacred fire was kept burning perpetually in a hut near his tent.[5] In old days it is said that the king of Mombasa in East Africa could put an army of eighty thousand men in the field. On the march his guards were preceded by men carrying fire.[6] High above the tent of Alexander the Great hung a fiery cresset on a pole, and "the flame of it was seen by night, and the smoke by day."[7] When a Spartan king was about to lead an army abroad he first sacrificed at home to Zeus the Leader. Then a man called the fire-bearer took fire from the altar and marched with it at the head of the troops to the frontier. There the king again sacrificed to Zeus and Athena, and if the omens were favourable, he crossed the border, preceded by the fire from the sacrifices, which thenceforth led the way and might not be quenched. To perform such sacrifices the king always rose very early in the morning, while it was still dark, in order to get the ear of the god before the enemy could forestall him.[8]

A custom of maintaining a fire during a king's reign and extinguishing it at his death, even if it did not originate in a

[1] Hennepin, *Nouvelle Decouverte d'un très grand pays situé dans l'Amerique* (Utrecht, 1697), p. 306.

[2] Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, viii. 3. 12; Ammianus Marcellinus, xxiii. 6. 34; Quintus Curtius, iii. 3. 7.

[3] Dio Cassius, lxxi. 35. 5; Herodian, i. 8. 4, i. 16. 4, ii. 3. 2, ii. 8. 6, vii. 1. 9, vii. 6. 2.

[4] H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, p. 320.

[5] O. Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique* (Amsterdam, 1686), p. 392.

[6] O. Dapper, *op. cit.* p. 400.

[7] Quintus Curtius, v. 2. 7. Curtius represents this as a signal adopted by Alexander, because the sound of the bugle was lost in the trampling and hum of the great multitude. But this may be merely the historian's interpretation of an old custom.

[8] Xenophon, *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum*, xiii. 2 *sq.*; Nicolaus Damascenus, quoted by Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, xliv. 41 (vol. ii. p. 188 ed. Meineke); Hesychius, *s.v.* πυρσοφόρος.

superstition, would naturally lend itself to a superstitious interpretation. The distinction between the sign and the cause of an event is not readily grasped by a dull mind; hence the extinction of the king's fire, from being merely a signal of his death, might come in time to be regarded as a cause of it. In other words, a vital connexion might be supposed to exist between the king and the fire, so that if the fire were put out the king would die. That a sympathetic bond of some sort united the king's life with the fire on his hearth was apparently believed by the ancient Scythians. For their most solemn oath was by the king's hearth, and if any man who had taken this oath forswore himself, they believed that the king would fall ill.[1] The story of Meleager,[2] whose life was said to be bound up with a brand plucked from the fire on the hearth, belongs to the same class of ideas, which will be examined at large in a later part of this work. Wherever a superstition of this sort gathered round the king's hearth, it is obvious that he would be moved to watch over the fire with redoubled vigilance. On a certain day the Vestal Virgins at Rome used to go to the King of the Sacred Rites, the successor of the old Roman kings, and say to him, "Watchest thou, O King? Watch."[3] The ceremony may have been a reminiscence or survival of a time when the king's life as well as the general safety was supposed to hang on the maintenance of the fire, to the guardianship of which he would thus be impelled by the motive of self-preservation as well as of public duty. When natives of the Kei Islands in the East Indies are away on a long voyage, a sacred fire is kept up the whole time of their absence by their friends at home. Three or four young girls are appointed to feed it and watch over it day and night with a jealous care lest it should go out; its extinction would be deemed a most evil omen, for the fire is the symbol of the life of the absent ones.[4] This belief and this practice may help us to understand the corresponding beliefs and practices concerned with the maintenance of a perpetual fire at Rome.

The custom of keeping up a perpetual fire during a king's reign and extinguishing it at his death, might lead to a belief that his life was bound up with the fire.

[1] Herodotus, iv. 68.

[2] Aeschylus, *Choëph.* 604 *sqq.*; Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, i. 8. 2 *sq.*; Diodorus Siculus, iv. 34. 6 *sq.*; Ovid, *Metamorph.* viii. 445 *sqq.*; Hyginus, *Fab.* 171 and 174.

[3] Servius, on Virgil, *Aen.* x. 228.

[4] Le P. H. Geurtjens, "Le Cérémonial des Voyages aux Îles Keij," *Anthropos*, v. (1910) pp. 337 *sq.*

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SUCCESSION TO THE KINGDOM IN ANCIENT LATIUM

The Vestal fire and the great priesthoods appear to have been institutions common to the whole Latin race.

THUS it appears that a variety of considerations combined to uphold, if not to originate, the custom of maintaining a perpetual fire. The sanctity of the wood which fed it, the belief in the generative virtue of the process by which it was kindled, the supposed efficacy of fire in repelling the powers of evil, the association of the hearth with the spirits of the dead and with the majesty or even the life of the king all worked together to invest the simple old custom with a halo of mystery and romance. If this was so at Rome we may assume that matters were not very different in the other Latin towns which kept up a Vestal fire. These too had their kings of the Sacred Rites, their flamens, and their pontiffs, as well as their Vestal Virgins.[1] All the great priesthoods of Rome appear, in fact, to have had their doubles in the other ancient cities of Latium; all were probably primitive institutions common to the whole Latin race.[2]

Priestly or divine functions of the Roman kings, including the maintenance of the Vestal fire.

Accordingly, whatever is true or probable of the Roman priesthoods, about which we know most, may reasonably be regarded as true or probable of the corresponding priesthoods elsewhere in Latium, about which for the most part we know nothing more than the names. Now in regard to the Roman king, whose priestly functions were inherited by his successor the king of the Sacred Rites, the foregoing discussion has led us to the following conclusions. He

[1] J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] 237, 321; C. Julian, in Daremberg et Saglio, *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*, ii. 1173. As to Vesta and the Vestals, see above, vol. i. pp. 13 *sq.*

[2] C. Julian, *l.c.*

represented and indeed personated Jupiter, the great god of the oak, the sky, and the thunder, and in that character made rain, thunder, and lightning for the good of his subjects, like many more kings of the weather in other parts of the world. Further, he not only mimicked the oak-god by wearing an oak wreath and other insignia of divinity, but he was married to an oak-nymph Egeria, who appears to have been merely a local form of Diana in her character of a goddess of woods, of waters, and of childbirth. Moreover, he was descended from the oak, since he was born of a virgin who conceived by contact with a fire of sacred oak-wood. Hence he had to guard the ancestral fire and keep it constantly burning, inasmuch as on its maintenance depended the continuance of the royal family. Only on certain stated occasions was it lawful and even necessary to extinguish the old fire in order to revive it in a purer and more vigorous form by the friction of the sacred wood. This was done once a year on the first of March,[1] and we may conjecture that it was also done by the new king on his accession to power; for, as we have seen, it has been customary in various places to extinguish the king's fire at his death.[2] Among the ancient Persians the perpetual sacred fire was put out on the death of a king and remained unlit until after his funeral.[3] It is a common practice to extinguish the fire in any house where a death has taken place,[4]

But the fire was formally extinguished and rekindled on certain occasions, perhaps on the death of the king.

[1] See above, p. 186 note 1.

[2] Above, pp. 261-263.

[3] Diodorus Siculus, xvii. 114.

[4] Thus in some African tribes the household fire is put out after a death, and afterwards relit by the friction of sticks (Sir H. H. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 439; L. Concradt, "Die Ngumbu in Südkamerun," *Globus*, lxxxi. (1902) p. 352). In Laos the fire on the hearth is extinguished after a death and the ashes are scattered; afterwards a new fire is obtained from a neighbour (Tournier, *Notice sur le Laos français*, p. 68). A custom of the same sort is observed in Burma, but there the new fire must be bought (C. J. F. S. Forbes, *British Burma*, p. 94). Among the Miris of Assam the new fire is made by the widow or widower (W. H. Furness, in *Journal of the Anthrop. Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 462). In Armenia it is made by flint and steel (M. Abeghian, *Der armenische Volksglaube*, p. 71). In Argos fire was extinguished after a death, and fresh fire obtained from a neighbour (Plutarch, *Quaest. Graec.* 24). In the Highlands of Scotland all fires were put out in a house where there was a corpse (Pennant's "Tour in Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 49). Amongst the Bogos of East Africa no fire may be lit in a house after a death until the body has been carried out (W. Munzinger, *Sitten und Recht der Bogos*, p. 67). In the Pelew Islands, when a death has taken place, fire is transferred from the house to a shed erected beside it (J. S. Kubary, "Die Todtenbestattung auf den Pelau-

apparently from a fear that the ghost may scorch or singe himself at it, like a moth at the flame of a candle; and the custom of putting out the king's fire at his decease may in its origin have been nothing more than this. But when the fire on the king's hearth came to be viewed as bound up in a mysterious fashion with his life, it would naturally be extinguished at his death, not to spare his fluttering ghost the risk and pain of falling into it, but because, as a sort of life-token or external soul, it too must die at his death and be born again from the holy tree. At all events, it seems probable that whenever and from whatever cause it became necessary to rekindle the royal and sacred fire by the friction of wood, the operation was performed jointly by the king and the Vestals, one or more of whom may have been his daughters or the daughters of his predecessor. Regarded as impersonations of Mother Vesta herself, these priestesses would be the chosen vessels, not only to bring to birth the seed of fire in working the fire-drill, but also to receive the seed of the fire-god in their chaste wombs, and so to become the mothers of fire-begotten kings.

What is true of the Roman kings is probably true of the Latin kings in general.

All these conclusions, which we have reached mainly by a consideration of the Roman evidence, may with great probability be applied to the other Latin communities. They too probably had of old their divine or priestly kings, who transmitted their religious functions, without their civil powers, to their successors the kings of the Sacred Rites.

What was the rule of succession to the Latin kingship?

But we have still to ask, What was the rule of succession to the kingdom among the old Latin tribes? We possess two lists of Latin kings both professedly complete. One is the list of the kings of Alba, the other is the list of the

Inseln," *Original-Mittheilungen aus der Ethnologischen Abtheilung der Königlichen Museen zu Berlin*, i. 7). In the Marquesas Islands fires were extinguished after a death (Vincendon-Dumoulin et Desgraz, *Iles Marquises*, p. 251). Among the Indians of Peru and the Moors of Algiers no fire might be lighted for several days in a house where a death had occurred (Cieza de Leon, *Travels*, Markham's translation, p. 366; Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 176). The same custom is reported of the Mohammedans of India (Mandelsloe, in J. Harris's *Voyages and Travels*, i. (London, 1744) p. 770). In the East Indian island of Wetter no fire may burn in a house for three days after a death, and according to Bastian the reason is the one given in the text, to wit, a fear that the ghost might fall into it and hurt himself (A. Bastian, *Indonesien*, ii. 60). For more evidence, see my article "On certain Burial Customs," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xv. (1886) p. 90.

kings of Rome. If we accept as authentic the list of the Alban kings, we can only conclude that the kingdom was hereditary in the male line, the son regularly succeeding his father on the throne.[1] But this list, if it is not, as Niebuhr held, a late and clumsy fabrication, has somewhat the appearance of an elastic cord which ancient historians stretched in order to link Aeneas to Romulus.[2] Yet it would be rash to set these names wholly aside as a chronological stop-gap deliberately foisted in by later annalists. In early monarchies, before the invention of writing, tradition is remarkably retentive of the names of kings. The Baganda of Central Africa, for example, remember the names of more than thirty of their kings in an unbroken chain of twenty-two generations.[3] Even the occurrence of foreign names among the Alban kings is not of itself sufficient to condemn the list as a forgery; for, as I shall shew presently, this feature is explicable by a rule of descent which appears to have prevailed in many ancient monarchies, including that of Rome. Perhaps the most we can say for the history of the Alban kings is that their names may well be genuine, and that some general features of the monarchy, together with a few events which happened to strike the popular imagination, may have survived in the memory of the people till they found their way into written history. But no dependence can be placed either on the alleged years of their reigns, or on the hereditary principle which is assumed to have connected each king with his predecessor.

The list of the Alban kings seems to imply that the kingship was hereditary in the male line.

When we come to the list of the Roman kings we are on much firmer, though still slippery ground. According

[1] For the list of the Alban kings see Livy, i. 3. 5-11; Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 39-56; *id.*, *Metam.* xiv. 609 *sqq.*; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* i. 70 *sq.*; Eusebius, *Chronic.* bk. i. vol. i. coll. 273, 275, 285, 287, 289, 291, ed. A. Schoene; Diodorus Siculus, vii. 3[a] ed. L. Dindorf; Sextus Aurelius Victor, *Origo gentis Romanae*, 17-19; Zonaras, *Annales*, vii. 1.

[2] See B. G. Niebuhr, *History of Rome*, i. 205-207; A. Schwegler, *Römische Geschichte*, i. 339, 342-345. However, Niebuhr admits that some of the names may have been taken from older legends.

[3] H. M. Stanley, *Through the Dark Continent* (London, 1878), i. 380; C. T. Wilson and R. W. Felkin, *Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan* (London, 1882), i. 197; Fr. Stuhlman, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 192 *sq.*; J. Roscoe, "Farther Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 25, with plates i. and ii.; Sir Harry Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, ii. 681 *sq.*

On the other hand none of the Roman kings was immediately succeeded by his son, but three were succeeded by their sons-in-law, who were foreigners.

to tradition there were in all eight kings of Rome,[1] and with regard to the five last of them, at all events, we can hardly doubt that they actually sat on the throne, and that the traditional history of their reigns is, in its main outlines, correct.[2] Now it is very remarkable that though the first king of Rome, Romulus, is said to have been descended from the royal house of Alba, in which the kingship is represented as hereditary in the male line, not one of the Roman kings was immediately succeeded by his son on the throne. Yet several left sons or grandsons behind them.[3] On the other hand, one of them was descended from a former king through his mother, not through his father,[4] and three of the kings, namely Tatius, the elder Tarquin, and Servius Tullius, were succeeded by their sons-in-law,[5] who were all either foreigners or of foreign descent.[6] This

[1] Romulus and Tatius reigned for a time together; after Romulus the kings were, in order of succession, Numa Pompilius, Tullus Hostilius, Ancus Marcius, the elder Tarquin, Servius Tullius, and Tarquin the Proud.

[2] See A. Schwegler, *Römische Geschichte*, i. 579 *sq.*

[3] According to one account, Romulus had a son and a daughter (Plutarch, *Romulus*, 14). Some held that Numa had four sons (Plutarch, *Numa*, 21). Ancus Marcius left two sons (Livy, i. 35. 1, i. 40; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* iii. 72 *sq.*, iv. 34. 3). Tarquin the Elder left two sons or grandsons (Livy, i. 46; Dionysius Halic., *Ant. Rom.* iv. 6 *sq.* iv. 28).

[4] Pompilia, the mother of Ancus Marcius, was a daughter of Numa. See Cicero, *De re publica*, ii. 18. 33; Livy, i. 32. 1; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* ii. 76. 5, iii. 35. 3, iii. 36. 2; Plutarch, *Numa*, 21.

[5] Numa married Tatia, the daughter of Tatius (Plutarch, *Numa*, 3 and 21); Servius Tullius married the daughter of the elder Tarquin (Livy, i. 39. 4); and Tarquin the Proud married Tullia the daughter of Servius Tullius (Livy, i. 42. 1, i. 46. 5).

[6] Numa was a Sabine from Cures (Livy, i. 18; Plutarch, *Numa*, 3; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* ii. 58); Servius Tullius, according to the common account, was the son of Ocrisia, a slave woman of Corniculum (Livy, i. 39. 5; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* iv. 1), but according to another account he was an Etruscan (see above, p. 196 note); and Tarquin the Proud was a son of the elder Tarquin, who was an Etruscan from Tarquinii (Livy, i. 34; Cicero, *De re publica*, ii. 19 *sq.*, §§ 34 *sq.*). The foreign birth of their kings naturally struck the Romans themselves. See the speech put by Livy (i. 35. 3), in the mouth of the elder Tarquin: "*Se non rem novam petere, quippe qui non primus, quod quisquam indignari mirarive posset, sed tertius Romae peregrinus regnum adfectet; et Tatium non ex peregrino solum sed etiam ex hoste regem factum, et Numam ignarum urbis non petentem in regnum ultro accitum: se, ex quo sui potens fuerit, Romam cum conjuge ac fortunis omnibus commigrasse.*" And see a passage in a speech actually spoken by the Emperor Claudius: "*Quondam reges hanc tenuere urbem, nec tamen domesticis successoribus eam tradere contigit. Supervenere alieni et quidem externi, ut Numa Romulo successerit ex Sabinis veniens, vicinus quidem sed tunc externus,*" etc. The speech is engraved on bronze tablets found at

suggests that the right to the kingship was transmitted in the female line, and was actually exercised by foreigners who married the royal princesses. To put it in technical language, the succession to the kingship at Rome and probably in Latium generally would seem to have been determined by certain rules which have moulded early society in many parts of the world, namely exogamy, *beena* marriage, and female kinship or mother-kin. Exogamy is the rule which obliges a man to marry a woman of a different clan from his own; *beena* marriage is the rule that he must leave the home of his birth and live with his wife's people;[1] and female kinship or mother-kin is the system of tracing relationship and transmitting the family name through women instead of through men.[2] If these principles regulated descent of the kingship among the ancient Latins, the state of things in this respect would be somewhat as follows. The political and religious centre of each community would be the perpetual fire on the king's hearth tended by Vestal Virgins of the royal clan. The king would be a man of another clan, perhaps of another town or even of another race, who had married a daughter of his predecessor and received the kingdom with her. The children whom he had by her would inherit their mother's name, not his; the daughters would remain at home; the sons, when they grew up, would go away into the world, marry, and settle in their wives' country, whether as kings or commoners. Of the daughters who stayed at home, some or all would be dedicated as Vestal Virgins for a longer or shorter time to the service of the fire on the hearth, and one of them would in time become the consort of her father's successor.

This suggests that the kingship was transmitted in the female line and was held by foreigners who married the royal princesses

Lyons. See Tacitus, ed. Baiter and Orelli, i.[2] p. 342.

[1] "In Ceylon, where the higher and lower polyandry co-exist, marriage is of two sorts—Deega or Beena—according as the wife goes to live in the house and village of her husbands, or as the husband or husbands come to live with her in or near the house of her birth" (J. F. McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History* (London, 1886), p. 101).

[2] The system of mother-kin, that is, of tracing descent through females instead of through males, is often called the matriarchate. But this term is inappropriate and misleading, as it implies that under the system in question the women govern the men. Even when the so-called matriarchate regulates the descent of the kingdom, this does not mean that the women of the royal family reign; it only means that they are the channel through which the kingship is transmitted to their husbands or sons.

This hypothesis explains some obscure features in the traditional history of the Latin kings, such as the stories of their miraculous birth.

This hypothesis has the advantage of explaining in a simple and natural way some obscure features in the traditional history of the Latin kingship. Thus the legends which tell how Latin kings were born of virgin mothers and divine fathers become at least more intelligible. For, stripped of their fabulous element, tales of this sort mean no more than that a woman has been gotten with child by a man unknown; and this uncertainty as to fatherhood is more easily compatible with a system of kinship which ignores paternity than with one which makes it all-important. If at the birth of the Latin kings their fathers were really unknown,[1] the fact points either to a general looseness of life in the royal family or to a special relaxation of moral rules on certain occasions, when men and women reverted for a season to the licence of an earlier age. Such Saturnalias are not uncommon at some stages of social evolution. In our own country traces of them long survived in the practices of May Day and Whitsuntide, if not of Christmas. Children born of the more or less promiscuous intercourse which characterises festivals of this kind would naturally be fathered on the god to whom the particular festival was dedicated.

The Latin kings perhaps begotten at a Saturnalia.

The Roman festival of Midsummer was a kind of Saturnalia, and was specially associated with the fire-born King Servius Tullius.

In this connexion it may not be without significance that a festival of jollity and drunkenness was celebrated by the plebeians and slaves at Rome on Midsummer Day, and that the festival was specially associated with the fire-born King Servius Tullius, being held in honour of Fortuna, the goddess who loved Servius as Egeria loved Numa. The popular merrymakings at this season included foot-races and boat-races; the Tiber was gay with flower-wreathed boats, in which young folk sat quaffing wine.[2] The festival appears to have been a sort of Midsummer Saturnalia answering to the real Saturnalia which fell at Midwinter. In modern Europe, as we shall learn later on, the great Midsummer festival has been above all a festival

[1] Ancient writers repeatedly speak of the uncertainty as to the fathers of the Roman kings. See Livy, i. 4. 2; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* ii. 2. 3; Cicero, *De re publica*, ii. 18. 33; Seneca, *Epist.* cviii. 30; Aelian, *Var. Hist.* xiv. 36.

[2] Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 773-784; Varro, *De lingua Latina*, vi. 17. Compare L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] ii. 180 *sq.*

of lovers and of fire; one of its principal features is the pairing of sweethearts, who leap over the bonfires hand in hand or throw flowers across the flames to each other. And many omens of love and marriage are drawn from the flowers which bloom at this mystic season.[1] It is the time of the roses and of love. Yet the innocence and beauty of such festivals in modern times ought not to blind us to the likelihood that in earlier days they were marked by coarser features, which were probably of the essence of the rites. Indeed, among the rude Esthonian peasantry these features seem to have lingered down to our own generation, if not to the present day. One other feature in the Roman celebration of Midsummer deserves to be specially noticed. The custom of rowing in flower-decked boats on the river on this day proves that it was to some extent a water festival; and, as we shall learn later on, water has always, down to modern times, played a conspicuous part in the rites of Midsummer Day, which explains why the Church, in throwing its cloak over the old heathen festival, chose to dedicate it to St. John the Baptist.[2]

But the uncertainty as to the paternity of the Roman kings may only mean that in later times the names of their fathers were forgotten.

The hypothesis that the Latin kings may have been begotten at an annual festival of love is necessarily a mere conjecture, though the traditional birth of Numa on the festival of the Parilia, when shepherds leaped across the spring bonfires,[3] as lovers leap across the Midsummer fires, may perhaps be thought to lend it a faint colour of probability. But it is quite possible that the uncertainty as to their fathers may not have arisen till long after the death of the kings, when their figures began to melt away into the cloudland of fable, assuming fantastic shapes and gorgeous colouring as they passed from earth to heaven. If they were alien immigrants, strangers and pilgrims in the land they ruled over, it would be natural enough that the people should forget their lineage, and forgetting it should provide them with another, which made up in lustre what it lacked in truth. The final apotheosis, which represented the kings as not merely sprung from gods but as themselves deities

[1] See *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, iii. 266 *sqq.*, 328 *sqq.*

[2] See *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, Second Edition, pp. 203 *sqq.*; *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, iii. 318 *sq.*

[3] Plutarch, *Numa*, 3.

incarnate, would be much facilitated if in their lifetime, as we have seen reason to think, they had actually laid claim to divinity.

Where descent is traced through women only, girls of the highest rank may be married to men of humble birth, even to aliens and slaves.

If among the Latins the women of royal blood always stayed at home and received as their consorts men of another stock, and often of another country, who reigned as kings in virtue of their marriage with a native princess, we can understand not only why foreigners wore the crown at Rome, but also why foreign names occur in the list of the Alban kings. In a state of society where nobility is reckoned only through women—in other words, where descent through the mother is everything, and descent through the father is nothing—no objection will be felt to uniting girls of the highest rank to men of humble birth, even to aliens or slaves, provided that in themselves the men appear to be suitable mates. What really matters is that the royal stock, on which the prosperity and even the existence of the people is supposed to depend, should be perpetuated in a vigorous and efficient form, and for this purpose it is necessary that the women of the royal family should bear children to men who are physically and mentally fit, according to the standard of early society, to discharge the important duty of procreation. Thus the personal qualities of the kings at this stage of social evolution are deemed of vital importance. If they, like their consorts, are of royal and divine descent, so much the better ; but it is not essential that they should be so.

In Ashantee, where the kingdom descends through women, the rank of the king's father is not regarded.

The hypothesis which we have been led to frame of the rule of succession to the Latin kingship will be confirmed by analogy if we can shew that elsewhere, under a system of female kinship, the paternity of the kings is a matter of indifference—nay, that men who are born slaves may, like Servius Tullius, marry royal princesses and be raised to the throne. Now this is true of the Tshi-speaking peoples of the Gold Coast in West Africa. Thus in Ashantee, where the kingdom descends in the female line to the king's brothers and afterwards to the sons of his sister in preference to his own sons, the sisters of the reigning monarch are free to marry or intrigue with whom they please, provided only that their husband or lover be a very

strong and handsome man, in order that the kings whom he begets may be men of finer presence than their subjects. It matters not how low may be the rank and position of the king's father. If the king's sisters, however, have no sons, the throne will pass to the king's own son, and failing a son, to the chief vassal or the chief slave. But in the Fantee country the principal slave succeeds to the exclusion of the son. So little regard is paid by these people to the lineage, especially the paternal lineage, of their kings.[1] Yet Ashantee has attained a barbaric civilisation as high perhaps as that of any negro state, and probably not at all inferior to that of the petty Latin kingdoms at the dawn of history.

Traces of a similar state of things in Uganda.

A trace of a similar state of things appears to survive in Uganda, another great African monarchy. For there the queen dowager and the queen sister are, or were, allowed to have as many husbands as they choose, without going through any marriage ceremony. "Of these two women it is commonly said all Uganda is their husband; they appear to be fond of change, only living with a man for a few days and then inviting some one else to take his place." We are reminded of the legends of the lustful queen Semiramis, and the likeness may be more than superficial. Yet these women are not allowed, under pain of death, to bear children; hence they practise abortion.[2] Both the licence and the prohibition may be explained if we suppose that formerly the kingdom descended, as it still does in Ashantee, first to the king's brothers and next to the sons of his sisters. For in that case the next heirs to the throne would be the sons of the king's mother and of his sisters, and these women might accordingly be allowed, as the king's sisters still are allowed in Ashantee, to mate with any handsome men who took their fancy, in order that their offspring might be of regal port. But when the line of descent was changed from the female to the male line, in other words, when the kings were

[1] T. E. Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee*, New Edition (London, 1873), pp. 185, 204 *sq.*; A. B. Ellis, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, pp. 287, 297 *sq.*; *id.*, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 187.

[2] J. Roscoe, "Further Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 36, 67. In Benin "the legitimate daughters of a king did not *marry* any one, but bestowed their favours as they pleased" (Mr. C. Punch, in H. Ling Roth's *Great Benin* (Halifax, England, 1903), p. 37).

succeeded by their sons instead of by their brothers or their sisters' sons, then the king's mother and his sisters would be forbidden to bear children lest the descent of the crown to the king's own children should be endangered by the existence of rivals who, according to the old law of the kingdom, had a better right to the throne. We may surmise that the practice of putting the king's brothers to death at the beginning of his reign, which survived till Uganda passed under English protection,[1] was instituted at the same time as the prohibition of child-bearing laid on the king's mother and sisters. The one custom got rid of existing rivals; the other prevented them from being born. That the kingship in Uganda was formerly transmitted in the female line is strongly indicated by the rule that the kings and the rest of the royal family take their totems from their mothers, whereas all the other people of the country get their totems from their fathers.[2]

In Loango also, where the blood royal is traced in the female line, the princesses are free to cohabit with whom they please, and their consorts are practically their slaves.

In Loango the blood royal is traced in the female line, and here also the princesses are free to choose and divorce their husbands at pleasure, and to cohabit at the same time with other men. These husbands are nearly always plebeians, for princes and princesses, who are very numerous and form a ruling caste in the country, may not marry each other. The lot of a prince consort is not a happy one, for he is rather the slave and prisoner than the mate of his imperious princess. In marrying her he engages never more to look at a woman during the whole time he cohabits with his royal spouse. When he goes out he is preceded by guards who drive away all females from the road where he is to pass. If in spite of these precautions he should by ill-luck cast his eyes on a woman, the princess may have his head chopped off, and commonly exercises, or used to exercise, the right. This sort of libertinism, sustained by power, often carries the princesses to the greatest excesses, and nothing is so much

[1] C. T. Wilson and R. W. Felkin, *Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan* (London, 1882), i. 200; J. Roscoe, "Further Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 67.

[2] J. Roscoe, *op. cit.* pp. 27, 62. Mr. Roscoe says: "The royal family traces its pedigree through the maternal clan, but the nation through the paternal clan." But he here refers to the descent of the totem only. That the throne descends from father to son is proved by the genealogical tables which he gives (Plates I. and II.).

dreaded as their anger. No wonder that commoners in general avoid the honour of a royal alliance. Only poor and embarrassed men seek it as a protection against their creditors and enemies. All the children of such a man by such a wife are princes and princesses, and any one of the princes may in time be chosen king; for in Loango the crown is not hereditary but elective.[1] Thus it would seem that the father of the King of Loango is nearly always a plebeian, and often little better than a slave.

Similar rights enjoyed by queens in Central Africa.

Near the Chambezi river, which falls into Lake Bengweolo in Central Africa, there is a small state governed by a queen who belongs to the reigning family of Ubemba. She bears the title of *Mamfumer* or Mother of Kings. "The privileges attached to this dignity are numerous. The most singular is that the queens may choose for themselves their husband among the common people. The chosen man becomes prince-consort without sharing in the administration of affairs. He is bound to leave everything to follow his royal and often but little accommodating spouse. To shew that in these households the rights are inverted and that a man may be changed into a woman, the queen takes the title of *Monsieur* and her husband that of *Madame*."[2]

Traces of female descent of the kingship in ancient Greece.

At Athens, as at Rome, we find traces of succession to the throne by marriage with a royal princess; for two of the most ancient kings of Athens, namely Cecrops and Amphictyon, are said to have married the daughters of their predecessors.[3] This tradition is confirmed by the evidence, which I shall adduce presently, that at Athens male kinship was preceded by female kinship.

[1] Proyart's "History of Loango," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 570, 579 *sq.*; L. Degrandpré, *Voyage à la côte occidentale d'Afrique* (Paris, 1801), pp. 110-114; A. Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango Küste*, i. 197 *sqq.* Time seems not to have mitigated the lot of these unhappy prince consorts. See R. E. Dennett, *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind* (London, 1906), pp. 36 *sq.*, 134. Mr. Dennett says that the husband of a princess is virtually her slave and may be put to death by her. All the sisters of the King of Loango enjoy these arbitrary rights over their husbands, and the offspring of any of them may become king.

[2] Father Guillemé, "Au Bengouéolo," *Missions Catholiques*, xxxiv. (1902) p. 16. The writer visited the state and had an interview with the queen, a woman of gigantic stature, wearing many amulets.

[3] Pausanias, i. 2. 6.

With this rule of descent of the kingship males rule over different kingdoms in successive generations.

Further, if I am right in supposing that in ancient Latium the royal families kept their daughters at home and sent forth their sons to marry princesses and reign among their wives' people, it will follow that the male descendants would reign in successive generations over different kingdoms. Now this seems to have happened both in ancient Greece and in ancient Sweden; from which we may legitimately infer that it was a custom practised by more than one branch of the Aryan stock in Europe. Take, for instance, the great house of Aeacus, the grandfather of Achilles and Ajax. Aeacus himself reigned in Aegina, but his descendants, as has been justly observed, "from the beginning went forth to other lands."[1] His son Telamon migrated to the island of Salamis, married the king's daughter, and reigned over the country.[2] Telamon's son Teucer, in his turn, migrated to Cyprus, wedded the king's daughter, and succeeded his father-in-law on the throne.[3] Again, Peleus, another son of Aeacus, quitted his native land and went away to Phthia in Thessaly, where he received the hand of the king's daughter, and with her a third of the kingdom.[4] Of Achilles, the son of Peleus, we are told that in his youth he was sent to the court of Lycomedes, King of Scyros, where he got one of the princesses with child.[5] The tradition seems to shew that Achilles followed the custom of his family in seeking his fortune in a foreign land. His son Neoptolemus, after him, went away to Epirus, where he settled and became the ancestor of the kings of the country.[6]

Migrations of the male descendants of Aeacus.

Migrations of the male descendants of Tydeus and Pelops.

Again, Tydeus was a son of Oeneus, the King of Calydon in Aetolia, but he went to Argos and married the king's daughter.[7] His son Diomede migrated to Daunia in Italy, where he helped the king in a war with his enemies, receiving as his reward the king's daughter in marriage and

[1] Pausanias, ii. 29. 4. I have to thank Mr. H. M. Chadwick for pointing out the following Greek and Swedish parallels to what I conceive to have been the Latin practice.

[2] Diodorus Siculus, iv. 72. 7. According to Apollodorus (iii. 12. 7), Cychreus, King of Salamis, died childless, and bequeathed his kingdom to Telamon.

[3] J. Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 450. Compare Pausanias, ii. 29. 4.

[4] Apollodorus, iii. 13. 1. According to Diodorus Siculus (iv. 72. 6), the king of Phthia was childless, and bequeathed his kingdom to Peleus.

[5] Apollodorus, iii. 13. 8; Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 96.

[6] Pausanias, i. 11. 1 *sq.*; Justin, xvii. 3.

[7] Apollodorus, i. 8. 5.

part of the kingdom.[1] As another example we may take the family of the Pelopidae, whose tragic fortunes the Greek poets never wearied of celebrating. Their ancestor was Tantalus, King of Sipylus in Asia Minor. But his son Pelops passed into Greece, won Hippodamia, the daughter of the King of Pisa, in the famous chariot-race, and succeeded his father-in-law on the throne.[2] His son Atreus did not remain in Pisa, but migrated to Mycenae, of which he became king;[3] and in the next generation Menelaus, son of Atreus, went to Sparta, where he married Helen, the king's daughter, and himself reigned over the country.[4] Further, it is very notable that, according to the old lyric poets, Agamemnon himself, the elder brother of Menelaus, reigned not at Mycenae but in Lacedaemon, the native land of his wife Clytaemnestra, and that he was buried at Amyclae, the ancient capital of the country.[5]

These migrations not understood in later times.

Various reasons are assigned by ancient Greek writers for these migrations of the princes. A common one is that the king's son had been banished for murder. This would explain very well why he fled his own land, but it is no reason at all why he should become king of another. We may suspect that such reasons are afterthoughts devised by writers who, accustomed to the rule that a son should succeed to his father's property and kingdom, were hard put to it to account for so many traditions of kings' sons who quitted the land of their birth to reign over a foreign kingdom.

Traces of similar migrations in Scandinavian tradition.

In Scandinavian tradition we meet with traces of similar customs. For we read of daughters' husbands who received a share of the kingdoms of their royal fathers-in-law, even when these fathers-in-law had sons of their own; in particular, during the five generations which preceded Harold the Fair-haired, male members of the Ynglingar family, which is said to have come from Sweden, are reported in

[1] Antoninus Liberalis, *Transform.* 37; Ovid, *Metam.* xiv. 459 *sq.*, 510 *sq.* Compare Virgil, *Aen.* xi. 243 *sqq.*

[2] Diodorus, iv. 73; Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 82-84; Servius, on Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 7.

[3] Thucydides, i. 9; Strabo, viii. 6. 19, p. 377.

[4] Apollodorus, iii. 10. 8.

[5] Schol. on Euripides, *Orestes*, 46; Pindar, *Pyth.* xi. 31 *sq.*; Pausanias, iii. 19. 6.

the *Heimskringla* or *Sagas of the Norwegian Kings* to have obtained at least six provinces in Norway by marriage with the daughters of the local kings.[1]

A reminiscence of the transmission of the kingship through women is preserved in popular tales.

Thus it would seem that among some Aryan peoples, at a certain stage of their social evolution, it has been customary to regard women and not men as the channels in which royal blood flows, and to bestow the kingdom in each successive generation on a man of another family, and often of another country, who marries one of the princesses and reigns over his wife's people. A common type of popular tale, which relates how an adventurer, coming to a strange land, wins the hand of the king's daughter and with her the half or the whole of the kingdom, may well be a reminiscence of a real custom.[2]

Where such customs prevail, the kingship is an

Where usages and ideas of this sort prevail, it is obvious that the kingship is merely an appanage of marriage with a woman of the blood royal. The old Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus puts this view of the kingship very clearly in

[1] H. M. Chadwick, *The Origin of the English Nation* (Cambridge, 1907), pp. 332 *sq.* In treating of the succession to the kingdom in Scandinavia, the late K. Maurer, one of the highest authorities on old Norse law, also remarked that "some ancient authorities (*Quellenberichte*) profess to know of a certain right of succession accorded to women, in virtue of which under certain circumstances, though they could not themselves succeed to the kingdom, they nevertheless could convey it to their husbands." And he cites a number of instances, how one king (Eysteinn Halfdanarson) succeeded his father-in-law (Eirikr Agnarsson) on the throne; how another (Gudrodr Halfdanarson) received with his wife Alfhildr a portion of her father's kingdom; and so on. See K. Maurer, *Vorlesungen über altnordische Rechtsgeschichte*, i. (Leipsic, 1907) pp. 233 *sq.*

[2] G. W. Dasent, *Popular Tales from the Norse*, pp. 131 *sqq.*; S. Grundtvig, *Dänische Volksmärchen*, First Series (Leipsic, 1878), pp. 285 *sqq.* (Leo's German translation); Cavallius und Stephens, *Schwedische Volkssagen und Märchen*, No. 4, pp. 62 *sqq.* (Oberleitner's German translation); Grimm, *Household Tales*, No. 60; Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, pp. 340 *sqq.*; J. W. Wolf, *Deutsche Hausmärchen*, pp. 372 *sqq.*; Philo vom Walde, *Schlesien in Sage und Brauch*, pp. 81 *sqq.*; I. V. Zingerle, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen aus Tirol*, No. 8, pp. 35 *sqq.* No. 35, pp. 178 *sqq.*; J. Haltrich, *Deutsche Volksmärchen aus dem Sachsenlande in Siebenbürgen*,[4] No. 15, pp. 103 *sqq.*; J. F. Campbell, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*, No. 4, vol. i. pp. 77 *sqq.*; A. Schleicher, *Litauische Märchen, Sprichwörte, Rätsel und Lieder*, pp. 57 *sqq.*; A. Leskien und K. Brugmann, *Litauische Volkslieder und Märchen*, No. 14, pp. 404 *sqq.*; Basile, *Pentamerone*, First day, seventh tale, vol. i. pp. 97 *sqq.* (Liebrecht's German translation); E. Legrand, *Contes populaires grecques*, pp. 169 *sqq.*; J. G. von Hahn, *Griechische und albanesische Märchen*, No. 98, vol. ii. pp. 114 *sq.*; A. und A. Schott, *Walachische Maehrchen*, No. 10, pp. 140 *sqq.*; W. Webster, *Basque Legends*, pp. 36-38; A. Schiefner, *Awarische Texte* (St. Petersburg, 1873), No. 2, pp. 21 *sqq.*; J. Rivière, *Contes populaires de la Kabylie*, pp 195-197.

the mouth of Hermutrude, a legendary queen of Scotland, and her statement is all the more significant because, as we shall see presently, it reflects the actual practice of the Pictish kings. "Indeed she was a queen," says Hermutrude, "and but that her sex gainsaid it, might be deemed a king; nay (and this is yet truer), whomsoever she thought worthy of her bed was at once a king, and she yielded her kingdom with herself. Thus her sceptre and her hand went together."[1] Wherever a custom of this sort is observed, a man may clearly acquire the kingdom just as well by marrying the widow as the daughter of his predecessor. This is what Aegisthus did at Mycenae, and what Hamlet's uncle Feng and Hamlet's successor Wiglet did in Denmark; all three slew their predecessors, married their widows, and then sat peacefully on the throne.[2] The tame submission of the people to their rule would be intelligible, if they regarded the assassins, in spite of their crime, as the lawful occupants of the throne by reason of their marriage with the widowed queens. Similarly, Gyges murdered Candaules, King of Lydia, married his queen, and reigned over the country.[3] Nor was this the only instance of such a succession in the history of Lydia. The wife of King Cadys conspired against his life with her paramour Spermus, and though her husband recovered from the dose of poison which she administered to him, he died soon afterwards, and the adulterer married his leman and succeeded to the throne.[4] These cases excite a suspicion that in the royal house of Lydia descent was traced in the female line, and the suspicion is strengthened by the legendary character of Omphale, the ancestress of the dynasty. For she is represented as a masculine but dissolute queen of the Semiramis type, who wore male attire and put all her favoured lovers to death, while on the other hand her consort Hercules was her purchased slave,

appanage of marriage with a princess.

The Lydian kingship apparently transmitted through women.

[1] Saxo Grammaticus, *Historia Danica*, bk. iv. p. 126 (Elton's translation). The passage occurs on p. 158 of P. E. Müller's edition of Saxo.

[2] The story of Hamlet (Amleth) is told, in a striking form, by Saxo Grammaticus in the third and fourth books of his history. Mr. H. M. Chadwick tells me that Hamlet stands on the border-line between legend and history. Hence the main outlines of his story may be correct.

[3] Herodotus, i. 7-13.

[4] Nicolaus Damascenus, vi. frag. 49, in *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, ed. C. Müller, iii. 380.

The Lydian kingship apparently transmitted through women.

was treated with indignity, and went about dressed as a woman.[1] This plainly implies that the queen was a far more powerful and important personage than the king, as would naturally happen wherever it is the queen who confers royalty on her consort at marriage instead of receiving it from him. The story that she prostituted the daughters of the Lydians to their male slaves[2] is of a piece with the tradition that she herself married her slave Hercules. It may mean little more than that the Lydians were indifferent to paternity, and that the children of freewomen by slaves ranked as free. Such an indifference to fatherhood, coupled with the ancient accounts of the loose morals of the Lydian girls, who were accustomed to earn a dowry by prostitution,[3] is a mark of the system of female kinship. Hence we may conjecture that Herodotus was wrong in saying that from Hercules to Candaules the crown of Lydia had descended for twenty-two generations from father to son.[4] The old mode of transmitting the crown of Lydia through women probably did not end with Candaules. At least we are told that his murderer and successor Gyges, like Hercules, the mythical founder of the dynasty, gave himself and his kingdom into the hands of the woman he loved, and that when she died he collected all the slaves from the country round about and raised in her memory a mound so lofty that it could be seen from every part of the Lydian plain, and for centuries after was known as the Harlot's Tomb.[5]

Marriage of Canute with the widow of his predecessor.

When Canute the Dane had been acknowledged King of England, he married Emma, the widow of his predecessor Ethelred, whose throne he had overturned and whose children he had driven into exile. The marriage has not unnaturally puzzled the historians, for Emma was much

[1] Athenaeus, xii. 11, pp. 515 F-516 B; Apollodorus, ii. 6. 3; Diodorus Siculus, iv. 31; Joannes Lydus, *De magistratibus*, iii. 64; Lucian, *Dialogi deorum*, xiii. 2; Ovid, *Heroides*, ix. 55 *sqq.*; Statius, *Theb.* x. 646-649.

[2] Athenaeus, *l.c.*

[3] Herodotus, i. 93; Clearchus, quoted by Athenaeus, xii. 11, p. 516 A B. The Armenians also prostituted their daughters before marriage, dedicating them for a long time to the profligate worship of the goddess Anaitis (Strabo, xi. 14. 16, p. 532 *sq.*). The custom was probably practised as a charm to secure the fertility of the earth as well as of man and beast. See *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, Second Edition, pp. 32 *sqq.*

[4] Herodotus, i. 7.

[5] Clearchus, quoted by Athenaeus, xiii. 31, p. 573 A B.

older than her second husband, she was then living in Normandy, and it is very doubtful whether Canute had ever seen her before she became his bride. All, however, becomes plain if, as the cases of Feng and Wiglet seem to shew, it was an old Danish custom that marriage with a king's widow carried the kingdom with it as a matter of right. In that case the young but prudent Canute married the mature widow merely out of policy in order to clinch, according to Danish notions, by a legal measure his claim to that crown which he had already won for himself by the sword.[1] Among the Saxons and their near kinsmen the Varini it appears to have been a regular custom for the new king to marry his stepmother. Thus Hermegisclus, King of the Varini, on his deathbed enjoined his son Radigis to wed his stepmother in accordance with their ancestral practice, and his injunction was obeyed.[2] Edbald, King of Kent, married his stepmother after the death of his father Ethelbert;[3] and as late as the ninth century Ethelbald, King of the West Saxons, wedded Judith, the widow of his father Ethelwulf.[4] Such marriages are intelligible if we suppose that old Saxon as well as old Danish law gave the kingdom to him who married the late king's widow.

Traces of the system of female kinship among the Aryans.

To the view that the right to the Latin kingship was derived from women and not from men, it may be objected that the system of female kinship or mother-kin is unknown among the Aryans,[5] and that even if faint traces of it may be met with elsewhere, the last place in the world where we should look for it would be Rome, the stronghold of the patriarchal family. To meet this objection it is necessary to point to some facts which appear to be undoubted

[1] See E. A. Freeman, *History of the Norman Conquest of England*, i.[3] 410-412, 733-737. I am indebted to my friend Mr. H. M. Chadwick both for the fact and its explanation.

[2] Procopius, *De bello Gothico*, iv. 20 (vol. ii. p. 593, ed. J. Haury). This and the following cases of marriage with a stepmother are cited by K. Weinhold, *Deutsche Frauen*[2] (Vienna, 1882), ii. 359 *sq.*

[3] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, ii. 5. 102; compare i. 27. 63.

[4] Prudentius Trecensis, "Annales," anno 858, in Pertz's *Monumenta Germaniae historica*, i. 451; Ingulfus, *Historia*, quoted *ibid.*

[5] This is in substance the view of Dr. W. E. Hearn (*The Aryan Household*, pp. 150-155) and of Prof. B. Delbrück ("Das Mutterrecht bei den Indogermanen," *Preussische Jahrbücher*, lxxix. (1895) pp. 14-27).

survivals among Aryan peoples of a custom of tracing descent through the mother only.

Female kinship among the Athenians, the Epizephyrian Locrians, the Cantabrians, and the Germans.

In Attica tradition ran that of old the women were the common property of the men, who coupled with them like beasts, so that while every one knew his mother, nobody knew who his father was. This system of sexual communism was abolished by Cecrops, the first King of Athens, who introduced individual marriage in its place.[1] Little weight could be attached to this tradition, if it were not supported to a certain extent by the Attic usage which always allowed a man to marry his half-sister by the same father but not his half-sister by the same mother.[2] Such a rule seems clearly to be a relic of a time when kinship was counted only through women. Again, the Epizephyrian Locrians in Italy traced all ancestral distinction in the female, not the male line. Among them the nobles were the members of the hundred houses from whom were chosen by lot the maidens to be sent to Troy.[3] For in order, it is said, to expiate the sacrilege committed by the Locrian Ajax when he violated Cassandra in the sanctuary of Athena at Troy, the cities of Locris used annually to send to the Trojan goddess two maidens, whom the Trojans slew, and, burning their bodies on the wood of certain trees which bore no fruit, threw the ashes into the sea. If the maidens contrived to escape they took refuge in the sanctuary of Athena, which they thenceforth swept and washed, never quitting it except at night, and always going barefoot, shorn, and clad in a single garment. The custom is said to have been observed for a thousand years down to the fourth century before our era.[4] Among the Locrians, as elsewhere, the

[1] Clearchus of Soli, quoted by Athenaeus, xiii. 2. p. 555 D; John of Antioch, in *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, ed. C. Müller, iv. 547; Charax of Pergamus *ib.* iii. 638; J. Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 111; *id.*, *Chiliades*, v. 650-665; Suidas, *s.v.* Κέκροψ; Justin, ii. 6. 7.

[2] Ὁ μὲν οὖν Ἀθηναῖος Σόλων ὁμοπατρίους ἐφεὶς ἄγεσθαι, τὰς ὁμομητρίους ἐκώλυσεν, ὁ δὲ Λακεδαιμονίων νομοθέτης ἔμπαλιν, τὸν ἐπὶ ταῖς ὁμογαστρίοις γάμον ἐπιτρέψας, τὸν πρὸς τὰς ὁμοπατρίους ἀπεῖπεν, Philo Judaeus, *De specialibus legibus*, vol. ii. p. 303, ed. Th. Mangey. See also Plutarch, *Themistocles*, 32; Cornelius Nepos, *Cimon*, 1; Schol. on Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 1371; L. Beauchet, *Histoire du droit privé de la République Athénienne*, i. (Paris, 1897) pp. 165 *sqq.* Compare Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, 31.

[3] Polybius, xii. 5.

[4] Strabo, xiii. 1. 40, pp. 600 *sq.*; Plutarch, *De sera numinis vindicta*, 12; and especially Lycophron, *Cas-*

system of female kinship would seem to have gone hand in hand with dissolute morals; for there is reason to think that of old the Locrians, like the Lydians and Armenians, had been wont to prostitute their daughters before marriage, though in later times the custom fell into abeyance.[1] The Cantabrians of Spain seem also to have had mother-kin; for among them it was the daughters who inherited property and who portioned out their brothers in marriage.[2] Again, the ancient Germans deemed the tie between a man and his sister's children as close as that between a father and his children; indeed some regarded the bond as even closer and more sacred, and therefore in exacting hostages they chose the children of a man's sister rather than his own children, believing that this gave them a firmer hold on the family.[3] The superiority thus assigned to the maternal uncle over the father is an infallible mark of mother-kin, either present or past, as may be observed, for instance, in very many African tribes to this day, among whom both property and political power pass, not from father to son, but from the maternal uncle to his nephews.[4] Similarly, in Melanesia the close relation of the mother's brother to his nephew is maintained even where the system of relationship has become patriarchal.[5] Amongst the Germans in the time of Tacitus, it is true, a man's heirs were his own children,[6] but the mother's brother could never have attained the position he held except under a system of maternal descent. Another vestige of mother-kin among a Teutonic people appears to be found in the Salic law. For it was a custom with the Salian Franks that when a widow married again, a price had to be paid to her family, and in laying down the order in which her kinsmen were entitled to receive this payment

sandra, 1141 *sqq.*, with the scholia of J. Tzetzes, who refers to Timaeus and Callimachus as his authorities.

[1] Justin, xxi. 3. 1-6.

[2] Strabo, iii. 4. 18.

[3] Tacitus, *Germania*, 20. Compare L. Dargun, *Mutterrecht und Raubehe und ihre Reste im germanischen Recht und Leben* (Breslau, 1883), pp. 21 *sq.*

[4] A. Giraud-Teulon, *Les Origines du mariage et de la famille*, pp. 206 *sqq.*; A. H. Post, *Afrikanische Jurisprudenz*, i. 13 *sqq.*; Sir Harry H. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 471; A. B. Ellis, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, pp. 297 *sq.*; *id.*, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, pp. 207 *sqq.* Much more evidence will be found in my *Totemism and Exogamy*.

[5] R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 50, note 2.

[6] Tacitus, *Germania*, 20.

the law gave a decided preference to the female over the male line; thus the first person entitled to claim the money was the eldest son of the widow's sister.[1]

Among the Picts the kingship was transmitted through women.

It is a moot point whether the Picts of Scotland belonged to the Aryan family or not;[2] but among them the kingdom was certainly transmitted through women. Bede tells us that down to his own time, in the early part of the eighth century, whenever a doubt arose as to the succession, the Picts chose their king from the female rather than the male line.[3] The statement is amply confirmed by historical evidence. For we possess a list of the Pictish kings and their fathers which was drawn up in the reign of Cenaed, King of the Scots, towards the end of the tenth century; and for the period from the year 583 to the year 840 the register is authenticated by the Irish Annals of Tigernach and Ulster. Now, it is significant that in this list the fathers of the kings are never themselves kings; in other words, no king was succeeded on the throne by his son. Further, if we may judge by their names, the fathers of the Pictish kings were not Picts but foreigners—men of Irish, Cymric, or English race. The inference from these facts seems to be that among the Picts the royal family was exogamous, and that the crown descended in the female line; in other words, that the princesses married men of another clan or even of another race, and that their issue by these strangers sat on the throne, whether they succeeded in a prescribed order according to birth, or whether they were elected from among the sons of princesses, as the words of Bede might be taken to imply.[4]

Another European, though apparently not Aryan,

[1] A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 286 *sqq.* The *reipus* or payment made on the remarriage of a widow is discussed by L. Dargun, *op. cit.* pp. 141-152.

[2] W. F. Skene held that the Picts were Celts. See his *Celtic Scotland*, i. 194-227. On the other hand, H. Zimmer supposes them to have been the pre-Celtic inhabitants of the British Islands. See his paper "Das Mutterrecht der Pikten," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte*, xv. (1894) Romanistische Abtheilung, pp. 209 *sqq.*

[3] "*Cumque uxores Picti non habentes peterent a Scottis, ea solum conditione dare consenserunt, ut ubi res perveniret in dubium, magis de feminea regum prosapia quam de masculina regem sibi eligerent; quod usque hodie apud Pictos constat esse servatum*," Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, ii. 1. 7.

[4] W. F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, i. 232-235; J. F. McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History* (London, 1886), pp. 68-70; H. Zimmer, *loc. cit.*

people among whom the system of female kinship appears to have prevailed were the Etruscans. For in Etruscan sepulchral inscriptions the name of the mother of the deceased is regularly recorded along with or even without the name of the father; and where the names of both father and mother are mentioned, greater prominence is given to the mother's name by writing it in full, whereas the father's name is, in accordance with Roman usage, merely indicated by an initial.[1] The statement of Theopompus that among the Etruscans sexual communism was a recognised practice, and that paternity was unknown,[2] may be only an exaggerated way of saying that they traced their descent through their mothers and not through their fathers. Yet apparently in Etruria, as elsewhere, this system of relationship was combined with a real indifference to fatherhood and with the dissolute morals which that indifference implies; for Etruscan girls were wont to earn a dowry by prostitution.[3] In these customs the Etruscans resembled the Lydians, and the similarity confirms the common opinion of antiquity, which modern historians have too lightly set aside, that the Etruscans were of Lydian origin.[4] However that may be, in considering the vestiges of mother-kin among the Latins, we shall do well to bear in mind that the same archaic mode of tracing descent appears to have prevailed among the neighbouring Etruscans, who not only exercised a powerful influence on Rome, but gave her two, if not three, of her kings.[5]

Female kinship among the Etruscans.

[1] K. O. Müller, *Die Etrusker* (Stuttgart, 1877), ii. 376 *sq.*; J. J. Bachofen, *Die Sage von Tanaquil* (Heidelberg, 1870), pp. 282-290.

[2] Θεόπομπος δ' ἐν τῇ τεσσαρακοστῇ τρίτῃ τῶν Ἱστοριῶν καὶ νόμον εἶναι φησι παρὰ τοῖς Τυρρηνοῖς κοινὰς ὑπάρχειν τὰς γυναῖκας . . . τρέφειν δὲ τοὺς Τυρρηνοὺς πάντα τὰ γινόμενα παιδία, οὐκ εἰδότας ὅτου πάτρος ἐστὶν ἕκαστον, Athenaeus, xii. 14, p. 517 D E.

[3] "*Non enim hic, ubi ex Tusco modo Tute tibi indigne dotem quaeras corpore*" (Plautus, *Cistellaria*, ii. 3. 20 *sq.*).

[4] Herodotus, i. 94; Strabo, v. 2. 2, p. 219; Tacitus, *Annals*, iv. 55; Timaeus, cited by Tertullian, *De spectaculis*, 5; Festus, *s.v.* "Turannos," p. 355, ed. C. O. Müller; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 2; Velleius Paterculus, i. 1. 4; Justin, xx. 1. 7; Valerius Maximus, ii. 4. 4; Servius, on Virgil, *Aen.* i. 67. On the other hand, Dionysius of Halicarnassus held that the Etruscans were an indigenous Italian race, differing from all other known peoples in language and customs (*Ant. Rom.* i. 26-30). On this much-vexed question, see K. O. Müller, *Die Etrusker* (Stuttgart, 1877), i. 65 *sqq.*; G. Dennis, *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*,[3] i. pp. xxxiii. *sqq.*; F. Hommel, *Grundriss der Geographie und Geschichte des Alten Orients*,[2] pp. 63 *sqq.* (in Iwan von Müller's *Handbuch der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, vol. iii.).

[5] It is doubtful whether Servius Tullius was a Latin or an Etruscan. See above, p. 195, note 1.

Mother-kin may survive in the royal family after it has been exchanged for father-kin in all others.

It would be neither unnatural nor surprising if among the ancient Latins mother-kin survived in the royal family after it had been exchanged for father-kin in all others. For royalty, like religion, is essentially conservative; it clings to old forms and old customs which have long vanished from ordinary life. Thus in Uganda persons of royal blood still inherit their totems from their mothers, while other people inherit them from their fathers. So in Denmark and Scandinavia, as we have seen, the kingdom would appear to have been transmitted through women long after the family name and property had become hereditary in the male line among the people. Sometimes the difference in custom between kings and commoners is probably based rather on a distinction of race than on varying degrees of social progress; for a dynasty is often a family of alien origin who have imposed their rule on their subjects by force of arms, as the Normans did on the Saxons, and the Manchus on the Chinese. More rarely, perhaps, it may have happened that from motives of policy or superstition a conquering tribe has left a nominal kingship to the members of the old royal house. Such a concession would be most likely to be made where the functions of the king were rather religious than civil, and where the prosperity of the country was supposed to depend on the maintenance of the established relations between the people and the gods of the land. In that case the new-comers, knowing not how to appease and conciliate these strange deities, might be glad to let the priestly kings of the conquered race perform the quaint rites and mumble the venerable spells, which had been found to answer their purpose time out of mind.[1] In a common-

Sometimes a conquering race may have left a nominal kingship to members of the old royal house.

[1] "All over India the hedge-priest is very often an autochthon, his long residence in the land being supposed to confer upon him the knowledge of the character and peculiarities of the local gods, and to teach him the proper mode in which they may be conciliated. Thus the Doms preserve to the present day the animistic and demonistic beliefs of the aboriginal races, which the Khasiyas, who have succeeded them, temper with the worship of the village deities, the named and localised divine entities, with the occasional languid cult of the greater Hindu gods. The propitiation of the vague spirits of wood, or cliff, river or lake, they are satisfied to leave in charge of their serfs" (W. Crooke, *Natives of Northern India*, London, 1907, pp. 104 *sq.*). When the Israelites had been carried away captives into Assyria, the new settlers in the desolate land of Israel were attacked by lions, which they supposed to be sent against them by the god of the country

wealth like the Roman, formed by the union of different stocks, the royal family might thus belong either to the conquerors or to the conquered; in other words, either to the patricians or to the plebeians. But if we leave out of account Romulus and Tatius, who are more or less legendary figures, and the two Tarquins, who came of a noble Etruscan house, all the other Roman kings appear from their names to have been men of plebeian, not patrician, families.[1] Hence it seems probable that they belonged to the indigenous race, who may have retained mother-kin, at least in the royal succession, after they had submitted to invaders who knew father-kin only.

This perhaps happened at Rome, where many of the kings seem to have been plebeians.

If that was so, it confirms the view that the old Roman kingship was essentially a religious office; for the conquerors would be much more ready to leave an office of this sort in the hands of the conquered than a kingship of the type with which we are familiar. "Let these puppets," they might think, "render to the gods their dues, while we rule the people in peace and lead them in war." Of such priestly kings Numa was the type. But not all of his successors were willing to model themselves on his saintly figure and, rejecting the pomps and vanities of earth, to devote themselves to communion with heaven. Some were men of strong will and warlike temper, who could not brook the dull routine of the cloister. They longed to exchange the stillness and gloom of the temple or the sacred grove for the sunshine, the dust, and the tumult of the battlefield. Such men broke bounds, and when they threatened to get completely out of hand and turn the tables on the patricians, it was time that they should go. This, we may conjecture, was the real meaning of the abolition of the kingship at Rome. It put an end to the solemn pretence that the state was still ruled by the ancient owners of the soil: it took the shadow of power from them and gave it to those who had long possessed the substance. The ghost of the monarchy had begun to walk and grow troublesome: the revolution laid it for centuries.

The abolition of the monarchy at Rome may have been a revolution whereby the patricians wrested the shadow of sovereignty from the plebeians and transferred it to themselves, who already wielded the substance.

because, as strangers, they did not know how to propitiate him. So they petitioned the king of Assyria and he sent them a native Israelitish priest, who taught them how to worship the God of Israel. See 2 Kings xvii. 24-28.

[1] H. Jordan, *Die Könige im alten Italien* (Berlin, 1884), pp. 15-25.

At first the intention seems to have been to leave the annual kingship or consulship to the old royal family.

But though the effect of the revolution was to substitute the real rule of the patricians for the nominal rule of the plebeians, the break with the past was at the outset less complete than it seems. For the first two consuls were both men of the royal blood. One of them, L. Junius Brutus, was sister's son of the expelled King Tarquin the Proud.[1] As such he would have been the heir to the throne under a strict system of mother-kin. The other consul, L. Tarquinius Collatinus, was a son of the late king's cousin Egerius.[2] These facts suggest that the first intention of the revolutionaries was neither to abolish the kingship nor to wrest it from the royal family, but, merely retaining the hereditary monarchy, to restrict its powers. To achieve this object they limited the tenure of office to a year and doubled the number of the kings, who might thus be expected to check and balance each other. But it is not impossible that both restrictions were merely the revival of old rules which the growing power of the kings had contrived for a time to set aside in practice. The legends of Romulus and Remus, and afterwards of Romulus and Tatius, may be real reminiscences of a double kingship like that of Sparta;[3] and in the yearly ceremony of the *Regifugium* or Flight of the King we seem to detect a trace of an annual, not a life-long, tenure of office.[4] The same thing may perhaps be true of the parallel change which took place at Athens when the people deprived the Medontids of their regal powers and reduced them from kings to responsible magistrates, who held office at first for life, but afterwards only for periods of ten years.[5] Here, too, the limitation of the tenure of the kingship may have been merely the reinforcement of an old custom which had fallen into abeyance. At Rome, however, the attempt to maintain the hereditary principle, if it was made at all, was almost immediately abandoned, and the patricians openly transferred to themselves the

[1] Livy, i. 56. 7; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* iv. 68. 1.

[2] Livy, i. 34. 2 *sq.*, i. 38. 1, i. 57. 6; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* iv. 64.

[3] I owe to Mr. A. B. Cook the interesting suggestion that the double consulship was a revival of a double kingship.

[4] As to the *Regifugium* see below, pp. 308-310.

[5] Pausanias, iv. 5. 10; G. Gilbert, *Handbuch der griech. Staatsalterthümer*, i.[2] 122 *sq.*

double kingship, which thenceforth was purely elective, and was afterwards known as the consulship.[1]

The history of the last king of Rome, Tarquin the Proud, leads us to suspect that the offence which he gave by his ambitious and domineering character was heightened by an attempt to shift the succession of the kingship from the female to the male line. He himself united both rights in his own person; for he had married the daughter of his predecessor, Servius Tullius, and he was the son or grandson of Tarquin the Elder,[2] who preceded Servius Tullius on the throne. But in asserting his right to the crown, if we can trust Roman history on this point, Tarquin the Proud entirely ignored his claim to it through women as the son-in-law of his predecessor, and insisted only on his claim in the male line as the son or grandson of a former king.[3] And he evidently intended to bequeath the kingdom to one of his sons; for he put out of the way two of the men who, if the succession had been through women in the way I have indicated, would have been entitled to sit on the throne before his own sons, and even before himself. One of these was his sister's husband, the other was her elder son. Her younger son, the famous Lucius Junius Brutus, only escaped the fate of his father and elder brother by feigning, like Hamlet, imbecility, and thus deluding his wicked uncle into the belief that he had nothing to fear from such a simpleton.[4] This design of

The abolition of the monarchy at Rome seems to have been hastened by an attempt of the last king to shift the succession from the female to the male line.

[1] The two supreme magistrates who replaced the kings were at first called praetors. See Livy, iii. 55. 12; B. G. Niebuhr, *History of Rome*,[3] i. 520 *sq.*; Th. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht*, ii.[3] 74 *sqq.* That the power of the first consuls was, with the limitations indicated in the text, that of the old kings is fully recognised by Livy (ii. 1. 7 *sq.*).

[2] It was a disputed point whether Tarquin the Proud was the son or grandson of Tarquin the Elder. Most writers, and Livy (i. 46. 4) among them, held that he was a son. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, on the other hand, argued that he must have been a grandson; he insists strongly on the chronological difficulties to which the ordinary hypothesis is exposed if Servius Tullius reigned, as he is said to have reigned, forty-four years. See Dionysius Halic. *Ant. Rom.* iv. 6 *sq.*

[3] Livy, i. 48. 2; Dionysius Halic. *Ant. Rom.* iv. 31 *sq.* and 46.

[4] Livy, i. 56; Dionysius Halic. *Ant. Rom.* iv. 67-69, 77; Valerius Maximus, vii. 3. 2; Aurelius Victor, *De viris illustribus*, x. The murder of Brutus's father and brother is recorded by Dionysius; the other writers mention the assassination of his brother only. The resemblance between Brutus and Hamlet has been pointed out before. See F. York Powell, in Elton's translation of Saxo Grammaticus's *Danish History* (London, 1894), pp. 405-410.

Tarquin to alter the line of succession from the female to the male side of the house may have been the last drop which filled his cup of high-handed tyranny to overflowing. At least it is a strange coincidence, if it is nothing more, that he was deposed by the man who, under a system of female kinship, was the rightful heir, and who in a sense actually sat on the throne from which he pushed his uncle. For the curule chair of the consul was little less than the king's throne under a limited tenure.

The hereditary principle does not necessarily exclude the elective in the succession to a monarchy; many African chieftainships or kingships are both hereditary and elective.

It has often been asked whether the Roman monarchy was hereditary or elective. The question implies an opposition between the two modes of succession which by no means necessarily exists. As a matter of fact, in many African tribes at the present day the succession to the kingdom or the chieftainship is determined by a combination of the hereditary and the elective principle, that is, the kings or chiefs are chosen by the people or by a body of electors from among the members of the royal family. And as the chiefs have commonly several wives and many children by them, the number of possible candidates may be not inconsiderable. For example, we are told that "the government of the Banyai is rather peculiar, being a sort of feudal republicanism. The chief is elected, and they choose the son of the deceased chief's sister in preference to his own offspring. When dissatisfied with one candidate, they even go to a distant tribe for a successor, who is usually of the family of the late chief, a brother, or a sister's son, but never his own son or daughter. When first spoken to on the subject, he answers as if he thought himself unequal to the task and unworthy of the honour, but, having accepted it, all the wives, goods, and children of his predecessor belong to him, and he takes care to keep them in a dependent position." Among these people "the children of the chief have fewer privileges than common free men. They may not be sold, but, rather than choose any one of them for a chief at any future time, the free men would prefer to elect one of themselves who bore only a very distant relationship to the family." [1]

Sometimes the chief is chosen from several families in rotation.

[1] D. Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, pp. 617 *sq*. Many more examples are given by A. H. Post, *Afrikanische Jurisprudenz* (Oldenburg and Leipsic), i. 134 *sqq*.

Chiefs and kings in Africa elected from several families in rotation.

Sometimes the field of choice is extended still further by a rule that the chief may or must be chosen from one of several families in a certain order. Thus among the Bangalas of the Cassange Valley in Angola the chief is elected from three families in rotation.[1] And Diagara, a country bordering on Senegambia, is ruled by an absolute monarch who is chosen alternately from two families, one of which lives in Diapina and the other in Badumar.[2] In the Winamwanga tribe, to the south of Lake Tanganyika, "the first male child born to a chief after he succeeds to the chieftainship is the natural heir, but many years ago there were two claimants to the throne, whose supporters were about equal, and to avoid a civil war the following arrangement was made. One of them was allowed to reign, but the other claimant or his son was to succeed him. This was carried out, so that now there are continually alternate dynasties."[3] So in the Matse tribe of Togoland in West Africa, there are two royal families descended from two women, which supply a king alternately. Hence the palm forest which belongs to the crown is divided into two parts; the reigning king has the right to one part, and the representative of the other royal house has a right to the other part.[4] Among the Yorubas in western Africa the sovereign chief is always taken from one or more families which have the hereditary right of furnishing the community with rulers. In many cases the succession passes regularly from one to a second family alternately; but in one instance, apparently unique, the right of succession to the sovereignty seems to be possessed by four princely families, from each of which the head chief is elected in rotation. The principle of primogeniture is not necessarily followed in the election, but the choice of the electors must always fall on one who is related to a former chief in the male line. For paternal descent alone is

[1] D. Livingstone, *op. cit.* p. 434.

[2] H. Hecquard, *Reise an die Küste und in das Innere von West-Afrika* (Leipsic, 1854), p. 104. This and the preceding example are cited by A. H. Post, *l.c.*

[3] J. A. Chisholm, "Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Winamwanga and Wiwa," *Journal of the African Society*, No. 36 (July 1910), p. 384.

[4] J. Spieth, *Die Ewe-Stämme* (Berlin, 1906), pp. 784 *sq.*

Chiefs and kings in Africa elected from several families in rotation.

recognised in Yorubaland, where even the greatest chief may take to wife a woman of the lowest rank. Sometimes the choice of the ruling chief is made by divine authority, intimated to the people through the high priest of the principal god of the district.[1] Among the Igaras, on the lower Niger, the royal family is divided into four branches, each of which provides a king in turn. The capital and its district, both of which bear the name of Idah, are always occupied by the reigning branch of the royal family, while the three other branches, not being allowed to live there, retreat into the interior. Hence at the death of a king a double change takes place. On the one hand the late reigning family, with all their dependants, have to leave the homes in which many of them have been born and brought up, and to migrate to towns in the forest, which they know only by name. On the other hand, the new reigning family come into the capital, and their people settle in the houses occupied by their forefathers four reigns ago. The king is generally elected by the leading men of his branch of the royal family; they choose the richest and most powerful of their number.[2]

Among the Khasis of Assam, also, the succession to the kingdom is partly hereditary and partly elective.

Again, among the Khasis of Assam we meet with the same combination of the hereditary with the elective principle in the succession to the kingdom. Indeed, in this people the kingship presents several features of resemblance to the old Latin kingship as it appears to have existed at the dawn of history. For a Khasi king is the religious as well as the secular head of the state; along with the soothsayers he consults the auspices for the public good, and sometimes he has priestly duties to perform. Succession to the kingship always runs in the female line, for the Khasis have a regular system of mother-kin as opposed to father-kin; hence it is not the king's sons, but his uterine brothers and the sons of his uterine sisters who succeed him on the

[1] Sir William MacGregor, "Lagos, Abeokuta, and the Alake," *Journal of the African Society*, No. 12 (July 1904), pp. 470 *sq.*

[2] C. Partridge, "The Burial of the Atta of Igaraland, and the 'Coronation' of his Successor," *Blackwood's Magazine*, September 1904, pp. 329 *sq.* Mr. Partridge kindly gave me some details as to the election of the king in a letter dated 24th October 1904. He is Assistant District Commissioner in Southern Nigeria.

throne in order of birth. But this hereditary principle is controlled by a body of electors, who have the right of rejecting unsuitable claimants to the throne. Generally the electors are a small body composed of the heads of certain priestly clans; but in some Khasi states the number of the electors has been greatly increased by the inclusion of representative headmen of certain important lay clans, or even by the inclusion of village headmen or of the chief superintendents of the village markets. Nay, in the Langrim state all the adult males regularly vote at the election of a monarch; and here the royal family is divided into two branches, a Black and a White, from either of which, apparently, the electors are free to choose a king. Similarly, in the Nobosohpoh state there are two royal houses, a Black and a White, and the people may select the heir to the throne from either of them.[1]

Thus the Roman monarchy may have combined the hereditary with the elective principle.

Thus the mere circumstance that all the Roman kings, with the exception of the two Tarquins, appear to have belonged to different families, is not of itself conclusive against the view that heredity was one of the elements which determined the succession. The number of families from whom the king might be elected may have been large. And even if, as is possible, the electors were free to chose a king without any regard to his birth, the hereditary principle would still be maintained if, as we have seen reason to conjecture, it was essential that the chosen candidate should marry a woman of the royal house, who would generally be either the daughter or the widow of his predecessor. In this way the apparently disparate principles of unfettered election and strict heredity would be combined; the marriage of the elected king with the hereditary princess would furnish the link between the two. Under such a system, to put it otherwise, the kings are elective and the queens hereditary. This is just the converse of what happens under a system of male kinship, where the kings are hereditary and the queens elective.

In the later times of Rome it was held that the custom had been for the people to elect the kings and for the senate

[1] Major P. R. T. Gurdon, *The Khasis* (London, 1907), pp. 66-75.

The king was probably nominated either by his predecessor or by an interim king.

to ratify the election.[1] But we may suspect, with Mommsen, that this was no more than an inference from the mode of electing the consuls. The magistrates who, under the republic, represented the kings most closely were the dictator and the King of the Sacred Rites, and neither of these was elected by the people. Both were nominated, the dictator by the consul, and the King of the Sacred Rites by the chief pontiff.[2] Accordingly it seems probable that under the monarchy the king was nominated either by his predecessor or, failing that, by an interim king (*interrex*) chosen from the senate.[3] Now if, as we have been led to think, an essential claim to the throne was constituted by marriage with a princess of the royal house, nothing could be more natural than that the king should choose his successor, who would commonly be also his son-in-law. If he had several sons-in-law and had omitted to designate the one who was to reign after him, the election would be made by his substitute, the interim king.

Personal qualities which commended a man for marriage with a princess and succession to the throne.

The personal qualities which recommended a man for a royal alliance and succession to the throne would naturally vary according to the popular ideas of the time and the character of the king or his substitute, but it is reasonable to suppose that among them in early society physical strength and beauty would hold a prominent place.[4] We have seen that in Ashantee the husbands or paramours of the princesses must always be men of fine presence, because they are to be the fathers of future kings. Among the Ethiopians in antiquity, as among the Ashantees and many other African tribes to this day, the crown passed in the female line to the son of the king's sister, but if there

[1] Livy, i. 17; Cicero, *De re publica*, ii. 17. 31.

[2] As to the nomination of the King of the Sacred Rites see Livy, xl. 42; Dionysius Halic. *Ant. Rom.* v. 1. 4. The latter writer says that the augurs co-operated with the pontiff in the nomination.

[3] Th. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht*, ii.[3] 6-8; A. H. J. Greenidge, *Roman Public Life*, pp. 45 *sqq.* Mr. Greenidge thinks that the king was regularly nominated by his predecessor and only occasionally by an interim king. Mommsen holds that he was always nominated by the latter.

[4] Compare Lucretius, v. 1108 *sqq.*:

"*Condere coeperunt urbis arcemque locare*
Praesidium reges ipsi sibi perfugiumque,
Et pecus atque agros divisere atque dedere
Pro facie cujusque et viribus ingenioque;
Nam facies multum valuit viresque vigentes."

was no such heir they chose the handsomest and most valiant man to reign over them.[1] We are told that the Gordioi elected the fattest man to the kingship,[2] nor is this incredible when we remember that in Africa corpulence is still regarded as a great distinction and beauty, and that both the chiefs and their wives are sometimes so fat that they can hardly walk. Thus among the Caffres chiefs and rich men attain to an enormous bulk, and the queens fatten themselves on beef and porridge, of which they partake freely in the intervals of slumber. To be fat is with them a mark of riches, and therefore of high rank; common folk cannot afford to eat and drink and lounge as much as they would like to do.[3] The Syrakoi in antiquity are reported to have bestowed the crown on the tallest man or on the man with the longest head in the literal, not the figurative, sense of the word.[4] They seem to have been a Sarmatian people to the north of the Caucasus,[5] and are probably the same with the long-headed people described by Hippocrates, who says that among them the men with the longest heads were esteemed the noblest, and that they applied bandages and other instruments to the heads of their children in infancy for the sake of moulding them into the shape which they admired.[6] Such reports are probably by no means fabulous, for among the Monbuttu or Mang-bettou of Central Africa down to this day "when the children of chiefs are young, string is wound round their heads, which are gradually compressed into a shape that will allow of the longest head-dress. The skull thus treated in childhood takes the appearance of an elongated egg."[7] Similarly

Fat kings

Long-headed kings and chiefs.

[1] Nicolaus Damascenus, in Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, xliv. 41 (*Frag. Histor. Graec.* ed. C. Müller, iii. 463). Other writers say simply that the tallest, strongest, or handsomest man was chosen king. See Herodotus, iii. 20; Aristotle, *Politics*, iv. 4; Athenaeus, xiii. 20, p. 566 C.

[2] Zenobius, *Cent.* v. 25.

[3] J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal*, pp. 4 *sq.* Compare D. Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, p. 186; W. Max Müller, *Asien und Europa* (Leipsic, 1893), p. 110.

[4] Zenobius, *Cent.* v. 25.

[5] Strabo, xi. 21, p. 492.

[6] Hippocrates, *De aere locis et aquis* (vol. i. pp. 550 *sq.* ed. Kühn).

[7] Captain Guy Burrows, *The Land of the Pigmies* (London, 1898), p. 95. Speaking of this tribe, Emin Pasha observes: "The most curious custom, however, and one which is particularly observed in the ruling families, is bandaging the heads of infants. By means of these bandages a lengthening of the head along its horizontal axis is produced; and whereas the ordinary Monbutto people

Heads artificially moulded as a mark of high rank.

some of the Indian tribes on the north-west coast of America artificially mould the heads of their children into the shape of a wedge or a sugar-loaf by compressing them between boards; some of them regard such heads as a personal beauty, others as a mark of high birth.[1] For instance, "the practice among some of the Salish seems to have had a definite social, as well as aesthetic, significance. There appear to have been recognised degrees of contortion marking the social status of the individual. For example slaves, of which the Salish kept considerable numbers, were prohibited from deforming the heads of their children at all, consequently a normal, undeformed head was the sign and badge of servitude. And in the case of the base-born of the tribes the heads of their children were customarily but slightly deformed, while the heads of the children born of wealthy or noble persons, and particularly those of chiefs, were severely and excessively deformed."[2]

Among the Bororos the best singers are the chiefs.

Among the Bororos of Brazil at the present day the title to chieftaincy is neither corpulence nor an egg-shaped head, but the possession of a fine musical ear and a rich baritone, bass, or tenor voice. The best singer, in fact, becomes the chief. There is no other way to supreme power but this. Hence in the education of the Bororo youth the main thing is to train, not their minds, but their voices, for the best of the tuneful quire will certainly be

have rather round heads, the form of the head in the better classes shows an extraordinary increase in length, which certainly very well suits their style of hair and of hats." See *Emin Pasha in Central Africa, being a Collection of Letters and Journals* (London, 1888), p. 212.

[1] Lewis and Clark, *Expedition to the Sources of the Missouri*, ch. 23, vol. ii. 327 *sq.* (reprinted at London, 1905); D. W. Harmon, quoted by Rev. J. Morse, *Report to the Secretary of War of the United States on Indian Affairs* (Newhaven, 1822), Appendix, p. 346; H. R. Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, ii. 325 *sq.*; R. C. Mayne, *Four Years in British Columbia*, p. 277; G. M. Sproat, *Scenes and Studies of Savage Life*, pp. 28-30; H. H. Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, i. 180.

[2] C. Hill-Tout, *The Far West, the Home of the Salish and Déné* (London, 1907), p. 40. As to the custom in general among these tribes, see *ibid.* pp. 38-41. In Melanesia the practice of artificially lengthening the head into a cone by means of bandages applied in infancy is observed by the natives of Malikolo (Malekula) in the New Hebrides and also by the natives of the south coast of New Britain, from Cape Roebuck to Cape Bedder. See Beatrice Grimshaw, *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* (London, 1907), pp. 258-260; R. Parkinson, *Dreissig Jahre in der Südsee* (Stuttgart, 1907), pp. 204-206.

chief. In this tribe, accordingly, there is no such thing as hereditary chieftainship; for if the son of a chief has an indifferent ear or a poor voice, he will be a commoner to the end of his days. When two rival songsters are found in the same village, they sing against each other, and he who is judged to have acquitted himself best in the musical contest mounts the throne. His defeated rival sometimes retires in a huff with his admirers and founds a new village. Once seated in the place of power, the melodious singer is not only highly honoured and respected, but can exact unconditional obedience from all, and he gives his orders, like an operatic king or hero, in a musical recitativo. It is especially at eventide, when the sun has set and the labours of the day are over, that he pours out his soul in harmony. At that witching hour he takes up his post in front of the men's club-house, and while his subjects are hushed in attention he bursts into sacred song, passing from that to lighter themes, and concluding the oratorio by chanting his commands to each individual for the next day.[1] When Addison ridiculed the new fashion of the Italian opera, in which generals sang the word of command, ladies delivered their messages in music, and lovers chanted their billet-doux, he little suspected that among the back-woods of Brazil a tribe of savages in all seriousness observed a custom which he thought absurd even on the stage.[2]

Succession to the throne determined by a race.

Sometimes apparently the right to the hand of the princess and to the throne has been determined by a race. The Alitemnian Libyans awarded the kingdom to the fleetest runner.[3] Amongst the old Prussians, candidates for nobility raced on horseback to the king, and the one who reached him first was ennobled.[4] According to tradition the earliest games at Olympia were held by Endymion, who set his sons to run a race for the kingdom. His tomb was said to be at the point of the racecourse from which the runners started.[5] The famous story of Pelops and Hippo-

[1] V. Frič and P. Radin, "Contributions to the Study of the Bororo Indians," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxvi. (1906) pp. 388 *sq.*

[2] See *The Spectator*, Nos. 18 and 20.

[3] Nicolaus Damascenus, in Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, xliv. 41 (*Fragmenta Historic. Graecorum*, ed. C. Müller, iii. 463).

[4] Simon Grunau, *Preussische Chronik*, Tract. ii. cap. iii. § 2, p. 66, ed. M. Perlbach. This passage was pointed out to me by Mr. H. M. Chadwick.

[5] Pausanias, v. 1. 4, vi. 20. 9.

Greek traditions of princesses whose hands were won in a race.

damia is perhaps only another version of the legend that the first races at Olympia were run for no less a prize than a kingdom. For Oenomaus was king of Pisa, a town close to Olympia; and having been warned by an oracle that he would die by the hand of the man who married his daughter Hippodamia, he resolved to keep her a maid. So when any one came a-wooing her, the king made the suitor drive away in a chariot with Hippodamia, while he himself pursued the pair in another car drawn by fleet horses, and, overtaking the unlucky wight, slew him. In this way he killed twelve suitors and nailed their heads to his house, the ruins of which were shewn at Olympia down to the second century of our era. The bodies of the suitors were buried under a lofty mound, and it is said that in former days sacrifices were offered to them yearly. When Pelops came to win the hand of Hippodamia, he bribed the charioteer of Oenomaus not to put the pins into the wheels of the king's chariot. So Oenomaus was thrown from the car and dragged by his horses to death. But some say he was despatched by Pelops according to the oracle. Anyhow, he died, and Pelops married Hippodamia and succeeded to the kingdom.[1] The grave of Oenomaus was shown at Olympia; it was a mound of earth enclosed with stones.[2] Here, too, precincts were dedicated to Pelops and Hippodamia, in which sacrifices were offered to them annually; the victim presented to Pelops was a black ram, whose blood was poured into a pit.[3] Other traditions were current in antiquity of princesses who were offered in marriage to the fleetest runner and won by the victor in the race. Thus Icarius at Sparta set the wooers of his daughter Penelope to run a race; Ulysses won and wedded her. His father-in-law is said to have tried to induce him to take up his abode in Sparta; which seems to shew that if Ulysses had accepted the invitation he would have inherited the kingdom through his wife.[4] So, too, the Libyan King Antaeus placed his beautiful daughter Barce or Alceis at the end of the racecourse; her many

[1] Apollodorus, *Epitoma*, ii. 4-9, ed. R. Wagner (Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, ed. R. Wagner, pp. 183 *sq.*); Diodorus Siculus, iv. 73; Pausanias, v. 1. 6 *sq.*, v. 10. 6 *sq.*, v. 14. 7, v. 17. 7 *sq.*, v. 20. 6 *sq.*, vi. 21. 7-11.

[2] Pausanias, vi. 21. 3.

[3] Pausanias, v. 13. 1-6, vi. 20. 7.

[4] Pausanias, iii. 12. 1, 20. 10 *sq.*

noble suitors, both Libyans and foreigners, ran to her as the goal, and Alcidamus, who touched her first, gained her in marriage.[1] Danaus, also, at Argos is said to have stationed his many daughters at the goal, and the runner who reached them first had first choice of the maidens.[2] Somewhat different from these traditions is the story of Atalante, for in it the wooers are said to have contended, not with each other, but with the coy maiden herself in a foot-race. She slew her vanquished suitors and hung up their heads in the racecourse, till Hippomenes gained the race and her hand by throwing down the golden apples which she stooped to pick up.[3]

Custom of racing for a bride among the Kirghiz and Calmucks.

These traditions may very well reflect a real custom of racing for a bride, for such a custom appears to have prevailed among various peoples, though in practice it has degenerated into a mere form or pretence. Thus "there is one race, called the 'Love Chase,' which may be considered a part of the form of marriage among the Kirghiz. In this the bride, armed with a formidable whip, mounts a fleet horse, and is pursued by all the young men who make any pretensions to her hand. She will be given as a prize to the one who catches her, but she has the right, besides urging on her horse to the utmost, to use her whip, often with no mean force, to keep off those lovers who are unwelcome to her, and she will probably favour the one whom she has already chosen in her heart. As, however, by Kirghiz custom, a suitor to the hand of a maiden is obliged to give a certain *kalym*, or purchase-money, and an agreement must be made with the father for the amount of dowry which he gives his daughter, the 'Love Chase' is a mere matter of form."[4] Similarly "the ceremony of marriage among the Calmucks is performed on horseback. A girl is first mounted, who rides off in full speed. Her lover pursues; and if he overtakes her, she becomes his wife, and

[1] Pindar, *Pyth.* ix. 181-220, with the Scholia.

[2] Pindar, *Pyth.* ix. 195 *sqq.*; Pausanias, iii. 12. 2.

[3] Apollodorus, iii. 9. 2; Hyginus, *Fab.* 185; Ovid, *Metam.* x. 560 *sqq.*

[4] E. Schuyler, *Turkistan* (London, 1876), i. 42 *sq.* This and the four following examples of the bride-race have been already cited by J. F. McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History* (London, 1886), pp. 15 *sq.*, 181-184. He supposes them to be relics of a custom of capturing women from another community.

Custom of racing for a bride among the Calmucks and some tribes of the Malay Peninsula.

the marriage is consummated on the spot, after which she returns with him to his tent. But it sometimes happens that the woman does not wish to marry the person by whom she is pursued, in which case she will not suffer him to overtake her; and we were assured that no instance occurs of a Calmuck girl being thus caught unless she has a partiality for her pursuer. If she dislikes him she rides, to use the language of English sportsmen, 'neck or nothing,' until she has completely escaped, or until the pursuer's horse is tired out, leaving her at liberty to return, to be afterwards chased by some more favoured admirer."[1] The race for the bride is found also among the Koryaks of north-eastern Asia. It takes place in a large tent, round which many separate compartments called *pologs* are arranged in a continuous circle. The girl gets a start and is clear of the marriage if she can run through all the compartments without being caught by the bridegroom. The women of the encampment place every obstacle in the man's way, tripping him up, belabouring him with switches, and so forth, so that he has little chance of succeeding unless the girl wishes it and waits for him.[2] Among some of the rude indigenous tribes of the Malay Peninsula "marriage is preceded by a singular ceremony. An old man presents the future couple to the assembled guests, and, followed by their families, he leads them to a great circle, round which the girl sets off to run as fast as she can. If the young man succeeds in overtaking her, she becomes his mate; otherwise he loses all rights, which happens especially when he is not so fortunate as to please his bride."[3] Another writer tells us that among these savages, when there is a

[1] E. D. Clarke, *Travels in Various Countries*, i. (London, 1810), p. 333. In the fourth octavo edition of Clarke's *Travels* (vol. i., London, 1816), from which McLennan seems to have quoted, there are a few verbal changes.

[2] J. McLennan, *op. cit.* pp. 183 *sq.*, referring to Kennan's *Tent Life in Siberia* (1870), which I have not seen. Compare W. Jochelson, "The Koryak" (Leyden and New York, 1908), p. 742 (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. vi.).

[3] Letter of the missionary Bigandet, dated March 1847, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xx. (1848) p. 431. A similar account of the ceremony is given by M. Bourien, "Wild Tribes of the Malay Peninsula," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S. iii. (1865) p. 81. See further W. W. Skeat and C. O. Blagden, *Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula* (London, 1906), ii. 68, 77 *sq.*, 79 *sq.*, 82 *sq.*

river at hand, the race takes place on the water, the bride paddling away in one canoe and pursued by the bridegroom in another.[1] Before the wedding procession starts for the bridegroom's hut, a Caffre bride is allowed to make one last bid for freedom, and a young man is told off to catch her. Should he fail to do so, she is theoretically allowed to return to her father, and the whole performance has to be repeated; but the flight of the bride is usually a pretence.[2]

Caffre race for bride.

Similar customs appear to have been practised by all the Teutonic peoples; for the German, Anglo-Saxon, and Norse languages possess in common a word for marriage which means simply bride-race.[3] Moreover, traces of the custom survived into modern times. Thus in the Mark of Brandenburg, down to the first half of the nineteenth century at least, it was the practice for bride and bridegroom to run a race on their wedding day in presence of all the guests. Two sturdy men took the bride between them and set off. The bridegroom gave them a start and then followed hot-foot. At the end of the course stood two or three young married women, who took from the bride her maiden's crown and replaced it by the matron's cap. If the bridegroom failed to overtake his bride, he was much ridiculed.[4] In other parts of Germany races are still held at marriage, but the competitors are no longer the bride and bridegroom. Thus in Hesse at the wedding of a well-to-do farmer his friends race on horseback to the house of the bride, and her friends similarly race on horseback to the house of the bridegroom. The prize hangs over the gate of the farmyard or the door of the house. It consists of a silken or woollen

The bride-race among Teutonic peoples, and its traces in modern Europe.

[1] J. Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions in Malayan India* (London, 1865), pp. 116 *sq.*

[2] Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir* (London, 1904), p. 219.

[3] Middle High German *brûtlouf*, modern German *Brautlauf*, Anglo-Saxon *brýdhlèap*, old Norse *brudhlaup*, modern Norse *bryllup*. See Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, *s.v.* "Brautlauf"; K. Weinhold, *Deutsche Frauen*,[2] i. 407. The latter writer supposes the word to refer merely to the procession from the house of the bride to the house of the bridegroom. But Grimm is most probably right in holding that originally it applied to a real race for the bride. This is the view also of K. Simrock (*Deutsche Mythologie*,[6] pp. 598 *sq.*). Another writer sees in it a trace of marriage by capture (L. Dargun, *Mutterrecht und Raubehe* (Breslau, 1883), p. 130). Compare K. Schmidt, *Jus primae noctis* (Freiburg i. B. 1881), p. 129.

[4] A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen* (Berlin, 1843), p. 358.

Traces of a custom of racing for a bride in Europe.

handkerchief, which the winner winds round his head or fastens to his breast. The victors have also the right to escort the marriage procession.[1] In Upper Bavaria, down at least to some fifty years ago, a regular feature of a rustic wedding used to be what was called the "bride-race" or the "key-race." It generally took place when the bridal party was proceeding from the church to the alehouse. A course was marked out and two goals, consisting of heaps of straw, were set up at distances of three and four hundred yards respectively. The strongest and fleetest of the young fellows raced barefoot, clad only in shirt and trousers. He who first reached the further goal received the first prize; this was regularly a key of gilt wood, which the winner fastened to his hat. Often, as in some of the Greek legends, the bride herself was the goal of the race. The writers who record the custom suggest that the race was originally for the key of the bridechamber, and that the bridegroom ran with the rest.[2] In Scotland also the guests at a rustic wedding used to ride on horseback for a prize, which sometimes consisted of the bride's cake set up on a pole in front of the bridegroom's house. The race was known as the *broose*.[3] At Weitensfeld, in Carinthia, a festival called the Bride-race is still held every year. It is popularly supposed to commemorate a time when a plague had swept away the whole people except a girl and three young men. These three, it is said, raced with each other in order that the winner might get the maiden to wife, and so repeople the land. The race is now held on horseback. The winner receives as the prize a garland of flowers called the Bride-wreath, and the man who comes in last gets a wreath of ribbons and pig's bristles.[4] It seems not impossible that this custom is a relic of a fair at which the marriageable maidens of the year were assigned in order of merit to the young men who distinguished themselves by their feats of strength

[1] W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-sitten und Gebräuche* (Marburg, 1888), pp. 150 *sq.*

[2] Lentner and Dahn, in *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, i. (Munich, 1860) pp. 398 *sq.*

[3] J. Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 153-155 (Bohn's edition); J. Jamieson, *Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, *s.v.* "Broose."

[4] E. Herrmann, "Über Lieder und Bräuche bei Hochzeiten in Kärnten," *Archiv für Anthropologie*, xix. (1891) p. 169.

and agility. A practice of this sort appears to have prevailed among the ancient Samnites. Every year the youths and maidens were tested publicly, and the young man who was adjudged best had first choice of the girls; the second best had the next choice, and so on with the rest.[1] "They say," writes Strabo, "that the Samnites have a beautiful custom which incites to virtue. For they may not give their daughters in marriage to whom they please, but every year the ten best maidens and the ten best youths are picked out, and the best of the ten maidens is given to the best of the ten youths, and the second to the second, and so on. But if the man who wins one of these prizes should afterwards turn out a knave, they disgrace him and take the girl from him."[2] The nature of the test to which the young men and women were subjected is not mentioned, but we may conjecture that it was mainly athletic.

Assignment of brides to picked young men among the Samnites.

The contests for a bride may be designed to try the skill, strength, and courage of the suitors as well as their horsemanship and speed of foot. Speaking of King's County, Ireland, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, Arthur Young says: "There is a very ancient custom here, for a number of country neighbours among the poor people, to fix upon some young woman that ought, as they think, to be married; they also agree upon a young fellow as a proper husband for her; this determined, they send to the fair one's cabin to inform her that on the Sunday following she is to be horsed,' that is, carried on men's backs. She must then provide whisky and cyder for a treat, as all will pay her a visit after mass for a hurling match. As soon as she is horsed, the hurling begins, in which the young fellow appointed for her husband has the eyes of all the company fixed on him: if he comes off conqueror, he is certainly married to the girl; but if another is victorious, he as certainly loses her, for she is the prize of the victor. These trials are not always finished in one Sunday, they take sometimes two or three, and the common expression when they are over is, that 'such a girl was goal'd.' Sometimes one

Contests for a bride other than races.

[1] Nicolaus Damascenus, quoted by Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, xliv. 41; *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, ed. C. Müller, iii. 457.

[2] Strabo, v. 4. 12, p. 250.

Contests for a bride.

barony hurls against another, but a marriageable girl is always the prize. Hurling is a sort of cricket, but instead of throwing the ball in order to knock down a wicket, the aim is to pass it through a bent stick, the ends stuck in the ground."[1] In the great Indian epic the *Mahabharata* it is related that the hand of the lovely Princess Draupadi or Krishna, daughter of the King of the Panchalas, was only to be won by him who could bend a certain mighty bow and shoot five arrows through a revolving wheel so as to hit the target beyond. After many noble wooers had essayed the task in vain, the disguised Arjun was successful, and carried off the princess to be the wife of himself and his four brothers.[2] This was an instance of the ancient Indian practice of *Svayamvara*, in accordance with which a maiden of high rank either chose her husband from among her assembled suitors or was offered as the prize to the conqueror in a trial of skill. The custom was occasionally observed among the Rajputs down to a late time.[3] The Tartar king Caidu, the cousin and opponent of Cublay Khan, is said to have had a beautiful daughter named Aijaruc, or "the Bright Moon," who was so tall and brawny that she outdid all men in her father's realm in feats of strength. She vowed she would never marry till she found a man who could vanquish her in wrestling. Many noble suitors came and tried a fall with her, but she threw them all; and from every one whom she had overcome she exacted a hundred horses. In this way she collected an immense stud.[4] In the *Nibelungenlied* the fair Brunhild, Queen of Iceland, was only to be won in marriage by him who could beat her in three trials of strength, and the unsuccessful wooers forfeited their heads. Many had thus perished, but at last Gunther, King of the Burgundians, vanquished and

The Indian *Svayamvara.*

[1] Arthur Young, "Tour in Ireland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 860.

[2] *Mahabharata*, condensed into English by Romesch Dutt (London, 1898), pp. 15 *sqq.*; J. C. Oman, *The Great Indian Epics*, pp. 109 *sqq.*

[3] J. D. Mayne, *A Treatise on Hindu Law and Usage*[3] (Madras and London, 1883), p. 56; *The Vikramânkadeva-charita*, edited by G. Bühler (Bombay, 1875), pp. 38-40; A. Holtzmann, *Das Mahâbharata und seine Theile*, i. (Kiel, 1895), pp. 21 *sq.*; J. Jolly, *Recht und Sitte*, pp. 50 *sq.* (in G. Bühler's *Grundriss der indo-arischen Philologie*).

[4] *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, Yule's translation,[2] bk. iv. ch. 4, vol. ii. pp. 461-463.

married her.[1] It is said that Sithon, King of the Odomanti in Thrace, had a lovely daughter, Pallene, and that many men came a-wooing her not only from Thrace but from Illyria and the country of the Don. But her father said that he who would wed his daughter must first fight himself and pay with his life the penalty of defeat. Thus he slew many young men. But when he was grown old and his strength had failed, he set two of the wooers, by name Dryas and Clitus, to fight each other for the kingdom and the hand of the princess. The combat was to take place in chariots, but the princess, being in love with Clitus, bribed his rival's charioteer to put no pins in the wheels of his chariot; so Dryas came to the ground, and Clitus slew him and married the king's daughter.[2] The tale agrees closely with that of Pelops and Hippodamia. Both stories probably contain, in a legendary form, reminiscences of a real custom. Within historical times Clisthenes, tyrant of Sicyon, made public proclamation at the Olympian games that he would give his daughter Agariste in marriage to that suitor who, during a year's trial, should approve himself the best. So many young men who prided themselves on their persons and on their lineage assembled at Sicyon from all parts of the Greek world. The tyrant had a racecourse and a wrestling school made on purpose for them, and there he put them through their paces. Of all the suitors none pleased him so much as Hippoclides, the handsomest and richest man of Athens, a scion of the old princely house of Cypselus. And when the year was up and the day had come on which the award was to be made, the tyrant sacrificed a hundred oxen and entertained the suitors and all the people of Sicyon at a splendid banquet. Dinner being over, the wine went round and the suitors fell to wrangling as to their accomplishments and their wit. In this feast of reason the gay Hippoclides outshone himself and them all until, flushed with triumph and liquor, he jumped on a table, danced to music, and then, as a finishing touch, stood on his head and sawed the air with

Contests for a bride.

Hippoclides at Sicyon, and how he danced away his marriage.

[1] *The Lay of the Nibelungs*, translated by Alice Horton (London, 1898), Adventures vi. and vii.

[2] Parthenius, *Narrat. Amat.* vi. This passage was pointed out to me by Mr. A. B. Cook, who has himself discussed the contest for the kingship. See his article, "The European Sky-god," *Folk-lore*, xv. (1904) pp. 376 *sqq.*

his legs. This was too much. The tyrant in disgust told him he had danced away his marriage.[1]

The annual flight of the king (*regifugium*) at Rome may have been a relic of his contest for the kingdom and for the hand of the princess.

Thus it appears that the right to marry a girl, and especially a princess, has often been conferred as a prize in an athletic contest. There would be no reason, therefore, for surprise if the Roman kings, before bestowing their daughters in marriage, should have resorted to this ancient mode of testing the personal qualities of their future sons-in-law and successors. If my theory is correct, the Roman king and queen personated Jupiter and his divine consort, and in the character of these divinities went through the annual ceremony of a sacred marriage for the purpose of causing the crops to grow and men and cattle to be fruitful and multiply. Thus they did what in more northern lands we may suppose the King and Queen of May were believed to do in days of old. Now we have seen that the right to play the part of the King of May and to wed the Queen of May has sometimes been determined by an athletic contest, particularly by a race.[2] This may have been a relic of an old marriage custom of the sort we have examined, a custom designed to test the fitness of a candidate for matrimony. Such a test might reasonably be applied with peculiar rigour to the king, in order to ensure that no personal defect should incapacitate him for the performance of those sacred rites and ceremonies on which, even more than on the despatch of his civil and military duties, the safety and prosperity of the community were believed to depend. And it would be natural to require of him that from time to time he should submit himself afresh to the same ordeal for the sake of publicly demonstrating that he was still equal to the discharge of his high calling. A relic of that test perhaps survived in the ceremony known as the Flight of the King (*regifugium*), which continued to be annually observed at Rome down to imperial times. On the twenty-fourth day of

[1] Herodotus, vi. 126-130. It is to be observed that in this and other of the examples cited above the succession to the kingdom did not pass with the hand of the princess.

[2] See above, pp. 69, 84, 90 *sq.* These customs were observed at Whitsuntide, not on May Day. But the Whitsuntide king and queen are obviously equivalent to the King and Queen of May. Hence I allow myself to use the latter and more familiar titles so as to include the former.

February a sacrifice used to be offered in the Comitium, and when it was over the King of the Sacred Rites fled from the Forum.[1] We may conjecture that the Flight of the King was originally a race for an annual kingship, which may have been awarded as a prize to the fleetest runner. At the end of the year the king might run again for a second term of office; and so on, until he was defeated and deposed or perhaps slain. In this way what had once been a race would tend to assume the character of a flight and a pursuit. The king would be given a start; he ran and his competitors ran after him, and if he were overtaken he had to yield the crown and perhaps his life to the lightest of foot among them. In time a man of masterful character might succeed in seating himself permanently on the throne and reducing the annual race or flight to the empty form which it seems always to have been within historical times.[2] The rite was sometimes interpreted as a commemoration of the expulsion of the kings from Rome; but this appears to have been a mere afterthought devised to explain a ceremony of which the old meaning was forgotten. It is far more likely that in acting thus the King of the Sacred Rites was merely keeping up an ancient custom which in the regal period had been annually observed by

[1] Ovid, *Fasti*, ii. 685 *sqq.*; Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 63; J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] 323 *sq.*; W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*, pp. 327 *sqq.*

[2] Another proposed explanation of the *regifugium* is that the king fled because at the sacrifice he had incurred the guilt of slaying a sacred animal. See W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*, pp. 328 *sqq.* The best-known example of such a ritual flight is that of the men who slew the ox at the Athenian festival of the *Bouphonia*. See *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, ii. 294. Amongst the Pawnees the four men who assisted at the sacrifice of a girl to Ti-ra'-wa used to run away very fast after the deed was done and wash themselves in the river. See G. B. Grinnell, *Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk-Tales* (New York, 1889), pp. 365 *sq.* Among the ancient Egyptians the man whose duty it was to slit open a corpse for the purpose of embalming it fled as soon as he had done his part, pursued by all the persons present, who pelted him with stones and cursed him, "turning as it were the pollution on him; for they suppose that any one who violates or wounds or does any harm to the person of a fellow-tribesman is hateful" (Diodorus Siculus, i. 91. 4). Similarly in the western islands of Torres Straits the man whose duty it was to decapitate a corpse for the purpose of preserving the skull was shot at with arrows by the relatives of the deceased as an expiation for the injury he had done to the corpse of their kinsman. See *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, v. (Cambridge, 1904) pp. 249, 251. This explanation of the *regifugium* certainly deserves to be considered. But on this as on so many other points of ancient ritual we can hardly hope ever to attain to certainty.

his predecessors the kings. What the original intention of the rite may have been must probably always remain more or less a matter of conjecture. The present explanation is suggested with a full sense of the difficulty and obscurity in which the subject is involved.

The theory is confirmed by the evidence that at the Saturnalia a man used to personate the god Saturn and to be put to death in that character.

Thus, if my theory is correct, the yearly flight of the Roman king was a relic of a time when the kingship was an annual office awarded, along with the hand of a princess, to the victorious athlete or gladiator, who thereafter figured along with his bride as a god and goddess at a sacred marriage designed to ensure the fertility of the earth by homoeopathic magic. Now this theory is to a certain extent remarkably confirmed by an ancient account of the Saturnalia which was discovered and published some years ago by a learned Belgian scholar, Professor Franz Cumont of Ghent. From that account we learn that down to the beginning of the fourth century of our era, that is, down nearly to the establishment of Christianity by Constantine, the Roman soldiers stationed on the Danube were wont to celebrate the Saturnalia in a barbarous fashion which must certainly have dated from a very remote antiquity. Thirty days before the festival they chose by lot from among themselves a young and handsome man, who was dressed in royal robes to resemble the god Saturn. In that character he was allowed to indulge all his passions to the fullest extent; but when his brief reign of thirty days was over, and the festival of Saturn was come, he had to cut his own throat on the altar of the god he personated.[1] We can hardly doubt that this tragic figure, whom a fatal lot doomed to masquerade for a short time as a deity and to

[1] F. Cumont, "Les Actes de S. Dasius," *Analecta Bollandiana*, xvi. (1897) pp. 5-16. See further Messrs. Parmentier and Cumont, "Le Roi des Saturnales," *Revue de Philologie*, xxi. (1897) pp. 143-153; *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, iii. 138 *sqq.* The tomb of St. Dasius, a Christian soldier who was put to death at Durostorum in 303 A.D. after refusing to play the part of Saturn at the festival, has since been discovered at Ancona. A Greek inscription on the tomb records that the martyr's remains were brought thither from Durostorum. See F. Cumont, "Le Tombeau de S. Dasius de Durostorum," *Analecta Bollandiana*, xxvii. (1908) pp. 369-372. Professor A. Erhard of Strasburg, who has been engaged for years in preparing an edition of the *Acta Martyrum* for the Berlin Corpus of Greek Fathers, informed me in conversation at Cambridge in the summer of 1910 that he ranks the Acts of St. Dasius among the authentic documents of their class. The plain unvarnished narrative bears indeed the stamp of truth on its face.

die as such a violent death, was the true original of the merry monarch or King of the Saturnalia, as he was called, whom a happier lot invested with the playful dignity of Master of the Winter Revels.[1] In all probability the grim predecessor of the frolicsome King of the Saturnalia belonged to that class of puppets who in some countries have been suffered to reign nominally for a few days each year merely for the sake of discharging a burdensome or fatal obligation which otherwise must have fallen on the real king.[2] If that is so, we may infer that the part of the god Saturn, who was commonly spoken of as a king,[3] was formerly played at the Saturnalia by the Roman king himself. And a trace of the Sacred Marriage may perhaps be detected in the licence accorded to the human representatives of Saturn, a licence which, if I am right, is strictly analogous to the old orgies of May Day and other similar festivals. It is to be observed that Saturn was the god of the seed, and the Saturnalia the festival of sowing held in December,[4] when the autumn sowing was over and the husbandman gave himself up to a season of jollity after the long labours of summer and autumn.[5] On the principles of

Saturn the god of seed, and the Saturnalia a festival of sowing.

[1] Tacitus, *Annals*, xiii. 15; Arrian, *Epicteti dissert.* i. 25. 8; Lucian, *Saturnalia*, 4.

[2] As to these temporary kings see *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, ii. 24 *sqq.*

[3] Varro, *Rerum rusticarum*, iii. 1. 5; Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 324; Tibullus, i. 3. 35; Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, vii. 19. Compare Wissowa, in W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, iv. 433 *sq.*

[4] On Saturn as the god of sowing and the derivation of his name from a root meaning "to sow," from which comes *satus* "sowing," see Varro, *De lingua Latina*, v. 64; Festus, *s.v.* "Opima spolia," p. 186, ed. C. O. Müller; Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, vii. 2, 3, 13, 15; Wissowa, in W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, iv. 428. The derivation is confirmed by the form Saeturnus which occurs in an inscription (*Saeturni pocolom*, H. Dessau, *Inscript. Latinae selectae*, No. 2966). As to the Saturnalia see L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] ii. 15 *sqq.*; J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*,[2] pp. 586 *sqq.*; Dezobry, *Rome au siècle d'Auguste*, iii. 143 *sqq.*; W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*, pp. 268 *sqq.* The festival was held from the seventeenth to the twenty-third of December. I formerly argued that in the old days, when the Roman year began with March instead of with January, the Saturnalia may have been held from the seventeenth to the twenty-third of February, in which case the festival must have immediately preceded the Flight of the King, which fell on February the twenty-fourth. See *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, iii. 144 *sqq.*; *Lectures on the Early History of the Kingship*, p. 266. But this attempt to bring the ancient Saturnalia into immediate juxtaposition to the King's Flight breaks down when we observe, as my friend Mr. W. Warde Fowler has pointed out to me, that the Saturnalia fell in December under the Republic, long before Caesar, in his reform of the calendar, had shifted the commencement of the year from March to January. See Livy, xxii. 1. 19 *sq.*

[5] Roman farmers sowed wheat, spelt,

homoeopathic magic nothing could be more natural than that, when the last seeds had been committed to the earth, the marriage of the powers of vegetation should be simulated by their human representatives for the purpose of sympathetically quickening the seed. In short, no time could be more suitable for the celebration of the Sacred Marriage. We have seen as a matter of fact that the sowing of the seed has often been accompanied by sexual orgies with the express intention of thereby promoting the growth of the crops. At all events the view that the King's Flight at Rome was a mitigation of an old custom of putting him to death at the end of a year's tenure of office, is confirmed by the practice of annually slaying a human representative of the divine king Saturn, which survived in some parts of the Roman empire, though not at Rome itself, down to Christian times.

If the Latin kings were begotten at the licentious festival of the Saturnalia, we could understand why their paternity was sometimes uncertain, and why they might be of servile parentage.

This theory would throw light on some dark passages in the legends of the Roman kingship, such as the obscure and humble births of certain kings and their mysterious ends. For if the sacred marriage took place at a licentious festival like the Saturnalia, when slaves were temporarily granted the privileges of freemen,[1] it might well be that the paternity of the children begotten at this time, including those of the royal family, was a matter of uncertainty; nay, it might be known that the king or queen had offspring by a slave. Such offspring of a royal father and a slave mother, or of a royal mother and a slave father, would rank as princes and princesses according as male or female kinship prevailed. Under a system of male kinship the union of the king with a slave woman would give birth to a Servius Tullius, and, according to one tradition, to a Romulus. If female kinship prevailed in the royal family, as we have seen reason to suppose, it is possible that the stories of the birth of Romulus and

and barley in December, flax up to the seventh of that month, and beans up to the eleventh (the festival of Septimontium). See Palladius, *De re rustica*, xiii. 1. In the lowlands of Sicily at the present day November and December are the months of sowing, but in the highlands August and September. See G. Pitrè, *Usi e costumi, credenze e pregiudizi del popolo siciliano*, iii. (Palermo, 1889) pp. 132 *sqq*. Hence we may suppose that in the Roman Campagna of old the last sowing of autumn was over before the middle of December, when the Saturnalia began.

[1] This temporary liberty accorded to slaves was one of the most remarkable features of the Saturnalia and kindred festivals in antiquity. See *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, iii. 139 *sqq*.

Servius from slave mothers is a later inversion of the facts, and that what really happened was that some of the old Latin kings were begotten by slave fathers on royal princesses at the festival of the Saturnalia. The disappearance of female kinship would suffice to account for the warping of the tradition. All that was distinctly remembered would be that some of the kings had had a slave for one of their parents; and people living under a system of paternal descent would naturally conclude that the slave parent of a king could only be the mother, since according to their ideas no son of a slave father could be of royal blood and sit on the throne.[1]

The violent ends of the Roman kings.

Again, if I am right in supposing that in very early times the old Latin kings personated a god and were regularly put to death in that character, we can better understand the mysterious or violent ends to which so many of them are said to have come. Too much stress should not, however, be laid on such legends, for in a turbulent state of society kings, like commoners, are apt to be knocked on the head for much sounder reasons than a claim to divinity. Still, it is worth while to note that Romulus is said to have vanished mysteriously like Aeneas, or to have been cut to pieces by the patricians whom he had offended,[2] and that the seventh of July, the day on which he perished, was a festival which bore some resemblance to the Saturnalia. For on that day the female slaves were allowed to take certain remarkable liberties. They dressed up as free women in the attire of matrons and maids, and in this guise they went forth from the city, scoffed and jeered at all whom they met, and engaged among themselves in a fight, striking and throwing stones at each other. Moreover, they feasted under a wild fig-tree, made use of a rod cut from the tree for a certain purpose, perhaps to beat each other with, and offered the milky juice of the tree in sacrifice to Juno Caprotina, whose name appears to mean either the goddess of the goat (*caper*) or the goddess of the wild fig-tree, for

Death of Romulus on the seventh of July, the *Nonae Caprotinae*, at a festival resembling the Saturnalia.

[1] The learned Swiss scholar, J. J. Bachofen long ago drew out in minute detail the parallel between these birth legends of the Roman kings and licentious festivals like the Roman Saturnalia and the Babylonian Sacaea. See his book *Die Sage von Tanaquil* (Heidelberg, 1870), pp. 133 *sqq.* To be frank, I have not had the patience to read through his long dissertation.

[2] Livy, i. 16; Dionysius Halic. *Ant. Rom.* ii. 56; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 27; Florus, i. 1. 16 *sq.* See above, pp. 181 *sq.*

the Romans called a wild fig-tree a goat-fig (*caprificus*). Hence the day was called the *Nonae Caprotinae* after the animal or the tree. The festival was not peculiar to Rome, but was held by women throughout Latium.[1] It can hardly be dissociated from a custom which was observed by ancient husbandmen at this season. They sought to fertilise the fig-trees or ripen the figs by hanging strings of fruit from a wild fig-tree among the boughs. The practice appears to be very old. It has been employed in Greece both in ancient and modern times, and Roman writers often refer to it. Palladius recommends the solstice in June, that is Midsummer Day, as the best time for the operation; Columella prefers July.[2] In Sicily at the present day the operation is performed either on Midsummer Day (the festival of St. John the Baptist) or in the early days of July;[3] in Morocco and North Africa generally it takes place on Midsummer Day.[4] The wild fig-tree is a male and

The *Nonae Caprotinae* seems to have been the festival of the fertilisation of the fig.

[1] Varro, *De lingua Latina*, vi. 18; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 29; *id.*, *Camillus*, 33; Macrobius, *Saturn.* i. 11. 36-40. The analogy of this festival to the Babylonian Sacaea was long ago pointed out by J. J. Bachofen. See his book *Die Sage von Tanaquil* (Heidelberg, 1870), pp. 172 *sqq.*

[2] Aristotle, *Hist. anim.* v. 32, p. 557*b*, ed. Bekker; Theophrastus, *Hist. plant.* ii. 8; *id.*, *De causis plantarum*, ii. 9; Plutarch, *Quaest. conviv.* vii. 2. 2; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xv. 79-81, xvi. 114, xvii. 256; Palladius, iv. 10. 28, vii. 5. 2; Columella, xi. 2. 56; *Geoponica*, iii. 6, x. 48. As to the practice in modern Greece and the fig-growing districts of Asia Minor, see P. de Tournefort, *Relation d'un voyage du Levant* (Amsterdam, 1718), i. 130; W. R. Paton, "The *Pharmakoi* and the Story of the Fall," *Revue archéologique*, IVème Série, ix. (1907) p. 51. For an elaborate examination of the process and its relation to the domestication and spread of the fig-tree, see Graf zu Solms-Laubach, "Die Herkunft, Domestication und Verbreitung des gewöhnlichen Feigenbaums (*Ficus Carica*, L.)," *Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, xxviii. (1882) pp. 1-106. This last writer thinks that the operation was not practised by Italian husbandmen, because it is not mentioned by Cato and Varro. But their silence can hardly outweigh the express mention and recommendation of it by Palladius and Columella. Theophrastus, it is true, says that the process was not in use in Italy (*Hist. Plantarum*, ii. 1), but he can scarcely have had exact information on this subject. *Caprificatio*, as this artificial fertilisation of fig-trees is called, is still employed by the Neapolitan peasantry, though it seems to be unknown in northern Italy. Pliny's account has no independent value, as he merely copies from Theophrastus. The name "goat-fig" (*caprificus*) applied to the wild fig-tree may be derived from the notion that the tree is a male who mounts the female as the he-goat mounts the she-goat. Similarly the Messenians called the tree simply "he-goat" (τράγος). See Pausanias, iv. 20. 1-3.

[3] G. Pitrè, *Usi e costumi, credenze e pregiudizi del popolo siciliano*, iii. 113.

[4] Budgett Meakin, *The Moors* (London, 1902), p. 258; E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord* (Algiers, 1908), p. 568.

the cultivated fig-tree is a female, and the fertilisation is effected by insects, which are engendered in the fruit of the male tree and convey the pollen to the blossom of the female.[1] Thus the placing of wild figs, laden with pollen and insects, among the boughs of the cultivated fig-tree is, like the artificial fertilisation of the date-palm,[2] a real marriage of the trees, and it may well have been regarded as such by the peasants of antiquity long before the true theory of the process was discovered. Now the fig is an important article of diet in countries bordering on the Mediterranean. In Palestine, for example, the fruit is not, as with us, merely an agreeable luxury, but is eaten daily and forms indeed one of the staple productions of the country. "To sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree" was the regular Jewish expression for the peaceable possession of the Holy Land; and in the fable of Jotham the fig-tree is invited by the other trees, next after the olive, to come and reign over them.[3] When Sandanis the Lydian

Importance of the fig as an article of diet.

[1] A. Engler, in V. Hehn's *Kulturpflanzen und Hausthiere*[7] (Berlin, 1902), p. 99. Compare Graf zu Solms-Laubach, *op. cit.*; *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, *s.v.* "Fig-tree," vol. iv. 1519. The ancients were well aware of the production of these insects in the wild fig-tree and their transference to the cultivated fig-tree. Sometimes instead of fertilising the trees by hand they contented themselves with planting wild fig-trees near cultivated fig-trees, so that the fertilisation was effected by the wind, which blew the insects from the male to the female trees. See Aristotle, *l.c.*; Theophrastus, *De causis plantarum*, ii. 9; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xv. 79-81; Palladius, iv. 10. 28. On subject of the fertilisation of the fig the late Professor H. Marshall Ward of Cambridge kindly furnished me with the following note, which will serve to supplement and correct the brief account in the text:—"The fig is a hollow case full of flowers. In the wild fig a small gall wasp (*Cynips psenes*) lays its eggs: this kind of fig is still called *Caprificus*. The eggs hatch in the female flowers at the base of the hollow fig: at the top, near the ostiole observable on any ripe fig, are the male flowers. When the eggs hatch, and the little insects creep through the ostiole, the male flowers dust the wasp with pollen; and the insect flies to another flower (to lay its eggs), and so fertilises many of the female flowers in return for the nursery afforded its eggs. Now, the cultivated fig is apt to be barren of male flowers. Hence the hanging of branches bearing wild figs enables the escaping wasps to do the trick. The ancients knew the fact that the propinquity of the *Caprificus* helped the fertility of the cultivated fig, but, of course, they did not know the details of the process. The further complexities are, chiefly, that the fig bears two kinds of female flowers: one especially fitted for the wasp's convenience, the other not. The *Caprificus* figs are inedible. In Naples three crops of them are borne every year, viz. *Mamme* (in April), *Profichi* (in June), and *Mammoni* (in August). It is the June crop that bears most male flowers and is most useful." The suggestion that the festival of the seventh of July was connected with this horticultural operation is due to L. Preller (*Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 287).

[2] See above, pp. 24 *sq.*

[3] 1 Kings iv. 25; 2 Kings xviii.

Importance of the fig as an article of diet.

attempted to dissuade Croesus from marching against the Persians, he represented to him that there was nothing to be gained by conquering the inhabitants of a barren country who neither drank wine nor ate figs.[1] An Arab commentator on the Koran observes that "God swears by these two trees, the fig and the olive, because among fruit-trees they surpass all the rest. They relate that a basket of figs was offered to the prophet Mohammed, and when he had eaten one he bade his comrades do the same, saying, 'Truly, if I were to say that any fruit had come down from Paradise, I would say it of the fig.'"[2] Hence it would be natural that a process supposed to be essential to the ripening of so favourite a fruit should be the occasion of a popular festival. We may suspect that the license allowed to slave women on this day formed part of an ancient Saturnalia, at which the loose behaviour of men and women was supposed to secure the fertilisation of the fig-trees by homoeopathetic magic.

At the festival of the seventh of July women were probably thought to be fertilised by the fig as well as to fertilise it.

But it is possible and indeed probable that the fertilisation was believed to be mutual; in other words, it may have been imagined, that while the women caused the fig-tree to bear fruit, the tree in its turn caused them to bear children. This conjecture is confirmed by a remarkable African parallel. The Akikuyu of British East Africa attribute to the wild fig-tree the power of fertilising barren women. For this purpose they apply the white sap or milk to various parts of the body of the would-be mother; then, having sacrificed a goat, they tie the woman to a wild fig-tree with long strips cut from the intestines of the sacrificial animal. "This seems," writes Mr. C. W. Hobley, who reports the custom, "to be a case of the tree marriage of India. I fancy there is an idea of ceremonial marriage with the ancestral spirits which are said to inhabit certain of these fig-trees; in fact it supports the Kamba idea of the spiritual husbands."[3] The belief in spiritual husbands,

Supposed fertilisation of barren women by the wild fig-tree among the Akikuyu of British East Africa.

31; Isaiah xxxvi. 16; Micah iv. 4; Zechariah iii. 10; Judges ix. 10 *sq.*; H. B. Tristram, *The Natural History of the Bible*[9] (London, 1898), pp. 350 *sqq.*; *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, *s.v.* "Fig Tree," vol. ii. 1519 *sq.*

[1] Herodotus, i. 71.

[2] Zamachschar, cited by Graf zu Solms-Laubach, *op. cit.* p. 82. For more evidence as to the fig in antiquity see V. Hehn, *Kulturpflanzen und Hausthiere*,[7] pp. 94 *sqq.*

[3] Letter of Mr. C. W. Hobley to me, dated Nairobi, British East Africa, July 27th, 1910. This interesting information was given spontaneously and not in answer to any questions of mine.

to which Mr. Hobley here briefly refers, is as follows. The Akamba of British East Africa imagine that every married woman is at the same time the wife of a living man and also the wife of the spirit of some departed ancestor (*aimu*). They are firmly convinced that the fertility of a wife depends to a great extent on the attentions of her spiritual husband, and if she does not conceive within six months after marriage they take it as a sign that her spiritual husband is neglecting her; so they offer beer and kill a goat as a propitiatory sacrifice. If after that the woman still remains barren, they make a bigger feast and kill a bullock. On the other hand, if a wife is found to be with child soon after marriage, they are glad and consider it a proof that she has found favour in the eyes of her ghostly husband. Further, they believe that at death the human spirit quits the bodily frame and takes up its abode in a wild fig-tree (*mumbo*); hence they build miniature huts at the foot of those fig-trees which are thought to be haunted by the souls of the dead, and they periodically sacrifice to these spirits.[1] Accordingly, we may conjecture, though we are not told, that amongst the Akamba, as among the Akikuyu, a barren woman sometimes resorts to a wild fig-tree in order to obtain a child, since she believes that her spiritual spouse has his abode in the tree. The Akikuyu clearly attribute a special power of fertilisation to the milky sap of the tree, since they apply it to various parts of the woman who desires to become a mother: perhaps they regard it as the seed of the fig. This may explain why the Roman slave-women offered the milky juice of the tree to Juno Caprotina; they may have intended thereby to add to the fecundity of the mother goddess. And we can scarcely doubt that the rods which they cut from the wild fig-tree, for the purpose apparently of beating each other, were supposed to communicate the generative virtue of the tree to the women who

Belief of the Akamba that the spirits of the dead live in wild fig-trees.

[1] C. W. Hobley, *The Ethnology of A-Kamba and other East African Tribes* (Cambridge, 1910), pp. 85, 89 *sq.* In British Central Africa "every village has its 'prayer-tree,' under which the sacrifices are offered. It stands (usually) in the *bwalo*, the open space which Mr. Macdonald calls the 'forum,' and is, sometimes, at any rate, a wild fig-tree." "This is the principal tree used for making bark-cloth. Livingstone says, 'It is a sacred tree all over Africa and India'; and I learn from M. Auguste Chevalier that it is found in every village of Senegal and French Guinea, and looked on as 'a fetich-tree'" (Miss A. Werner, *The Natives of British Central Africa*, pp. 62 *sq.*).

Supposed fertilisation of women by the wild banana-tree among the Baganda.

were struck by them. The Baganda of Central Africa appear to ascribe to the wild banana-tree the same power of removing barrenness which the Akikuyu attribute to the wild fig-tree. For when a wife has no child, she and her husband will sometimes repair to a wild banana-tree and there, standing one on each side of the tree, partake of the male organs of a goat, the man eating the flesh and drinking the soup and the woman drinking the soup only. This is believed to ensure conception after the husband has gone in to his wife.[1] Here again, as among the Akikuyu, we see that the fertilising virtue of the tree is reinforced by the fertilising virtue of the goat; and we can therefore better understand why the Romans called the male wild fig-tree "goat-fig," and why the Messenians dubbed it simply "he-goat."

The Roman king may have celebrated a sacred marriage on the *Nonae Caprotinae* as a charm to make the fig-trees bear fruit.

The association of the death of Romulus with the festival of the wild fig-tree can hardly be accidental, especially as he and his twin-brother Remus were said to have been suckled by the she-wolf under a fig-tree, the famous *ficus Ruminalis*, which was shewn in the forum as one of the sacred objects of Rome and received offerings of milk down to late times.[2] Indeed, some have gone so far both in ancient and modern times as to derive the names of Romulus and Rome itself from this fig-tree (*ficus Ruminalis*); if they are right, Romulus was "the fig-man" and Rome "the fig-town."[3] Be that as it may, the clue to the association of Romulus with the fig is probably furnished by the old belief that the king is responsible for the fruits of the earth and the rain from heaven. We may conjecture that on this principle the Roman king was expected to make the fig-trees blossom and

[1] From the unpublished papers of the Rev. John Roscoe, which he has kindly placed at my disposal.

[2] Varro, *De lingua Latina*, v. 54; Livy, i. 4. 5; Ovid, *Fasti*, ii. 411 *sq.*; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xv. 77; Festus, pp. 266, 270, 271, ed. C. O. Müller; Tacitus, *Annals*, xiii. 58; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 90; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 4; *id.*, *Quaestiones Romanae*, 57; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquitates Romanae*, iii. 71. 5. All the Roman writers speak of the tree as a cultivated fig (*ficus*), not a wild fig (*caprificus*), and Dionysius agrees with them. Plutarch alone (*Romulus*, 4) describes it as a wild fig-tree (ἐρινεός). See also above, p. 10.

[3] Festus, p. 266, ed. C. O. Müller; Ettore Pais, *Ancient Legends of Roman History* (London, 1906), pp. 55 *sqq.* Festus indeed treats the derivation as an absurdity, and many people will be inclined to agree with him.

bear figs, and that in order to do so he masqueraded as the god of the fig-tree and went through a form of sacred marriage, either with his queen or with a slave-woman, on the July day when the husbandmen resorted to a more efficacious means of producing the same result. The ceremony of the sacred marriage need not have been restricted to a single day in the year. It may well have been repeated for many different crops and fruits. If the Queen of Athens was annually married to the god of the vine, why should not the King of Rome have annually wedded the goddess of the fig?

The marriage of the divine king or human god often followed by his death.

But, as we have seen, Romulus, the first king of Rome, is said to have perished on the day of this festival of the fig, which, if our hypothesis is correct, was also the day of his ceremonial marriage to the tree. That the real date of his death should have been preserved by tradition is very improbable; rather we may suppose that the reason for dating his death and his marriage on the same day was drawn from some ancient ritual in which the two events were actually associated. But we have still to ask, Why should the king's wedding-day be also the day of his death? The answer must be deferred for the present. All we need say now is that elsewhere the marriage of the divine king or human god has been regularly followed at a brief interval by his violent end. For him, as for others, death often treads on the heels of love.[1]

[1] On the fifth of July a ceremony called the Flight of the People was performed at Rome. Some ancient writers thought that it commemorated the dispersal of the people after the disappearance of Romulus. But this is to confuse the dates; for, according to tradition, the death of Romulus took place on the seventh, not the fifth of July, and therefore after instead of before the Flight of the People. See Varro, *De lingua Latina*, vi. 18; Macrobius, *Sat.* iii. 2. 14; Dionysius Halicarn. *Ant. Rom.* ii. 56. 3; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 29; *id.*, *Camillus*, 33; W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*, pp. 174 *sqq.* Mr. Warde Fowler may be right in thinking that some connexion perhaps existed between the ceremonies of the two days, the fifth and the seventh; and I agree with his suggestion that "the story itself of the death of Romulus had grown out of some religious rite performed at this time of year." I note as a curious coincidence, for it can hardly be more, that at Bodmin in Cornwall a festival was held on the seventh of July, when a Lord of Misrule was appointed, who tried people for imaginary crimes and sentenced them to be ducked in a quagmire called Halgaver, which is ex-

Violent ends of Tatius, Tullus Hostilius, and other Roman kings.

Another Roman king who perished by violence was Tatius, the Sabine colleague of Romulus. It is said that he was at Lavinium offering a public sacrifice to the ancestral gods, when some men to whom he had given umbrage despatched him with the sacrificial knives and spits which they had snatched from the altar.[1] The occasion and the manner of his death suggest that the slaughter may have been a sacrifice rather than an assassination. Again, Tullus Hostilius, the successor of Numa, was commonly said to have been killed by lightning, but many held that he was murdered at the instigation of Ancus Marcius, who reigned after him.[2] Speaking of the more or less mythical Numa, the type of the priestly king, Plutarch observes that "his fame was enhanced by the fortunes of the later kings. For of the five who reigned after him the last was deposed and ended his life in exile, and of the remaining four not one died a natural death; for three of them were assassinated and Tullus Hostilius was consumed by thunderbolts."[3] This implies that King Ancus Marcius, as well as Tarquin the Elder and Servius Tullius, perished by the hand of an assassin. No other ancient historian, so far as I know, records this of Ancus Marcius, though one of them says that the king "was carried off by an untimely death."[4] Tarquin the Elder was slain by two murderers whom the sons of his predecessor, Ancus Marcius, had hired to do the deed.[5] Lastly, Servius Tullius came by his end in circumstances which recall the combat for the priesthood of Diana at Nemi. He was attacked by his successor and killed by his orders, though not by his hand. Moreover, he lived among the oak groves of the Esquiline Hill at the head of the

plained to mean "the goat's moor." See T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 339. The "goat's moor" is an odd echo of the "goat's marsh" at which Romulus disappeared on the same day of the year (Livy, i. 16. 1; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 29; *id.*, *Camillus*, 33).

[1] Livy, i. 14. 1 *sq.*; Dionysius Halicarn. *Ant. Rom.* ii. 52. 3; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 23.

[2] Dionysius Halicarn. *Ant. Rom.* iii. 35; Zonaras, *Annales*, vii. 6. As to his reported death by lightning, see above, p. 181.

[3] Plutarch, *Numa*, 22. I have pruned the luxuriant periods in which Plutarch dwells, with edifying unction, on the righteous visitation of God which overtook that early agnostic Tullus Hostilius.

[4] Aurelius Victor, *De viris illustribus*, v. 5.

[5] Livy, i. 40; Dionysius Halicarn. *Ant. Rom.* iii. 73.

Slope of Virbius, and it was here, beside a sanctuary of Diana, that he was slain.[1]

The succession to the Latin kingship may sometimes have been decided by single combat.

These legends of the violent ends of the Roman kings suggest that the contest by which they gained the throne may sometimes have been a mortal combat rather than a race. If that were so, the analogy which we have traced between Rome and Nemi would be still closer. At both places the sacred kings, the living representatives of the godhead, would thus be liable to suffer deposition and death at the hand of any resolute man who could prove his divine right to the holy office by the strong arm and the sharp sword. It would not be surprising if among the early Latins the claim to the kingdom should often have been settled by single combat; for down to historical times the Umbrians regularly submitted their private disputes to the ordeal of battle, and he who cut his adversary's throat was thought thereby to have proved the justice of his cause beyond the reach of cavil.[2] "Any one who remembers how in the forests of Westphalia the *Femgericht* set the modern civil law at defiance down into the eighteenth century, and how in the mountains of Corsica and Sardinia blood-revenge has persisted and persists to our own days, will not wonder that hardly a century after the union of Italy the Roman legislation had not yet succeeded in putting down the last relics of this ancient Italian or rather Indo-European mode of doing justice in the nests of the Apennines."[3]

A parallel to what I conceive to have been the rule of the

[1] Livy, i. 48; Dionysius Halicarn. *Ant. Rom.* iv. 38 *sq.*; Solinus, i. 25. The reading *Virbium clivum* ("the slope of Virbius") occurs only in the more recent manuscripts of Livy: the better-attested reading both of Livy and Solinus is *Urbium*. But the obscure *Virbium* would easily and naturally be altered into *Urbium*, whereas the reverse change is very improbable. See Mr. A. B. Cook, in *Classical Review*, xvi. (1902) p. 380, note 3. In this passage Mr. Cook was the first to call attention to the analogy between the murder of the slave-born king, Servius Tullius, and the slaughter of the slave-king by his successor at Nemi. As to the oak-woods of the Esquiline see above, p. 185.

[2] Nicolaus Damascenus, in Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, x. 70; *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, ed. C. Müller, iii. 457.

[3] H. Jordan, *Die Könige im alten Italien* (Berlin, 1887), pp. 44 *sq.* In this his last work Jordan argues that the Umbrian practice, combined with the rule of the Arician priesthood, throws light on the existence and nature of the kingship among the ancient Latins. On this subject I am happy to be at one with so learned and judicious a scholar.

Combats for the kingdom in Africa.

old Latin kingship is furnished by a West African custom of to-day. When the Maluango or king of Loango, who is deemed the representative of God on earth, has been elected, he has to take his stand at *Nkumbi*, a large tree near the entrance to his sacred ground. Here, encouraged by one of his ministers, he must fight all rivals who present themselves to dispute his right to the throne.[1] This is one of the many instances in which the rites and legends of ancient Italy are illustrated by the practice of modern Africa. Similarly among the Banyoro of Central Africa, whose king had to take his life with his own hand whenever his health and strength began to fail, the succession to the throne was determined by a mortal combat among the claimants, who fought till only one of them was left alive.[2] Even in England a relic of a similar custom survived till lately in the coronation ceremony, at which a champion used to throw down his glove and challenge to mortal combat all who disputed the king's right to the crown. The ceremony was witnessed by Pepys at the coronation of Charles the Second.[3]

In Greece and Italy kings probably personated Cronus and Saturn, the god of the seed, before they personated Zeus and Jupiter, the god of the oak.

In the foregoing enquiry we have found reason to suppose that the Roman kings personated not only Jupiter the god of the oak, but Saturn the god of the seed and perhaps also the god of the fig-tree. The question naturally arises, Did they do so simultaneously or successively? In other words, did the same king regularly represent the oak-god at one season of the year, the seed-god at another, and the fig-god at a third? or were there separate dynasties of oak-kings, seed-kings, and fig-kings, who belonged perhaps to different stocks and reigned at different times? The

[1] R. E. Dennett, *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind* (London, 1906), pp. 11 *sq.*, 111, 131 *sq.*, 135. The word translated "sacred ground" (*xibila*, plural *bibila*) means properly "sacred grove." Such "sacred groves" are common in this part of Africa, but in the "sacred grove" of the king of Loango the tree beside which the monarch takes post to fight for the crown appears to stand solitary in a grassy plain. See R. E. Dennett, *op. cit.* pp. 11 *sq.*, 25, 96 *sqq.*, 110 *sqq.* We have seen that the right of succession to the throne of Loango descends in the female line (above, pp. 276 *sq.*), which furnishes another point of resemblance between Loango and Rome, if my theory of the Roman kingship is correct.

[2] J. G. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, ii. 530. My authority is the Rev. John Roscoe, formerly of the Church Missionary Society in Uganda.

[3] *Memoirs of Samuel Pepys*, edited by Richard, Lord Braybrooke, Second Edition (London, 1828), i. 193 *sq.* (under April 23rd, 1661).

evidence does not allow us to answer these questions definitely. But tradition certainly points to the conclusion that in Latium and perhaps in Italy generally the seed-god Saturn was an older deity than the oak-god Jupiter, just as in Greece Cronus appears to have preceded Zeus. Perhaps Saturn and Cronus were the gods of an old indigenous and agricultural people; while Jupiter and Zeus were the divinities of a ruder invading race, which swarmed down into Italy and Greece from the forests of central Europe, bringing their wild woodland deities to dwell in more fertile lands, under softer skies, side by side with the gods of the corn and the vine, the olive and the fig. If that was so, we may suppose that before the irruption of these northern barbarians the old kings of Greece and Italy personated the gods of the fat field and fruitful orchard, and that it was not till after the conquest that their successors learned to pose as the god of the verdant oak and the thundering sky. However, on questions so obscure we must be content to suspend our judgment. It is unlikely that the student's search-light will ever pierce the mists that hang over these remote ages. All that we can do is to follow the lines of evidence backward as far as they can be traced, till, after growing fainter and fainter, they are lost altogether in the darkness.

CHAPTER XIX

ST. GEORGE AND THE PARILIA

The early Italians were as much a pastoral as an agricultural people, and their kings would be expected to ensure the safety and fecundity of the flocks and herds.

IN the course of the preceding investigation we found reason to assume that the old Latin kings, like their brethren in many parts of the world, were charged with certain religious duties or magical functions, amongst which the maintenance of the fertility of the earth held a principal place. By this I do not mean that they had to see to it only that the rain fell, and that the corn grew and trees put forth their fruit in due season. In those early days it is probable that the Italians were quite as much a pastoral as an agricultural people, or, in other words, that they depended for their subsistence no less on their flocks and herds than on their fields and orchards. To provide their cattle with grass and water, to ensure their fecundity and the abundance of their milk, and to guard them from the depredations of wild beasts, would be objects of the first importance with the shepherds and herdsmen who, according to tradition, founded Rome;[1] and the king, as the representative or embodiment of the deity, would be expected to do his part towards procuring these blessings for his people by the performance of sacred rites. The Greeks of the Homeric age, as we have seen, thought that the reign of a good king not only made the land to bear wheat

[1] Varro, *Rerum rusticarum*, ii. 1. 9 *sq.* "*Romanorum vero populum a pastoribus esse ortum quis non dicit?*" etc. Amongst other arguments in favour of this view Varro refers to the Roman personal names derived from cattle, both large and small, such as *Porcius*, "pig-man," *Ovinius*, "sheep-man," *Caprilius*, "goat-man," *Equitius*, "horse-man," *Taurius*, "bull-man," and so forth. On the importance of cattle and milk among the ancient Aryans see O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Altertumskunde* (Strasburg, 1901), pp. 541 *sq.*, 689 *sqq* 913 *sqq.*

and barley, but also caused the flocks to multiply and the sea to yield fish.[1]

In this connexion, accordingly, it can be no mere accident that Rome is said to have been founded and the pious king Numa to have been born on the twenty-first of April, the day of the great shepherds' festival of the Parilia.[2] It is very unlikely that the real day either of the foundation of the city or of Numa's birth should have been remembered, even if we suppose Numa to have been an historical personage rather than a mythical type; it is far more probable that both events were arbitrarily assigned to this date by the speculative antiquaries of a later age on the ground of some assumed fitness or propriety. In what did this fitness or propriety consist? The belief that the first Romans were shepherds and herdsmen would be reason enough for supposing that Rome was founded on the day of the shepherds' festival, or even that the festival was instituted to commemorate the event.[3] But why should Numa be thought to have been born on that day of all days? Perhaps it was because the old sacred kings, of whom he was the model, had to play an important part in the ceremonies of the day. The birthdays of the gods were celebrated by festivals;[4] the kings were divine or semi-divine; it would be natural, therefore, that their birthdays should be identified with high feasts and holidays. Whether this was so or not, the festival of the Parilia presents so many points of resemblance to some of the popular customs discussed in these volumes that a

Numa is said to have been born and Rome to have been founded on the shepherds' festival of the Parilia, the twenty-first of April.

[1] Above, vol. i. p. 366.

[2] As to the foundation of Rome on this date see Varro, *Rerum rusticarum*, ii. 1. 9; Cicero, *De divinatione*, ii. 47. 98; Festus, *s.v.* "Parilibus," p. 236, ed. C. O. Müller; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xviii. 247; Propertius, v. 4. 73 *sq.*; Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 801-806; *id.*, *Metam.* xiv. 774 *sq.*; Velleius Paterculus, i. 8. 4; Eutropius, i. 1; Solinus, i. 18; Censorinus, *De die natali*, xxi. 6; Probus on Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 1; Schol. Veronens. on Virgil, *l.c.*; Dionysius Halicarnas., *Ant. Rom.* i. 88; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 12; Dio Cassius, xliii. 42; Zonaras, *Annales*, vii. 3; Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, i. 14, iv. 50. As to the birth of Numa, see Plutarch, *Numa*, 3. The festival is variously called Parilia and Palilia by ancient writers, but the form Parilia seems to be the better attested of the two. See G. Wissowa, *s.v.* "Pales," in W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, iii. 1278.

[3] Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. Rom.* i. 88) hesitates between these two views. With truer historical insight Plutarch (*Romulus*, 12) holds that the rustic festival was older than the foundation of Rome.

[4] See, for example, vol. i. above, p. 32.

brief examination of it may not be inappropriate in this place.[1]

The Parilia, a festival celebrated by shepherds and herdsmen in honour of Pales, for the safety and increase of their flocks and herds.

The spring festival of the twenty-first of April, known as the birthday of Rome,[2] was deemed second in importance to none in the calendar.[3] It was held by shepherds and herdsmen for the welfare and increase of their flocks and herds.[4] The pastoral deity to whom they paid their devotions was Pales, as to whose sex the ancients themselves were not at one. In later times they commonly spoke of her as a goddess; but Varro regarded Pales as masculine,[5] and we may follow his high authority. The day was celebrated with similar rites both in the town and the country, but in its origin it must have been a strictly rural festival. Indeed, it could hardly be carried out in full except among the sheepfolds and cattle-pens. At some time of the day, probably in the morning, the people repaired to the temple of Vesta, where they received from the Vestal Virgins ashes, blood, and bean-straw to be used in fumigating themselves and probably their beasts. The ashes were those of the unborn calves which had been torn from their mothers' wombs on the fifteenth of April; the blood was that which had dripped from the tail of a horse sacrificed in October.[6] Both were probably supposed to exercise a fertilising as well as a cleansing influence on the people and on the cattle;[7] for apparently one effect of the ceremonies, in the popular opinion, was to quicken the wombs of women no less than of cows and ewes.[8] At break

[1] For modern discussions of the Parilia, see L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 413 *sqq.*; J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] 207 *sq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, pp. 309-317; W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Festivals*, pp. 79-85; G. Wissowa, *s.v.* "Pales," in W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, iii. 1276-1280; *id.*, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, pp. 165 *sq.*

[2] Cicero, *De divinatione*, ii. 47. 98; Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 806; Calendar of Philocalus, quoted by W. Warde Fowler, *op. cit.* p. 79; Probus on Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 1; Plutarch, *Romulus*, 12; Zonaras, *Annales*, vii. 3.

[3] Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* i. 88.

[4] Festus, *s.v.* "Pales," p. 222, ed. C. O. Müller; Dionysius Halic. *l.c.*

[5] Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 1. See also Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, iii. 40; Martianus Capella, i. 50.

[6] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 637-640, 731-734; Propertius, v. 1. 19 *sq.*

[7] See above, p. 229. As to the sacrifice of the horse in October see *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, ii. 315 *sqq.*

[8] Tibullus, ii. 5. 91 *sq.* :—

"*Et fetus matrona dabit, natusque parenti*
Oscula comprensis auribus eripiet."

of day the shepherd purified his sheep, after sprinkling and sweeping the ground. The fold was decked with leafy boughs, and a great wreath was hung on the door.[1] The purification of the flocks apparently consisted in driving them over burning heaps of grass, pine-wood, laurel, and branches of the male olive-tree.[2] Certainly at some time of the day the sheep were compelled to scamper over a fire.[3] Moreover, the bleating flocks were touched with burning sulphur and fumigated with its blue smoke.[4] Then the shepherd offered to Pales baskets of millet, cakes of millet, and pails of warm milk. Next he prayed to the god that he would guard the fold from the evil powers, including probably witchcraft;[5] that the flocks, the men, and the dogs might be hale and free from disease; that the sheep might not fall a prey to wolves; that grass and leaves might abound; that water might be plentiful; that the udders of the dams might be full of milk; that the rams might be lusty, and the ewes prolific; that many lambs might be born; and that there might be much wool at shearing.[6] This prayer the shepherd had to repeat four times, looking to the east; then he washed his hands in the morning dew. After that he drank a bowl of milk and wine, and, warmed with the liquor, leaped over burning heaps of crackling straw. This practice of jumping over a straw fire would seem to have been a principal part of the ceremonies: at least it struck the ancients themselves, for they often refer to it.[7]

The flocks purified by being driven through fire.

The shepherd's prayer.

The shepherd's prayer at the Parilia is instructive, because it gives us in short a view of the chief wants of

[1] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 735-738. In his account of the festival Ovid mentions only shepherds and sheep; but since Pales was a god of cattle as well as of sheep (Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, iii. 23), we may suppose that herds and herdsmen equally participated in it. Dionysius (*l.c.*) speaks of four-footed beasts in general.

[2] So Mr. W. Warde Fowler understands Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 735-742.

[3] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 805 *sq.*

[4] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 739 *sq.*

[5] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 747 *sq.* :—

"*Consule, dic, pecori pariter pecorisque magistris:*
Effugiat stabulis noxa repulsa meis."

With this sense of *noxa* compare *id.* vi. 129 *sq.*, where it is said that buckthorn or hawthorn "*tristes pellere posset a foribus noxas.*"

[6] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 763-774. The prayer that the wolves may be kept far from the fold is mentioned also by Tibullus (ii. 5. 88).

[7] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 779-782; Tibullus, ii. 5. 89 *sq.*; Propertius, v. 1. 19, v. 4. 77 sq.; Persius, i. 72; Probus on Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 1.

The shepherd has to propitiate the tree-spirits and water-spirits.

the pastoral life. The supplication for grass and leaves and water reminds us that the herdsman no less than the husbandman depends ultimately on vegetation and rain; so that the same divine powers which cover the fields of the one with yellow corn may be conceived to carpet the meadows of the other with green grass, and to diversify them with pools and rivers for the refreshment of the thirsty cattle. And it is to be borne in mind that in countries where grass is less plentiful than under the rainy skies of northern Europe, sheep, goats, and cattle still subsist in great measure on the leaves and juicy twigs of trees.[1] Hence in these lands the pious shepherd and goatherd cannot afford to ignore or to offend the tree-spirits, on whose favour and bounty his flocks are dependent for much of their fodder. Indeed, at the Parilia the shepherd made elaborate excuses to these divine beings for any trespass he might unwittingly have committed on their hallowed domain by entering a sacred grove, sitting in the shadow of a holy tree, or lopping leafy branches from it with which to feed a sickly sheep.[2] In like manner he craved pardon of the water-nymphs, if the hoofs of his cattle had stirred up the mud in their clear pools; and he implored Pales to intercede for him with the divinities of springs "and the gods dispersed through every woodland glade."[3]

The Parilia was generally considered to be the best time for coupling the rams and the ewes;[4] and it has been

[1] I owe this observation to F. A. Paley, on Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 754. He refers to Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 435, *Ecl.* x. 30; Theocritus, xi. 73 *sq.*; to which may be added Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 300 *sq.*, 320 *sq.*; Horace, *Epist.* i. 14. 28; Cato, *De re rustica*, 30; Columella, *De re rustica*, vii. 3. 21, xi. 2. 83 and 99-101. From these passages of Cato and Columella we learn that the Italian farmer fed his cattle on the leaves of the elm, the ash, the poplar, the oak, the evergreen oak, the fig, and the laurel.

[2] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 749-754.

[3] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 757-760.

[4] Columella, *De re rustica*, vii. 3. 11. In this respect the practice of ancient Italian farmers would seem to have differed from that of modern English breeders. In a letter (dated 8th February 1908) my friend Professor W. Somerville of Oxford writes: "It is against all modern custom to arrange matters so that lambs are born five months after April 21, say the end of September." And, again, in another letter (dated 16th February 1908) he writes to me: "The matter of coupling ewes and rams in the end of April is very perplexing. In this country it is only the Dorset breed of sheep that will 'take' the ram at this time of the year. In the case of other breeds the ewe will only take the ram in autumn, say from July to November, so that the lambs are born from January to May. We consider that lambs born late in the

suggested that it was also the season when the flocks and herds, after being folded and stalled throughout the winter, were turned out for the first time to pasture in spring.[1] The occasion is an anxious one for the shepherd, especially in countries which are infested with wolves, as ancient Italy was.[2] Accordingly the Italian shepherd propitiated Pales with a slaughtered victim before he drove his flocks afield in spring;[3] but it is doubtful whether this sacrifice formed part of the Parilia. None of the ancient authors who expressly describe the Parilia mention the slaughter of a victim; and in Plutarch's day a tradition ran that of old no blood was shed at the festival.[4] But such a tradition seems to point to a contrary practice in after-times. In the absence of decisive evidence the question must be left open; but modern analogy, as we shall see, strongly supports the opinion that immediately at the close of the Parilia the flocks and herds were driven out to graze in the open pastures for the first time after their long winter confinement. On this view a special significance is seen to attach to some of the features of the festival, such as the prayer for protection against the wolf; for the brute could hardly do the sheep and kine much harm so long as they were safely pent within the walls of the sheepcote and the cattle-stall.

The Parilia was perhaps the time when the flocks and herds were turned out for the first time in spring to graze in the open.

As the Parilia is said to have been celebrated by Romulus, who sacrificed to the gods and caused the people to purify themselves by leaping over flames,[5] some scholars have inferred that it was customary for the king, and afterwards for his successor, the chief pontiff, or the King of the Sacred Rites, to offer sacrifices for the people at the Parilia.[6] The inference is reasonable and receives some confirmation, as we shall see presently, from the analogy of modern custom. Further, the tradition that Numa was born on the day of the Parilia may be thought to point in the same way, since it is most naturally explicable on the hypothesis that

The Roman kings had perhaps to discharge some important religious function at the Parilia.

season, say May or June, never thrive well."

[1] The suggestion was made by C. G. Heyne in his commentary on Tibullus, i. 5. 88.

[2] O. Keller, *Thiere des classischen Alterthums* (Innsbruck, 1887), pp. 158 *sqq.*

[3] Calpurnius, *Bucol.* v. 16-28.

[4] Plutarch, *Romulus*, 12.

[5] Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Ant. Rom.* i. 88.

[6] This is the view of J. Marquardt (*Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.[2] 207), and Mr. W. Warde Fowler (*Roman Festivals*, p. 83, note 1).

the king had to discharge some important function at the festival. Still, it must be confessed that the positive evidence for connecting the Roman kings with the celebration of the twenty-first of April is slight and dubious.

The Parilia intended to ensure the welfare of the cattle and to guard them against witches and wolves.

On the whole the festival of the Parilia, which probably fell at or near the time of turning out the cattle to pasture in spring, was designed to ensure their welfare and increase, and to guard them from the insidious machinations or the open attacks of their various enemies, among whom witches and wolves were perhaps the most dreaded.

A celebration of the same sort is still held in eastern Europe on the twenty-third of April, the festival of St. George, the patron saint of cattle, horses, and wolves.

Now it can hardly be a mere coincidence that down to modern times a great popular festival of this sort has been celebrated only two days later by the herdsmen and shepherds of eastern Europe, who still cherish a profound belief in witchcraft, and still fear, with far better reason, the raids of wolves on their flocks and herds. The festival falls on the twenty-third of April and is dedicated to St. George, the patron saint of cattle, horses, and wolves. The Esthonians say that on St. George's morning the wolf gets a ring round his snout and a halter about his neck, whereby he is rendered less dangerous till Michaelmas. But if the day should chance to be a Friday at full moon, or if before the day came round any person should have been so rash as to thump the dirty linen in the wash-tub with two beetles, the cattle will run a serious risk of being devoured by wolves.

Precautions taken by the Esthonians against wolves and witches on St. George's Day.

Many are the precautions taken by the anxious Esthonians on this day to guard their herds from the ravening beasts. Thus some people gather wolf's dung on the preceding night, burn it, and fumigate the cattle with it in the morning. Or they collect bones from the pastures and burn them at a cross-road, which serves as a charm against sickness, sorcery, and demons quite as well as against wolves. Others smoke the cattle with *asa foetida* or sulphur to protect them against witchcraft and noxious exhalations. They think, too, that if you sew stitches on St. George's morning the cubs of the wolves will be blind, no doubt because their eyes are sewed up by the needle and thread. In order to forecast the fate of their herds the peasants put eggs or a sharp weapon, such as an axe or a scythe, before the doors of the stalls, and the animal which crushes an egg or wounds itself will surely be

rent by a wolf or will perish in some other fashion before the year is out. So certain is its fate that many a man prefers to slaughter the doomed beast out of hand for the sake of saving at least the beef.

The Esthonians generally drive their cattle out to pasture for the first time on St. George's Day.

As a rule the Esthonians drive their cattle out to pasture for the first time on St. George's Day, and the herdsman's duties begin from then. If, however, the herds should have been sent out to graze before that day, the boys who look after them must eat neither flesh nor butter while they are on duty; else the wolves will destroy many sheep, and the cream will not turn to butter in the churn. Further, the boys may not kindle a fire in the wood, or the wolf's tooth would be fiery and he would bite viciously. By St. George's Day, the twenty-third of April, there is commonly fresh grass in the meadows. But even if the spring should be late and the cattle should have to return to their stalls hungrier than they went forth, many Esthonian farmers insist on turning out the poor beasts on St. George's Day in order that the saint may guard them against his creatures the wolves. On this morning the farmer treats the herdsman to a dram of brandy, and gives him two copper kopecks as "tail-money" for every cow in the herd. This money the giver first passes thrice round his head and then lays it on the dunghill; for if the herdsman took it from his hand, it would in some way injure the herd. Were this ceremony omitted, the wolves would prove very destructive, because they had not been appeased on St. George's Day. After receiving the "tail-money" some herdsmen are wont to collect the herd on the village common. Here they set up their crook in the ground, place their hat on it, and walk thrice round the cattle, muttering spells or the Lord's Prayer as they do so. The pastoral crook should be cut from the rowan or mountain-ash and consecrated by a wise man, who carves mystic signs on it. Sometimes the upper end of the crook is hollowed out and filled with quicksilver and *asa foetida*, the aperture being stopped up with resin. Some Esthonians cut a cross with a scythe under the door through which the herd is to be driven, and fill the furrows of the cross with salt to prevent certain evil beings from harming the cattle. Further, it is an almost universal custom in

Esthonia not to hang bells on the necks of the kine till St. George's Day; the few who can give a reason for the rule say that the chiming of the bells before that season would attract the wild beasts.[1]

Sacrifices for horses offered on St. George's Day by the Esthonians of Dago.

In the island of Dago down to the early part of the nineteenth century there were certain holy trees from which no one dared to break a bough; in spite of the lack of wood in the island the fallen branches were allowed to rot in heaps on the ground. Under such trees the Esthonians used to offer sacrifices on St. George's Day for the safety and welfare of their horses. The offerings, which consist of an egg, a piece of money, and a bunch of horse-hair tied up with a red thread, were buried in the earth.[2] The custom is interesting because it exhibits St. George in the two-fold character of a patron of horses and of trees. In the latter capacity he has already met us more than once under the name of Green George.[3]

St. George as the patron of wolves and cattle in Russia; the herds are driven out to pasture for the first time on his day.

In Russia the saint is known as Yegory or Yury, and here, as in Esthonia, he is a patron of wolves as well as of flocks and herds. Many legends speak of the connexion which exists between St. George and the wolf. In Little Russia the beast is known as "St. George's Dog," and the carcases of sheep which wolves have killed are not eaten, it being held that they have been made over by divine command to the beasts of the field.[4] The festival of St. George on the twenty-third of April has a national as well as an ecclesiastical character in Russia, and the mythical features of the songs which are devoted to the day prove that the saint has supplanted some old Slavonian deity who used to be honoured at this season in heathen times. It is not as a slayer of dragons and a champion of forlorn damsels that St. George figures in these songs, but as a patron of farmers and herdsmen who preserves cattle from harm, and on whose day accordingly the flocks and herds

[1] Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, pp. 82-84, 116-118; F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Ehsten*, pp. 332, 356-361; Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. (1872) p. 61.

[2] F. J. Wiedemann, *op. cit.* p. 413.

[3] See above, pp. 75 *sq.*

[4] W. R. S. Ralston, *Russian Folk-tales*, pp. 344, 345.

are driven out to browse the fresh pastures for the first time after their confinement through the long Russian winter. "What the wolf holds in its teeth, that Yegory has given," is a proverb which shews how completely he is thought to rule over the fold and the stall. Here is one of the songs:—

"*We have gone around the field,*
We have called Yegory . . .
'O thou, our brave Yegory,
Save our cattle,
In the field, and beyond the field,
In the forest, and beyond the forest,
Under the bright moon,
Under the red sun,
From the rapacious wolf,
From the cruel bear,
From the cunning beast.'"

A White-Russian song represents St. George as opening with golden keys, probably the sunbeams, the soil which has been frost-bound all the winter:—

"*Holy Jury, the divine envoy,*
Has gone to God,
And having taken the golden keys,
Has unlocked the moist earth,
Having scattered the clinging dew
Over White-Russia and all the world."

In Moravia they "meet the Spring" with a song in which they ask Green Thursday, that is, the day before Good Friday, what he has done with the keys, and he answers: "I gave them to St. George. St. George arose and unlocked the earth, so that the grass grew—the green grass." In White Russia it is customary on St. George's Day to drive the cattle afield through the morning dew, and in Little Russia and Bulgaria young folk go out early and roll themselves in it.[1] In the Smolensk Government on this day the cattle are driven out first to the rye-fields and then to the pastures. A religious service is held in the stalls before the departure of the herd and afterwards in the field, where the stool

[1] W. R. S. Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, pp. 229-231. In the island of Rhodes also it is customary for people to roll themselves on the grass for good luck on St. George's Day. See Mary Hamilton, *Greek Saints and their Festivals* (Edinburgh and London, 1910), p. 166.

which supported the holy picture is allowed to stand for several weeks till the next procession with the pictures of the saints takes place. St. George's Day in this government is the herdsmen's festival, and it is the term from which their engagements are dated.[1] And in the Smolensk Government, when the herds are being sent out to graze on St. George's Day, the following spell is uttered:—

"*Deaf man, deaf man, dost thou hear us?*"
"*I hear not.*"
"*God grant that the wolf may not hear our cattle!*"
"*Cripple, cripple, canst thou catch us?*"
"*I cannot catch.*"
"*God grant that the wolf may not catch our cattle!*"
"*Blind man, blind man, dost thou see us?*"
"*I see not.*"
"*God grant that the wolf may not see our cattle!*"[2]

In Russia witches try to steal the milk of the cattle on the eve of St. George.

But in the opinion of the Russian peasant wolves are not the only foes of cattle at this season. On the eve of St. George's Day, as well as on the night before Whitsunday and on Midsummer Eve, witches go out naked in the dark and cut chips from the doors and gates of farmyards. These they boil in a milk-pail, and thus charm away the milk from the farms. Hence careful housewives examine their doors and smear mud in any fresh gashes they may find in them, which frustrates the knavish tricks of the milk-stealing witch. Not to be baffled, however, the witches climb the wooden crosses by the wayside and chip splinters from them, or lay their hands on stray wooden wedges. These they stick into a post in the cattle-shed and squeeze them with their hands till milk flows from them as freely as from the dugs of a cow. At this time also wicked people turn themselves by magic art into dogs and black cats, and in that disguise they suck the milk of cows, mares, and ewes, while they slaughter the bulls, horses, and rams.[3]

[1] Olga Bartels, "Aus dem Leben der weissrussischen Landbevölkerung," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxv. (1903) p. 659.

[2] W. R. S. Ralston, *op. cit.* p. 389. French peasants of the Vosges Mountains believe that St. George shuts the mouths of wild beasts and prevents them from attacking the flocks which are placed under his protection (L. F. Sauvé, *Le Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 127).

[3] W. R. S. Ralston, *op. cit.* pp. 319 *sq.*

St. George's Day among the Ruthenians.

The Ruthenians of Bukowina and Galicia believe that at midnight before St. George's Day (the twenty-third of April) the witches come in bands of twelve to the hills at the boundaries of the villages and there dance and play with fire. Moreover, they cull on the mountains the herbs they need for their infernal enchantments. Like the Esthonians and the Russians, the Ruthenians drive their cattle out to pasture for the first time on St. George's Day; hence during the preceding night the witches are very busy casting their spells on the cows; and the farmer is at great pains to defeat their fell purpose. With this intent many people catch a snake, skin it, and fumigate the cows with the skin on the eve of the saint's day. To rub the udders and horns of the cows with serpent's fat is equally effective. Others strew meal about the animals, saying, "Not till thou hast gathered up this meal, shalt thou take the milk from my cow So-and-so." Further, sods of turf, with thorn-branches stuck in them, are laid on the gate-posts; and crosses are painted with tar on the doors. These precautions keep the witches from the cows. If, however, a beast should after all be bewitched, the farmer's wife drags a rope about in the dew on the morning of St. George's Day. Then she chops it up small, mixes salt with it, and scatters the bits among the cow's fodder. No sooner has the afflicted animal partaken of this compound than the spell is broken.[1]

St. George's Day among the Huzuls of the Carpathians.

The Huzuls of the Carpathian Mountains believe that when a cow gives milk tinged with blood, or no milk at all, a witch is the cause of it. These maleficent beings play their pranks especially on the eve of St. George's Day and on Midsummer Eve, but they are most dangerous at the former season, for that night they and the foul fiends hold their greatest gathering or sabbath. To steal the cows' milk they resort to various devices. Sometimes they run about in the shape of dogs and smell the cows' udders. Sometimes they rub the udders of their own cows with milk taken from a neighbour's kine; then their own cows yield abundant milk, but the udders of the neighbour's cows shrivel up or give only blood. Others again make a wooden cow

[1] R. F. Kaindl, "Zauberglaube bei den Rutenen in der Bukowina und Galizien," *Globus*, lxi. (1892) p. 280.

on the spot where the real cows are generally milked, taking care to stick into the ground the knife they used in carving the image. Then the wooden cow yields the witch all the milk of the cattle which are commonly milked there, while the owner of the beasts gets nothing but blood from them.

Precautions taken by the Huzuls against the witches who try to steal milk on the eve of St. George.

Hence the Huzuls take steps to guard their cows from the machinations of witches at this season. For this purpose they kindle a great fire before the house on the eve of St. George's Day, using as fuel the dung which has accumulated during the winter. Also they place on the gate-posts clods in which are stuck the branches consecrated on Palm Sunday or boughs of the silver poplar, the wood of which is deemed especially efficacious in banning fiends. Moreover, they make crosses on the doors, sprinkle the cows with mud, and fumigate them with incense or the skin of a snake. To tie red woollen threads round the necks or tails of the animals is also a safeguard against witchcraft. And in June, when the snow has melted and the cattle are led to the high mountain pastures, the herds have no sooner reached their summer quarters than the herdsman makes "living fire" by the friction of wood and drives the animals over the ashes in order to protect them against witches and other powers of evil. The fire thus kindled is kept constantly burning in the herdsman's hut till with the chill of autumn the time comes to drive the herds down the mountains again. If the fire went out in the interval, it would be an ill omen for the owner of the pastures.[1]

Sacrifice for horses in Silesia on St. George's Day.

In some parts of Silesia the might of the witches is believed to be at the highest pitch on St. George's Day. The people deem the saint very powerful in the matter of cattle-breeding and especially of horse-breeding. At the Polish village of Ostroppa, not far from Gleiwitz, a sacrifice for horses used to be offered at the little village church. It has been described by an eye-witness. Peasants on horseback streamed to the spot from all the neighbouring villages, not with the staid and solemn pace of pilgrims, but with the noise and clatter of merrymakers hastening to a revel. The sorry image of the saint, carved in wood and about an ell

[1] R. F. Kaindl, *Die Huzulen* (Vienna, 1894), pp. 62 *sq.*, 78, 88 *sq.*; *id.*, "Zauberglaube bei den Huzulen," *Globus*, lxxvi. (1899) p. 233.

high, stood in the churchyard on a table covered with a white cloth. It represented him seated on horseback and spearing the dragon. Beside it were two vessels to receive offerings of money and eggs respectively. As each farmer galloped up, he dismounted, led his horse by the bridle, knelt before the image of the saint, and prayed. After that he made his offering of money or eggs, according to his means, in the name of his horse. Then he led the beast round the church and churchyard, tethered it, and went into the church to hear mass and a sermon. Having thus paid his devotions to the saint, every man leaped into the saddle and made for the nearest public-house as fast as his horse could lay legs to the ground.[1]

Festival of St. George, as the patron of horses, at Ertringen in Bavaria.

At Ertringen, in South Bavaria, there is a chapel of St. George, where a festival of the saint used to be held on April the twenty-fourth down to the beginning of the nineteenth century. From the whole neighbourhood people streamed thither on horseback and in waggons to take part in the ceremony. More than fourteen hundred riders are said to have been present on one occasion. The foundation of the chapel was attributed to the monastery of Holy Cross Vale (*Heiligkreuztal*), and the abbot and prior with their suite attended the festival in state mounted on white horses. A burgher of Ertringen had to ride as patron in the costume of St. George, whom he represented. He alone bestrode a fiery stallion. After the celebration of high mass the horses were blessed at the chapel. Then the procession of men on horseback moved round the common lands, winding up at the parish church, where it broke up.[2] In many villages near Freiburg in Baden St. George is the patron of horses, and in some parts of Baden the saint's day (April the twenty-third) is the season when cattle are driven out to pasture for the first time in spring.[3]

The Saxons of Transylvania think that on the eve of

[1] P. Drechsler, *Sitte, Brauch und Volksglaube in Schlesien*, i. (Leipsic, 1903) pp. 106 *sq.* The authority quoted for the sacrifice is Tiede, *Merkwürdigkeiten Schlesiens* (1804), pp. 123 *sq.* It is not expressly said, but we may assume, that the sacrifice was offered on St. George's Day.

[2] A. Birlinger, *Aus Schwaben* (Wiesbaden, 1874), ii. 166. Compare *id.*, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, ii. 21 n.[1]

[3] E. H. Meyer, *Badisches Volksleben im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Strasburg, 1900), pp. 219, 408.

St. George's Day among the Saxons and Roumanians of Transylvania.

St. George's Day the witches ride on the backs of the cows into the farmyard, if branches of wild rosebushes or other thorny shrubs are not stuck over the gate of the yard to keep them out.[1] Beliefs and practices of this sort are shared by the Roumanians of Transylvania. They hold that on St. George's Day the witches keep their sabbath in sequestered spots, such as woodland glades, deserted farmsteadings, and the like. In Walachia green sods are laid on the window-sills and on the lintels of the doors to avert the uncanny crew. But in Transylvania the Roumanians, not content with setting a thorn-bush in the doorway of the house, keep watch and ward all night beside the cattle or elsewhere, to catch the witches who are at work stealing the milk from the cows. Here, as elsewhere, the day is above all the herdsman's festival. It marks the beginning of spring; the shepherds are preparing to start for the distant pastures, and they listen with all their ears to some wiseacre who tells them how, if the milk should fail in the udders of the sheep, they have only to thrash the shepherd's pouch, and every stroke will fall on the witch who is pumping the lost milk into her pails.[2]

St. George's Day the herdsman's festival among the Walachians.

The Walachians look on St. George's Day as very holy; for they are mainly a pastoral folk, and St. George is the patron of herds and herdsmen. On that day also, as well as on the day before and the day after, the Walachian numbers his herd, beginning at one and counting continuously up to the total. This he never does at any other time of the year. On this day, too, he milks his sheep for the first time into vessels which have been carefully scoured and are wreathed with flowers. Then too a cake of white meal is baked in the shape of a ring, and is rolled on the ground in sight of the herd; and from the length of its course omens are drawn as to the good or bad luck of the cattle in their summer pastures. If the herd is owned by several men, they afterwards lay hold of the ring, and break

[1] J. Haltrich, *Zur Volkskunde der Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Vienna, 1885), p. 281.

[2] W. Schmidt, *Das Jahr und seine Tage in Meinung und Brauch der Romänen Siebenbürgens* (Hermannstadt, 1866), pp. 9, 11. Compare R. F. Kaindl, "Zur Volkskunde der Rumänen in der Bukowina," *Globus*, xcii. (1907) p. 284. It does not appear whether the shepherd's pouch ("*Hirtentaschen*") in question is the real pouch or the plant of that name.

it among them, and the one who gets the largest piece will have the best luck. The milk is made into a cheese which is divided; and the pieces of the cake are given to the shepherds. In like manner the wreaths of flowers which crowned the pails are thrown into the water, and from the way in which they float down-stream the shepherds presage good or evil fortune.[1]

St. George's Day among the Bulgarians and South Slavs.

The Bulgarians seem to share the belief that cattle are especially exposed to the machinations of witches at this season, for it is a rule with them not to give away milk, butter, or cheese on the eve of St. George's Day; to do so, they say, would be to give away the profit of the milch kine.[2] They rise very early on the morning of this day, and wash themselves in the dew, that they may be healthy.[3] It is said, too, that a regular sacrifice is still offered on St. George's Day in Bulgaria. An old man kills a ram, while girls spread grass on which the blood is poured forth.[4] The intention of the sacrifice may be to make the herbage grow abundantly in the pastures. Amongst the South Slavs the twenty-third of April, St. George's Day, is the chief festival of the spring. The herdsman thinks that if his cattle are well on that day they will thrive throughout the year. As we have already seen,[5] he crowns the horns of his cows with garlands of flowers to guard them against witchcraft, and in the evening the garlands are hung on the doors of the stalls, where they remain until the next St. George's Day. Early in the morning of that day, when the herdsman drives the cows from the byres, the housewife takes salt in one hand and a potsherd with glowing coals in the other. She offers the salt to the cow, and the beast must step over the smouldering coals, on which various kinds of roses are smoking. This deprives the witches of all power to harm the cow. On the eve or the morning of the day old women cut thistles and fasten them to the doors and gates of the farm; and they make crosses with cow's dung on the doors of the byres to ward off the witches. Many knock great nails into the

[1] A. und A. Schott, *Walachische Maehrchen* (Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1845), pp. 299 *sq.*

[2] A. Strausz, *Die Bulgaren* (Leipsic, 1898), p. 287.

[3] A. Strausz, *op. cit.* p. 337.

[4] W. R. S. Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 230.

[5] Above, pp. 126 *sq.*

Precautions taken against witchcraft by the South Slavs on St. George's Day.

doors, which is thought to be a surer preventive even than thistles. In certain districts the people cut thistles before sunrise and put some on each other's heads, some on the fences, the windows, the doors, and some in the shape of wreaths round the necks of the cows, in order that the witches may be powerless to harm man and beast, house and homestead, throughout the year. If, nevertheless, a witch should contrive to steal through the garden fence and into the byre, it is all over with the cows. A good housewife will also go round her house and cattle-stalls early in the morning of the fateful day and sprinkle them with holy water. Another approved means of driving the witches away is furnished by the froth which is shot from the spokes of a revolving mill-wheel; for common-sense tells us that just as the froth flies from the wheel, so the witches will fly from our house, if only we apply the remedy in the right way. And the right way is this. On the eve of St. George's Day you must send a child to fetch froth from the mill, three stones from three cross-roads, three twigs of a blackberry bush, three sprigs of beech, and three shoots of a wild vine. Then you insert the plants in a buttered roll, put the stones in the fire, boil the froth, toast the buttered roll over the glowing stones, and speak these words: "The blackberry twigs gather together, the beeches pull together, but the foam from the wheel shakes all evil away." Do this, and you may take my word for it that no witch will be able to charm away the milk from your cows.[1]

Precautions of the same sort are taken against wolves and witches whenever the cattle are driven out to pasture for the first time in spring.

Thus on the whole the festival of St. George at the present day, like the Parilia of ancient Italy, is a ceremony intended to guard the cattle against their real and their imaginary foes, the wolves and the witches, at the critical season when the flocks and herds are driven out to pasture for the first time in spring. Precautions of the same sort are naturally taken by the superstitious herdsman whenever, the winter being over, he turns his herds out into the open for the first time, whether it be on St. George's Day or not. Thus in Prussia and Lithuania, when the momentous morning broke, the herd-boy ran from house to house in the

[1] F. S. Krauss, *Volksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, pp. 125-127; *id.*, *Kroatien und Slavonien* (Vienna, 1889), pp. 105 *sq.*

village, knocked at the windows, and cried: "Put out the fire, spin not, reel not, but drive the cattle out!" Meantime the herdsman had fetched sand from the church, which he strewed on the road by which the beasts must go from the farmyard. At the same time he laid a woodcutter's axe in every doorway, with the sharp edge outwards, over which the cows had to step. Then he walked in front of them, speaking never a word, and paying no heed to the herd, which was kept together by the herd-boys alone. His thoughts were occupied by higher things, for he was busy making crosses, blessing the cattle, and murmuring prayers, till the pastures were reached. The axe in the doorway signified that the wolf should flee from the herd as from the sharp edge of the axe: the sand from the church betokened that the cattle should not disperse and wander in the meadows, but should keep as close together as people in church.[1]

Swedish observances at turning out the cattle to graze after their winter confinement.

In Sweden the cattle are confined almost wholly to their stalls during the long and dreary northern winter; and the first day in spring on which they are turned out into the forest to graze has been from time immemorial a great popular festival. The time of its celebration depends more or less on the mildness or severity of the season. For the most part it takes place about the middle of May. On the preceding evening bonfires are kindled everywhere in the forest, because so far as their flickering light extends the cattle will be safe from the attacks of wild beasts throughout the summer. For the same reason people go about the woods that night firing guns, blowing horns, and making all kinds of discordant noises. The mode of celebrating the festival, which in some places is called the feast of flowers, varies somewhat in different provinces. In Dalsland the cattle are driven home that day from pasture at noon instead of at evening. Early in the morning the herd-boy repairs with the herd to the forest, where he decks their horns with wreaths of flowers and provides himself with a wand of the rowan or mountain-ash. During his absence the girls pluck flowers, weave them into a garland,

[1] W. J. A. Tettau und J. D. H. Temme, *Die Volkssagen Ostpreussens, Litthauens und Westpreussens* (Berlin, 1837), p. 263.

Swedish observances at turning out the cattle to pasture for the first time in summer.

and hang it on the gate through which the cattle must pass on their return from the forest. When they come back, the herd-boy takes the garland from the gate, fastens it to the top of his wand, and marches with it at the head of his beasts to the hamlet. Afterwards the wand with the garland on it is set up on the muck-heap, where it remains all the summer. The intention of these ceremonies is not said, but on the analogy of the preceding customs we may conjecture that both the flowers and the rowan-wand are supposed to guard the cattle against witchcraft. A little later in the season, when the grass is well grown in the forest, most of the cattle are sent away to the *säter*, or summer pastures, of which every hamlet commonly has one or more. These are clearings in the woods, and may be many miles distant from the village. In Dalecarlia the departure usually takes place in the first week of June. It is a great event for the pastoral folk. An instinctive longing seems to awaken both in the people and the beasts. The preparations of the women are accompanied by the bleating of the sheep and goats and the lowing of the cattle, which make incessant efforts to break through the pens near the house where they are shut up. Two or more girls, according to the size of the herd, attend the cattle on their migration and stay with them all the summer. Every animal as it goes forth, whether cow, sheep, or goat, is marked on the brow with a cross by means of a tar-brush in order to protect it against evil spirits. But more dangerous foes lie in wait for the cattle in the distant pastures, where bears and wolves not uncommonly rush forth on them from the woods. On such occasions the herd-girls often display the utmost gallantry, belabouring the ferocious beasts with sticks, and risking their own lives in defence of the herds.[1]

These modern parallels throw light on some features of the Parilia.

The foregoing customs, practised down to modern times by shepherds and herdsmen with a full sense of their meaning, throw light on some features of the Parilia which might otherwise remain obscure. They seem to shew that when the Italian shepherd hung green boughs on his folds,

[1] L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, pp. 246-251; A. Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*,[2] pp. 163 *sq.*

and garlands on his doors, he did so in order to keep the witches from the ewes; and that in fumigating his flocks with sulphur and driving them over a fire of straw he sought to interpose a fiery barrier between them and the powers of evil, whether these were conceived as witches or mischievous spirits.

Green George a personification of a spirit of trees or of vegetation in general.

But St. George is more than a patron of cattle. The mummer who dresses up in green boughs on the saint's day and goes by the name of Green George[1] clearly personifies the saint himself, and such a disguise is appropriate only to a spirit of trees or of vegetation in general. As if to make this quite clear, the Slavs of Carinthia carry a tree decked with flowers in the procession in which Green George figures; and the ceremonies in which the leaf-clad masker takes a part plainly indicate that he is thought to stand in intimate connexion with rain as well as with cattle. This counterpart of our Jack in the Green is known in some parts of Russia, and the Slovenes call him Green George. Dressed in leaves and flowers, he appears in public on St. George's Day carrying a lighted torch in one hand and a pie in the other. Thus arrayed he goes out to the cornfields, followed by girls, who sing appropriate songs. A circle of brushwood is then lighted, and the pie is set in the middle of it. All who share in the ceremony sit down around the fire, and the pie is divided among them. The observance has perhaps a bearing on the cattle as well as on the cornfields, for in some parts of Russia when the herds go out to graze for the first time in spring a pie baked in the form of a sheep is cut up by the chief herdsman, and the bits are kept as a cure for the ills to which sheep are subject.[2]

"Ringing out the grass" on St. George's Day.

At Schwaz, an old Tyrolese town in the lower valley of the Inn, young lads assemble on St. George's Day, which is here the twenty-fourth of April, and having provided themselves with bells, both large and small, they go in procession ringing them to the various farms of the neighbourhood, where they are welcomed and given milk to drink. These processions, which take place in other parts

[1] See above, pp. 75 *sq.*

[2] W. R. S. Ralston, *Russian Folk-tales*, p. 345.

of the Tyrol also, go by the name of "ringing out the grass" (*Grasausläuten*), and it is believed that wherever the bell-ringers come, there the grass grows and the crops will be abundant. This beneficial effect appears to be ascribed to the power of the bells to disperse the evil spirits, which are thought to be rampant on St. George's Day. For the same purpose of averting demoniac influence at this time, people in Salzburg and the neighbouring districts of Upper Austria go in procession round the fields and stick palm branches or small crosses in them; also they fasten branches of the *Prunus Padus*, L., at the windows of the houses and cattle-stalls.[1] In some parts of Germany the farmer looks to the height of his corn on St. George's Day, expecting that it should then be high enough to hide a crow.[2]

St. George supposed to get barren women with child.

Even when we have said that St. George of Eastern Europe represents an old heathen deity of sheep, cattle, horses, wolves, vegetation, and rain, we have not exhausted all the provinces over which he is supposed to bear sway. According to an opinion which appears to be widely spread, he has the power of blessing barren women with offspring. This belief is clearly at the root of the South Slavonian custom, described above, whereby a childless woman hopes to become a mother by wearing a shirt which has hung all night on a fruitful tree on St. George's Eve.[3] Similarly, a Bulgarian wife who desires to have a child will strike off a serpent's head on St. George's Day, put a bean in its mouth, and lay the head in a hollow tree or bury it in the earth at a spot so far from the village that the crowing of the cocks cannot be heard there. If the bean buds, her wishes will be granted.[4]

[1] Marie Andree-Eysn, *Volkskundliches aus dem bayrisch-österreichischen Alpengebiet* (Brunswick, 1910), pp. 180-182.

[2] E. H. Meyer, *Badisches Volksleben im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Strasburg, 1900), p. 423; K. Freiherr von Leoprechting, *Aus dem Lechrain* (Munich, 1855), p. 168.

[3] See above, pp. 56 *sq.*

[4] A. Strausz, *Die Bulgaren*, pp. 337, 385 *sq.* There seems to be a special connexion between St. George and serpents. In Bohemia and Moravia it is thought that up to the twenty-third of April serpents are innocuous, and only get their poison on the saint's day. See J. V. Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, §§ 326, 580, pp. 51, 81; W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, p. 323. Various other charms are effected by means of serpents on this

Love-charms practised among the Slavs on St. George's Day.

It is natural to suppose that a saint who can bestow offspring can also bring fond lovers together. Hence among the Slavs, with whom St. George is so popular, his day is one of the seasons at which youths and maidens resort to charms and divination in order to win or discover the affections of the other sex. Thus, to take examples, a Bohemian way of gaining a girl's love is as follows. You catch a frog on St. George's Day, wrap it in a white cloth, and put it in an ant-hill after sunset or about midnight. The creature croaks terribly while the ants are gnawing the flesh from its bones. When silence reigns again, you will find nothing left of the frog but one little bone in the shape of a hook and another little bone in the shape of a shovel. Take the hook-shaped bone, go to the girl of your choice, and hook her dress with the bone, and she will fall over head and ears in love with you. If you afterwards tire of her, you have only to touch her with the shovel-shaped bone, and her affection will vanish as quickly as it came.[1] Again, at Ceklinj, in Crnagora, maidens go at break of day on St. George's morning to a well to draw water, and look down into its dark depth till tears fill their eyes and they fancy they see in the water the image of their future husband.[2] At Krajina, in Servia, girls who would pry into the book of fate gather flowers in the meadows on the eve of St. George, make them up into nosegays, and give to the nosegays the names of the various lads whose hearts they would win. Late at night they place the flowers by stealth under the open sky, on the roof or elsewhere, and leave them there till daybreak. The lad on whose nosegay most dew has fallen will love the girl most truly throughout the year. Sometimes mischievous young men secretly watch these doings, and steal the bunches of flowers, which makes sore hearts among the girls.[3] Once more, in wooded districts of Bohemia a Czech maiden will sometimes go out on St. George's Eve into an oak or beech forest and catch a

day. Thus if you tear out the tongue of a live snake on St. George's Day, put it in a ball of wax, and lay the ball under your tongue, you will be able to talk down anybody. See J. V. Grohmann, *op. cit.*, §§ 576, 1169, pp. 81, 166.

[1] J. V. Grohmann, *op. cit.* § 1463, p. 210.

[2] F. S. Krauss, *Sitte und Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 175.

[3] F. S. Krauss, *op. cit.* pp. 175 *sq.*

young wild pigeon. It may be a ring-dove or a wood-pigeon, but it must always be a male. She takes the bird home with her, and covers it with a sieve or shuts it up in a box that nobody may know what she is about. Having kept and fed it till it can fly, she rises very early in the morning, while the household is still asleep, and goes with the dove to the hearth. Here she presses the bird thrice to her bare breast, above her heart, and then lets it fly away up the chimney, while she says :—

"*Out of the chimney, dove,*
Fly, fly from here.
Take me, dear Hans, my love,
None, none so dear.

"*Fly to your rocks, fair dove,*
Fly to your lea.
So may I get, my love,
None, none but thee."[1]

St. George in Syria esteemed a giver of offspring to childless women.

In the East, also, St. George is reputed to be a giver of offspring to barren women, and in this character he is revered by Moslems as well as Christians. His shrines may be found in all parts of Syria; more places are associated with him than with any other saint in the calendar. The most famous of his sanctuaries is at Kalat el Hosn, in Northern Syria. Childless women of all sects resort to it in order that the saint may remove their reproach. Some people shrug their shoulders when the shrine is mentioned in this connexion. Yet many Mohammedan women who desired offspring used to repair to it with the full consent of their husbands. Nowadays the true character of the place is beginning to be perceived, and many Moslems have forbidden their wives to visit it.[2] Such beliefs and practices lend some colour to the theory that in the East the saint has taken the place of Tammuz or Adonis.[3]

The Syrian St. George may represent Tammuz.

[1] Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, pp. 194 *sq.*; J. V. Grohmann, *op. cit.*, § 554, p. 77.

[2] S. J. Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion To-day*, pp. 83 *sq.*, 118 *sq.*

[3] S. Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, pp. 278 *sqq.* The authority for this identification is the nominal translator, but real author, of the work called *The Agriculture of the Nabataeans*. See D. A. Chwolson, *Über Tammuz und die Menschenverehrung bei den alten Babyloniern* (St. Petersburg, 1860), pp. 56 *sq.* Although *The Agriculture of the Nabataeans* appears to be a forgery (see above, p.

In Europe St. George seems to have displaced an old Aryan god of the spring, such as the Lithuanian Pergrubius.

But we cannot suppose that the worship of Tammuz has been transplanted to Europe and struck its roots deep among the Slavs and other peoples in the eastern part of our continent. Rather amongst them we must look for a native Aryan deity who now masquerades in the costume of the Cappadocian saint and martyr St. George. Perhaps we may find him in the Pergrubius of the Lithuanians, a people who retained their heathen religion later than any other branch of the Aryan stock in Europe. This Pergrubius is described as "the god of the spring," as "he who makes leaves and grass to grow," or more fully as "the god of flowers, plants, and all buds." On St. George's Day, the twenty-third of April, the heathen Prussians and Lithuanians offered a sacrifice to Pergrubius. A priest, who bore the title of *Wurschait*, held in his hand a mug of beer, while he thus addressed the deity: "Thou drivest away the winter; thou bringest back the pleasant spring. By thee the fields and gardens are green, by thee the groves and the woods put forth leaves." According to another version, the prayer ran as follows: "Thou drivest the winter away, and givest in all lands leaves and grass. We pray thee that thou wouldst make our corn to grow and wouldst put down all weeds." After praying thus, the priest drank the beer, holding the mug with his teeth, but not touching it with his hands. Then without handling it he threw the mug backward over his head. Afterwards it was picked up and filled again, and all present drank out of it. They also sang a hymn in praise of Pergrubius, and then spent the whole day in feasting and dancing.[1] Thus it appears that Pergrubius was a Lithuanian god of the spring, who caused the grass and the

100, note 2), the identification of the oriental St. George with Tammuz may nevertheless be correct.

[1] J. Maeletius (Menecius), "De sacrificiis et idolatria veterum Borussorum Livonum aliarumque vicinarum gentium," *Mitteilungen der Litterarischen Gesellschaft Masovia*, Heft 8 (Lötzen, 1902), pp. 185, 187, 200 *sq.*; *id.* in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, ii. (Riga and Leipsic, 1848), pp. 389, 390; J. Lasicius, "De diis Samagitarum caeterorumque Sarmatarum," ed. W. Mannhardt, in *Magazin herausgegeben von der Lettisch-literärischen Gesellschaft*, xiv. (1868) pp. 95 *sq.* The first form of the prayer to Pergrubius is from the Latin, the second from the German, version of Maeletius's (Jan Malecki's) work. The description of Pergrubius as "he who makes leaves and grass to grow" ("*der lest wachssen laub unnd gras*") is also from the German. According to M. Praetorius, Pergrubius was a god of husbandry (*Deliciae Prussicae*, Berlin, 1871, p. 25).

corn to grow and the trees to burst into leaf. In this he resembles Green George, the embodiment of the fresh vegetation of spring, whose leaf-clad representative still plays his pranks on the very same day in some parts of Eastern Europe. Nothing, indeed, is said of the relation of Pergrubius to cattle, and so far the analogy between him and St. George breaks down. But our accounts of the old Lithuanian mythology are few and scanty; if we knew more about Pergrubius we might find that as a god or personification of spring he, like St. George, was believed to exert all the quickening powers of that genial season—in other words, that his beneficent activity was not confined to clothing the bare earth with verdure, but extended to the care of the teeming flocks and herds, as well as to the propagation of mankind. Certainly it is not easy to draw a sharp line of division between the god who attends to cattle and the god who provides the food on which they subsist.

The Roman equivalent of St. George was Pales, who may have been personated by the king at the Parilia.

Thus Pergrubius may perhaps have been the northern equivalent of the pastoral god Pales, who was worshipped by the Romans only two days earlier at the spring festival of the Parilia. It will be remembered that the Roman shepherds prayed to Pales for grass and leaves, the very things which it was the part of Pergrubius to supply. Is it too bold to conjecture that in rural districts of Italy Pales may have been personated by a leaf-clad man, and that in the early age of Rome the duty of thus representing the god may have been one of the sacred functions of the king? The conjecture at least suggests a reason for the tradition that Numa, the typical priestly king of Rome, was born on the day of the Parilia.

CHAPTER XX

THE WORSHIP OF THE OAK

§ 1. *The Diffusion of the Oak in Europe*

The Latin kings represented Jupiter, the god of the oak, the sky, the thunder, and the rain.

IN a preceding chapter some reasons were given for thinking that the early Latin kings posed as living representatives of Jupiter, the god of the oak, the sky, the rain, and the thunder, and that in this capacity they attempted to exercise the fertilising functions which were ascribed to the god. The probability of this view will be strengthened if it can be proved that the same god was worshipped under other names by other branches of the Aryan stock in Europe, and that the Latin kings were not alone in arrogating to themselves his powers and attributes. In this chapter I propose briefly to put together a few of the principal facts which point to this conclusion.

Why should the god of the oak be also the god of the sky, the thunder, and the rain?

But at the outset a difficulty presents itself. To us the oak, the sky, the rain, and the thunder appear things totally distinct from each other. How did our forefathers come to group them together and imagine them as attributes of one and the same god? A connexion may be seen between the sky, the rain, and the thunder; but what has any of them to do with the oak? Yet one of these apparently disparate elements was probably the original nucleus round which in time the others gathered and crystallised into the composite conception of Jupiter. Accordingly we must ask, Which of them was the original centre of attraction? If men started with the idea of an oak-god, how came they to enlarge his kingdom by annexing to it the province of the sky, the rain, and the thunder? If, on the other hand, they

set out with the notion of a god of the sky, the rain, and the thunder, or any one of them, why should they have added the oak to his attributes? The oak is terrestrial; the sky, the thunder, and the rain are celestial or aerial. What is the bridge between the two?

In the composite character of Jupiter the oak is probably primary, the sky, the rain, and the thunder secondary and derivative.

In the sequel I shall endeavour to shew that on the principle of primitive thought the evolution of a sky-god from an oak-god is more easily conceivable than the converse; and if I succeed, it becomes probable that in the composite character of Jupiter the oak is primary and original, the sky, the rain, and the thunder secondary and derivative.

Europe covered with vast oak forests in prehistoric times.

We have seen that long before the dawn of history Europe was covered with vast primaeval woods, which must have exercised a profound influence on the thought as well as on the life of our rude ancestors who dwelt dispersed under the gloomy shadow or in the open glades and clearings of the forest.[1] Now, of all the trees which composed these woods the oak appears to have been both the commonest and the most useful. The proof of this is drawn partly from the statements of classical writers, partly from the remains of ancient villages built on piles in lakes and marshes, and partly from the oak forests which have been found embedded in peat-bogs.

Remains of oak forests found in peat-bogs.

These bogs, which attain their greatest development in Northern Europe, but are met with also in the central and southern parts of the Continent, have preserved as in a museum the trees and plants which sprang up and flourished after the end of the glacial epoch. Thus in Scotland the peat, which occupies wide areas both in the highlands and lowlands, almost everywhere covers the remains of forests, among which the commoner trees are pine, oak, and birch. The oaks are of great size, and are found at heights above the sea such as the tree would not now naturally attain to. Equally remarkable for their size are the pines, but though they also had a wider distribution than at present, they appear not to have formed any extensive forests at the lowest levels of the country. Still, remains of them have been dug up in many lowland peat-mosses, where the bulk

[1] See above, pp. 7 *sq.*

of the buried timber is oak.[1] When Hatfield Moss in Yorkshire was drained, there were found in it trunks of oak a hundred feet long and as black as ebony. One giant actually measured a hundred and twenty feet in length, with a diameter of twelve feet at the root and six feet at the top. No such tree now exists in Europe.[2] Sunken forests and peat occur at many places on the coasts of England, especially on low shelving shores where the land falls away with a gentle slope to the sea. These submerged areas were once mud flats which, as the sea retreated from them, gradually became clothed with dense forests, chiefly of oak and Scotch fir, though ash, yew, alder, and other trees sooner or later mingled with them.[3] The great peat-bogs of Ireland shew that there was a time when vast woods of oak and yew covered the country, the oak growing on the hills up to a height of four hundred feet or thereabout above the sea, while at higher levels deal was the prevailing timber. Human relics have often been discovered in these Irish bogs, and ancient roadways made of oak have also come to light.[4] In the peat-bog near Abbeville, in the valley of the Somme, trunks of oak have been dug up fourteen feet thick, a diameter rarely met with outside the tropics in the old Continent.[5]

Former oak woods of Denmark and Scandinavia.

At present the woods of Denmark consist for the most part of magnificent beeches, which flourish here as luxuriantly as anywhere in the world. Oaks are much rarer and appear to be on the decline. Yet the evidence of the peat-bogs proves that before the advent of the beech the country was overspread with dense forests of tall and stately oaks. It was during the ascendency of the oak in the woods that bronze seems to have become known in Denmark; for swords and shields of that metal, now in the museum of Copenhagen, have been taken out of peat in which oaks abound. Yet at a still earlier period the oak had been preceded by the pine or Scotch fir in the Danish forests; and

[1] J. Geikie, *Prehistoric Europe* (Edinburgh, 1881), pp. 420 *sq.*, 482 *sqq.*, 495.

[2] R. Munro, *Ancient Scottish Lake Dwellings or Crannogs* (Edinburgh, 1882), p. 266, quoting Aiton's *Treatise on the Origin, Qualities, and Cultivation of Moss Earth.*

[3] J. Geikie, *op. cit.* pp. 432-436.

[4] J. Geikie, *op. cit.* pp. 461-463.

[5] A. von Humboldt, *Kosmos*, i. (Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1845) p. 298. The passage is mistranslated in the English version edited by E. Sabine.

the discovery of neolithic implements in the peat-bogs shews that savages of the Stone Age had their homes in these old pine woods as well as in the later forests of oak. Some antiquaries are of opinion that the Iron Age in Denmark began with the coming of the beech, but of this there is no evidence; for aught we know to the contrary the beautiful beech forests may date back to the Age of Bronze.[1] The peat-bogs of Norway abound in buried timber; and in many of them the trees occur in two distinct layers. The lower of these layers consists chiefly of oak, hazel, ash, and other deciduous trees; the upper is composed of Scotch firs and birches. In the bogs of Sweden also the oak forests underlie the pine forests.[2] However, it appears to be doubtful whether Scandinavia was inhabited in the age of the oak woods. Neolithic tools have indeed been found in the peat, but generally not deeper down than two feet or so; hence one antiquary infers that in these bogs not more than two feet of peat has formed within historical times.[3] But negative evidence on such a point goes for little, as only a small portion of the bogs can have been explored.

The ancient lake dwellings of Europe were built to a great extent on oaken piles.

Unequivocal proof of the prevalence of the oak and its usefulness to man in early times is furnished by the remains of the pile villages which have been discovered in many of the lakes of Europe. In the British Islands the piles and the platforms on which these crannogs or lake dwellings rested appear to have been generally of oak, though fir, birch, and other trees were sometimes used in their construction. Speaking of the Irish and Scotch crannogs a learned antiquary remarks: "Every variety of structure observed in the one country is to be found in the other, from the purely artificial island, framed of oak-beams, mortised together, to the natural island, artificially fortified or enlarged by girdles of oak-piles or ramparts of loose stones."[4] Canoes hollowed out of trunks of oak have been found both in the Scotch and in the Irish crannogs.[5] In

[1] Sir Charles Lyell, *The Geological Evidence of the Antiquity of Man*[4] (London, 1873), pp. 8, 17, 415 *sq.*; Sir John Lubbock (Lord Avebury), *Prehistoric Times*[5] (London, 1890), pp. 251, 387; J. Geikie, *op. cit.* pp. 485-487.

[2] J. Geikie, *op. cit.* pp. 487 *sq.*

[3] J. Geikie, *op. cit.* p. 489.

[4] R. Munro, *Ancient Scottish Lake Dwellings*, p. 20, quoting the article "Crannoges" in *Chambers's Encyclopædia*.

[5] R. Munro, *op. cit.* p. 23. For

the lake dwellings of Switzerland and Central Europe the piles are very often of oak, but by no means as uniformly so as in the British Islands; fir, birch, alder, ash, elm, and other timber were also employed for the purpose.[1] That the inhabitants of these villages subsisted partly on the produce of the oak, even after they had adopted agriculture, is proved by the acorns which have been found in their dwellings along with wheat, barley, and millet, as well as beech-nuts, hazel-nuts, and the remains of chestnuts and cherries.[2] In the valley of the Po the framework of logs and planks which supports the prehistoric villages is most commonly of elm wood, but evergreen oak and chestnut were also used; and the abundance of oaks is attested by the great quantities of acorns which were dug up in these settlements. As the acorns were sometimes found stored in earthenware vessels, it appears that they were eaten by the people as well as by their pigs.[3]

The inhabitants of the lake dwellings subsisted partly on acorns.

The evidence of classical writers proves that great oak forests still existed down to their time in various parts of Europe. Thus the Veneti on the Atlantic coast of Brittany made their flat-bottomed boats out of oak timber, of which, we are told, there was abundance in their country.[4] Pliny informs us that, while the whole of Germany was covered with cool and shady woods, the loftiest trees were to be seen not far from the country of the Chauci, who inhabited the coast of the North Sea. Among these giants of the forest he speaks especially of the oaks which grew on the banks of two lakes. When the waves had undermined their roots, the oaks are said to have torn away great portions of the bank and floated like islands on the lakes.[5] The same

Evidence of classical writers as to the oak forests of Europe.

The oak woods of Germany.

more evidence of the use of oak in British crannogs, see *id.*, *op. cit.* pp. 6-8, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 *sq.*, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 51 *sq.*, 53, 61, 62, 97, 122, 208, 262, 291-299; *id. The Lake Dwellings of Europe* (London, Paris, and Melbourne, 1890), pp. 350, 364, 372, 377.

[1] F. Keller, *The Lake Dwellings of Switzerland and other Parts of Europe*[2] (London, 1878), i. 37, 48, 65, 87, 93, 105, 110, 129, 156, 186, 194, 201, 214, 264, 268, 289, 300, 320, 375, 382, 434, 438, 440, 444, 446, 465, 639.

[2] F. Keller, *op. cit.* i. 332, 334, 375, 586.

[3] W. Helbig, *Die Italiker in der Poebene* (Leipsic, 1879), pp. 12, 16 *sq.* 26. The bones of cattle, pigs, goats, and sheep prove that these animals were bred by the people of the Italian pile villages. See W. Helbig, *op. cit.* p. 14.

[4] Strabo, v. 4. 1, p. 195.

[5] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 5.

writer speaks of the vast Hercynian wood of Germany as an oak forest, old as the world, untouched for ages, and passing wonderful in its immortality. So huge were the trees, he says, that when their roots met they were forced up above ground in the shape of arches, through which a troop of horse could ride as through an open gate.[1] His testimony as to the kind of trees which composed this famous forest is confirmed by its name, which seems to mean no more than "oak wood."[2] In the second century before our era oak forests were still so common in the valley of the Po that the herds of swine which browsed on the acorns sufficed to supply the greater part of the demand for pork throughout Italy, although nowhere in the world, according to Polybius, were more pigs butchered to feed the gods, the people, and the army.[3] Elsewhere the same historian describes the immense herds of swine which roamed the Italian oak forests, especially on the coasts of Tuscany and Lombardy. In order to sort out the different droves when they mingled with each other in the woods, each swineherd carried a horn, and when he wound a blast on it all his own pigs came trooping to him with such vehemence that nothing could stop them; for all the herds knew the note of their own horn. In the oak forests of Greece this device was unknown, and the swineherds there had harder work to come by their own when the beasts had strayed far in the woods, as they were apt to do in autumn while the acorns were falling.[4] Down to the beginning of our era oak woods were interspersed among the olive groves and vineyards of the Sabine country in central Italy.[5] Among the beautiful woods which clothed the Heraean mountains in Sicily the oaks were particularly remarked for their stately growth and the great size of their acorns.[6] In the second century after

The oak woods of ancient Italy and Greece.

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 6 "*Hercyniae silvae roborum vastitas . . . glandiferi maxime generis omnes, quibus honos apud Romanos perpetuus.*"

[2] H. Hirt, "Die Urheimat der Indogermanen," *Indogermanische Forschungen*, i. (1892), p. 480; P. Kretschmer, *Einleitung in die Geschichte der griechische Sprache* (Göttingen, 1896), p. 81; O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der Inaogermanischen Altertumskunde, s.v.* "Eiche," p. 164. This etymology assumes that *Hercynia* represents an original *Perkunia*, and is connected with the Latin *quercus*. However, the derivation is not undisputed. See O. Schrader, *op. cit.* pp. 1015 *sq.*

[3] Polybius, ii. 15. Compare Strabo, v. 1. 12, p. 218.

[4] Polybius, xii. 4.

[5] Strabo, v. 3. 1, p. 228.

[6] Diodorus Siculus, iv. 84.

Christ the oak forests of Arcadia still harboured wild boars, bears, and huge tortoises in their dark recesses.[1]

The oak still the chief forest tree of Europe.

Even now the predominance of the oak as the principal forest tree of Europe has hardly passed away. Thus we are told that among the leaf-bearing trees of Greece, as opposed to the conifers, the oak still plays by far the most important part in regard both to the number of the individuals and the number of the species.[2] And the British oak in particular (*Quercus robur*) is yet the prevailing tree in most of the woods of France, Germany, and southern Russia, while in England the coppice and the few fragments of natural forest still left are mainly composed of this species.[3]

In Europe acorns have been used as human food both in ancient and modern times.

Thus the old classical tradition that men lived upon acorns before they learned to till the ground[4] may very well be founded on fact. Indeed acorns were still an article of diet in some parts of southern Europe within historical times. Speaking of the prosperity of the righteous, Hesiod declares that for them the earth bears much substance, and the oak on the mountains puts forth acorns.[5] The Arcadians in their oak-forests were proverbial for eating acorns,[6] but not the acorns of all oaks, only those of a particular sort.[7] Pliny tells us that in his day acorns still constituted the wealth of many nations, and that in time of dearth they were ground and baked into bread.[8] According to Strabo, the mountaineers of Spain subsisted on acorn bread for two-thirds of the year;[9] and in that country acorns were served up as a second course even at the meals of the well-to-do.[10] In the same regions the same practice

[1] Pausanias, viii. 23. 8 *sq.* For notices of forests and groves of oak in Arcadia and other parts of Greece, see *id.* ii. 11. 4, iii. 10. 6, vii. 26. 10, viii. 11. 1, viii. 25. 1, viii. 42. 12, viii. 54. 5, ix. 3. 4, ix. 24. 5. The oaks in the Arcadian forests were of various species (*id.* viii. 12. 1).

[2] C. Neumann und J. Partsch, *Physikalische Geographie von Griechenland* (Breslau, 1885), p. 378.

[3] *Encyclopædia Britannica*,[9] xvii. 690.

[4] Virgil, *Georg.*, i. 7 *sq.*, 147-149; Lucretius, v. 939 *sq.*, 965; Tibullus, ii. 1. 37 *sq.*, ii. 3. 69; Ovid, *Metam.* i. 106; *id.*, *Fasti*, i. 675 *sq.*, iv. 399-402; Juvenal, xiv. 182-184; Aulus Gellius, v. 6. 12; Dionysius Halicarnas. *Ars rhetorica*, i. 6, vol. v. p. 230, ed. Reiske; Pollux, i. 234; Poryphry, *De abstinentia*, ii. 5.

[5] Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 232 *sq.*

[6] Herodotus, i. 66.

[7] Pausanias, viii. 1, 6. According to Pausanias it was only the acorns of the *phegos* oak which the Arcadians ate.

[8] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 15.

[9] Strabo, iii. 3. 7, p. 155.

[10] Pliny, *l.c.*

Acorns as food in modern Europe.

has survived to modern times. The commonest and finest oak of modern Greece is the *Quercus Aegilops*, with a beautiful crown of leaves, and the peasants eat its acorns both roasted and raw.[1] The sweeter acorns of the *Quercus Ballota* also serve them as food, especially in Arcadia.[2] In Spain people eat the acorns of the evergreen oak (*Quercus Ilex*), which are known as *bellotas*, and are said to be much larger and more succulent than the produce of the British oak. The duchess in *Don Quixote* writes to Sancho's wife to send her some of them. But oaks are now few and far between in La Mancha.[3] Even in England and France acorns have been boiled and eaten by the poor as a substitute for bread in time of dearth.[4] And naturally the use of acorns as food for swine has also lasted into modern times. It is on acorns that those hogs are fattened in Estremadura which make the famous Montanches hams.[5] Large herds of swine in all the great oak woods of Germany depend on acorns for their autumn subsistence; and in the remaining royal forests of England the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages still claim their ancient right of *pannage*, turning their hogs into the woods in October and November.[6]

§ 2. *The Aryan God of the Oak and the Thunder*[7]

Thus we may conclude that the primitive Aryans of Europe lived among oak woods, used oak sticks for the lighting of their fires, and oak timber for the construction of

[1] C. Neumann und J. Partsch, *Physikalische Geographie von Griechenland*, p. 379.

[2] C. Neumann and J. Partsch, *op. cit.*, p. 382, note.

[3] Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, part ii. ch. 50, vol. iv. p. 133 of H. E. Watts's translation, with the translator's note (new edition, London, 1895); Neumann und Partsch, *op. cit.* p. 380; P. Wagler, *Die Eiche in alter und neuer Zeit*, i. (Wurzen, 1891) p. 35. The passage in *Don Quixote* was pointed out to me by my friend Mr. W. Wyse.

[4] *Encyclopædia Britannica*,[9] xvii. 692.

[5] H. E. Watts, *loc. cit.*

[6] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *l.c.*

[7] To avoid misapprehension, I desire to point out that I am not here concerned with the evolution of Aryan religion in general, but only with that of a small, though important part of it, to wit, the worship of a particular kind of tree. To write a general history of Aryan religion in all its many aspects as a worship of nature, of the dead, and so forth, would be a task equally beyond my powers and my ambition. Still less should I dream of writing a universal history of religion. The "general work" referred to in the preface to the first edition of *The Golden Bough* is a book of far humbler scope.

their villages, their roads, their canoes, fed their swine on acorns, and themselves subsisted in part on the same simple diet. No wonder, then, if the tree from which they received so many benefits should play an important part in their religion, and should be invested with a sacred character. We have seen that the worship of trees has been world-wide, and that, beginning with a simple reverence and dread of the tree as itself animated by a powerful spirit, it has gradually grown into a cult of tree gods and tree goddesses, who with the advance of thought become more and more detached from their old home in the trees, and assume the character of sylvan deities and powers of fertility in general, to whom the husbandman looks not merely for the prosperity of his crops, but for the fecundity of his cattle and his women. Where this evolution has taken place it has necessarily been slow and long. Though it is convenient to distinguish in theory between the worship of trees and the worship of gods of the trees, it is impossible to draw a hard and fast line between them in practice, and to say, "Here the one begins and the other ends." Such distinctions, however useful they may be as heads of classification to the student, evade in general the duller wit of the tree worshipper. We cannot therefore hope to lay our finger on that precise point in the history of the Aryans when they ceased to worship the oak for its own sake, and began to worship a god of the oak. That point, if it were ideally possible to mark it, had doubtless been left far behind them by the more intelligent, at least, of our forefathers before they emerged into the light of history. We must be content for the most part to find among them gods of whom the oak was an attribute or sacred adjunct rather than the essence. If we wish to find the original worship of the tree itself we must go for it to the ignorant peasantry of to-day, not to the enlightened writers of antiquity. Further, it is to be borne in mind that while all oaks were probably the object of superstitious awe, so that the felling of any of them for timber or firewood would be attended with ceremonies designed to appease the injured spirit of the tree,[1] only certain particular groves or individual oaks would in general receive that measure of

The many benefits received by the ancient Aryans from the oak naturally led them to worship the tree.

The worship of the tree itself gradually grew into a worship of the god of the tree, but no sharp line of distinction can be drawn between the two.

[1] For examples of such ceremonies, see above, pp. 18-20, 34-38.

homage which we should term worship. The reasons which led men to venerate some trees more than others might be various. Amongst them the venerable age and imposing size of a giant oak would naturally count for much. And any other striking peculiarity which marked a tree off from its fellows would be apt to attract the attention, and to concentrate on itself the vague superstitious awe of the savage. We know, for example, that with the Druids the growth of mistletoe on an oak was a sign that the tree was especially sacred; and the rarity of this feature—for mistletoe does not commonly grow on oaks—would enhance the sanctity and mystery of the tree. For it is the strange, the wonderful, the rare, not the familiar and commonplace, which excites the religious emotions of mankind.

The worship of the oak tree or of the oak god seems to have been common to all the Aryans of Europe.

The worship of the oak tree or of the oak god appears to have been shared by all the branches of the Aryan stock in Europe. Both Greeks and Italians associated the tree with their highest god, Zeus or Jupiter, the divinity of the sky, the rain, and the thunder.[1] Perhaps the oldest and certainly one of the most famous sanctuaries in Greece was that of Dodona, where Zeus was revered in the oracular oak.[2] The thunder-storms which are said to rage at Dodona more frequently than anywhere else in Europe,[3] would render the spot a fitting home for the god whose voice was heard alike in the rustling of the oak leaves and in the crash of thunder. Perhaps the bronze gongs which kept up a humming in the wind round the sanctuary[4] were

Worship of the oak in Greece; its association with Zeus.

[1] For evidence of these aspects of Zeus and Jupiter, see L. Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*, i.[4] 115 *sqq.*; *id.*, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 184 *sqq.* In former editions of this book I was disposed to set aside much too summarily what may be called the meteorological side of Zeus and Jupiter.

[2] See my note on Pausanias, ii. 17. 5; P. Wagler, *Die Eiche in alter und neuer Zeit*, ii. (Berlin, 1891), pp. 2 *sqq.*; A. B. Cook, "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xvii. (1903) pp. 178 *sqq.*

[3] Aug. Mommsen, *Delphika* (Leipsic, 1878), pp. 4 *sq.*

[4] Strabo, Frag. vii. 3; Stephanus Byzantius, *s.v.* Δωδώνη; Suidas, *s.vv.* Δωδωναῖον χαλκεῖον and Δωδώνη; Apostolius, *Cent.* vi. 43; Zenobius, *Cent.* vi. 5; Nonnus Abbas, *Ad S. Gregorii orat. ii. contra Julianum*, 19 (Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, xxxvi. 1045). The evidence on this subject has been collected and discussed by Mr. A. B. Cook ("The Gong at Dodona," *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, xxii. (1902) pp. 5-28). The theory in the text is obviously consistent, both with the statement that the sound of the gongs was consulted as oracular, and with the view, advocated by Mr. Cook, that it was supposed to avert evil influences from the sanctuary. If I am right, the bronze statuette which, according to some accounts, produced

meant to mimick the thunder that might so often be heard rolling and rumbling in the coombs of the stern and barren mountains which shut in the gloomy valley.[1] In Boeotia, as we have seen, the sacred marriage of Zeus and Hera, the oak god and the oak goddess, was celebrated with much pomp by a religious federation of states.[2] And on Mount Lycaeus in Arcadia the character of Zeus as god both of the oak and of the rain comes out clearly in the rain charm practised by the priest of Zeus, who dipped an oak branch in a sacred spring.[3]

Zeus as the rain god of the Greeks.

In his latter capacity Zeus was the god to whom the Greeks regularly prayed for rain. Nothing could be more natural; for often, though not always, he had his seat on the mountains where the clouds gather and the oaks grow. On the acropolis at Athens there was an image of Earth praying to Zeus for rain.[4] And in time of drought the Athenians themselves prayed, "Rain, rain, O dear Zeus, on the cornland of the Athenians and on the plains."[5] The mountains which lay round their city, and to which they looked through the clear Attic air for signs of the weather, were associated by them with the worship of the weather-god Zeus. It was a sign of rain when, away to sea, a cloud rested on the sharp peak of Aegina, which cuts the sky-line like a blue horn.[6] On this far-seen peak Panhellenian Zeus was worshipped,[7] and legend ran that once, when all Greece was parched with drought, envoys assembled in Aegina from every quarter and entreated Aeacus, the king of the island, that he would intercede with his father Zeus for rain. The king complied with the request, and by sacrifices and prayers wrung the needed showers from his sire the sky-god.[8]

the sound by striking the gong with a clapper would represent Zeus himself making his thunder.

[1] On the natural surroundings of Dodona, see C. Carapanos, *Dodone et ses ruines* (Paris, 1878), pp. 7-10.

[2] Above, pp. 140 *sq.*

[3] Above, vol. i. p. 309. On the oak as the tree of Zeus, see Dionysius Halicarn. *Ars rhetorica*, i. 6, vol. v. p. 230 ed. Reiske; Schol. on Aristophanes, *Birds*, 480. On this subject much evidence, both literary and monumental, has been collected by Mr. A. B. Cook in his articles "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xvii. (1903) pp. 174 *sqq.*, 268 *sqq.*, 403 *sqq.*, xviii. (1904) pp. 75 *sqq.*, 327 *sq.*

[4] Pausanias, i. 24. 3.

[5] Marcus Antoninus, v. 7.

[6] Theophrastus, *De signis tempestatum*, i. 24.

[7] Pausanias, i. 30. 4.

[8] Pausanias, ii. 29. 7 *sq*; Isocrates, *Evagoras*, 14; Apollodorus, iii. 12. 6. Aeacus was said to be the son of Zeus by Aegina, daughter of Asopus (Apol-

Zeus as the rain-god of the Greeks.

Again, it was a sign of rain at Athens when clouds in summer lay on the top or the sides of Hymettus,[1] the chain of barren mountains which bounds the Attic plain on the east, facing the westering sun and catching from his last beams a solemn glow of purple light. If during a storm a long bank of clouds was seen lowering on the mountain, it meant that the storm would increase in fury.[2] Hence an altar of Showery Zeus stood on Hymettus.[3] Again, omens of weather were drawn when lightning flashed or clouds hung on the top of Mount Parnes to the north of Athens;[4] and there accordingly an altar was set up to sign-giving Zeus.[5] The climate of eastern Argolis is dry, and the rugged mountains are little better than a stony waterless wilderness. On one of them, named Mount Arachnaeus, or the Spider Mountain, stood altars of Zeus and Hera, and when rain was wanted the people sacrificed there to the god and goddess.[6] On the ridge of Mount Tmolus, near Sardes, there was a spot called the Birthplace of Rainy Zeus,[7] probably because clouds resting on it were observed to presage rain. The members of a religious society in the island of Cos used to go in procession and offer sacrifices on an altar of Rainy Zeus, when the thirsty land stood in need of refreshing showers.[8] Thus conceived as the source of fertility, it was not unnatural that Zeus should receive the title of the Fruitful One,[9] and that at Athens he should be worshipped under the surname of the Husbandman.[10]

Zeus as the god of fertility.

Again, Zeus wielded the thunder and lightning as well

lodorus, *l.c.*). Isocrates says that his relationship to the god marked Aeacus out as the man to procure rain.

[1] Theophrastus, *De signis tempestatum*, i. 20, compare 24.

[2] Theophrastus, *op. cit.* iii. 43.

[3] Pausanias, i. 32. 2.

[4] Theophrastus, *op. cit.* iii. 43 and 47. Compare Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 324 *sq.*; Photius, *Lexicon*, *s.v.* Πάρνης.

[5] Pausanias, i. 32. 2.

[6] Pausanias, ii. 25. 10. As to the climate and scenery of these barren mountains, see A. Philippson, *Der Peloponnes* (Berlin, 1891), pp. 43 *sq.*, 65.

[7] Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iv. 48.

[8] Paton and Hicks, *The Inscriptions of Cos* (Oxford, 1891), No. 382; Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*,[2] No. 735. There were altars of Rainy Zeus also at Argos and Lebadea. See Pausanias, ii. 19. 8, ix. 39. 4.

[9] Ἐπικάρπιος μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν, Aristotle, *De mundo*, 7, p. 401 a, ed. Bekker; Plutarch, *De Stoicorum repugnantiis*, xxx. 8.

[10] *Corpus Inscriptionum Atticarum*, iii. No. 77; E. S. Roberts, *Introduction to Greek Epigraphy*, ii. No. 142, p. 387; Ch. Michel, *Recueil d'inscriptions grecques*, No. 692; L. R. Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States*, i. 66 and 172.

as the rain.[1] At Olympia and elsewhere he was worshipped under the surname of Thunderbolt;[2] and at Athens there was a sacrificial hearth of Lightning Zeus on the city wall, where some priestly officials watched for lightning over Mount Parnes at certain seasons of the year.[3] Further, spots which had been struck by lightning were regularly fenced in by the Greeks and consecrated to Zeus the Descender, that is, to the god who came down in the flash from heaven. Altars were set up within these enclosures and sacrifices offered on them. Several such places are known from inscriptions to have existed in Athens.[4]

Zeus as the god of thunder and lightning.

Thus when ancient Greek kings claimed to be descended from Zeus, and even to bear his name,[5] we may reasonably suppose that they also attempted to exercise his divine functions by making thunder and rain for the good of their people or the terror and confusion of their foes. In this respect the legend of Salmoneus[6] probably reflects the pretensions of a whole class of petty sovereigns who reigned of old, each over his little canton, in the oak-clad highlands of Greece. Like their kinsmen the Irish kings, they were expected to be a source of fertility to the land and of fecundity to the cattle;[7] and how could they fulfil these expectations better than by acting the part of their kinsman Zeus, the great god of the oak, the thunder, and the rain? They personified him, apparently, just as the Italian kings personified Jupiter.[8]

The Greek kings personified Zeus, as the Italian kings personified Jupiter.

In ancient Italy every oak was sacred to Jupiter, the Italian counterpart of Zeus;[9] and on the Capitol at Rome the god was worshipped as the deity not merely of the oak, but of the rain and the thunder.[10] Contrast-

Jupiter in Italy as the god of the oak, the thunder, and the rain.

[1] Hesiod, *Theogony*, 71 *sq.*; L. Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*,[4] i. 119.

[2] Pausanias, v. 14. 7; H. Roehl, *Inscriptiones Graecae antiquissimae* (Berlin, 1882), No. 101; Fränkel, *Inschriften von Pergamon*, i. No. 232; Joannes Malalas, *Chronographia*, viii. p. 199, ed. L. Dindorf.

[3] Strabo, ix. 2. 11, p. 404.

[4] Pollux, ix. 41; Hesychius, *s.v.* ἠλίσιον; *Etymologicum Magnum*, p. 341. 8 *sqq.*; Artemidorus, *Oniocrit.* ii. 9; Pausanias, v. 14. 10; Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*,[2] No. 577, with Dittenberger's note.

[5] See above, p. 177.

[6] See above, vol. i. p. 310.

[7] See above, vol. i. p. 366.

[8] For more evidence that the old Greek kings regularly personified Zeus, see Mr. A. B. Cook, "The European Sky-god," *Folk-lore*, xv. (1904) pp. 299 *sqq.*

[9] Virgil. *Georg.* iii. 332, with Servius's note; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xii. 3.

[10] As to the oak of Jupiter on the Capitol and the god's oak crown, see

Jupiter as the rain-god.

ing the piety of the good old times with the scepticism of an age when nobody thought that heaven was heaven, or cared a fig for Jupiter, a Roman writer tells us that in former days noble matrons used to go with bare feet, streaming hair, and pure minds, up the long Capitoline slope, praying to Jupiter for rain. And straightway, he goes on, it rained bucketsful, then or never, and everybody returned dripping like drowned rats. "But nowadays," says he, "we are no longer religious, so the fields lie baking."[1] And as Jupiter conjured up the clouds and caused them to discharge their genial burden on the earth, so he drove them away and brought the bright Italian sky back once more. Hence he was worshipped under the titles of the Serene, he who restores serenity.[2] Lastly, as god of the fertilising showers he made the earth to bring forth; so people called him the Fruitful One.[3]

Jupiter as the god of fertility.

The god of the oak and the thunder among the northern Aryans.

Celtic worship of the oak.

When we pass from southern to central Europe we still meet with the great god of the oak and the thunder among the barbarous Aryans who dwelt in the vast primaeval forests.[4] Thus among the Celts of Gaul the Druids esteemed nothing more sacred than the mistletoe and the oak on which it grew; they chose groves of oaks for the scene of their solemn service, and they performed none of their rites without oak leaves.[5] "The Celts," says a Greek writer, "worship Zeus, and the Celtic image of Zeus is a tall oak."[6] The

above, p. 176. With regard to the Capitoline worship of Thundering Jupiter, see Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 21, xxxiv. 10 and 79, xxxvi. 50. He was worshipped in many places besides Rome as the god of thunder and lightning. See Festus, p. 229, ed. C. O. Müller; Apuleius, *De mundo*, xxxvii. 371; H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, Nos. 3044-3053.

[1] Petronius, *Sat.* 44. That the slope mentioned by Petronius was the Capitoline one is made highly probable by a passage of Tertullian (*Apologeticus* 40: "*Aquilicia Jovi immolatis, nudipedalia populo denuntiatis, coelum apud Capitolium quaeritis, nubila de laquearibus exspectatis*"). The church father's scorn for the ceremony contrasts with the respect, perhaps the mock respect, testified for it by the man in Petronius.

The epithets Rainy and Showery are occasionally applied to Jupiter. See Tibullus, i. 7. 26; Apuleius, *De mundo*, xxxvii. 371; H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, No. 3043.

[2] H. Dessau, *op. cit.* No. 3042; Apuleius, *l.c.*

[3] Apuleius, *l.c.*, "*Plures eum Frugiferum vocant*"; H. Dessau, *op. cit.* No. 3017.

[4] On this subject see H. Munro Chadwick, "The Oak and the Thunder-god," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxx. (1900) pp. 22-42.

[5] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 249.

[6] Maximus Tyrius, *Dissert.* viii. 8. H. D'Arbois de Jubainville supposed that by Celts the writer here meant Germans (*Cours de la littérature celtique*, i. 121 *sqq.*). This was not the view of J. Grimm, to whose

Celtic conquerors who settled in Asia in the third century before our era appear to have carried the worship of the oak with them to their new home; for in the heart of Asia Minor the Galatian senate met in a place which bore the pure Celtic name of Drynemetum, "the sacred oak grove" or "the temple of the oak."[1] Indeed the very name of Druids is believed by good authorities to mean no more than "oak men."[2] When Christianity displaced Druidism in Ireland, the churches and monasteries were sometimes built in oak groves or under solitary oaks,[3] the choice of the site being perhaps determined by the immemorial sanctity of the trees, which might predispose the minds of the converts to receive with less reluctance the teaching of the new faith.[4] But there is no positive evidence that the Irish Druids performed their rites, like their Gallic brethren, in oak groves,[5] so that the inference from the churches of Kildare, Derry, and the rest is merely a conjecture based on analogy.

Traces of sacred oaks in Ireland.

In the religion of the ancient Germans the veneration for sacred groves seems to have held the foremost place,[6] and

authority D'Arbois de Jubainville appealed. Grimm says that what Maximus Tyrius affirms of the Celts might be applied to the Germans (*Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] i. 55), which is quite a different thing.

[1] Strabo, xii. 5. 1, p. 567. As to the meaning of the name see (Sir) J. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 221; H. F. Tozer, *Selections from Strabo*, p. 284. On the Galatian language see above, p. 126, note 2.

[2] G. Curtius, *Griech. Etymologie*,[5] pp. 238 *sq.*; J. Rhys, *op. cit.* pp. 221 *sq.*; P. Kretschmer, *Einleitung in die Geschichte der griech. Sprache*, p. 81. Compare A. Vaniček, *Griechisch-lateinisch. etymologisches Wörterbuch*, pp. 368-370. Oak in old Irish is *daur*, in modern Irish *dair*, *darach*, in Gaelic *darach*. See G. Curtius, *l.c.*; A. Macbain, *Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language* (Inverness, 1896), *s.v.* "Darach." On this view Pliny was substantially right (*Nat. Hist.* xvi. 249) in connecting Druid with the Greek *drus*, "oak," though the name was not derived from the Greek. However, this derivation of Druid has been doubted or rejected by some scholars. See H. D'Arbois de Jubainville, *Cours de la littérature celtique*, i. (Paris, 1883), pp. 117 *sqq.*; O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Altertumskunde*, pp. 638 *sq.*

[3] See above, p. 242.

[4] The Gael's "faith in druidism was never suddenly undermined; for in the saints he only saw more powerful druids than those he had previously known, and Christ took the position in his eyes of the druid κατ' ἐξοχήν. Irish druidism absorbed a certain amount of Christianity; and it would be a problem of considerable difficulty to fix on the point where it ceased to be druidism, and from which onwards it could be said to be Christianity in any restricted sense of that term" (J. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 224).

[5] P. W. Joyce, *Social History of Ancient Ireland*, i. 236.

[6] J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] i. 55 *sq.* Tacitus often mentions the sacred groves of the Germans, but never specifies the kinds of trees of which they were composed. See *Annals*, ii. 12, iv. 73; *Histor.* iv. 14; *Germania*, 7, 9, 39, 40, 43.

The Teutonic god of the oak and the thunder.

according to Grimm the chief of their holy trees was the oak.[1] It appears to have been especially dedicated to the god of thunder, Donar or Thunar, the equivalent of the Norse Thor; for a sacred oak near Geismar, in Hesse, which Boniface cut down in the eighth century, went among the heathen by the name of Jupiter's oak (*robur Jovis*), which in old German would be *Donares eih*, "the oak of Donar."[2] That the Teutonic thunder god Donar, Thunar, Thor was identified with the Italian thunder god Jupiter appears from our word Thursday, Thunar's day, which is merely a rendering of the Latin *dies Jovis*.[3] Thus among the ancient Teutons, as among the Greeks and Italians, the god of the oak was also the god of the thunder. Moreover, he was regarded as the great fertilising power, who sent rain and caused the earth to bear fruit; for Adam of Bremen tells us that "Thor presides in the air; he it is who rules thunder and lightning, wind and rains, fine weather and crops."[4] In these respects, therefore, the Teutonic thunder god again resembled his southern counterparts Zeus and Jupiter. And like them Thor appears to have been the chief god of the pantheon; for in the great temple at Upsala his image occupied the middle place between the images of Odin and Frey,[5] and in oaths by this or other Norse trinities he was always the principal deity invoked.[6] Beside the temple at Upsala there was a sacred grove, but the kinds of trees which grew in it are not known. Only of one tree are we told that it was of mighty size, with great spreading branches, and that it remained green winter and summer alike. Here too was a spring where sacrifices were offered. They used to plunge a living man into the water, and if he disappeared they drew a favourable omen. Every nine years, at the spring equinox, a great festival was held at Upsala in honour of Thor, the god of thunder, Odin, the god of war, and Frey,

The worship of Thor at Upsala.

[1] J. Grimm, *op. cit.* ii. 542.

[2] Willibald's *Life of S. Boniface*, in Pertz's *Monumenta Germaniae historica*, ii. 343 *sq.*; J. Grimm, *op. cit.* i. pp. 58, 142.

[3] J. Grimm, *op. cit.* i. 157. Prof. E. Maass supposes that the identification of Donar or Thunar with Jupiter was first made in Upper Germany between the Vosges mountains and the Black Forest. See his work *Die Tagesgötter* (Berlin, 1902), p. 280.

[4] Adam of Bremen, *Descriptio insularum Aquilonis*, 26 (Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, cxlvi. col. 643).

[5] Adam of Bremen, *l.c.*

[6] E. H. Meyer, *Mythologie der Germanen* (Strasburg, 1903), p. 290.

the god of peace and pleasure. The ceremonies lasted nine days. Nine male animals of every sort were sacrificed, that their blood might appease the gods. Each day six victims were slaughtered, of whom one was a man. Their bodies were fastened to the trees of the grove, where dogs and horses might be seen hanging beside men.[1]

Perun, the god of the oak and the thunder among the Slavs.

Amongst the Slavs also the oak appears to have been the sacred tree of the thunder god Perun, the counterpart of Zeus and Jupiter.[2] It is said that at Novgorod there used to stand an image of Perun in the likeness of a man with a thunder-stone in his hand. A fire of oak wood burned day and night in his honour; and if ever it went out the attendants paid for their negligence with their lives.[3] Perun seems, like Zeus and Jupiter, to have been the chief god of his people; for Procopius tells us that the Slavs "believe that one god, the maker of lightning, is alone lord of all things, and they sacrifice to him oxen and every victim."[4]

Perkunas, the chief Lithuanian god.

The chief deity of the Lithuanians was Perkunas or Perkuns, the god of thunder and lightning, whose resemblance to Zeus and Jupiter has often been pointed out.[5] Oaks

[1] Adam of Bremen, *op. cit.* 26, 27, with the Scholia (Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, cxlvi. coll. 642-644).

[2] J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] i. 142 *sq.*; L. Leger, *La Mythologie slave* (Paris, 1901), pp. 54-76.

[3] L. Leger, *op. cit.* pp. 57 *sq.*, translating Guagnini's *Sarmatiae Europaeae descriptio* (1578). The passage is quoted in the original by Chr. Hartknoch (*Alt- und neues Preussen*, Frankfort and Leipsic, 1684, p. 132), who rightly assigns the work to Strykowski, not Guagnini. See W. Mannhardt, in *Magazin herausgegeben von der Lettisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft*, xiv. (1868) pp. 105 *sq.*

[4] Procopius, *De bello Gothico*, iii. 14 (vol. ii. p. 357, ed. J. Haury).

[5] Matthias Michov, "De Sarmatia Asiana atque Europea," in Simon Grynaeus's *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum* (Paris, 1532), p. 457; *id.*, in J. Pistorius's *Polonicae historiae corpus* (Bâle, 1582), i. 144; Martin Cromer, *De origine et rebus gestis Polonorum* (Bâle, 1568), p. 241; J. Maeletius (Menecius, Ian Malecki), "De sacrificiis et idolatria veterum Borussorum, Livonum, aliarumque vicinarum gentium," *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, ii. (Riga and Leipsic, 1848) p. 390; *id.*, in *Mitteilungen der Litterarischen Gesellschaft Masovia*, Heft 8 (Lötzen, 1902), p. 187; Chr. Hartknoch, *Alt- und neues Preussen* (Frankfort and Leipsic, 1684), pp. 131 *sqq.*; S. Rostowski, quoted by A. Brückner, *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, ix. (1886) pp. 32, 35; M. Töppen, *Geschichte der preussischen Historiographie* (Berlin, 1853), p. 190 ("*Perkunos ist in allen andern Ueberlieferungen so gross und hehr, wie nur immer der griechische und römische Donnergott, und kein anderer der Götter darf sich ihm gleich stellen. Er ist der Hauptgott, wie nach andern Berichten in Preussen, so auch in Litthauen und Livland*"); Schleicher, "Lituanica," *Sitzungsberichte der philosoph.-histor. Classe d. kais. Akademie d. Wissen.* (Vienna), xi. (1853 pub. 1854) p. 96; H. Usener, *Götternamen* (Bonn, 1896), p. 97.

Perkunas, the god of the oak and the thunder among the Lithuanians.

were sacred to him, and when they were cut down by the Christian missionaries, the people loudly complained that their sylvan deities were destroyed.[1] Perpetual fires, kindled with the wood of certain oak-trees, were kept up in honour of Perkunas; if such a fire went out, it was lighted again by friction of the sacred wood.[2] Men sacrificed to oak-trees for good crops, while women did the same to lime-trees;

[1] M. Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussicae* (Berlin, 1871), pp. 19 *sq.*; S. Rostowski, *op. cit.* pp. 34, 35. On the sacred oaks of the Lithuanians see Chr. Hartknoch, *op. cit.* pp. 117 *sqq.*; Tettau und Temme, *Volkssagen Ostpreussens, Litthauens und Westpreussens*, pp. 19-22, 35-38.

[2] M. Praetorius, *l.c.*; S. Grunau, *Preussische Chronik*, ed. M. Perlbach, i. (Leipsic, 1876) p. 78 (ii. tract. cap. v. § 2). The chronicler, Simon Grunau, lived as an itinerant Dominican friar at the beginning of the sixteenth century in the part of Prussia which had been ceded to Poland. He brought his history, composed in somewhat rustic German, down to 1529. His familiar intercourse with the lowest classes of the people enabled him to learn much as to their old heathen customs and superstitions; but his good faith has been doubted or denied. In particular, his description of the images of the three gods in the great oak at Romove has been regarded with suspicion or denounced as a figment. See Chr. Hartknoch, *op. cit.* pp. 127 *sqq.*; M. Toeppen, *op. cit.* pp. 122 *sqq.*, 190 *sqq.*; M. Perlbach's preface to his edition of Grunau; H. Usener, *Götternamen*, p. 83. But his account of the sanctity of the oak, and of the perpetual sacred fire of oak-wood, may be accepted, since it is confirmed by other authorities. Thus, according to Malecki, a perpetual fire was kept up by a priest in honour of Perkunas (Pargnus) on the top of a mountain, which stood beside the river Neuuassa (Niewiaza, a tributary of the Niemen). See Malecki (Maeletius, Menecius), *op. cit.*, *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, ii. 391; *id.*, *Mitteilungen der Litterarischen Gesellschaft Masovia*, Heft 8 (Lötzen, 1902), p. 187. Again, the Jesuit S. Rostowski says that the Lithuanians maintained a perpetual sacred fire in honour of Perkunas in the woods (quoted by A. Brückner, *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, ix. (1886) p. 33). Malecki and Rostowski do not mention that the fire was kindled with oak-wood, but this is expressly stated by M. Praetorius, and is, besides, intrinsically probable, since the oak was sacred to Perkunas. Moreover, the early historian, Peter of Dusburg, who dedicated his chronicle of Prussia to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights in 1326, informs us that the high-priest of the nation, whom the Prussians revered as a pope, kept up a perpetual fire at Romow, which is doubtless the same with the Romowo or Romewo of Grunau (*Preussische Chronik*, pp. 80, 81, compare p. 62, ed. M. Perlbach). See P. de Dusburg, *Chronicon Prussiae*, ed. Chr. Hartknoch (Frankfort and Leipsic, 1679), p. 79. Martin Cromer says that the Lithuanians "worshipped fire as a god, and kept it perpetually burning in the more frequented places and towns" (*De origine et rebus gestis Polonorum*, Bâle, 1568, p. 241). Romow or Romowo is more commonly known as Romove. Its site is very uncertain. See Chr. Hartknoch, *Alt- und neues Preussen*, pp. 122 *sqq.* Grunau's account of Romove and its sacred oak, with the images of the three gods in it and the fire of oak-wood burning before it, is substantially repeated by Alex. Guagnini. See J. Pistorius, *Polonicae historiae corpus* (Bâle, 1582), i. 52; *Respublica sive status regni Poloniae, Lituaniae, Prussiae, Livoniae*, etc. (Leyden, 1627), pp. 321 *sq.* I do not know whether the chronicler, Simon Grunau, is the same with Simon Grynaeus, editor of the *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum*, which was published at Paris in 1532.

from which we may infer that they regarded oaks as male and lime-trees as female.[1] And in time of drought, when they wanted rain, they used to sacrifice a black heifer, a black he-goat, and a black cock to the thunder-god in the depths of the woods. On such occasions the people assembled in great numbers from the country round about, ate and drank, and called upon Perkunas. They carried a bowl of beer thrice round the fire, then poured the liquor on the flames, while they prayed to the god to send showers.[2] Thus the chief Lithuanian deity presents a close resemblance to Zeus and Jupiter, since he was the god of the oak, the thunder, and the rain.[3]

The god of the oak and the thunder among the Esthonians.

Wedged in between the Lithuanians and the Slavs are the Esthonians, a people who do not belong to the Aryan family. But they also shared the reverence for the oak, and associated the tree with their thunder-god Taara, the chief deity of their pantheon, whom they called "Old Father," or "Father of Heaven."[4] It is said that down to the beginning of the nineteenth century Esthonians used to smear the holy oaks, lime-trees, and ash-trees with the fresh blood of animals at least once a year.[5] The following prayer to thunder is instructive, because it shews how easily thunder, through its association with rain, may appear to the rustic

[1] S. Rostowski, *op. cit.* p. 35.

[2] D. Fabricius, "De cultu, religione et moribus incolarum Livoniae," *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, ii. 441. Malecki (Maeletius) also says that Perkunas was prayed to for rain. See *Mitteilungen der Litterarischen Gesellschaft Masovia*, Heft 8 (Lötzen, 1902), p. 201.

[3] According to Prof. H. Hirt, the name Perkunas means "the oak-god," being derived from the same root *querq*, which appears in the Latin *quercus* "oak," the *Hercynian* forest, the Norse god and goddess *Fjörygn*, and the Indian *Parjanya*, the Vedic god of thunder and rain. See H. Hirt, "Die Urheimat der Indogermanen," *Indogermanischen Forschungen*, i. (1892) pp. 479 *sqq.*; *id.*, *Die Indogermanen* (Strasburg, 1905-1907), ii. 507; P. Kretschmer, *Einleitung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache*, pp. 81 *sq.* The identity of the names Perkunas and Parjanya had been maintained long before by G. Bühler, though he did not connect the words with *quercus*. See his article, "On the Hindu god Parjanya," *Transactions of the (London) Philological Society*, 1859, pp. 154-168. As to Parjanya, see below, pp. 368 *sq.*

[4] Fr. Kreutzwald und H. Neus, *Mythische und magische Lieder der Ehsten* (St. Petersburg, 1854), pp. 16, 26, 27, 56, 57, 104; F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Ehsten*, pp. 427, 438. Sometimes, however, a special thunder-god Kou, Koo, Piker or Pikne is distinguished from Taara (Tar). See F. J. Wiedemann, *op. cit.* p. 427; Kreutzwald und Neus, *op. cit.* pp. 12 *sq.*

[5] Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten* (St. Petersburg, 1854), p. 2.

Esthonian prayer to thunder.

mind in the character of a beneficent and fertilising power. It was taken down from the lips of an Esthonian peasant in the seventeenth century. "Dear Thunder," he prayed, "we sacrifice to thee an ox, which has two horns and four claws, and we would beseech thee for the sake of our ploughing and sowing, that our straw may be red as copper, and our corn yellow as gold. Drive somewhere else all black, thick clouds over great marshes, high woods, and wide wastes. But to us ploughmen and sowers give a fruitful time and sweet rain. Holy Thunder, guard our fields, that they may bear good straw below, good ears above, and good grain within."[1] Sometimes in time of great drought an Esthonian farmer would carry beer thrice round a sacrificial fire, then pour it on the flames with a prayer that the thunder-god would be pleased to send rain.[2]

Parjanya, the old Indian god of thunder, rain, and fertility.

In like manner, Parjanya, the old Indian god of thunder and rain, whose name is by some scholars identified with the Lithuanian Perkunas,[3] was conceived as a deity of fertility, who not only made plants to germinate, but caused cows, mares, and women to conceive. As the power who impregnated all things, he was compared to a bull, an animal which to the primitive herdsman is the most natural type of the procreative energies. Thus in a hymn of the Rigveda it is said of him :—

"*The Bull, loud roaring, swift to send his bounty, lays in the plants the seed for germination.*
He smites the trees apart, he slays the demons: all life fears him who wields the mighty weapon.
From him exceeding strong flees e'en the guiltless when thundering Parjanya smites the wicked.

"*Like a car-driver whipping on his horses, he makes the messengers of rain spring forward.*
Far off resounds the roaring of the lion what time Parjanya fills the sky with rain-cloud.
Forth burst the winds, down come the lightning-flashes: the plants shoot up, the realm of light is streaming.
Food springs abundant for all living creatures what time Parjanya quickens earth with moisture."[4]

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[1] J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] i. 146.

[2] F. J. Wiedemann, *op. cit.* p. 427.

[3] See above, p. 367, note 3.

[4] *Rigveda*, Book v. Hymn 83, R. T. H. Griffith's translation (Benares, 1889-1892), vol. ii. pp. 299 *sq.*

In another hymn Parjanya is spoken of as "giver of growth to plants, the god who ruleth over the waters and all moving creatures," and it is said that "in him all living creatures have their being." Then the poet goes on :— Parjanya the old Indian god of thunder, rain, and fertility.

"*May this my song to sovran lord Parjanya come near unto his heart and give him pleasure.*
May we obtain the showers that bring enjoyment, and god-protected plants with goodly fruitage.
He is the Bull of all, and their impregner: he holds the life of all things fixed and moving." [1]

And in yet another hymn we read :—

"*Sing forth and laud Parjanya, son of Heaven, who sends the gift of rain:*
May he provide our pasturage.
Parjanya is the god who forms in kine, in mares, in plants of earth And womanhood, the germ of life." [2]

In short, "Parjanya is a god who presides over the lightning, the thunder, the rain, and the procreation of plants and living creatures. But it is by no means clear whether he is originally a god of the rain, or a god of the thunder. For, as both phenomena are always associated in India, either of the two opinions is admissible, if no deciding evidence comes from another quarter." [3] On this point something will be said presently. Here it is enough to have indicated the ease with which the notion of the thunder-god passes into, or is combined with, the idea of a god of fertility in general.

The same combination meets us in Heno, the thunder-spirit of the Iroquois. His office was not only to hurl his bolts at evil-doers, but to cool and refresh the ground with showers, to ripen the harvest, and to mature the fruits of the earth. In spring, when they committed the seeds to the soil, the Indians prayed to him that he would water them and foster their growth; and at the harvest God of thunder, rain, and fertility among the Iroquois.

[1] *Rigveda*, Book vii. Hymn 101, Griffith's translation (vol. iii. pp. 123 *sq.*).

[2] *Rigveda*, Book vii. Hymn 102, Griffith's translation (vol. iii. p. 124). On Parjanya see further G. Bühler, "On the Hindu god *Parjanya*," *Transactions of the* (*London*) *Philological Society*, 1859, pp. 154-168; *id.* in *Orient und Occident*, i. (1862) pp. 214-229; J. Muir, *Original Sanscrit Texts*, v. 140-142; H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 226; A. Macdonnell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 83-85.

[3] G. Bühler, *op. cit.* p. 161.

Goddess of lightning, rain, and fertility among the Hos.

festival they thanked him for his gift of rain.[1] The Hos of Togoland in West Africa distinguish two deities of the lightning, a god Sogble and a goddess Sodza, who are husband and wife and talk with each other in the sound of thunder. The goddess has epithets applied to her which seem to shew that she is believed to send the rain and to cause the plants to grow. She is addressed as "Mother of men and beasts, ship full of yams, ship full of the most varied fullness." Further, it is said to be she who blesses the tilled land. Moreover, like the Hindoo thunder-god Parjanya, who slays demons, the Ho thunder-goddess drives away evil spirits and witches from people's houses; under her protection children multiply and the inmates of the house remain healthy.[2]

Gods of thunder, rain, and fertility among the Indians of the Andes and the Abchases of the Caucasus.

The Indians of the Andes, about Lake Titicaca, believe in a thunder-god named Con or Cun, whom they call the "lord" or "father" of the mountains (*Ccollo-auqui*). He is regarded as a powerful being, but irritable and difficult of access, who dwells on the high mountains above the line of perpetual snow. Yet he gives great gifts to those who win his favour; and when the crops are languishing for lack of rain, the Indians try to rouse the god from his torpor by pouring a small libation of brandy into a tarn below the snow-line; for they dare not set foot on the snow lest they should meet the dreadful thunder-god face to face. His bird is the condor as the eagle was the bird of the Greek thunder-god Zeus.[3] Similarly in time of drought the Abchases of the Caucasus sacrifice an ox to Ap-hi, the god of thunder and lightning, and an old man prays him to send rain, thunder, and lightning, telling him that the crops are parched, the grass burnt up, and the cattle starving.[4] These examples shew how readily a thunder-god may come to be viewed as a power of fertility; the connecting link is furnished by the fertilising rain which usually accompanies a thunder-storm.

As might have been expected, the ancient worship of the oak in Europe has left its print in popular custom and

[1] L. H. Morgan, *League of the Iroquois* (Rochester, 1851), pp. 157 *sq.*

[2] J. Spieth, *Die Ewe-Stämme* (Berlin, 1906), pp. 424-427.

[3] E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. (Oxford, 1892) pp. 407 *sq.*

[4] N. Seidlitz, "Die Abchasen," *Globus*, lxvi. (1894) p. 73.

Traces of the worship of the oak in modern Europe.

superstition down to modern times. Thus in the French department of Maine it is said that solitary oak-trees in the fields are still worshipped, though the priests have sought to give the worship a Christian colour by hanging images of saints on the trees.[1] In various parts of Lower Saxony and Westphalia, as late as the first half of the nineteenth century, traces survived of the sanctity of certain oaks, to which the people paid a half-heathenish, half-Christian worship. In the principality of Minden young people of both sexes used to dance round an old oak on Easter Saturday with loud shouts of joy. And not far from the village of Wormeln, in the neighbourhood of Paderborn, there stood a holy oak in the forest, to which the inhabitants of Wormeln and Calenberg went every year in solemn procession.[2] Another vestige of superstitious reverence for the oak in Germany is the custom of passing sick people and animals through a natural or artificial opening in the trunk of an oak for the purpose of healing them of their infirmities.[3] At a village near Ragnit in East Prussia there was an oak which, down to the seventeenth century, the villagers regarded as sacred, firmly believing that any person who harmed it would be visited with misfortune, especially with some bodily ailment.[4] About the middle of the nineteenth century the Lithuanians still laid offerings for spirits under ancient oaks;[5] and old-fashioned people among them preferred to cook the viands for funeral banquets on a fire of oak-wood, or at least under an oak-tree.[6] On the rivulet Micksy, between the governments of Pskov and Livonia in Russia, there stood a stunted, withered, but holy oak, which received the homage of the neighbouring peasantry down at least to 1874. An eye-witness has described the ceremonies. He found a great crowd of people, chiefly Esthonians of the Greek Church, assembled with their families about the tree, all dressed in

[1] P. Wagler, *Die Eiche in alter und neuer Zeit*, ii. (Berlin, 1891) p. 37.

[2] J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] i. 59.

[3] P. Wagler, *Die Eiche in alter und neuer Zeit*, i. (Wurzen, 1891) pp. 21-23. For many more survivals of oak-worship in Germany see P. Wagler, *op. cit.* ii. 40 *sqq.*

[4] M. Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussicae* (Berlin, 1871), p. 16.

[5] J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen* (Dresden and Leipsic, 1841), ii. 31; compare 33.

[6] Schleicher, "Lituanica," *Sitzungsberichte der philos.-histor. Classe der kais. Akademie der Wissenschaften*, xi. (1853, pub. 1854) p. 100.

Worship of the oak in modern Russia.

gala costume. Some of them had brought wax candles and were fastening them about the trunk and in the branches. Soon a priest arrived, and, having donned his sacred robes, proceeded to sing a canticle, such as is usually sung in the Orthodox Church in honour of saints. But instead of saying as usual, "Holy saint, pray the Lord for us," he said, "Holy Oak Hallelujah, pray for us." Then he incensed the tree all round. During the service the tapers on the oak were lighted, and the people, throwing themselves on the ground, adored the holy tree. When the pastor had retired, his flock remained till late at night, feasting, drinking, dancing, and lighting fresh tapers on the oak, till everybody was drunk and the proceedings ended in an orgy.[1]

Ceremonial fires kindled by the friction of oak-wood.

Another relic of the ancient sanctity of the oak has survived to modern times in the practice of kindling ceremonial fires by means of the friction of oak-wood. This has been done, either at stated seasons of the year or on occasions of distress, by Slavs, Germans, and Celts.[2] Taken together with the perpetual sacred fires of oak-wood which we have found among the Slavs, the Lithuanians, and the ancient Romans,[3] the wide prevalence of the practice seems clearly to point back to a time when the forefathers of the Aryans in Europe dwelt in forests of oak, fed their fires with oak-wood, and rekindled them, when they chanced to go out, by rubbing two oaken sticks against each other.

In the great European god of the oak, the thunder, and the rain, the

From the foregoing survey of the facts it appears that a god of the oak, the thunder, and the rain was worshipped of old by all the main branches of the Aryan stock in Europe, and was indeed the chief deity of their pantheon.[4] It was natural enough that the oak should loom large in the religion

[1] James Piggul, steward of the estate of Panikovitz, in a report to Baron de Bogouschefsky, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, iii. (1874) pp. 274 *sq.*

[2] The evidence will be given later on, when we come to deal with the fire-festivals of Europe. Meantime I may refer the reader to *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, iii. 347 *sqq.*, where, however, the statement as to the universal use of oak-wood in kindling the need-fire is too absolute, exceptions having since come to my knowledge. These will be noticed in the third edition of that part of *The Golden Bough*.

[3] See above, pp. 186, 365, 366.

[4] The only positive evidence, so far as I know, that the Celtic oak-god was also a deity of thunder and rain is his identification with Zeus (see above, p. 362). But the analogy of the Greeks, Italians, Teutons, Slavs, and Lithuanians may be allowed to supply the lack of more definite testimony.

of people who lived in oak forests, used oak timber for building, oak sticks for fuel, and oak acorns for food and fodder; but we have still to explain how they were led to associate the thunder and the rain with the oak in their conception of this great divinity. From the nature of the case our solution of the problem must be conjectural; we can only guess at the train of thought which prompted our forefathers to link together things which to us seem so very different. Thunder and rain may indeed naturally be regarded as akin since the two so often occur together; but the difficulty is to understand why the oak should be joined with them. Which of the three elements was the original nucleus about which the others afterwards clustered? In our ignorance of the facts, this question amounts to asking whether, on the principles of savage thought, it is easier to suppose that an original god of thunder and rain should afterwards add the oak-tree to his attributes, or that, on the contrary, an old god of the oak should annex to himself the thunder and the rain? In favour of the first of these suppositions it may be said that a god of thunder and rain might in time be regarded as a god of the oak, because thunder and rain come from the sky, and the oak reaches skyward and is often struck by lightning.[1] But this train of thought is hardly likely to carry conviction even to the mind of a savage. On the other hand, it is not difficult to imagine how early man in Europe might suppose the thunder, or rather the lightning, to be derived from the oak. Seeing that fire on earth was regularly kindled by the rubbing of oaken sticks together, he might readily infer that fire in heaven was produced in like manner; in other words, that the flash of lightning was the spark elicited by some one who was lighting his fire in the usual fashion up aloft; for the

original element seems to have been the oak.

The clue to the development of a lightning-god out of an oak-god may have been the notion that the heavenly fire or lightning was made.

[1] It is said to have been observed that lightning strikes an oak twenty times for once that it strikes a beech (J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,[4] iii. 64). But even if this observation were correct, we could not estimate its worth unless we knew the comparative frequency of oaks and beeches in the country where it was made. The Greeks observed that a certain species of oak, which they called *haliphloios*, or sea-bark, was often struck by lightning though it did not grow to a great height; but far from regarding it as thereby marked out for the service of the god they abstained from using its wood in the sacrificial rites. See Theophrastus, *Histor. plant.* iii. 8. 5; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 24.

like the earthly fire, by the friction of oak-wood.

savage commonly explains natural phenomena by ideas drawn from the circle of his own daily life. Similarly, people who are accustomed to make fire by means of flints sometimes suppose that lightning is produced in the same way. This is reported of the Armenians,[1] and it may be inferred of the many peoples who believe that the flint implements of prehistoric races are thunder-bolts.[2]

When an oak-god had once grown into a lightning-god, he would easily develop into a god of the rain and the sky.

Thus it is easy to conceive how a god of the oak, viewed as the source of earthly fire, should come to be regarded as a god of the lightning, and hence, by an easy extension of ideas, as a god of thunder and rain. Accordingly we may provisionally assume that the great Aryan gods who combine these various functions have been evolved in this fashion. A further step in their promotion would be taken when the whole sky was assigned to their dominion. The Greeks and Italians certainly advanced their Zeus and Jupiter to this lofty position;[3] but there seems to be no evidence that the Aryans of the north ever raised their corresponding deities

[1] M. Abeghian, *Der armenische Volksglaube*, p. 90.

[2] E. B. Tylor, *Early History of Mankind*,[3] pp. 223-227. For more evidence of this wide-spread belief see M. Baudrouin et L. Bonnemère, "Les Haches polies dans l'histoire jusqu'au XIXe siècle," *Bulletins et Mémoires de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, Ve Série, v. (1904) pp. 496-548; Lieut. Boyd Alexander, "From the Niger, by Lake Chad, to the Nile," *The Geographical Journal*, xxx. (1907) pp. 144 *sq.*; A. B. Ellis, *Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, pp. 37 *sq.*; H. Seidel, "Der Yew'e Dienst im Togolande," *Zeitschrift für afrikanische und oceanischen Sprachen*, iii. (1897) p. 161; H. Klose, *Togo unter deutscher Flagge*, pp. 197 *sq.*; L. Conradt, "Die Ngumbu in Südkamerun," *Globus*, lxxxi. (1902) p. 353; Guerlach, "Mœurs et superstitions des sauvages Ba-hnars," *Missions Catholiques*, xix. (1887) pp. 442, 454; J. A. Jacobsen, *Reisen in die Inselwelt des Banda-Meeres* (Berlin, 1896), pp. 49 *sq.*, 232; C. Ribbe, "Die Aru-Inseln," *Festschrift des Vereins für Erdkunde zu Dresden* (Dresden, 1888), p. 165; E. Thurston, *Ethnographic Notes in Southern India*, p. 351; Rev. P. O. Bodding, "Ancient Stone Implements in the Santal Parganas," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, lxx. Part iii. (1901) pp. 17-20; E. M. Gordon, *Indian Folk-tales* (London, 1908), p. 75; *County Folk-lore, III. Orkney and Shetland Islands*, collected by G. F. Black (London, 1903), p. 153; P. Hermann, *Nordische Mythologie*, pp. 339 *sq.*, 352; M. Toeppen, *Aberglauben aus Masuren*[2] (Danzig, 1867), pp. 42 *sq.* Dr. E. B. Tylor has pointed out how natural to the primitive mind is the association of spark-producing stones with lightning (*Primitive Culture*,[2] ii. 262).

[3] L. Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*,[4] i. 116 *sq.*; *id.*, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 184 *sqq.* As to Jupiter see in particular Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, vii. 19, "*Coelum enim esse Jovem innumerabiliter et diligenter affirmant*"; and Ennius, quoted by Cicero, *De natura deorum*, ii. 25. 65, "*Aspice hoc sublimen candens, quem invocant omnes Jovem.*"

to the rank of sky-gods in general. It is commonly indeed assumed that the sky was the original province of all these deities, or rather of the single Aryan god from which they are descended. But on this theory it is hard to see why the god of the sky should have taken up with the oak, and not only that, but should have clung to it even after he had, in some places at least, begun to sit very loose to his old home, the vault of heaven. Surely his fidelity to the oak from the earliest to the latest times among all the different families of his European worshippers is a strong argument for regarding the tree as the primary, not a secondary, element in his composite nature.

CHAPTER XXI

DIANUS AND DIANA

Recapitulation.

IN this chapter I propose to recapitulate the conclusions to which the enquiry has thus far led us, and drawing together the scattered rays of light, to turn them on the dark figure of the priest of Nemi.

Rise of sacred kings, who are supposed to be endowed with magical or divine powers.

We have found that at an early stage of society men, ignorant of the secret processes of Nature and of the narrow limits within which it is in our power to control and direct them, have commonly arrogated to themselves functions which in the present state of knowledge we should deem superhuman or divine. The illusion has been fostered and maintained by the same causes which begot it, namely, the marvellous order and uniformity with which Nature conducts her operations, the wheels of her great machine revolving with a smoothness and precision which enable the patient observer to anticipate in general the season, if not the very hour, when they will bring round the fulfilment of his hopes or the accomplishment of his fears. The regularly recurring events of this great cycle, or rather series of cycles, soon stamp themselves even on the dull mind of the savage. He foresees them, and foreseeing them mistakes the desired recurrence for an effect of his own will, and the dreaded recurrence for an effect of the will of his enemies. Thus the springs which set the vast machine in motion, though they lie far beyond our ken, shrouded in a mystery which we can never hope to penetrate, appear to ignorant man to lie within his reach: he fancies he can touch them and so work by magic art all manner of good to himself and evil to his foes. In time the

fallacy of this belief becomes apparent to him: he discovers that there are things he cannot do, pleasures which he is unable of himself to procure, pains which even the most potent magician is powerless to avoid. The unattainable good, the inevitable ill, are now ascribed by him to the action of invisible powers, whose favour is joy and life, whose anger is misery and death. Thus magic tends to be displaced by religion, and the sorcerer by the priest. At this stage of thought the ultimate causes of things are conceived to be personal beings, many in number and often discordant in character, who partake of the nature and even of the frailty of man, though their might is greater than his, and their life far exceeds the span of his ephemeral existence. Their sharply-marked individualities, their clear-cut outlines have not yet begun, under the powerful solvent of philosophy, to melt and coalesce into that single unknown substratum of phenomena which, according to the qualities with which our imagination invests it, goes by one or other of the high-sounding names which the wit of man has devised to hide his ignorance. Accordingly, so long as men look on their gods as beings akin to themselves and not raised to an unapproachable height above them, they believe it to be possible for those of their own number who surpass their fellows to attain to the divine rank after death or even in life. Incarnate human deities of this latter sort may be said to halt midway between the age of magic and the age of religion. If they bear the names and display the pomp of deities, the powers which they are supposed to wield are commonly those of their predecessor the magician. Like him, they are expected to guard their people against hostile enchantments, to heal them in sickness, to bless them with offspring, and to provide them with an abundant supply of food by regulating the weather and performing the other ceremonies which are deemed necessary to ensure the fertility of the earth and the multiplication of animals. Men who are credited with powers so lofty and far-reaching naturally hold the highest place in the land, and while the rift between the spiritual and the temporal spheres has not yet widened too far, they are supreme in civil as well as religious matters: in a word, they are kings as well as gods.

Transition from magic to religion.

Incarnate human deities.

Thus the divinity which hedges a king has its roots deep down in human history, and long ages pass before these are sapped by a profounder view of nature and man.

The King of the Wood at Nemi seems to have been one of these divine kings and to have mated with the divine Queen of the Wood, Diana.

In the classical period of Greek and Latin antiquity the reign of kings was for the most part a thing of the past; yet the stories of their lineage, titles, and pretensions suffice to prove that they too claimed to rule by divine right and to exercise superhuman powers. Hence we may without undue temerity assume that the King of the Wood at Nemi, though shorn in later times of his glory and fallen on evil days, represented a long line of sacred kings who had once received not only the homage but the adoration of their subjects in return for the manifold blessings which they were supposed to dispense. What little we know of the functions of Diana in the Arician grove seems to prove that she was here conceived as a goddess of fertility, and particularly as a divinity of childbirth.[1] It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that in the discharge of these important duties she was assisted by her priest, the two figuring as King and Queen of the Wood in a solemn marriage, which was intended to make the earth gay with the blossoms of spring and the fruits of autumn, and to gladden the hearts of men and women with healthful offspring.

Virbius, whom the King of the Wood represented, was probably a form of Jupiter regarded as god of the greenwood, and especially of the oak.

If the priest of Nemi posed not merely as a king, but as a god of the grove, we have still to ask, What deity in particular did he personate? The answer of antiquity is that he represented Virbius, the consort or lover of Diana.[2] But this does not help us much, for of Virbius we know little more than the name. A clue to the mystery is perhaps supplied by the Vestal fire which burned in the grove.[3] For the perpetual holy fires of the Aryans in Europe appear to have been commonly kindled and fed with oak-wood,[4] and we have seen that in Rome itself, not many miles from Nemi, the fuel of the Vestal fire consisted of oaken sticks or logs, which in early days the holy maidens doubtless gathered or cut in the coppices of oak that once covered the Seven Hills.[5] But the ritual of the various Latin towns seems

[1] Above, vol. i. pp. 6 *sq.*, 12; vol. ii. pp. 124 *sq.*, 128 *sq.*, 171 *sqq.*

[2] Above, vol. i. pp. 19 *sqq.*, 40 *sq.*

[3] Above, vol. i. pp. 12 *sq.*

[4] Above, pp. 365, 366, 372.

[5] Above, p. 186.

to have been marked by great uniformity;[1] hence it is reasonable to conclude that wherever in Latium a Vestal fire was maintained, it was fed, as at Rome, with wood of the sacred oak. If this was so at Nemi, it becomes probable that the hallowed grove there consisted of a natural oak-wood, and that therefore the tree which the King of the Wood had to guard at the peril of his life was itself an oak; indeed it was from an evergreen oak, according to Virgil, that Aeneas plucked the Golden Bough.[2] Now the oak was the sacred tree of Jupiter, the supreme god of the Latins. Hence it follows that the King of the Wood, whose life was bound up in a fashion with an oak, personated no less a deity than Jupiter himself. At least the evidence, slight as it is, seems to point to this conclusion. The old Alban dynasty of the Silvii or Woods, with their crown of oak leaves, apparently aped the style and emulated the powers of Latian Jupiter, who dwelt on the top of the Alban Mount.[3] It is not impossible that the King of the Wood, who guarded the sacred oak a little lower down the mountain, was the lawful successor and representative of this ancient line of the Silvii or Woods.[4] At all events, if I am right in supposing that he passed for a human Jupiter, it would appear that Virbius, with whom legend identified him, was nothing but a local form of Jupiter, considered perhaps in his original aspect as a god of the greenwood.[5]

[1] Above, vol. i. pp. 13 *sq.*, vol. ii. pp. 184, 266.

[2] Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 205 *sqq.*

[3] See above, pp. 178 *sqq.*

[4] This suggestion is due to Mr. A. B. Cook. See his articles, "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xviii. (1904) pp. 363 *sq.*; and "The European Sky-God," *Folk-lore*, xvi. (1905) pp. 277 *sq.* On the other hand see above, pp. 1 *sq.*

[5] Virbius may perhaps be etymologically connected with *viridis*, "green," and *verbena*, "a sacred bough." If this were so, Virbius would be "the Green One." We are reminded of those popular personifications of the spring, Green George and Jack in the Green. See above, pp. 75 *sq.*, 82 *sq.* As to the proposed derivation from a root meaning "green" Professor R. S. Conway writes to me (10th January 1903): "From this meaning of the root a derivative in *-bus* would not strike me as so strange; *vir-bho* might conceivably mean 'growing green.'" In my *Lectures on the Early History of the Kingship* (pp. 282 *sq.*) I followed Mr. A. B. Cook in interpreting a passage of Plautus (*Casina*, ii. 5. 23-29) as a reference to the priests of Nemi in the character of mortal Jupiters. But a simpler and more probable explanation of the passage has been given by Dr. L. R. Farnell. See A. B. Cook, "The European Sky-god," *Folk-lore*, xvi. (1905) pp. 322 *sqq.*; L. R. Farnell, in *The Hibbert Journal*, iv. (1906) p. 932.

Diana and the oak.

Diana, the divine partner of the King of the Wood at Nemi, seems to have been especially associated with the oak.

The hypothesis that in later times at all events the King of the Wood played the part of the oak god Jupiter, is confirmed by an examination of his divine partner Diana. For two distinct lines of argument converge to shew that if Diana was a queen of the woods in general, she was at Nemi a goddess of the oak in particular. In the first place, she bore the title of Vesta, and as such presided over a perpetual fire, which we have seen reason to believe was fed with oak wood.[1] But a goddess of fire is not far removed from a goddess of the fuel which burns in the fire; primitive thought perhaps drew no sharp line of distinction between the blaze and the wood that blazes. In the second place, the nymph Egeria at Nemi appears to have been merely a form of Diana, and Egeria is definitely said to have been a Dryad, a nymph of the oak.[2] Elsewhere in Italy the goddess had her home on oak-clad mountains. Thus Mount Algidus, a spur of the Alban hills, was covered in antiquity with dark forests of oak, both of the evergreen and the deciduous sort. In winter the snow lay long on these cold hills, and their gloomy oak-woods were believed to be a favourite haunt of Diana, as they have been of brigands in modern times.[3] Again, Mount Tifata, the long abrupt ridge of the Apennines which looks down on the Campanian plain behind Capua, was wooded of old with evergreen oaks, among which Diana had a temple. Here Sulla thanked the goddess for his victory over the Marians in the plain below, attesting his gratitude by inscriptions which were long afterwards to be seen in the temple.[4] On the whole, then, we conclude that at Nemi the King of the Wood personated the oak-god Jupiter and mated with the oak-goddess Diana in the sacred grove. An echo of their mystic union has come down to us in the legend of the loves of Numa and Egeria, who according to some had their trysting-place in these holy woods.[5]

[1] See above, vol. i. p. 13, vol. ii. pp. 378 *sq.*

[2] Above, pp. 171 *sq.*

[3] Horace, *Odes*, i. 21. 5 *sq.*, iii. 23. 9 *sq.*, iv. 4. 5 *sq.*, *Carmen Saeculare*, 69; Livy, iii. 25. 6-8; E. H. Bunbury, in Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography*, *s.v.* "Algidus."

[4] Festus, *s.v.* "Tifata," p. 366, ed. C. O. Müller; Velleius Paterculus, ii. 25. 4; E. H. Bunbury, *op. cit. s.v.* "Tifata." For more evidence of the association of Diana with the oak, see Mr. A. B. Cook, "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xviii. (1904) pp. 369 *sq.*

[5] Above, vol. i. pp. 17 *sq.*, vol. ii. pp. 172 *sq.*

To this theory it may naturally be objected that the divine consort of Jupiter was not Diana but Juno, and that if Diana had a mate at all he might be expected to bear the name not of Jupiter, but of Dianus or Janus, the latter of these forms being merely a corruption of the former. All this is true, but the objection may be parried by observing that the two pairs of deities, Jupiter and Juno on the one side, and Dianus and Diana, or Janus and Jana, on the other side, are merely duplicates of each other, their names and their functions being in substance and origin identical. With regard to their names, all four of them come from the same Aryan root *DI*, meaning "bright," which occurs in the names of the corresponding Greek deities, Zeus and his old female consort Dione.[1] In regard to their functions, Juno and Diana were both goddesses of fecundity and childbirth, and both were sooner or later identified with the moon.[2] As to the true nature and functions of Janus the ancients themselves were puzzled;[3] and where they hesitated, it is not for us confidently to decide. But the view mentioned by Varro that Janus was the god of the sky[4] is supported not only by the etymological identity of his name with that of the

In nature and in name Dianus (Janus) and Diana seem to be only dialectically different forms of Jupiter and Juno.

[1] The original root appears plainly in *Diovis* and *Diespiter*, the older forms of *Jupiter* (Varro, *De lingua Latina*, v. 66; Aulus Gellius, v. 12). The form Dianus is attested by an inscription found at Aquileia (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, v. 783), and the form Jana by Varro (*Rerum rusticarum*, i. 37. 3) and Macrobius (*Saturn.* i. 9. 8). In *Zeus*, *Dione*, *Jupiter*, and *Juno* the old root *DI* appears in the expanded form *DIV*. As to the etymology of these names, see Ch. Ploix, "Les Dieux qui proviennent de la racine *DIV*," *Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique de Paris*, i. (1868) pp. 213-222; G. Curtius, *Grundzüge der griechischen Etymologie*,[5] pp. 236 *sq.*, 616 *sq.*; A. Vaníček, *Griechisch-lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, i. 353 *sqq.*; W. H. Roscher, *Lexikon der griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, ii. 45 *sq.*, 578 *sq.*, 619; S. Linde, *De Jano summo Romanorum deo* (Lund, 1891), pp. 7 *sq.*; J. S. Speijer, "Le Dieu romain Janus," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, xxvi. (1892) pp. 37-41; H. Usener, *Götternamen*, pp. 16, 35 *sq.*, 326; P. Kretschmer, *Einleitung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache*, pp. 78 *sqq.*, 91, 161 *sq.* Messrs. Speijer and Kretschmer reject the derivation of Janus from the root *DI*.

[2] As to Juno in these aspects, see L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,[3] i. 271 *sqq.*; G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, pp. 117 *sqq.*; W. H. Roscher, *Lexikon der griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, ii. 578 *sqq.* As to Diana, see above, vol. i. p. 12, vol. ii. pp. 124, 128 *sq.*

[3] Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 89 *sqq.*; Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 9; Servius, on Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 610; Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iv. 1 *sq.*

[4] Varro, quoted by Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, vii. 28; Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iv. 2. Compare Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 9. 11. See R. Agahd, *M. Terentii Varronis rerum divinarum libri I. XIV. XV. XVI.* (Leipsic, 1898) pp. 117 *sqq.*, 203 *sq.*

sky-god Jupiter, but also by the relation in which he appears to have stood to Jupiter's two mates, Juno and Juturna. For the epithet Junonian bestowed on Janus[1] points to a marriage union between the two deities; and according to one account Janus was the husband of the water-nymph Juturna,[2] who according to others was beloved by Jupiter.[3] Moreover, Janus, like Jove, was regularly invoked, and commonly spoken of, under the title of Father.[4] Indeed, he was identified with Jupiter not merely by the logic of a Christian doctor,[5] but by the piety of a pagan worshipper who dedicated an offering to Jupiter Dianus.[6] A trace of his relation to the oak may be found in the oak-woods of the Janiculum, the hill on the right bank of the Tiber, where Janus is said to have reigned as a king in the remotest ages of Italian history.[7]

Zeus and Dione, Jupiter and Juno, Dianus (Janus) and Diana represent a single original pair of Aryan deities, which through purely dialectical differences

Thus, if I am right, the same ancient pair of deities was variously known among the Greek and Italian peoples as Zeus and Dione, Jupiter and Juno, or Dianus (Janus) and Diana (Jana), the names of the divinities being identical in substance, though varying in form with the dialect of the particular tribe which worshipped them. At first, when the peoples dwelt near each other, the difference between the deities would be hardly more than one of name; in other words, it would be almost purely dialectical. But the gradual dispersion of the tribes, and their consequent isolation from each other, would favour the growth of divergent modes of conceiving and worshipping the gods whom they had carried

[1] Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 9. 15, i. 15. 19; Servius, on Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 610; Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iv. 1. Prof. G. Wissowa thinks that sacrifices were offered to Janus as well as to Juno on the first of every month (*Religion und Kultus der Römer*, pp. 91 *sq.*); but this view does not seem to me to be supported by the evidence of Macrobius (*Sat.* i. 9. 16, i. 15. 18 *sq.*), to which he refers. Macrobius does not say that the first of every month was sacred to Janus.

[2] Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, iii. 29.

[3] Virgil, *Aen.* xii. 138 *sqq.*; Ovid, *Fasti*, ii. 585 *sqq.*

[4] Cato, *De agri cultura*, 134; Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 357; Horace, *Epist.* i. 16. 59, compare *Sat.* ii. 6. 20; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxvi. 28; Juvenal, vi. 394; Martial, x. 28. 6 *sq.*; Aulus Gellius, v. 12. 5; Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, iii. 29; H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, Nos. 3320, 3322, 3323, 3324, 3325, 5047; G. Henzen, *Acta fratrum Arvalium*, p. 144; Athenaeus, xv. 46, p. 692 D, E.

[5] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, vii. 9 *sq.*

[6] *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, v. No. 783.

[7] Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 7. 19; Servius, on Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 319 and 357; Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, iii. 29; Athenaeus, xv. 46, p. 692 D. As to the oak-woods of the Janiculum, see above, p. 186.

with them from their old home, so that in time discrepancies of myth and ritual would tend to spring up and thereby to convert a nominal into a real distinction between the divinities. Accordingly when, with the slow progress of culture, the long period of barbarism and separation was passing away, and the rising political power of a single strong community had begun to draw or hammer its weaker neighbours into a nation, the confluent peoples would throw their gods, like their dialects, into a common stock; and thus it might come about that the same ancient deities, which their forefathers had worshipped together before the dispersion, would now be so disguised by the accumulated effect of dialectical and religious divergencies that their original identity might fail to be recognised, and they would take their places side by side as independent divinities in the national pantheon.[1]

of nomenclature gradually diverged from each other and came to be regarded as separate pairs of deities.

This duplication of deities, the result of the final fusion of kindred tribes who had long lived apart, would account for the appearance of Janus beside Jupiter, and of Diana or Jana beside Juno in the Roman religion.[2] At least this appears to be a more probable theory than the opinion, which has found favour with some modern scholars, that Janus was originally nothing but the god of doors.[3] That a deity of his dignity and importance, whom the Romans revered as a god of gods[4] and the father of his people,

This explanation of Janus as equivalent to Jupiter is more probable than the view that Janus was originally nothing but the god

[1] As dialectal differences in the ancient Italian languages seem to have created a multiplicity of deities, so in the Malay language they appear to have created a multiplicity of fabulous animals. See R. J. Wilkinson, *Malay Beliefs* (London and Leyden, 1906), p. 56: "The wealth of Malay nomenclature in the province of natural history is in itself a fruitful source of error. The identity of different dialectic names for the same animal is not always recognized: the local name is taken to represent the real animal, the foreign name is assumed to represent a rare or fabulous variety of the same genus." In these cases mythology might fairly enough be described as a disease of language. But such cases cover only a small part of the vast mythical field.

[2] Mr. A. B. Cook, who accepts in substance my theory of the original identity of Jupiter and Janus, Juno and Diana, has suggested that Janus and Diana were the deities of the aborigines of Rome, Jupiter and Juno the deities of their conquerors. See his article, "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xviii. (1904) pp. 367 *sq.*

[3] This is the opinion of Dr. W. H. Roscher (*Lexikon der griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, ii. 47), Mr. W. Warde Fowler (*Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*, pp. 282 *sqq.*), and Prof. G. Wissowa (*Religion und Kultus der Römer*, p. 96). It is rejected for the reasons given in the text by Ph. Buttmann (*Mythologus*, ii. pp. 72, 79) and S. Linde (*De Jano summo Romanorum deo*, pp. 50 *sqq.*).

[4] He was so saluted in the ancient hymns of the Salii. See Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 9. 14; compare Varro, *De lingua Latina*, vii. 26 *sq.*

of the door (*janua*); for the door (*janua*) seems rather to have been named after Janus than he after it.

should have started in life as a humble, though doubtless respectable, doorkeeper appears to me, I confess, very unlikely. So lofty an end hardly consorts with so lowly a beginning. It is more probable that the door (*janua*) got its name from Janus than that he got his name from it. This view is strengthened by a consideration of the word *janua* itself. The regular word for door is the same in all the languages of the Aryan family from India to Ireland. It is *dur* in Sanscrit, *thura* in Greek, *Tür* in German, *door* in English, *dorus* in old Irish, and *foris* in Latin.[1] Yet besides this ordinary name for door, which the Latins shared with all their Aryan brethren, they had also the name *janua*, to which there is no corresponding term in any Indo-European speech. The word has the appearance of being an adjectival form derived from the noun *Janus*. I conjecture that it may have been customary to set up an image or symbol of Janus at the principal door of the house in order to place the entrance under the protection of the great god. A door thus guarded might be known as a *janua foris*, that is, a Januan door, and the phrase might in time be abridged into *janua*, the noun *foris* being understood but not expressed. From this to the use of *janua* to designate a door in general, whether guarded by an image of Janus or not, would be an easy and natural transition.[2]

The double-headed figure of Janus may have originated in a custom of placing his image as guardian of doorways so as to face both ways, outwards and inwards, at the same time.

If there is any truth in this conjecture, it may explain very simply the origin of the double head of Janus, which has so long exercised the ingenuity of mythologists. When it had become customary to guard the entrance of houses and towns by an image of Janus, it might well be deemed necessary to make the sentinel god look both ways, before and behind, at the same time, in order that nothing should escape his vigilant eye. For if the divine watchman always faced in one direction, it is easy to imagine what mischief might have been wrought with impunity behind his back.

[1] G. Curtius, *Grundzüge der griechischen Etymologie*,[5] p. 258; O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Altertumskunde*, p. 866.

[2] This theory of the derivation of *janua* from *Janus* was suggested, though not accepted, by Ph. Butmann (*Mythologus*, ii. 79 *sqq.*). It occurred to me independently. Mr. A. B. Cook also derives *janua* from *Janus*, but he would explain the derivation in a different way by supposing that the lintel and two side-posts of a door represented a triple Janus. See his article "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xviii. (1904) p. 369

This explanation is confirmed by the double-headed idols which the Bush negroes of Surinam set to guard the entrances of their villages.

This explanation of the double-headed Janus at Rome is confirmed by the double-headed idol which the Bush negroes in the interior of Surinam regularly set up as a guardian at the entrance of a village. The idol consists of a block of wood with a human face rudely carved on each side; it stands under a gateway composed of two uprights and a cross-bar. Beside the idol generally lies a white rag intended to keep off the devil; and sometimes there is also a stick which seems to represent a bludgeon or weapon of some sort. Further, from the cross-bar hangs a small log which serves the useful purpose of knocking on the head any evil spirit who might attempt to pass through the gateway.[1] Clearly this double-headed fetish at the gateway of the negro villages in Surinam bears a close resemblance to the double-headed images of Janus which, grasping a stick in one hand and a key in the other, stood sentinel at Roman gates and doorways;[2] and we can hardly doubt that in both cases the heads facing two ways are to be similarly explained as expressive of the vigilance of the guardian god, who kept his eye on spiritual foes behind and before, and stood ready to bludgeon them on the spot. We may, therefore, dispense with the tedious and unsatisfactory explanations which the wily Janus himself fobbed off an anxious Roman enquirer.[3] In the interior of Borneo the Kenyahs generally place before the main entrance of their houses the wooden image of Balli Atap, that is, the Spirit or God (*Balli*) of the Roof, who protects the household from harm of all kinds.[4] But it does not appear that this divine watchman is provided with more than one face.

[1] K. Martin, "Bericht über eine Reise ins Gebiet des Oberen-Surinam," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xxxv. (1886) pp. 28 *sq.* I am indebted to Mr. A. van Gennep for pointing out this confirmation of my theory as to the meaning of the double-headed Janus. See his article "Janus Bifrons," *Revue des traditions populaires*, xxii. (1907) pp. 97 *sq.*

[2] Macrobius, *Saturn.* i. 9. 7, "*Sed apud nos Janum omnibus praeesse januis nomen ostendit, quod est simile θυραῳ. Nam et cum clavi ac virga figuratur, quasi omnium et portarum custos et rector viarum*"; Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 95, 99, "*Sacer ancipiti mirandus imagine Janus . . . tenens dextra baculum clavemque sinistra.*"

[3] Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 89 *sqq.*

[4] C. Hose and W. McDougall, "The Relations between Men and Animals in Sarawak," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxi. (1901) p. 175.

Thus the King of the Wood at Nemi seems to have personated the great Aryan god of the oak, Jupiter or Janus, and to have mated with the oak-goddess Diana.

To apply these conclusions to the priest of Nemi, we may suppose that as the mate of Diana he represented originally Dianus or Janus rather than Jupiter, but that the difference between these deities was of old merely superficial, going little deeper than the names, and leaving practically unaffected the essential functions of the god as a power of the sky, the thunder, and the oak. If my analysis of this great divinity is correct, the original element in his composite nature was the oak. It was fitting, therefore, that his human representative at Nemi should dwell, as we have seen reason to believe he did, in an oak grove. His title of King of the Wood clearly indicates the sylvan character of the deity whom he served; and since he could only be assailed by him who had plucked the bough of a certain tree in the grove, his own life might be said to be bound up with that of the sacred tree. Thus he not only served but embodied the great Aryan god of the oak; and as an oak-god he would mate with the oak-goddess, whether she went by the name of Egeria or Diana. Their union, however consummated, would be deemed essential to the fertility of the earth and the fecundity of man and beast. Further, as the oak-god had grown into a god of the sky, the thunder, and the rain, so his human representative would be required, like many other divine kings, to cause the clouds to gather, the thunder to peal, and the rain to descend in due season, that the fields and orchards might bear fruit and the pastures be covered with luxuriant herbage. The reputed possessor of powers so exalted must have been a very important personage; and the remains of buildings and of votive offerings which have been found on the site of the sanctuary combine with the testimony of classical writers to prove that in later times it was one of the greatest and most popular shrines in Italy. Even in the old days when the champaign country around was still parcelled out among the petty tribes who composed the Latin League, the sacred grove is known to have been an object of their common reverence and care. And just as the kings of Cambodia used to send offerings to the mystic kings of Fire and Water far in the dim depths of the tropical forest, so, we may well believe, from all sides of the broad Latian plain the

eyes and footsteps of Italian pilgrims turned to the quarter where, standing sharply out against the faint blue line of the Apennines or the deeper blue of the distant sea, the Alban Mountain rose before them, the home of the mysterious priest of Nemi, the King of the Wood. There, among the green woods and beside the still waters of the lonely hills the ancient Aryan worship of the god of the oak, the thunder, and the dripping sky lingered in its early, almost Druidical form, long after a great political and intellectual revolution had shifted the capital of Latin religion from the forest to the city, from Nemi to Rome.

INDEX

Abbas Effendi, i. 402
Abchases of the Caucasus, the, ii. 370
Abolition of the kingship at Rome, ii. 289 *sqq.*
Abraham and Sarah, ii. 114
Acacia-tree worshipped, ii. 16
Achelous and Dejanira, ii. 161 *sq.*
Achilles, ii. 278
Acorns as food, ii. 353, 355 *sq.*; as fodder for swine, 354, 356
Adam of Bremen, ii. 364
Adonis at Byblus, i. 30
—— and Venus (Aphrodite), i. 21, 25, 40, 41
—— or Tammuz, ii. 346
Adoption, pretence of birth at, i. 74 *sq.*
Adultery supposed to blight the fruits of the earth, ii. 107 *sq.*, 114
Aeacus, ii. 278, 359
Aegira, priestess of Earth at, i. 381 *sq.*
Aegisthus, ii. 281
Aeneas and the Golden Bough, i. 11, ii. 379; his disappearance in a thunderstorm, 181
Aeolus, i. 326
Aeschines, spurious epistles of, ii. 162 *n.*[2]
Aesculapius brings Hippolytus to life, i. 20; at Cos, ii. 10
Africa, rise of magicians, especially rain-makers, to chieftainship and kingship in, i. 342 *sqq.*, 352; human gods in, 392 *sqq.*
—— North, magical images in, i. 65 *sq.*
Afterbirth (placenta), contagious magic of, i. 182-201; placed in tree, 182, 187, 190, 191, 194, 199; part of child's spirit in, 184; regarded as brother or sister of child, 189, 191, 192, 193; regarded as a second child, 195; seat of external soul, 200 *sq.*
Agamemnon, ii. 279; sceptre of, i. 365
Agni, the fire-god, ii. 249
Agnihotris, Brahman fire-priests, ii. 247 *sqq.*
Agriculture of the Nabataeans, ii. 100
Ainos, i. 60
Akamba, the, ii. 317
Akikuyu, the, ii. 44, 150, 316, 317; pretence of new birth among the, i. 75 *sq.*, 96 *sq.*
Alba Longa, the kings of, ii. 178 *sqq.*, 268 *sq.*
Alban Hills, i. 2
—— Mountain, the, ii. 187 *sq.*, 202
Albigenses, the, i. 407
Alcheringa, legendary time, i. 98
Alfai, priesthood of the, ii. 3
Algidus, Mount, ii. 187, 380
Algonquins, the, ii. 147
Amata, "Beloved," title of Vestals, ii. 197; Amata, wife of King Latinus, 197
Amboyna, ii. 28
Amenophis III., birth of, ii. 131 *sqq.*
American Indians, power of medicine-men among the, i. 355 *sqq.*
Amethyst, i. 165
Ammon, the god, married to the Queen of Egypt, ii. 130 *sqq.*; human wives of the god, 130 *sqq.*; costume of the god, 133; King of Egypt masqueraded as, 133; at Thebes, high priests of, 134
Ammonite, black fossil, ii. 26, 27 *n.*[2]
Amphictyon, ii. 277
Amulius Sylvius, ii. 180
Anaitis, Oriental goddess, i. 16 *sq.*, 37 *n.*[2]
Anatomie of Abuses, ii. 66
Anazarbus, the olives of, ii. 107
Ancestor-worship among the Bantu peoples, ii. 221; in relation to fire-worship, 221
Ancestors, prayers to, i. 285, 287, 345, 352; sacrifices to, 339; souls of, in trees, ii. 30, 31, 32; dead, regarded as mischievous beings, 221; represented by sacred fire-sticks, 222 *sqq.*; souls of, in the fire on the hearth, 232
Ancestral spirits worshipped at the hearth, ii. 221 *sq.*

Ancestral tree, fire kindled from, ii. 221, 233 *sq.*
Ancus Martius, his death, ii. 320
Andaman Islanders, ii. 253
Andania, ii. 122
Anderida, forest of, ii. 7
Andromeda and Perseus, ii. 163
Animals, homoeopathic magic of, i. 150 *sqq.*; rain-making by means of, 287 *sqq.*
Animism passing into polytheism, ii. 45
Anitos, spirits of ancestors, ii. 30
Anjea, mythical being, who causes conception in women, i. 100, 184
Annals of Tigernach and Ulster, ii. 286
Annandale, Nelson, ii. 237 *n.*
Anointing weapon which caused wound, i. 202 *sqq.*
Antaeus, ii. 300
Antigone, death of, ii. 228 *n.*[5]
Antigonus, i. 391 *n.*[1]
Antimores of Madagascar, i. 354
Apaches, land of the, i. 306
Apepi, Egyptian fiend, i. 67
Apes thought to be related to twins, i. 265
Ap-hi, god of thunder and lightning, ii. 370
Aphrodite and Adonis, i. 25
—— Askraia, i. 26
Apollo, i. 384, 386; at Delos, 32, 34 *sq.*; at Delphi, 28; grave of, at Delphi, 35; Erithasean, ii. 121; at Patara, 135
—— and Artemis, birthdays of, i. 32
—— Diradiotes, i. 381
Apologies offered to trees for cutting them down, ii. 18 *sq.*, 36 *sq.*
Apples at festival of Diana, i. 14, 16
April 15th, sacrifice on, ii. 229, 326
—— 21st, date of the Parilia, ii. 325, 326
—— 23rd, St. George's Day, ii. 330 *sqq.*
—— 24th, in some places St. George's Day, ii. 337, 343
Arab charms, i. 152, 153, 157, 165 *sq.*, 181, 303
Arabs of Moab, i. 276
Aratus, sacrifices to, i. 105
Araucanians of Chili, the, ii. 183
Arden, forest of, ii. 7
Ardennes, goddess of the, ii. 126
Aren palm-tree, ii. 22
Ariadne and Dionysus, ii. 138
Aricia, i. 3, 4, 10, ii. 2; "many Manii at," i. 22
Arician grove, the sacred, i. 20, 22, ii. 115; horses excluded from, i. 20
Arikara Indians, i. 115
Aristotle, ii. 137
Arkon, in Rügen, ii. 241 *n.*[4]
Armenia, rain-making in, i. 275 *sq.*
Arrephoroi at Athens, the, ii. 199
Arrian, on sacrifices to Artemis, ii. 125 *sq.*
Arrows shot at sacred trees, ii. 11; fire-tipped, shot at sun during an eclipse, i. 311
Artemis, temple dedicated to her by Xenophon, i. 7; birthday of, i. 32, ii. 125; the Asiatic, i. 7; at Delos, 28; of Ephesus, 7, 37 *sq.*, ii. 128, 136; a goddess of the wild life of nature, i. 35 *sq.*; sacrifices to, ii. 125; worshipped by the Celts, 125 *sq.*; Saronian, i. 26; Wolfish, 26 *sq.*
—— and Apollo, birthdays of, i. 32; and Hippolytus, 19 *sq.*, 24 *sqq.*
—— *Parthenos*, i. 36
Arunta, the, of Central Australia, i. 98; magical ceremonies among, 85 *sqq.*; burial customs of the, 102
Arval Brothers, the, ii. 203
Aryan god of the oak and thunder, ii. 356 *sqq.*; god of the sky, 374 *sq.*
Aryans, magical powers ascribed to kings among the, i. 366 *sqq.*; perpetual fires among the, ii. 260; female kinship among the, 283 *sqq.*
Ascanius or Julus, ii. 197
Ascension Day, ii. 69, 166
Ashantee, licence accorded to king's sisters in, ii. 274 *sq.*
Ashes scattered as rain-charm, i. 304; in magic, 314; of unborn calves used in a fertility charm, ii. 229, 326
Asia Minor, pontiffs in, i. 47
Assimilation of rain-maker to water, i. 269 *sqq.*
Association of ideas, magic based on a misapplication of the, i. 221 *sq.*
Assumption of the Virgin in relation to the festival of Diana, i. 14-16
Astarte at Byblus, i. 30
Atalante, ii. 301
Athenian sacrifices to the Seasons, i. 310
Athens, barrow of Hippolytus at, i. 25; new fire brought to, 32 *sq.*; King and Queen at, 44 *sq.*; marriage of Dionysus at, ii. 136 *sq.*; female kinship at, 277
Atkinson, J. C., i. 199
Atreus, ii. 279
Attacking the wind, i. 327 *sqq.*
Attica, traces of female kinship in, ii. 284
Attis and Cybele (Mother of the Gods), i. 18, 21, 40, 41
Atua, Polynesian term for god, i. 387 *n.*[1]
August, the Ides (13th) of, Diana's day, i. 12, 14-17
—— 15th, the day of the Assumption of the Virgin, i. 14-16
Augustine on the one God, i. 121 *n.*[1]

Australia, aboriginal paintings in, i. 87 *n.*[1]; magic universally practised but religion nearly unknown among the aborigines of, 234; government of old men in aboriginal, 334 *sq.*; influence of magicians in aboriginal, 334 *sqq.*
—— Central, magical ceremonies for the supply of food in, i. 85 *sqq.*
Australian aborigines, magical images among the, i. 62; ceremonies of initiation among the, 92 *sqq.*; contagious magic of teeth among the, 176; magic of navel-string and afterbirth among the, 183 *sq.*
Autun, procession of goddess at, ii. 144
Auxesia and Damia, i. 39
Avebury, Lord, i. 225 *n.*
Aventine, Diana on the, ii. 128

Baal, prophets of, cutting themselves, i. 258
Baalim, the, lords of underground waters, ii. 159
Babar Archipelago, i. 72, 131
Babaruda, i. 273
Babylon, magical images in ancient, i. 66 *sq.*; sanctuary of Bel at, ii. 129 *sq.*
Babylonian kings, divinity of the early, i. 417
Bacchanals chew ivy, i. 384
Bachofen, J. J., ii. 313 *n.*[1], 314 *n.*[1]
Bacon, Francis, on anointing weapon that caused wound, i. 202
Badonsachen, King of Burma, i. 400
Baganda, the, i. 395; superstitions as to the navel-string and afterbirth (placenta), 195 *sq.*; their customs in regard to twins, ii. 102 *sq.*; their belief in the influence of the sexes on vegetation, 101 *sq.*; Vestal Virgins among the, 246; their list of kings, 269
Bagba, a fetish, i. 327
Bagishu, i. 103
Bahaus or Kayans of Borneo, ii. 40, 109
Bakers, Roman, required to be chaste, ii. 115 *sq.*, 205
Balli Atap, ii. 385
Faloi, mythical beings, i. 177
Bambaras, the, ii. 42
Banana-tree, wild, supposed to fertilise barren women, ii. 318
Bandicoot in rain-charm, i. 288
Bangalas, the, ii. 293
Banks' Islanders, i. 314
Bantu peoples, ancestor-worship among the, ii. 221
Banyai, chieftainship among the, ii. 292
Banyoro, the, ii. 322; king of the, as rain-maker, i. 348
Baobab-trees, ii. 47
Baptist, St. John the, i. 277
Bar-tree (*Ficus Indica*), ii. 25, 43
Barea, the, ii. 3
Barenton, fountain of, i. 306, 307
Bari, rain-making among the, i. 346 *sq.*
Barotse, the, i. 392 *sq.*
Barren women, charms to procure offspring for, i. 70 *sqq.*; thought to sterilise gardens, 142; fertilised by trees, ii. 51, 56 *sq.*, 316 *sq.*; thought to blight the fruits of the earth, 102; fertilised by water-spirits, 159 *sqq.*
Basilai at Olympia, i. 46 *n.*[4]
Basoga, the, ii. 19, 112
Basutos, the, i. 71, 177
Bath before marriage, intention of, ii. 162
Bathing as a rain-charm, i. 277 *sq.*
Battas or Bataks of Sumatra, i. 71, 398 *sq.*, ii. 108
Battus, King, i. 47
Bayfield, M. A., ii. 228 *n.*[5]
Bean, sprouting of, in superstitious ceremony, i. 266
Beasts, sacred, in Egypt held responsible for failure of crops, i. 354
Bechuana charms, i. 150 *sq.*
Bechuanas, the, i. 313
Bedouins, fire-drill of the ancient, ii. 209
Beech-woods of Denmark, ii. 351
Beena marriage, ii. 271
Bees, the King Bees (Essenes) at Ephesus, ii. 135 *sq.*
Bel of Babylon, ii. 129
Belep, the, of New Caledonia, i. 150
Bell-ringing as a charm to dispel evil influences, ii. 343 *sq.*
Benefits conferred by magic, i. 218 *sq.*
Benin, king of, as a god, i. 396
Benvenuto Cellini, ii. 197 *n.*[6]
Benzoni, G., i. 57 *n.*
Bes, the god, ii. 133
Betsileo, the, i. 397
Bevan, Professor A. A., ii. 210 *n.*
Bezoar stone in rain-charms, i. 305
Bhagavati, goddess of Cochin, i. 280
Birch, crowns of, ii. 64; leaves, girl clad in, 80; tree dressed in woman's clothes, 64; a protection against witches, 54
Birth, pretence of, at adoption, i. 74 *sq.*; at return of supposed dead man, 75; at circumcision, 75 *sq.*; simulation of a new, 380 *sq.*; from the fire, ii. 195 *sqq.*
Birthday, Greek custom of sacrificing to a dead man on his, i. 105
Birthdays of Apollo and Artemis, i. 32
"Birthplace of Rainy Zeus," ii. 360
Black animals in rain-charms, i. 250, 290 *sqq.*; colour in magic, 83; in rain-making ceremonies, 269 *sq.*

Blackfoot Indians, i. 116, 150; their worship of the sun, ii. 146 *sq.*
Bleeding trees, ii. 18, 20, 33
Blighting effect of illicit love on the fruits of the earth, ii. 107 *sqq.*
Blindness, charm to cause, i. 147
Blood drawn from virgin bride, i. 94; shed at circumcision and subincision, uses of, 92, 94 *sq.*; sympathetic connexion between wounded person and his shed blood, 205; used to imitate rain, 256, 257 *sq.*; as a means of inspiration, 381 *sqq.*; offered to trees, ii. 13, 16, 34, 44, 47; of pigs in purificatory rites, 107, 108, 109; of incestuous persons, blighting effects attributed to the, 110 *sq.*; reluctance to spill royal, 228; smeared on sacred trees, 367
Blood, human, in *intichiuma* ceremonies, i. 85, *sqq.* 90, *sqq.*; offered at grave, 90 *sq.*; given to sick people, 91; used to knit men together, 92
Blood-stone, i. 165
Bloomfield, Professor M., i. 229
Boanerges, i. 266
Bodio, fetish king, i. 353
Bogomiles, the, i. 407
Boiled meat offered to the Seasons, i. 310
Bones of dead in magic, i. 148; human, buried as rain-charm, 287; burned as a charm against sorcery, ii. 330
Bonfires at midsummer, ii. 65
Bongo, the, i. 347
Boni, G., ii. 186 *n.*[1]
Borewell, the, ii. 161
Borlase, W., ii. 67
Born thrice, said of Brahmans, i. 381
Borneo, i. 59, 73; beliefs as to the blighting effect of sexual crime in, ii. 108 *sqq.*
Bororos, the, ii. 298
Bough, the Golden, plucked by Aeneas, i. 11, ii. 379; the plucking of it not a piece of bravado, 123 *sq.*; grew on an evergreen oak, 379
Boughs, green, a charm against witches, ii. 52-55, 127. *See also* Branches
Bovillae, ii. 179
Bradbury, Professor J. B., ii. 139 *n.*[1]
Brahman, derivation of name, i. 229
—— fire-priests, ii. 247 *sqq.*; marriage ceremony, i. 160; householder, temporary inspiration of, i. 380 *sq.*
Brahmans deemed superior to the gods, i. 226; divinity of the, 403 *sq.*; thrice-born, 381
Branches dipped in water as a rain-charm, i. 248, 250, 309. *See also* Boughs
Brazil, Indians of, power of medicine-men among the, i. 358 *sq.*
Breath, holy fire not to be blown upon with the, ii. 241
Brethren of the Free Spirit, i. 408; of the Tilled Fields (*Fratres Arvales*), ii. 122
Brhaspati, as a magician, i. 241
Bride tied to tree at marriage, ii. 57; the Whitsuntide, 89, 96; the May, 95; race for a, 301 *sqq.*; contests for a, 305 *sqq.*
—— of God, the, i. 276
—— race among Teutonic peoples, ii. 303 *sqq.*
Bridegroom of May, ii. 91, 93
Bridget in Scotland and the Isle of Man, ii. 94 *sq.*
Brigit, a Celtic goddess, ii. 95, 240 *sqq.*
Brimo and Brimos, ii. 139
Brincker, Dr. P. H., ii. 224 *n.*[4]
Brooke, Rajah, i. 361
Brotherhood formed with trees by sucking their sap, ii. 19 *sq.*
Brothers reviled by sisters for good luck, i. 279
Brown, A. R., ii. 254 *n.*
Brown, Dr. George, i. 340
Brunhild, Queen of Iceland, ii. 306
Brutus, L. Junius, ii. 290, 291
Bryant, Jacob, i. 334
Buckthorn, a protection against witches, ii. 54, 191
Buddha, images of, drenched as a rain-charm, i. 308
Buddhas, living, i. 410 *sq.*
Buddhist animism not a philosophical theory, ii. 13 *sq.*
Bühler, G., ii. 367 *n.*[2], 369
Bulgaria, rain-making in, i. 274
Bull, the thunder-god compared to a, ii. 368
Bull-roarer used as a wind-charm, i. 324
Bull's blood drunk as means of inspiration, i. 381 *sq.*; as ordeal, i. 382 *n.*[1]
Bulls, white, sacrificed, ii. 188 *sq.*
Bunjil Kraura, i. 324
Bunsen, on St. Hippolytus, i. 21 *n.*[2]
Burglars, charms employed by, to cause sleep, i. 148 *sq.*
Burgundians and their kings, i. 366
Burial alive, punishment of unfaithful virgins, ii. 244
—— customs intended to ensure reincarnation, i. 101 *sqq.*
Burma, magical images in, i. 62 *sq.*
Burning of sacred trees or poles, ii. 141 *sq.*
Burning-glass or mirror, fire kindled by, ii. 243, 244 *n.*[1]
Buryats, the, ii. 32
Bush negroes of Surinam, ii. 385
Bushmen, i. 123

Butlers, Roman, required to be chaste, ii. 115 *sq.*, 205
Buttmann, P., i. 40 *n.*[2]
Büttner, C. G., ii. 218
Byblus, Astarte at, i. 30

Cabbages, charm to make cabbages grow, i. 136 *sq.*
Cactus, sacred, telepathy in search for, i. 123 *sq.*
Cadys, ii. 281
Caeculus born from the fire, ii. 197
Caelian hill at Rome, ii. 185
Caesar, Julius, his villa at Nemi, i. 5
Caesars, their name derived from *caesaries*, ii. 180
Caingua Indians, the, ii. 258
Calah, ancient capital of Assyria, ii. 130
Caland, Dr. W., i. 229
Caldwell, Bishop R., i. 382
Calica Puran, i. 63
Caligula, his barges on the lake of Nemi, i. 5; and the priest of Nemi, 11
Calmucks, race for a bride among the, ii. 301, *sq.*
Cambodia, the regalia in, i. 365; Kings of Fire and Water in, ii. 3 *sqq.*
Cambridge, May Day custom at, ii. 62
Camden, W., ii. 53.
Camillus, his triumph, ii. 174 *n.*[2]
Camphor, taboos observed in search for, i. 114 *sq.*; telepathy in search for, 124 *sq.*
Candaules, ii. 281, 282
Candlemas, ii. 94
Cannibalism in Australia, i. 106 *sq.*
Cantabrians, mother-kin among the, ii. 285
Canute, King of England, his marriage with Emma, ii. 282 *sq.*
Cape York Peninsula in Queensland, i. 99, 100
Capena, the Porta, at Rome, i. 18
Capitol, temple of Jupiter on the, ii. 174, 176, 184
Caprificatio, ii. 314 *n.*[2]
Caprificus, the wild fig-tree, ii. 314 *sq.*
Car Nicobar, i. 314
Caribs, war custom of the, i. 134
Carna, nymph, ii. 190
Carpenter, son of, as a human god, i. 376
Carpet-snakes, magical ceremony for the multiplication of, i. 90
Castor and Pollux, i. 49 *sq.*
Cat in rain-charm, i. 289, 291, 308 *sq.*
Cat's cradle as a charm to catch the sun, i. 316 *sq.*
Catlin, G., i. 356
Cato the Elder on dedication of Arician grove to Diana, i. 22, 23
Cato, on expiation, ii. 122
Cattle crowned, ii. 75, 126 *sq.*, 339, 341; charm to recover strayed, i. 212; influence of tree-spirits on, ii. 55
—— stall, the, at Athens, ii. 137
Caul, superstitions as to, i. 187 *sq.*, 190 *sq.*, 199 *sq.*
Caves, prehistoric paintings of animals in, i. 87 *n.*[1]
Cecrops, ii. 277; said to have instituted marriage, 284
Cedar, sacred, ii. 49, 50 *sq.*; smoke of, inhaled as mode of inspiration, i. 383 *sq.*
—— tree, girl annually sacrificed to, ii. 17
—— wood burned as a religious rite, ii. 130
Celebes, i. 109; magical virtue of regalia in, 362 *sqq.*
Celtic divinity akin to Artemis, ii. 126
—— and Italian languages akin, ii. 189
—— Vestals, ii. 241 *n.*[1]
Celts, their worship of the Huntress Artemis, ii. 125 *sq.*; their worship of the oak, 362 *sq.*; of Gaul, their harvest festival, i. 17; of Ireland, their belief in the blighting effect of incest, ii. 116
Ceos, funeral customs in, i. 105
Ceremonies, initiatory, of Central Australian aborigines, i. 92 *sqq.*
Chadwick, H. M., ii. 278 *n.*[1], 283 *n.*[1]
Chaka, the Zulu despot, i. 350
Champion at English coronation ceremony, ii. 322
Chams, the, i. 120, 131, 144
Chariot in rain-charm, i. 309
—— and horses dedicated to the sun, i. 315
Charles II. touches for scrofula, i. 368 *sq.*
Charms to ensure long life, i. 168 *sq.*; to prevent the sun from going down, 316 *sqq.* *See also* Magic
Chastity observed for sake of absent persons, i. 123, 124, 125, 131; practised to make the crops grow, ii. 104 *sqq.*; required of persons who handle dishes and food, 115 *sq.*, 205; Milton on, 118 *n.*[1]; as a virtue not understood by savages, 118; observed by sacred men, perhaps the husbands of a goddess, 135, 136; observed by sacred women, 137; required in those who make fire by friction, 238 *sq.* *See also* Continence
Chauci, the, ii. 353
Cheremiss, the, ii. 44, 49
Cherokees, homoeopathic magic of plants among the, i. 144, 146 *sq.*; homoeopathic magic of animals among the, i. 155 *sq.*

Chibchas, the, i. 416
Chi-chi Mama, i. 276
Chiefs, supernatural power of, in Melanesia, i. 338 *sqq.*; as magicians, especially rain-makers, in Africa, 342 *sqq.*; not allowed to leave their premises, 349; punished for drought and dearth, 352 *sqq.*; as priests, ii. 215 *sq.*; chosen from several families in rotation, 292 *sqq.*
Chilcotin Indians, i. 312
Child's Well at Oxford, ii. 161
Childbirth, Diana as goddess of, i. 12, ii. 128
Children, newborn, brought to the hearth, ii. 232
Chili, sacred cedar, ii. 49, 50 *sq.*
China, emperors of, i. 47; homoeopathic magic of city sites in, 169 *sq.*; the Emperor of, superior to the gods, 416 *sq.* *See also* Chinese
Chinchvad, human gods at, i. 405 *sq.*
Chinese, magical images among the, i. 60 *sq.*
—— belief in spirits of plants, ii. 14
—— charms to ensure long life, i. 168 *sq.*
—— emperor responsible for drought, i. 355
—— empire, incarnate human gods in the, i. 412 *sqq.*
—— modes of compelling the rain-god to give rain, i. 297 *sqq.*
—— superstition as to placenta (afterbirth), i. 194
Chingilli, the, i. 99
Chios, kings of, i. 45
Chissumpe, the, i. 393
Chitomé, the, a pontiff of Congo, ii. 261
Christians, pretenders to divinity among, i. 407 *sqq.*
Christs, Russian sect of the, i. 407 *sq.*
Chuckchees, sacred fire-boards of the, ii. 225 *sq.*
Churinga, in Australia, i. 88, 199, 335
Cimbrians, the, i. 331 *n.*[2]
Ciminian forest, ii. 8
Circassians, their custom as to pear-trees, ii. 55 *sq.*
Circumcision, pretence of new birth at, i. 76, 96 *sq.*; uses of blood shed at, 92, 94 *sq.*; suggested origin of, 96 *sq.*
Cithaeron, Mount, ii. 140
Clans, paternal and maternal, of the Herero, ii. 217
Cleanliness promoted by contagious magic, i. 175, 342
Clisthenes and Hippoclides, ii. 307 *sq.*
Clitus and Pallene, ii. 307
Clothes, sympathetic connexion between a person and his, i. 205-207
Clouds imitated by smoke, i. 249; by stones, i. 256; by rain-maker, 261, 262, 263
Clouds, magicians painted in imitation of, i. 323
Clove-trees in blossom treated like pregnant women, ii. 28
Cloves, ceremony to make cloves grow, ii. 100
Clown in spring ceremonies, ii. 82, 89
Clytaemnestra, ii. 279
Cockatoos, ceremony for the magical multiplication of, i. 89
Coco-nut sacred, ii. 51
—— palms worshipped, ii. 16
Codrington, Dr. R. H., quoted, i. 227 *sq.*, 338
Coligny calendar, i. 17 *n.*[2]
Collatinus, L. Tarquinius, ii. 290
Columella, ii. 314; quoted, 205
Combat, mortal, for the kingdom, ii. 322
Communism, tradition of sexual, ii. 284
Compelling rain-gods to give rain, i. 296 *sqq.*
Complexity of social phenomena, i. 332
Comrie, ii. 161
Con or Cun, a thunder-god, ii. 370
Conception in women, supposed cause of, i. 100; caused by trees, ii. 51, 56 *sq.*, 316-318
Concord, temple of, at Rome, i. 11, 21 *n.*[2]
Concordia, nurse of St. Hippolytus, i. 21 *n.*[2]
Condor, the bird of the thunder-god, ii. 370
Confession of sins, i. 266
Conflicts, sanguinary, as rain-charm, i. 258
Conquerors sometimes leave a nominal kingship to the conquered, ii. 288 *sq.*
"Consort, the divine," ii. 131, 135
Consuls, the first, ii. 290
Consulship at Rome, institution of, ii. 290 *sq.*
Contact or contagion in magic, law of, i. 52, 53
Contagious Magic, i. 174-214; of teeth, 176-182; of navel-string and afterbirth (placenta), 182-201; of wound and weapon, 201 *sqq.*; of footprints, 207-212; of other impressions, 213 *sq.*
—— taboos, i. 117
Contest for the kingship at Whitsuntide, ii. 89
Contests for a bride, ii. 305 *sqq.*
Continence required in magical ceremonies, i. 88; required at rain-making ceremonies, 257, 259; required of parents of twins, 266; practised in order to make the crops grow, ii. 104 *sqq.* *See also* Chastity

Conway, Professor R. S., ii. 379 *n.*[5]
Conybeare, F. C., i. 407 *n.*[3]
Cook, A. B., i. 23 *n.*, 40 *n.*[3] and [4], 42 *n.*[1], ii. 172 *n.*[3], 173 *n.*[2], 177 *n.*[6], 178 *n.*[3], 187 *n.*[4], 220 *n.*[3], 290 *n.*[3], 307 *n.*[2], 321 *n.*[1], 358 *n.*[4], 379 *n.*[4] and *n.*[5], 380 *n.*[4], 383 *n.*[2]
Cooks, Roman, required to be chaste, ii. 115 *sq.*, 205
Cora Indians, i. 55 *sq.*
Corc, his purification, ii. 116
Corn, defiled persons kept from the, ii. 112; reaped ear of, displayed at mysteries of Eleusis, 138 *sq.*
—— -mother, the, at Eleusis, ii. 139
—— -reaping in Greece, date of, i. 32
Cornel-tree, sacred, ii. 10
Cornish customs on May Day, ii. 52, 67
Corp chre, i. 68, 69
Corpus Christi Day, ii. 163
Cos, King of, i. 45
Crab in rain-charm, i. 289
Crannogs, ii. 352
Crannon in Thessaly, i. 309
Crawley, E., i. 201 *n.*[1]
Crocodiles, girls sacrificed to, ii. 152
Cronus and Zeus, ii. 323
Crooke, W., i. 406 *n.*[1], ii. 57 *n.*[4], 288 *n.*[1]
Cross River, i. 349
Crossbills in magic, i. 81 *sq.*
Crown of oak leaves, ii. 175, 176 *sq.*, 184
Crowning cattle, ii. 75, 126 *sq.*, 339, 341
—— dogs, custom of, i. 14, ii. 125 *sq.*, 127 *sq.*
Crowns, magical virtue of royal, i. 364 *sq.*; of birch at Whitsuntide, ii. 64; or wreaths, custom of wearing, 127 *n.*[2]
Crows in magic, i. 83
Crystals, magic of, i. 176; used in rain-making, 254, 255, 304, 345, 346
Cumont, Professor Franz, ii. 310
Cup-and-ball as a charm to hasten the return of the sun, i. 317
Curses, public, i. 45; supposed beneficial effects of, i. 279 *sqq.*
Cursing at sowing, i. 281
—— fishermen and hunters for good luck, i. 280 *sq.*
Curtiss, Professor S. I., i. 402
Cuzco, ii. 243
Cybele, ii. 144 *sq.*; and Attis, i. 18, 21, 40, 41
Cyrene, kingship at, i. 47

Daedala, festival of the, ii. 140 *sq.*
Dainyal or Sibyl, i. 383
Dalai Lama of Lhasa, i. 411 *sq.*
Damaras or Herero, their fire-customs, ii. 211 *sqq.*
Damia and Auxesia, i. 39
Danaus, ii. 301
Dance at giving of oracles, i. 379; of milkmaids on May-day, ii. 52
Dances of women while men are away fighting, i. 131-134; as means of inspiration, 408 *n.*[1]; round sacred trees, ii. 47, 55; round the May-pole, 65, 69, 74 *sq.*; on graves, 183 *n.*[2]
Dancing as a fertility charm, i. 137 *sqq.*, ii. 106
Danes, female descent of the kingship among the, ii. 282 *sq.*
Daphnephoria, ii. 63 *n.*[2]
Date-month, the, ii. 25
—— -palm, artificial fertilisation of the, ii. 24 *sq.*
Dawn, the rosy, i. 334
Day of Stones, i. 279
De Groot, J. J. M., i. 416 *sq.*, ii. 14
Dead, hair offered to the, i. 31; pretence of new birth at return of supposed dead man, 75; homoeopathic magic of the, 147 *sqq.*; sacrifices to, 163; making rain by means of the, 284 *sqq.*; trees animated by the souls of the, ii. 29 *sqq.*; the illustrious, represented by masked men, 178; thunder and lightning made by the, 183; spirits of the, in wild fig-trees, 317
Death, pretence of, in magic, i. 84; infection of, 143; at ebb tide, 167 *sq.*; puppet called, carried out of village, ii. 73 *sq.*
Deceiving the spirits of plants and trees, ii. 22 *sqq.*
Deir el Bahari, paintings at, ii. 131, 133
Deities duplicated through dialectical differences in their names, ii. 380 *sq.*
Dejanira and Achelous, ii. 161 *sq.*
Delivery, easy, granted to women by trees, ii. 57 *sq.*
Delos, graves of Hyperborean maidens in, i. 28, 33 *sqq.*; Apollo and Artemis at, 28, 32-35
Delphi, Apollo at, i. 28; new fire sent from, 32 *sq.*; King of, 45 *sq.*
Demeter and Zeus, their marriage at Eleusis, ii. 138 *sq.*
Demetrius Poliorcetes deified at Athens, i. 390 *sq.*
Denmark, Whitsun bride in, ii. 91 *sq.*; the beech-woods of, 351
Dennett, R. E., ii. 277 *n.*[1]
Deòce, a divine spirit, i. 410
Departmental kings of nature, ii. 1 *sqq.*
Derry, the oaks of, ii. 242 *sq.*
Devil-dancers, i. 382
Dew on May morning, custom of washing in the, ii. 54, 67, 327, 339; rolling in the, 333
"Dew-treading" in Holland, ii. 104 *n.*[2]
Dhurma Rajah, i. 410

DI, Aryan root meaning "bright," ii. 381
Dia, grove of the goddess, ii. 122
Dialectical differences a cause of the duplication of deities, ii. 382 *sq.*
Diana, her sanctuary at Nemi, i. 2 *sqq.*; as huntress at Nemi, 6; as patroness of cattle, 7, ii. 124; her priest at Nemi, i. 8 *sqq.*; the Tauric, 10 *sq.*, 24; as goddess of childbirth, 12, ii. 128; as Vesta at Nemi, i. 13, ii. 380; in relation to vines, i. 15 *sq.*; the mate of the King of the Wood at Nemi, 40, 41, ii. 380; as a goddess of fertility, 120 *sqq.*; in relation to animals of the woods, 124, 125 *sqq.*; as the moon, 128; the goddess of fruits, 128; as a goddess of the oak at Nemi, 380
—— and Dianus, ii. 376 *sqq.*
—— (Jana), a double of Juno, ii. 190 *sq.*, 381 *sq.*
"Diana's Mirror," i. 1
Dianus (Janus), a double of Jupiter, ii. 190 *sq.*, 381 *sq.*
Diels, Professor H., i. 390 *n.*[2]
Dieri, the, i. 90, 177, ii. 29; rain-making ceremonies of the, i. 255 *sqq.*
Dinka or Denka nation, i. 347
Diodorus Siculus, i. 74
Diomede, ii. 278; at Troezen, i. 27; sacred grove of, 27
Dione, wife of Zeus at Dodona, ii. 189; the old consort of Zeus, 381, 382
Dionysius of Halicarnassus, quoted, ii. 202 *sq.*
Dionysus, marriage of, to the Queen of Athens, ii. 136 *sq.*; and Ariadne, 138
Discovery of fire, ii. 255 *sqq.*
Disease-makers in Tana, i. 341 *sq.*
"Divine consort, the," ii. 131
Divinity of kings, i. 48 *sqq.*; among the Hovas, 397; among the Malays, 398; in great historical empires, 415 *sqq.*; growth of the conception of the, ii. 376 *sqq.*
—— of the Brahmans, i. 403 *sq.*
Division of labour in relation to social progress, i. 420
Diwali, the feast of lamps, ii. 160
Dixon, Dr. W. E., ii. 139 *n.*[1]
Djakuns, their mode of making fire, ii. 236
Djuldjul, i. 274
Dodola, the, i. 273
Dodona, oracular spring at, ii. 172; Zeus at, 177; Zeus and Dione at, 189; oracular oak at, 358
Dog, black, sacrificed for rain, i. 291; used to stop rain, 303
Dogs crowned, i. 14, ii. 125 *sq.*, 127 *sq.*
Dollar-bird associated with rain, i. 287 *sq.*
Domalde, a Swedish king, i. 366 *sq.*
Donar or Thunar, the German thunder god, ii. 364
Doors, Janus as a god of, ii. 383 *sq.*
Doreh, in New Guinea, i. 125
Dos Santos, J., i. 392
Double-headed fetish among the Bush negroes of Surinam, ii. 385; Janus, explanation of, ii. 384 *sq.*
Dragon, rain-god represented as, i. 297; or serpent of water, ii. 155 *sqq.*; of Rouen, destroyed by St. Romain, 164 *sqq.*; the Slaying of the, at Furth, 163 *sq.*
Dramas, magical, to promote vegetation, ii. 120
Dramatic exhibitions sometimes originate in magical rites, ii. 142; weddings of gods and goddesses, ii. 121
Draupadi or Krishna, ii. 306
Dreams, modes of counteracting evil, i. 172 *sq.*
Drenching people with water as a rain-charm, i. 250, 251, 269 *sq.*, 272, 273, 274, 275, 277 *sq.*, ii. 77
Dropsy, ancient Greek mode of preventing, i. 78
Drought supposed to be caused by unburied dead, i. 287; and dearth, chiefs and kings punished for, 352 *sqq.*; supposed to be caused by sexual crime, ii. 110, 111, 113
Drowning as a punishment, ii. 109, 110, 111; sacrifice by, 364
Druids, oak-worship of the, ii. 9; of Gaul, their sacrifices of white bulls, 189; female, 241 *n.*[1]; venerate the oak and the mistletoe, 358, 362; derivation of the name, 363
Drums, homoeopathic magic at the making of, i. 134 *sq.*; beaten as a charm against a storm, 328
Drynemetum, ii. 363
Du Pratz, ii. 263 *n.*[1]
Dudulé, the, i. 274
Duplication of deities an effect of dialectical differences, ii. 382 *sq.*
Durostorum, martyrdom of St. Dasius at, ii. 310 *n.*[1]
Dwarf tribes of Central Africa, ii. 255
Dyaks of Borneo, the, i. 73, 127, ii. 13; the Sea, 127

Ea, the inventor of magic, i. 240
Eagle hunters, taboos observed by, i. 116; charms employed by, 149 *sq.*
—— -wood, telepathy in search for, i. 120
Eagles, sacred, ii. 11
Earth and Sun, marriage of the, ii. 98 *sq.*, 148
—— goddess, pregnant cows sacrificed to, ii. 229

Earthquakes supposed to be caused by incest, ii. 111
Ebb tide, death at, i. 167 *sq.*
Eclipse, ceremonies at an, i. 311 *sq.*
Economic progress a condition of intellectual progress, i. 218
Egeria, water nymph at Nemi, i. 17-19, 41, ii. 171 *sq.*; an oak-nymph, 172; a double of Diana, 380; and Numa, i. 18, ii. 172 *sqq.*, 193, 380
Egerius Baebius or Laevius, i. 22
Eggs collected at spring ceremonies, ii. 65, 78, 81, 84, 85; or egg-shells, painted, in spring ceremonies, 63, 65; in purificatory rite, 109
Egypt, magical images in ancient, i. 66, 67 *sq.*; magicians in ancient, 225; confusion of magic and religion in ancient, 230 *sq.*; kings of, deified in their lifetime, 418 *sqq.*; the Queen of, married to the god Ammon, ii. 131 *sq.*; king of, masquerading as Ammon, 133
Egyptian kings and queens, their begetting and birth depicted on the monuments, ii. 131 *sqq.*
—— worship of sacred beasts, i. 29 *sq.*
Egyptians, the ancient, worshipped men and animals, i. 389 *sq.*; sycamores worshipped by the ancient, ii. 15
Eiresione, ii. 48
Elder-tree, ii. 43
Elective and hereditary monarchy, combination of the two, ii. 292 *sqq.*
Electric lights on mast-heads, spears, etc., i. 49 *sq.*
Elephant-hunters, telepathy of, i. 123
Eleusis, mysteries of, ii. 138 *sq.*
Elipandus of Toledo, i. 407
Elizabeth, Queen, i. 368
Emblica officinalis, a sacred tree, ii. 51
Emin Pasha, ii. 297 *n.*[7]
Empedocles, his claim to divinity, i. 390
Emus, ceremony for the multiplication of, i. 85 *sq.*
Endymion, ii. 299
Ephesian Artemis, ii. 128
Ephesus, Artemis of, i. 37 *sq.*; nominal kings at, 47; the Essenes or King Bees at, ii. 135 *sq.*
Epicurus, sacrifices offered to, i. 105
Erechtheum, the, ii. 199
Erechtheus and Erichthonius, ii. 199
Erhard, Professor A., ii. 310 *n.*[1]
Erichthonius, i. 21; and Erechtheus, ii. 199
Eruptions of volcanoes supposed to be caused by incest, ii. 111
Esquiline hill at Rome, ii. 185
Esquimaux, i. 70, 113, 121, 316, 327
Essenes or King Bees at Ephesus, i. 47 *n.*[2], ii. 135 *sq.*
Esthonian folk-tale of a tree-elf, ii. 71 *sqq.*; marriage custom, 234
Esthonians, St. George's Day among the, ii. 330 *sqq.*; their thunder-god Taara, 367
Etruscans, female kinship among the, ii. 286 *sq.*
Eudanemi, the, at Athens, i. 325 *n.*[1]
Europe, contagious magic of footprints in, i. 210 *sq.*; confusion of magic and religion in modern, 231-233; forests of ancient, ii. 7 *sq.*; relics of tree-worship in modern, 59 *sqq.*; diffusion of the oak in, 349 *sqq.*
—— South-Eastern, rain-making ceremonies in, i. 272 *sqq.*
Euros, magical ceremony for the multiplication of, i. 89
Evelyn, John, i. 369
Evergreen oak, the Golden Bough grew on, ii. 379
—— trees in Italy, i. 8
Evolution of kings out of magicians or medicine-men, i. 420 *sq.*; industrial, from uniformity to diversity of function, 421; political, from democracy to despotism, 421
Exaggerations of anthropological theories, i. 333
Exogamy, ii. 271
Expiation for adultery or fornication, ii. 107 *sq.*; for incest, 115, 116
External soul in afterbirth or navel-string, i. 200 *sq.*
Extinction of fires at king's death, ii. 261 *sqq.*, 267; in houses after any death, 267 *sq.*
Ezekiel, i. 87 *n.*[1]

Falerii, Juno at, ii. 190 *n.*[2]
Falstaff, death of, i. 168
Families, royal, kings chosen from several, ii. 292 *sqq.*
Fan tribe, i. 349
Farnell, Dr. L. R., i. 36, ii. 379 *n.*[5]
Fasting obligatory, i. 124, 131
Father Jove and Mother Vesta, ii. 227 *sqq.*
Fattest men chosen kings, ii. 297
February, first of, St. Bride's day, i. 94 *sq.*
Fehrle, E., ii. 199 *n.*[5]
Female descent of the kingship in Rome, ii. 270 *sqq.*; in Africa, 274 *sqq.*; in Greece, 277 *sq.*; in Scandinavia, 279 *sq.*; in Lydia, 281 *sq.*; among Danes and Saxons, 282 *sq.*
—— kinship in descent of the Roman kingship, ii. 271; indifference to paternity of kings under female kinship,

274 *sqq.*; at Athens, 277; indifference to paternity in general under, 282; among the Aryans, 283 *sqq.* *See also* Mother-kin
Female slaves, licence accorded to them on the *Nonae Caprotinae*, ii. 313 *sq.*
Feng and Wiglet, ii. 281, 283
Fennel, fire carried in giant, ii. 260
Fertilisation, artificial, of the date palm, ii. 24 *sq.*; of the fig-tree, 314 *sq.*
—— of women by the wild fig-tree, ii. 316; by the wild banana-tree, 318
Fertilising virtue attributed to trees, ii. 49 *sqq.*, 316 *sqq.*
Fertility, Diana as a goddess of, ii. 120 *sqq.*; the thunder-god conceived as a deity of fertility, 368 *sqq.*
Fictores Vestalium, *fictores Pontificum*, ii. 204
Ficus Ruminalis, ii. 318
Fierte or shrine of St. Romain, ii. 167, 168, 170 *n.*[1]
Fig, as an article of diet, ii. 315 *sq.*
Fig-tree of Romulus (*ficus Ruminalis*), ii. 10, 318
—— artificial fertilisation (*caprificatio*) of the, ii. 314 *sq.*
—— sacred, ii. 44, 99, 249, 250
—— the wild, a male, ii. 314 *sq.*; supposed to fertilise women, 316 *sq.*; haunted by spirits of the dead, 317
Fiji, catching the sun in, i. 316
Fijians, gods of the, i. 389
Finnisch-Ugrian peoples, sacred groves of the, ii. 10 *sq.*
Finnish wizards and witches, i. 325
Fire in the worship of Diana, i. 12 *sq.*; supposed to be subject to Catholic priests, 231; used to stop rain, 252 *sq.*; as a charm to rekindle the sun, 311, 313; of Vesta at Rome fed with oak wood, ii. 186; birth from the, 195 *sqq.*; the king's, 195 *sqq.*; impregnation of women by, 195 *sqq.*, 230 *sqq.*, 234; taken from sacred hearth to found a new village, 216; on the hearth, souls of ancestors in the, 232; reasons for attributing a procreative virtue to, 233 *sq.*; made jointly by man and woman or boy and girl, 235 *sqq.*; custom of extinguishing fire and rekindling it by the friction of wood, 237 *sq.*; need-fire made by married men, 238; holy, not to be blown upon with the breath, 240, 241; tribes reported to be ignorant of the art of kindling, 253 *sqq.*; discovery of, by mankind, 255 *sqq.*; carried about by savages, 257 *sqq.*; kept burning in houses of chiefs and kings, 260 *sqq.*; carried before king or chief, 263 *sq.*; a symbol of life, 265; leaping over a, 327, 329
Fire and Water, Kings of, ii. 3 *sqq.*
—— -bearer, the, i. 33
—— -boards, sacred, of the Chuckchees and Koryaks, ii. 225 *sq.*
—— customs of the Herero or Damaras, ii. 211 *sqq.*; compared to those of the Romans, ii. 227 *sqq.*
—— -drill, the, ii. 207 *sqq.*, 248 *sqq.*, 258 *sq.*, 263; the kindling of fire by it regarded by savages as a form of sexual intercourse, 208 *sqq.*, 218, 233, 235 *sq.*, 239, 249 *sq.*; of the Herero, 217 *sq.*
—— -god married to a human virgin, ii. 195 *sqq.*
—— kindled by the friction of wood, ii. 207 *sqq.*, 235 *sqq.*, 243, 248 *sqq.*, 258 *sq.*, 262, 263, 336, 366, 372; from ancestral tree, 221, 233 *sq.*; by natural causes, 256; by lightning, 263
—— "living," ii. 237; a charm against witchcraft, 336
—— "new," ii. 237; sent from Delos and Delphi, i. 32 *sq.*; made at beginning of king's reign, ii. 262, 267; made at Midsummer, 243
—— -priests (*Agnihotris*) of the Brahmans, ii. 247 *sqq.*
—— -sticks of fire-drill regarded as male and female, ii. 208 *sqq.*, 235, 238, 239, 248 *sqq.*
—— -worship a form of ancestor-worship, ii. 221
Fires ceremonially extinguished, i. 33; kept up for sake of absent persons, 120 *sq.*, 128, 129; extinguished at death of kings, ii, 261 *sqq.*, 267; at any death, 267 *sq.*; ceremonial, kindled by the friction of oak-wood, 372
—— perpetual, of Vesta, i. 13 *sq.*; in Ireland, ii. 240 *sqq.*; in Peru and Mexico, 243 *sqq.*; origin of, 253 *sqq.*; associated with royal dignity, 261 *sqq.*; of oak-wood, 365, 366
First-fruits, dedication of, i. 32
Fish, magical ceremony for the multiplication of, i. 90; in rain-charm, 288 *sq.*
Fishermen, Shetland, i. 69
—— and hunters cursed for good luck, i. 280 *sq.*
Fishing and hunting, homoeopathic magic in, i. 108 *sqq.*; telepathy in, 120 *sqq.*
Fison, Rev. Lorimer, i. 316, 331 *n.*[2], 378, 389 *n.*[3], ii. 13 *n.*[1]
Fladda's chapel, i. 322
Flamen, derivation of the name, ii. 235, 247
—— Dialis, the, ii. 179, 235, 246, 247, 248; an embodiment of Jupiter, 191 *sq.*

Flaminica, the, ii. 191, 235
Flax, charms to make flax grow tall, i. 138 *sq.*, ii. 86, 164
Flight of the king (*Regifugium*) at Rome, ii. 308 *sqq.*, 311 *n.*[4]; of sacrificer after the sacrifice, 309; of the People at Rome, 319 *n.*[1]
Flint implements supposed to be thunderbolts, ii. 374
Floquet, A., ii. 168, 169
Flowers, divination from, ii. 345
Food, homoeopathic magic for the supply of, i. 85 *sqq.*
Foods tabooed, i. 117 *sqq.*
Footprints, contagious magic of, i. 207-212
"Forced fire" or need-fire, ii. 238
Foreigners marry princesses and receive the kingdom with them, ii. 270 *sqq.*
Foreskins removed at circumcision, uses of, i. 92 *sq.*, 95; used in rain-making, 256 *sq.*
Forests of ancient Europe, ii. 7 *sq.*
Fortuna and Servius Tullius, ii. 193 *n.*[1], 272
Forum at Rome, prehistoric cemetery in the, ii. 186, 202
Foucart, P., ii. 139 *n.*[1]
Fowler, W. Warde, ii. 311 *n.*[4], 319 *n.*[1], 327 *n.*[2], 329 *n.*[6], 383 *n.*[3]
Fox in magic, i. 151
Fratres Arvales, ii. 122
Free Spirit, Brethren of the, i. 408
French peasants ascribe magical powers to priests, i. 231-233
Frey, the god of fertility and his human wife, ii. 143 *sq.*; his image and festival at Upsala, 364 *sq.*
Friction of wood, fire kindled by, ii. 207 *sqq.*, 235 *sqq.*, 243, 248 *sqq.*, 258 *sq.*, 262, 263, 336, 366, 372
Frog, magic of, i. 151; worshipped, 294 *sq.*; love-charm made from the bone of a, ii. 345
—— flayer, the, ii. 86
Frogs in relation to rain, i. 292 *sqq.*
Froth from a mill-wheel as a charm against witches, ii. 340
Fruit-trees fertilised by women, i. 140 *sq.*
Fruits blessed on day of Assumption of the Virgin, i. 14 *sqq.*; Artemis and Diana as patronesses of, 15 *sq.*
Fuegians, the, ii. 258
Fumigating flocks and herds as a charm against witchcraft, ii. 327, 330, 335, 336, 339, 343
Furth in Bavaria, the Slaying of the Dragon at, ii. 163 *sqq.*
Furtwängler, A., i. 309 *n.*[6]
Futuna, i. 388
Fylgia or guardian spirit in Iceland, i. 200
Galatians, their Celtic language, ii. 126 *n.*[2]
Galelareese, the, i. 110, 113, 131, 143, 145, ii. 22
Gallas, kings of the, i. 48; sacred trees of the, ii. 34
Garcilasso de la Vega, ii. 244 *n.*[1]
Gardiner, Professor J. Stanley, ii. 154
Gargouille or dragon destroyed by St. Romain, ii. 167
Garlands on May Day, ii. 60 *sqq.*, 90 *sq.*
Gaul, the Druids of, ii. 189
Gauri, harvest-goddess, ii. 77 *sq.*
Gayos, the, ii. 125
Gennep, A. van, ii. 385 *n.*[1]
Geomancy in China, i. 170
George, Green, ii. 75, 76, 79
Germans, worship of women among the ancient, i. 391; tree-worship among the ancient, ii. 8 *sq.*; evidence of mother-kin among the, 285; worship of the oak among the ancient, 363 *sq.*
Gerontocracy in Australia, i. 335
Gervasius of Tilbury, i. 301
Getae, the, i. 392
Ghosts in Melanesia, supposed powers of, i. 338 *sq.*
Gilyaks, the, i. 122, ii. 38
Girl annually sacrificed to cedar-tree, ii. 17
Girls married to nets, ii. 147; sacrificed to crocodiles, 152
Glory, the Hand of, i. 149
Glover, T. R., ii. 231 *n.*[6]
Goat, blood of, drunk as means of inspiration, i. 382, 383
God, Bride of, i. 276; savage ideas of, different from those of civilised men, 375 *sq.*
"God-boxes," i. 378
Gods viewed as magicians, i. 240 *sqq.*, 375; sacrifice themselves by fire, 315 *n.*[1]; conception of, slowly evolved, 373 *sq.*; incarnate human, 373 *sqq.*; gods and men, no sharp line of distinction between, in Fiji, 389; and goddesses, dramatic weddings of, ii. 121; the marriage of the, 129 *sqq.*; married to women, 129 *sqq.*, 143 *sq.*, 146 *sq.*, 149 *sqq.*
Gold in magic, i. 80 *sq.*
Golden Bough plucked by Aeneas, i. 11, ii. 379; the breaking of it not a piece of bravado, i. 123 *sq.*; grew on an evergreen oak, ii. 379
Golden lamb of Mycenae, i. 365
"Golden summer," the, i. 32
Gonds, their belief in reincarnation, i. 104 *sq.*
Gongs beaten in a storm, i. 328 *sq.*; at Dodona, ii. 358

Government of old men in aboriginal Australia, i. 334 *sq.*
Grafting, superstitious ceremony at, ii. 100
Granger, Professor F., i. 42 *n.*[1]
Grasausläuten, ii. 344
Grass King, the, ii. 85 *sq.*
—— seed, magical ceremony for the multiplication of, i. 87 *sq.*; continence at magical ceremony for growth of, ii. 105
Graveclothes, homoeopathic magic of, in China, i. 168 *sq.*
Graves, rain-charms at, i. 268, 286, 291; trees planted on graves, ii. 31; dances on, 183 *n.*[2]; of Hyperborean maidens at Delos, i. 28, 33 *sqq.*
Great Sun, the, title of chief, ii. 262, 263
Greece, priestly kings in, i. 44 *sqq.*; kings and chiefs sacred or divine in ancient, 366; human gods in ancient, 390 *sq.*; forests of, ii. 8; female descent of kingship in ancient, 278 *sq.*
Greek kings called Zeus, ii. 177, 361
Greeks, the modern, rain-making ceremonies among, i. 272 *sq.*; and Romans, rain-charms among the ancient, 309 *sq.*
Green boughs a charm against witches, ii. 52-55, 127, 342 *sq.*
—— George, ii. 75, 76, 79, 343
—— Thursday, ii. 333
Greenwich-hill, custom of rolling down, ii. 103
Gregory of Tours, ii. 144
Grimm, J., ii. 8, 362 *n.*[6], 364
Grizzly bears supposed to be related to human twins, i. 264 *sq.*
Groves, sacred, ii. 10 *sq.*, 44; Arician, i. 20, 22, ii. 115; in Chios, i. 45; in ancient Greece and Rome, ii. 121 *sqq.*
Grunau, Simon, ii. 366 *n.*[2]
Guanches of Teneriffe, i. 303
Guardian spirit associated with caul, i. 199 *sq.*
Guaycurus, the, i. 330
Gunkel, H., i. 101 *n.*[2]
Gunnar Helming, ii. 144
Gunputty, elephant-headed god, human incarnation of, i. 405 *sq.*
Gyges, ii. 281, 282
Gypsies, Green George among the, ii. 75 *sq.*
Gypsy ceremonies for stopping rain, i. 295 *sq.*

Hack-thorn sacred, ii. 48
Haddon, Dr. A. C., i. 262
Hahn, Dr. C. H., ii. 213 *n.*[2]
Haida Indians, i. 70, 133
Hair offered to gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, i. 28 *sq.*; offered to the dead, 31, 102; offered to rivers, 31; clippings of, used in magic, 57, 64, 65, 66; charms to make hair grow, 83, 145, 153 *sq.*, 154; loose as a charm, 136; human, used in rain-making, 251 *sq.*; long, a symbol of royalty, ii. 180
Hakea flowers, ceremony for the multiplication of, i. 86
Hakim Singh, i. 409
Halford in Warwickshire, May Day customs at, ii. 88 *sq.*
Hamlet, ii. 281, 291
Hammer worshipped, i. 317 *sq.*
Hammurabi, code of, ii. 130
Hand of Glory, i. 149
Hardy, Thomas, i. 136
Hares as witches, i. 212, ii. 53
Harran, the heathen of, i. 383, ii. 25, 100 *n.*[2]
Harris, J. Rendel, i. 15 *n.*, 21 *n.*[2]
Harrison, Miss J. E., ii. 137 *n.*[1], 139 *n.*[1]
Hartland, E. S., i. 52 *n.*[1], ii. 156 *n.*[2]
Harvest in Greece, date of, i. 32
—— May, the, ii. 47 *sq.*
Hatshopsitou, birth of Queen, ii. 131 *sqq.*
Hawaii, insignia of royal family of, i. 388 *n.*[3]
Hawthorn on May Day, ii. 52, 60; a protection against witches, 55, 127
Head-hunters, rules observed by people at home in absence of, i. 129
Headmen of totem clans in Central Australia, i. 335
Heads, custom of moulding heads artificially, ii. 297 *sq.*
Hearn, Dr. W. E., ii. 283 *n.*[5]
Hearth, the king's, at Rome, ii. 195, 200, 206; sacred, of the Herero, 213, 214; the sacred, seat of the ancestral spirits, 221; custom of leading a bride round the, 230, 231; new-born children brought to the, 232
Hearts of men and animals offered to the sun, i. 315
Heaven, vault of, imitated in rain-charm, i. 261, 262
Heavenly Master, the, i. 413
Hebrew prohibition of images, i. 87 *n.*[1]
—— prophets, their ethical religion, i. 223
Hebrews, their notion of the blighting effect of sexual crime, ii. 114 *sq.*
Hegel on magic and religion, i. 235 *n.*[1], 423 *sqq.*
Hehn, V., on evergreens in Italy, i. 8 *n.*[4]
Heimskringla, ii. 280
Heine, H., *Pilgrimage to Kevlaar*, i. 77
Hekaerge and Hekaergos, i. 33, 34, 35
Helaga, taboo, ii. 106 *n.*[2]

Helbig, W., i. 20 *n.*[5]
Helernus, grove of, ii. 190 *sq.*
Hellebore, curses at cutting black, i. 281
Hemlock as an anaphrodisiac, ii. 138, 139 *n.*[1]
Hemp, charms to make hemp grow tall, i. 137 *sq.*
Heno, the thunder-spirit of the Iroquois, ii. 369 *sq.*
Hera and Hercules, i. 74
Hercules, sacrifice to, i. 281
—— and Achelóus, ii. 162
—— and Hera, i. 74
—— and Omphale, ii. 281
Hercynian forest, the, ii. 7, 354; etymology of the name, 354 *n.*[2]
Hereditary and elective monarchy, combination of the two, ii. 292 *sqq.*
Herero or Damaras, their fire-customs, ii. 211 *sqq.*
Hermutrude, legendary queen of Scotland, ii. 281
Herodotus, i. 49, 331
Hersilia, a Sabine goddess, ii. 193 *n.*[1]
Heyne, C. G., ii. 329 *n.*[1]
Hidatsa Indians, ii. 12
Hierapolis, i. 29
Hierophant at Eleusis temporarily deprived of his virility, ii. 138
Highlands of Scotland, St. Bride's day in, ii. 94
Hindoo Koosh, sacred cedar of the, i. 383; the Kafirs of the, 385
—— Trinity, i. 225
Hindoos, magical images among the, i. 63 *sqq.*
Hippoclides and Clisthenes, ii. 307 *sq.*
Hippocrates, sacrifices offered to, i. 105
Hippodamia and Pelops, ii. 279, 299 *sq.*
Hippolytus in relation to Virbius at Nemi, i. 19 *sq.*; offerings of hair to, 28
—— and Artemis, i. 19 *sq.*, 24 *sqq.*
—— Saint, martyrdom of, i. 21
Hirn, Y., i. 52 *n.*[1], 54 *n.*[1]
Hirt, Professor H., ii. 367 *n.*[3]
Hobby Horse at Padstow, ii. 68
Hobley, C. W., ii. 316
Hog's blood, purifying virtue of, i. 107
Holed stone in magic, i. 313
Holland, Whitsuntide customs in, ii. 104
Holy Basil, ii. 26
Homoeopathic taboos, i. 116; magic for the making of rain, 247 *sqq.* *See also* Magic
Hopi Indians, the, ii. 208 *sq.*
Horse, sacred, i. 364; sacrificed at Rome in October, ii. 229, 326
Horses excluded from Arician grove, i. 20; dedicated by Hippolytus to Aesculapius, 21 *n.*[2], 27; branded with mark of wolf, 27; in relation to Diomede, 27; sacrifice of white, 27; sacrificed to the sun, 315 *sq.*; sacrificed to trees, ii. 16; sanctity of white, 174 *n.*[2]; sacrifices for, on St. George's Day, 332, 336 *sq.*
Horus, the golden, i. 418
Hos, the, of Togoland, i. 396 *sq.*, ii. 19, 370
Hot water drunk as a charm, i. 129
House-timber, homoeopathic magic of, i. 146
Housebreakers, charms employed by, to cause sleep, i. 148 *sq.*
Hovas, divinity of kings among the, i. 397
Howitt, A. W., i. 176, 207, 208
Hubert and Mauss, Messrs., i. 111 *n.*[2]
Huichol Indians, i. 71, 123
Human gods, i. 373 *sqq.*
—— victims sacrificed to water-spirits, ii. 157 *sqq.*
Humboldt, A. von, i. 416
Hunters employ contagious magic of footprints, i. 211 *sq.*
Huntin, a tree-god, ii. 15
Hunting and fishing, homoeopathic magic in, i. 108 *sqq.*; telepathy in, 120 *sqq.*
"Hurling" for a bride, ii. 305 *sq.*
Hurons, the, ii. 147; reincarnation among the, i. 105; their mode of counteracting an evil dream, 172 *sq.*
Husbands, spiritual, ii 316 *sq.*
Hut-urns of ancient Latins, ii. 201 *sq.*
Huts, round, of the ancient Latins, ii. 200 *sqq.*; in Africa, 227 *n.*[3]
Huzuls, the, i. 113, 137; their precautions against witches, ii. 336
Hymettus, ii. 360
Hyperborean maidens at Delos, i. 33

Ibn Batutah, ii. 153
Icarius, ii. 300
Iceland, superstitions as to the caul in, i. 199 *sqq.*
Iddah, king of, i. 396
Igaras, succession to the kingship among the, ii. 294
Illicit love supposed to blight the fruits of the earth, ii. 107 *sqq.*
Images, Hebrew prohibition of, i. 87 *n.*[1]
—— magical, to injure people, i. 55 *sqq.*; to procure offspring, 70-74; to win love, 77
Impressions, bodily, contagious magic of, i. 213 *sq.*
Incarnate human gods, i. 373 *sqq.*
Incarnation of gods in human form temporary or permanent, i. 376; examples of temporary incarnation, 376 *sqq.*; examples of permanent incarnation, 386 *sqq.*; mystery of, 396 *n.*[5]

Incas, the children of the Sun, i. 415
Incense, fumes of, inhaled to produce inspiration, i. 379, 384
—— -gatherers, chastity of, ii. 106 *sq.*
Incest, blighting effects attributed to, ii. 108, 110 *sq.*, 113, 115 *sqq.*; of domestic animals abhorred by the Basoga, 112 *sq.*; of animals employed as a rain-charm, 113
India, ancient, confusion of magic and religion in, i. 228 *sq.*; magical power of kings in, 366; incarnate human gods in, 376, 402 *sqq.*
Indifference to paternity of kings under female kinship, ii. 274 *sqq.*
Indra, thunderbolt of, i. 269
Industrial evolution from uniformity to diversity of function, i. 421
Infidelity of wife disastrous to absent husband, i. 123, 131
Influence of the sexes on vegetation, ii. 97 *sqq.*
Initiatory ceremonies of Central Australian aborigines, i. 92 *sqq.*
—— rites of Australian aborigines, suggested explanation of, i. 106.
Inquisition, the, i. 407, 408
Insects, homoeopathic magic of, i. 152
Inspiration, i. 376 *sqq.*; by incense, 379; by blood, 381 *sqq.*; by sacred plant or tree, 383 *sqq.*; of victims, 384 *sqq.*
Inspired or religious type of man-god, i. 244
—— priests and priestesses, i. 377 *sqq.*
Intellectual progress dependent on economic progress, i. 218
Intercourse of the sexes practised to make the crops and fruits grow, ii. 98 *sqq.*
Intichiuma, magical totemic ceremonies in Central Australia, i. 85
Invulnerability, charm to produce, i. 146 *sq.*
Ireland, perpetual fires in, ii. 240 *sqq.*
—— sacred oak groves in ancient, 242 *sq.*
Irish kings, magical virtues attributed to, i. 367
Irle, J., ii. 223 *n.*[2]
Iron, homoeopathic magic of, i. 159 *sq.*
Iroquois, the, ii. 12; their thunder-god, 369 *sq.*
Isle of Man, St. Bridget in the, ii. 94 *sq.*
—— of May, ii. 161
Ivy chewed by Bachanals, i. 384; in fire-making, ii. 251 *sq.*

Jack-in-the-Green, ii. 82
Jana, another form of Diana, ii. 381, 382, 383
Jangam, priest of the Lingayats, i. 404
Janiculum hill, the, ii. 186
Janua, derived from Janus, ii. 384
Janus, as a god of doors, ii. 383 *sq.*, explanation of the two-headed, 384 *sq.*
—— and Carna, ii. 190
—— (Dianus) and Diana, doubles of Jupiter and Juno, ii. 190 *sq.*, 381 *sq.*
Jaundice treated by homoeopathic magic, i. 79 *sqq.*
Java, ceremonies to procure offspring in, i. 73; ceremonies for preventing rain in, 270 *sq.*
Jerome of Prague, i. 317
Jevons, F. B., i. 105, 225 *n.*
Jewitt, J. R., i. 264
Jinnee of the sea, virgins married to, ii. 153 *sq.*
Job's protest, ii. 114
Johnson, Dr. S., i. 368, 370
Johnston, Sir H. H., ii. 227 *n.*[3]
Jordan, H., ii. 321 *n.*[3]
Joubert, quoted, i. 223 *n.*[2]
Jove (Father) and Mother Vesta, ii. 227 *sqq.*
Jubainville, H. d'Arbois de, ii. 362 *n.*[6]
Judah, idolatrous kings of, i. 315
Jukagirs, the, i. 122
Julian, the Emperor, ii. 7
Julii, the, ii. 179, 192
Julus, the Little Jupiter, ii. 179, 197
July the 7th, the *Nonae Caprotinae*, a Roman festival, ii. 313 *sqq.*
June, the first of, a Roman festival, ii. 190
Juno on the Capitol, ii. 184; at Falerii, 190 *n.*[2]; a duplicate of Diana, 381 *sq.*
—— Caprotina, ii. 313, 317
—— Moneta, ii. 189
Jupiter, costume of, ii. 174 *sq.*; the Roman kings in the character of, 174 *sqq.*; Capitoline, 176; the Little, 179, 192; Latian, 187, 379; as god of the oak, the thunder, the rain, and the sky, 358, 361 *sq.*; as sky-god, 374; a duplicate of Janus (Dianus), 381 *sq.*
—— and Juno, doubles of Janus and Diana, ii. 190 *sq.*; sacred marriage of, 190
—— Dianus, ii. 382
—— Elicius, ii. 183
—— Indiges, ii. 181
Jupiters, many local, in Latium, ii. 184
Juturna, a nymph, ii. 382

Kachins of Burma, the, ii. 237
Kafirs of the Hindoo Koosh, i. 133 *sq.*, 385
Kaitish tribe of Central Australia, i. 87
Kali, the goddess, i. 383
Kamilaroi, the, i. 101
Kangaroos, ceremony for the multiplication of, i. 87 *sq.*
Kara-Kirghiz, ii. 57

Karens of Burma, i. 209; their custom in regard to fornication and adultery, ii. 107 *sq.*
Karo-Bataks, the, of Sumatra, i. 277
Kausika Sutra, i. 209, 229
Kayans or Bahaus of Borneo, i. 328, ii. 109
Kei Islands, i. 126, 131, 145
Kenyahs of Borneo, i. 59, ii. 385
Keremet, a god of the Wotyaks, ii. 145 *sq.*
Kevlaar, Virgin Mary of, i. 77
"Key-race," ii. 304
Keys, the golden, ii. 333
Khasis of Assam, succession to the kingdom among the, ii. 294 *sq.*
Khnoumou, the god, ii. 132
Kidd, Dudley, i. 49 *n.*[3], 350, ii. 211, 224 *n.*[4]
Kildare, fire and nuns of St. Brigit at, ii. 240 *sq.*
Kimbugwe, high official in Uganda, i. 196
King, J. E., i. 105 *n.*[4]
King gives oracles, i. 377; the Grass, ii. 85 *sq.*; the Leaf, 85; the Roman, as Jupiter, 174 *sqq.*
—— and Queen at Athens, i. 44 *sq.*
—— of Sacred Rites at Rome, i. 44, ii. 201; his flight, 309
—— of the Saturnalia, ii. 311
—— of the Wood at Nemi, i. 1 *sqq.*, ii. 1; a mate of Diana, i. 40, 41, ii. 380; a personification of the oak-god Jupiter, 378 *sqq.* *See also* Priest of Nemi
—— Bees (Essenes) at Ephesus, ii. 135 *sq.*
Kingdom, mortal combat for the, ii. 322; in ancient Latium, succession to, 266 *sqq.*
Kings, priestly, i. 44 *sqq.*; titular or sacred, in Greece, 44 *sqq.*; Teutonic, 47; magicians as, 332 *sqq.*; as rain-makers in Africa, 348, 350 *sqq.*; punished for drought and dearth, 353 *sqq.*; among the Aryans, magical powers attributed to, 366 *sqq.*; divinity of, in great historical empires, 415 *sqq.*; of nature, ii. 1 *sqq.*; of rain, 2; Roman, as deities in a Sacred Marriage, 172 *sq.*, 192, 193 *sq.*; Greek, called Zeus, 177, 361; expected to make thunder, 180 *sq.*; the Latin, thought to be the sons of the fire-god by mortal mothers, 195 *sqq.*; perpetual fire in houses of, 261 *sq.*; Roman, as personifications of Jupiter, 266 *sq.*; paternity of, a matter of indifference under female kinship, 274 *sqq.*; sometimes of a different race from their subjects, 288 *sq.*; chosen from several royal families in rotation, 292 *sqq.*; fat, 297; handsomest men, 297; long-headed, 297; sacred or divine, development of, 376 *sqq.* *See also* Latin *and* Roman
Kings' Evil (scrofula), touching for the, i. 368 *sqq.*
—— fire, the, ii. 195 *sqq.*
—— Race, the, ii. 84
—— sisters, licence accorded to, ii. 274 *sqq.*
Kingship, annual, in ancient Greece, i. 46
—— contest for the, at Whitsuntide, ii. 89
—— descent of the, in the female line, at Rome, ii. 270 *sqq.*; in Africa, 274 *sqq.*; in Greece, 277 *sq.*; in Scandinavia, 279 *sq.*; in Lydia, 281 *sq.*; among the Danes and Saxons, 282 *sq.*
—— evolution of the sacred, i. 420 *sq.*
—— nominal, left by conquerors to indigenous race, ii. 288 *sq.*
—— Roman, abolition of the, ii. 289 *sqq.*
—— the old Roman, a religious office, ii. 289
Kingsley, Miss Mary H., i. 411 *n.*[1]
Kintu, ii. 261
Kirghiz, "Love Chase" among the, ii. 301
Knocking out of teeth as initiatory ceremony in Australia, i. 97 *sqq.*
Knots, tying up the wind in, i. 326
Kolkodoons, the, i. 93
Kondhs, their belief in reincarnation, i. 104
Koniags, the, i. 121
Koryaks, sacred fire-boards of the, ii. 225; race for a bride among the, 302
Krishna, i. 406; marriage of, to the Holy Basil, ii. 26
Kunama, the, ii. 3
Kvasir, i. 241
Kwakiutl Indians, their superstitions as to twins, i. 263

Lac, taboos observed in gathering, i. 115
Lacueva, Father, ii. 205 *n.*
Ladder to facilitate the descent of the sun, ii. 99
Laetare Sunday, ii. 63
Laibon, i. 343
Lake-dwellings of prehistoric Europe, ii. 352 *sq.*
Lakes, gods of lakes married to women, ii. 150 *sq.*
Lakshmi, wife of Vishnu, ii. 26
Lamas, transmigrations of the Grand, i. 410 *sqq.*
Lamb of Mycenae, the golden, i. 365

Lamb, blood of, as means of inspiration, i. 381
Lambing, time of, ii. 328 *n.*[4]
Lamps, dedication of burning, i. 12 *sq.*
Lane, E. W., ii. 209 *n.*[4]
Language, special, for kings and persons of blood royal, i. 401
Lapis manalis at Rome, i. 310
Larch-tree, sacred, ii. 20
Lares, the, ii. 206
Latin confederacy, the, in relation to sacred Arician grove, i. 22 *sq.*
—— kings thought to be the sons of the fire-god by mortal mothers, ii. 195 *sqq.*; lists of, 268 *sqq.*; stories of their miraculous birth, 272
Latinus, changed into Latian Jupiter, ii. 187; his wife a Vestal, 235
Latium, many local Jupiters in, ii. 184; in antiquity, the woods of, 188; succession to the kingdom in ancient, 266 *sqq.*
Latuka, rain-makers among the, i. 346, 354
Laurel chewed as means of inspiration, i. 384; in fire-making, ii. 251 *sq.*
Lavinium, worship of Vesta at, i. 14
Lazy Man, the, ii. 83
Leaf-clad mummers, ii. 74 *sqq.*, 78 *sqq.*; mock marriage of, ii. 97
Leaf King, the, ii. 85
—— Man, the Little, ii. 80 *sq.*
Leafy bust at Nemi, portrait of the King of the Wood, i. 41 *sq.*
Leaping over a fire, ii. 327, 329
—— and dancing to make the crops grow high, i. 137 *sqq.*
Lemnos, new fire brought to, i. 32
Lengua Indians, i. 313, 330, 359
Lent, fourth Sunday in, ii. 73, 87
Lerons of Borneo, i. 59
Leschiy, a woodland spirit, ii. 124 *sq.*
Leto, ii. 58
Lévi, Professor Sylvain, i. 228
Lhasa, i. 411 *sq.*
Licence accorded to slaves at the Saturnalia, ii. 312; to female slaves at the *Nonae Caprotinae*, 313 *sq.*
Lightning, charm against, i. 82; imitation of, 248, 303; thought to be the father of twins, 266; wood of tree that has been struck by, 319; fire kindled by, ii. 263; African deities of, 370; supposed to be produced by means of flints, 374; Zeus, i. 33, ii. 361
Lime-trees sacred, ii. 366, 367
Lindus in Rhodes, i. 281
Lingayats, the, i. 404
Lithuanians, the heathen, i. 317, ii. 46; tree-worship among the, 9; sacrifice to Pergrubius, 347; the thunder-god Perkunas of the, 365 *sqq.*; their reverence for oaks, 366, 371
Little Jupiter, the, ii. 179, 192
—— Leaf Man, ii. 80 *sq.*
"Living fire," ii. 237; as a charm against witchcraft, 336
Lo Bengula, i. 351, 352, 394
Loango, king of, revered as a god, i. 396; fights all rivals for his crown, ii. 322
—— licence of princesses in, ii. 276 *sq.*
Lobo, spirit-house, ii. 39
Local totem centres, i. 96
Locrians, the Epizephyrian, ii. 284 *sq.*
"Longevity garments," i. 169
Long-headed men chosen kings, ii. 297
Loon, the bird, associated with rain, i 288
Lord of the Wood, ii. 36; of Misrule 319 *n.*[1]
—— and Lady of the May, ii. 90 *sq.*
Loucheux, the, i. 356
Love, cure for, i. 161; illicit, thought to blight the fruits of the earth, ii. 107 *sqq.*
Love-charms practised on St. George's Day, ii. 345 *sq.*
"Love Chase" among the Kirghiz, ii. 301
Lovers of goddesses, their unhappy ends, i. 39 *sq.*
Low, Sir Hugh, ii. 30, 31
Lubare, god, i. 395
Lucian on hair offerings, i. 28
Lucius, E., i. 13 *n.*[1]
Luxor, paintings at, ii. 131, 133
Lyall, Sir A. C., i. 224 *n.*[1]
Lycaeus, Mount, ii. 359
Lycurgus, king of Thrace, i. 366
Lydia, female descent of kingship in, ii. 281 *sq.*

Mabuiag, i. 59, 262, 323
Macdonald, Rev. J., i. 110, ii. 210 *sq.*
"Macdonald's disease, the," i. 370 *n.*[3]
MacGregor, Sir William, i. 337
"Macleod's Fairy Banner," i. 368
Macrobius, ii. 385 *n.*[2]
Madagascar, King of, i. 47 *sq.*; foods tabooed in, 117 *sq.*; custom of women in Madagascar while men are at war, 131; modes of counteracting evil omens in, 173 *sq.*
Madness, cure of, i. 161
Maeander, the river, supposed to take the virginity of brides, ii. 162
Magian priests, ii. 241 *n.*[4]
Magic, principles of, i. 52 *sqq.*; negative, 111 *sqq.*; public and private, 214 *sq.*; benefits conferred by, 218 *sq.*; its analogy to science, 220 *sq.*; attraction of, 221; fatal flaw of, 221 *sq.*; based

on a misapplication of the association of ideas, 221 *sq.*; opposed in principle to religion, 224; older than religion, 233 *sqq.*; universality of belief in, 234-236; transition from magic to religion, 237 *sqq.*, ii. 376 *sq.*; the fallacy of, not easy to detect, i. 242 *sq.*
Magic, Contagious, i. 52-54, 174-214; of teeth, 176-182; of navel-string and afterbirth (placenta), 182-201; of wound and weapon, 201 *sqq.*; of footprints, 207-212; of other impressions, 213 *sq.*
—— Homoeopathic or Imitative, i. 52 *sqq.*; in medicine, 78 *sqq.*; for the supply of food, 85 *sqq.*; in fishing and hunting, 108 *sqq.*; to make plants grow, 136 *sqq.*; of the dead, 147 *sqq.*; of animals, 150 *sqq.*; of inanimate things, 157 *sqq.*; to annul evil omens, 170-174; for the making of rain, 247 *sqq.*
—— Sympathetic, i. 51 *sqq.*; the two branches of, 54; examples of, 55 *sqq.*
—— and religion, i. 220-243, 250, 285; 286, 347, 352; confused together, 226 *sqq.*; their historical antagonism comparatively late, 226; Hegel on, 423 *sqq.*
Magical control of rain, i. 247 *sqq.*; of the sun, 311 *sqq.*; of the wind, 319 *sqq.*
—— dramas to promote vegetation, ii. 120
—— origin of certain religious dramas, ii. 142 *sq.*
—— type of man-god, i. 244
Magician, public, his rise to power, i. 215 *sqq.*
Magician's progress, the, i. 214 *sqq.*, 335 *sqq.*
Magicians claim to compel the gods, i. 225; gods viewed as, 240 *sqq.*; importance of rise of professional magicians, 245 *sqq.*; as kings, 332 *sqq.*; develop into kings, 420 *sq.* *See also* Medicine-men
Mahabharata, the, ii. 306
Maharajas, a Hindoo sect, i. 406, ii. 160
Maidu Indians, i. 122, 357
Maillotins, ii. 63
Maimonides, i. 140, ii. 100 *n.*[2]
Maize, continence at sowing, ii. 105
Makalakas, the, i. 394
Makatisses, the, i. 71
Makrizi, i. 252, ii. 151 *n.*[2]
Malay charms, i. 57 *sq.*
—— magic, i. 110 *sq.*, 114 *sq.*, 127
—— Peninsula, the wild tribes of the, i. 360
—— region, divinity of kings in, i. 398
Malays, their superstitious veneration for their rajahs, i. 361; regalia among the, 362
Maldive Islands, ii. 153, 154
Malecki (Maeletius, Menecius), J., ii. 366 *n.*[2]
Man, E. H., ii. 253
"Man, the True," i. 413
—— -god, the two types of, i. 244 *sq.*; notion of a man-god belongs to early period of religious history, 374 *sq.*
Mana, supernatural or magical power in Melanesia, i. 111 *n.*[2], 227, 228 *n.*[1], 339
Mangaia, i. 378
Mania, a bogey, i. 22
Manii at Aricia, i. 22
Manius Egerius, i. 22
Manna, ceremony for the magical multiplication of, i. 88 *sq.*
Mannhardt, W., i. 140 *n.*[6], ii. 47, 78 *sq.*, 84, 87
Mantras, sacred texts, i. 403 *sq.*
Manu, the Laws of, i. 366, 402
Maoris, the, i. 71; magic of navel-string and afterbirth among the, 182 *sq.*; their belief as to fertilising virtue of trees, ii. 56
Maraves, the, i. 393, ii. 31
Marcellus of Bordeaux, i. 84
Marduk, chief Babylonian god, as a magician, i. 240 *sq.*; his wives, ii. 130
Marett, R. R., i. 111 *n.*[2]
Marigolds, magic of, i. 211
Marquesas or Washington Islands, human gods in the, i. 386 *sq.*
Marriage to trees, i. 40 *sq.*, ii. 57; of trees to each other, 24 *sqq.*; mock, of leaf-clad mummers, 97; the Sacred, 121 *sqq.*; of the gods, 129 *sqq.*; bath before, 162
Marsh-marigolds, a protection against witches, ii. 54; on May Day, 63
Martius, C. F. Phil. von, i. 359
Martyrdom of St. Hippolytus, i. 21
Masai, power of medicine-men among the, i. 343 *sq.*
Mashona, the, i. 393
Maskers, representing the dead, ii. 178
Maspéro, Sir Gaston, i. 230, ii. 133 *sq.*
"Mass of the Holy Spirit," i. 231 *sq.*
Mass of Saint Sécaire, i. 232 *sq.*
Master, the Heavenly, i. 413
—— of Sorrows, i. 280
Matabeles, king of the, i. 48; as rain-maker, 351 *sq.*
—— magical effigies among the, i. 63
Maternal uncle preferred to father, mark of mother-kin, ii. 285
Maurer, K., ii. 280 *n.*[1]
Mauss and Hubert, Messrs., i. 111 *n.*[2]
May Bride, the, ii. 95, 96

May bridegroom, ii. 91, 93
—— -bush, ii. 84, 85, 89, 90, 142
—— Day, celebration of, ii. 59 *sqq.*; licence of, 67, 103 *sq.*
—— Fools, ii. 91
—— garlands, ii. 60 *sqq.*, 90 *sq.*
—— King, ii. 85 *sq.*
—— Lady, the, ii. 62
—— -poles, ii. 59, 65 *sqq.*
—— Queen, ii. 84, 87 *sq.*
—— Rose, the Little, ii. 74
—— -trees, ii. 59 *sq.*, 64, 68 *sq.*; or may-poles, fertilising virtue of, 52
Mayos or Mayes, ii. 80
Medicine-men (magicians, sorcerers), power of, among African tribes, i. 342 *sqq.*; power of, among the American Indians, 355 *sqq.*; progressive differentiation of, 420 *sq.*; develop into kings, 420 *sq.*; the oldest professional class, 420. *See also* Magicians
Melampus and Iphiclus, i. 158
Melanesia, homoeopathic magic of stones in, i. 164; supernatural power of chiefs in, 338 *sqq.*
Merker, Captain M., i. 343
Merlin, i. 306
Messiah, pretended, i. 409
Metsik, a forest spirit, ii. 55
Mexican kings, their oath, i. 356
Mexicans, human sacrifices of the ancient, i. 314 *sq.*
Micah, quoted, i. 223
Mice and rats, teeth of, in magic, i. 178 *sqq.*
Midsummer, new fire made at, ii. 242; festival of, 272 *sq.*
—— bonfires, ii. 65, 141
—— Bride, ii. 92
—— customs, ii. 127; in Sweden, ii. 65
—— Eve, a witching time, ii. 127
Mikado, the, an incarnation of the sun goddess, i. 417
Miklucho-Maclay, Baron von, ii. 253 *sq.*
Milk, witches steal milk on Walpurgis Night or May Day, ii. 52 *sqq.*; witches steal milk on Midsummer Eve, 127; witches steal milk on Eve of St. George, 334 *sqq.*; not given away on St. George's Eve, 339
—— -pails wreathed with flowers, ii. 338, 339
—— -stones, i. 165
Milkmen of the Todas sacred or divine, i. 402 *sq.*
Milton on chastity, ii. 118 *n.*[1]
Minangkabauers of Sumatra, i. 58, 140
Miris of Assam, the, ii. 39
Mirror or burning-glass, fire made by means of, ii. 243, 245 *n.*
Mistletoe venerated by the Druids, ii. 358, 362
Moab, Arabs of, i. 276
Mock sun, i. 314
Moffat, Dr. R., i. 351
Mohammed, on the fig, ii. 316
Mommsen, Th., i. 23 *n.*[8], ii. 174 *n.*[1], 175 *n.*[1], 296
Monarchy in ancient Greece and Rome, tradition of its abolition, i. 46; rise of, 216 *sqq.*; essential to emergence of mankind from savagery, 217; hereditary and elective, combination of the two, ii. 292 *sqq.*
Money, old Italian, i. 23
Montanus, the Phrygian, i. 407
Montezuma, i. 416
Moon, singing to the, i. 125; charm to hasten the, 319; in relation to childbirth, ii. 128; woman chosen to represent the, 146
Morbus regius, jaundice, i. 371 *n.*[4]
Morgan, Professor M. H., ii. 207 *n.*[1]
"Mother of Kings," ii. 277
—— of the Gods, i. 21
—— of the Rain, i. 276
Mother-kin, ii. 271; in succession to Roman kingship, 271; among the Aryans, 283 *sqq.*; superiority of maternal uncle to father under mother-kin, 285. *See also* Female Kinship
Mother's brother preferred to father, mark of mother-kin, ii. 285
Motu, the, i. 317, ii. 106
Motumotu, the, i. 317, 327, 337; or Toaripi, the, in New Guinea, 125
Moulton, Professor J. H., ii. 182 *n.*[2], 189 *n.*[3], 247 *n.*[5]
Moxos Indians, i. 123
Muata Jamwo, the, ii. 262
Mukasa, god of the Baganda, ii. 150
Müller, Max, i. 333 *sq.*
Mulongo, "twin," name applied by the Baganda to the navel-string, i. 195, 196
Mummers dressed in leaves, branches, and flowers, ii. 74 *sqq.*, 78 *sqq.*
Mundaris, the, ii. 39, 46
Mundas, the, ii. 57
Munro, Dr. R., ii. 352
Mura-muras, i. 255 *sq.*
Mycenae, golden lamb of, i. 365
Mysteries of Eleusis, ii. 138 *sq.*
Mytilene, kings at, i. 45

Nabataeans, Agriculture of the, ii. 100
Nabu, marriage of the god, ii. 130
Nahak, rubbish used in magic, i. 341
Nails knocked into trees, ii. 36, 42; a charm against witchcraft, 339 *sq.*
—— pegs, or pins knocked into images, i. 61, 64, 65, 68, 69

Nails, parings of, used in magic, i. 57, 64, 65, 66
Names of kings changed to procure rain, i. 355
Nandi, power of medicine-men among the, i. 344
Nanja spots or local totem centres, i. 96, 97
Nat, spirit, ii. 46
Natchez, the, i. 249; their perpetual fires, ii. 262 *sq.*
"Nativity of the sun's walking-stick," i. 312
Navarre, rain-making in, i. 307 *sq.*
Navel-string, contagious magic of, i. 182-201; regarded as brother or sister of child, 186, 189; called the "twin," 195; seat of external soul, 200 *sq.*
Navel-strings hung on trees, ii. 56
Negative magic or taboo, i. 111 *sqq.*
Nemi, the lake of, i. 1 *sqq.*; sanctuary of Diana at, 2 *sqq.*; the priest of, 8 *sqq.*, 40, 41, ii. 376, 386, 387
Neoptolemus, ii. 278
Nerthus, procession of, ii. 144 *n.*[1]
Nets, marriage of girls to, ii. 147
New birth, simulation of, i. 380 *sq.*
—— -born children brought to the hearth, ii. 232
—— Caledonia, i. 78; homoeopathic magic of stones in, 162 *sqq.*,
—— Caledonians, the, i. 312, 313, 314
—— fire, ii. 237; made at Midsummer, 243; made at beginning of a king's reign, 262, 267
—— Guinea, influence of magicians in, i. 337 *sq.*
—— Year festival, i. 251
Ngai, god, ii. 44, 150
Nias, i. 109, 143
Nicholson, General, worshipped, i. 404
Niebuhr, B. G., ii. 269
Nightingale in magic, i. 154
Nile, the Upper, rain-makers on the, i. 345 *sqq.*; the bride of the, ii. 151
Nine animals sacrificed daily at a festival, ii. 365
—— years' festival at Upsala, ii. 364 *sq.*
Noah's ark, i. 334
Nonae Caprotinae, ii. 314
Nootkas, superstitions as to twins among the, i. 263 *sq.*
Norse trinities, ii. 364
Noses bored, i. 94
Numa, his birthday, ii. 273; a priestly king, 289
—— and Egeria, i. 18, ii. 172 *sq.*, 193, 380
Numa's birthday, ii. 325, 348; "Numa's crockery," ii. 202
Numbering the herds on St. George's Day, ii. 338
Numicius, the river, ii. 181
Nuns of St. Brigit, ii. 240 *sq.*
Nurin, i. 275, 276
Nusku, Babylonian fire-god, i. 67
Nyanza, Lake, god of, i. 395

Oak, its diffusion in Europe, ii. 349 *sqq.*; worship of the, 349 *sqq.*; oracular, at Dodona, 358; worshipped in modern Europe, 370 *sqq.*
—— and thunder, the Aryan god of the, ii. 356 *sqq.*; sky, rain, and thunder, god of the, 349 *sq.*
—— evergreen, in making fire, ii. 251; the Golden Bough grew on an, 379
—— branch in rain charm, i. 309
—— -god married to the oak-goddess, ii. 142; and oak-goddess, marriage of, 189; how he became a god of lightning, thunder, and rain, 372 *sqq.*
—— groves in ancient Ireland, ii. 242 *sq.*
—— leaves, crown of, ii. 175, 176 *sq.*, 184
—— -nymphs at Rome, ii. 172, 185
—— -tree guarded by the King of the Wood at Nemi, i. 42
—— -trees, sacrifices to, ii. 366
—— -wood, Vesta's fire at Rome fed with, ii. 186; perpetual fire of, 365, 366; ceremonial fires kindled by the friction of, 372
—— -woods on the site of ancient Rome, ii. 184 *sqq.*
—— -worship of the Druids, ii. 9
Oaken image dressed as a bride, ii. 140 *sq.*
Oaks at Troezen, i. 26; of Ireland, ii. 363; sacred among the old Prussians, 43
Oaths on stones, i. 160 *sq.*
Ocrisia, ii. 195
Octopus in magic, i. 156
Odin as a magician, i. 241 *sq.*; the Norse god of war, ii. 364
Oedipus, ii. 115
Oenomaus, ii. 300
Oesel, island of, i. 329
Offspring, charms to procure, i. 70 *sqq.*
Ojebways, magical images among the, i. 55
Olaf, King, i. 367
Old men, government by, in aboriginal Australia, i. 334 *sq.*
Oldenberg, Professor H., i. 225 *n.*, 228, 235 *n.*[1], 269, 270
Olives planted and gathered by pure boys and virgins, ii. 107
Olympia, races for the kingdom at, ii. 299 *sq.*
Omahas, the, i. 249, 320
Omens, homoeopathic magic to annul evil omens, i. 170-174

Omphale and Hercules, ii. 281
Omumborombonga (*Combretum primigenum*), the sacred tree of the Herero, ii. 213 *sq.*, 218, 219 *sq.*, 233
Omuwapu tree (*Grevia spec.*), ii. 219
Opprobrious language levelled at goddess to please her, i. 280
Oracles given by king, i. 377
Oraons, marriage of Sun and Earth among the, ii. 148; spring festival of the, 76 *sq.*
Oracular spring at Dodona, ii. 172
Ordeal of battle among the Umbrians, ii. 321
Orestes at Nemi, i. 10 *sq.*, 21 *n.*[2], 24; at Troezen, 26; cured of his madness, 161
Orgies, sexual, as fertility charms, ii. 98 *sqq.*
Orontes, the river, ii. 160
Osiris threatened by magicians, i. 225
Ostyaks, tree-worship among the, ii. 11
Ovambo, the, i. 63, 209, ii. 46
Ovid, ii. 176, 177, 191; on Nemi, i. 4, 17

Pacific, human gods in the, i. 386 *sqq.*
Padstow, custom of the Hobby Horse at, ii. 68
Pages, medicine-men, i. 358
Paint-house, the, ii. 111
Paintings, prehistoric, of animals in caves, i. 87 *n.*[1]
Pais, E., i. 23 *n.*
Pales, ii. 326, 327, 328, 329, 348
Pallades, female consorts of Ammon, ii. 135
Palladius, ii. 314
Pallene, daughter of Sithon, ii. 307
Palm-tree, ceremony of tapping it for wine, ii. 100 *sq.* *See also* Date-palm
Panamara in Caria, i. 29
Paparuda, i. 273
Parasitic plants, superstitions as to, ii. 250, 251 *sq.*
Parilia, the, ii. 123, 229, 273; a shepherds' festival, 325 *sqq.*
Parjanya, the ancient Hindoo god of thunder and rain, i. 270, ii. 368 *sq.*
Parkinson, R., i. 175
Parricide, Roman punishment of, ii. 110 *n.*[2]
Parsees, the, ii. 241
Partheniai, i. 36 *n.*[2]
Parthenos as applied to Artemis, i. 36
Parthian monarchs brothers of the Sun, i. 417 *sq.*
Partridge, C., ii. 294 *n.*[2]
Patara, Apollo at, ii. 135
Paternity, uncertainty of, a ground for a theological distinction, ii. 135; of kings a matter of indifference under female kinship, 274 *sqq.*, 282
Patriarchal family at Rome, ii. 283
Paulicians, the, i. 407
Payaguas, the, i. 330
Payne, E. J., i. 415 *n.*[2]
Pear-tree as protector of cattle, ii. 55
Peat-bogs of Europe, ii. 350 *sqq.*
Peking Gazette, i. 355
Peleus, ii. 278
Pelew Islands, human gods in, i. 389
Pelopidae, the, ii. 279
Pelops, ii. 279
—— and Hippodamia, ii. 299 *sq.*
Penates, the, ii. 205 *sq.*
Pennefather River in Queensland, i. 99, 100
Peoples said to be ignorant of the art of kindling fire, ii. 253 *sqq.*
Peperuga, i. 274
Pepys, S., i. 369, ii. 52, 322
Pergrubius, a Lithuanian god of the spring, ii. 347 *sq.*
Periphas, king of Athens, ii. 177
Perkunas or Perkuns, the Lithuanian god of thunder and lightning, ii. 365 *sqq.*; derivation of his name, 367 *n.*[3]
Perperia, i. 273
Perpetual fires, origin of, ii. 253 *sqq.*; associated with royal dignity, ii. 261 *sqq.*
Perseus and Andromeda, ii. 163
Peru, Indians of, i. 265, ii. 146; the Incas of, 243 *sq.*
Perun, the thunder-god of the Slavs, ii. 365
Peruvian Indians, i. 56
—— Vestals, ii. 243 *sqq.*
Pessinus, i. 47
Peter of Dusburg, ii. 366 *n.*[2]
Phaedra and Hippolytus, i. 25
Pheneus, lake of, ii. 8
Phigalia, i. 31
Philostratus, i. 167
Phosphorescence of the sea, superstitions as to the, ii. 154 *sq.*
Picts, female descent of kingship among the, ii. 280 *sq.*, 286
Piers, Sir Henry, ii. 59
Pig, blood of, drunk as a means of inspiration, i. 382; in purificatory rites, ii. 107, 108, 109; expiatory sacrifice of, 122
Pigeon used in a love-charm, ii. 345 *sq.*
Pile-villages in the valley of the Po, ii. 8; of Europe, 352 *sq.*
Pipal-tree (*Ficus religiosa*), ii. 43
Pipiles, the, of Central America, ii. 98
Pity of rain-gods, appeal to, i. 302 *sq.*
Placenta (afterbirth) and navel-string, contagious magic of, i. 182-201
Plantain-trees, navel-strings of Baganda buried at foot of, i. 195
Plants, homoeopathic magic to make

plants grow, i. 136 *sqq.*; influenced homoeopathically by a person's act or state, 139 *sqq.*; influence persons homoeopathically, 144 *sqq.*; sexes of, ii. 24; marriage of, 26 *sqq.*;
Plataea, festival of the Daedala at, ii. 140 *sq.*
Plato, i. 45, 104
Plebeians, the Roman kings, ii. 289
Pleiades, rising of the, i. 32
Pliny the Elder, i. 49; on sacredness of woods, ii. 123; the Younger, i. 6
Ploughing by women as a rain-charm, i. 282 *sq.*
Plover in connexion with rain, i. 259, 261
Plutarch, i. 28, 80, ii. 172, 196, 320 *n.*[3] 325 *n.*[3]; on Numa and Egeria, i. 18
Pole-star, homoeopathic magic of the, i. 166
Political evolution from democracy to despotism, i. 421
Polybius, ii. 354
Polydorus, ii. 31
Poplar, the white, at Olympia, a substitute for the oak, ii. 220
Porphyry, i. 390, ii. 12
Porta Capena at Rome, i. 18
Porta Querquetulana, ii. 185 *n.*[3]
Poso in Celebes, i. 379, ii. 29
Potrimpo, old Prussian god, ii. 248
Pottery, primitive, employed in Roman ritual, ii. 202 *sqq.*; superstitions as to the making of, 204 *sq.*
Pramantha, ii. 249
Prayers for rain, ii. 359, 362; to Thunder, 367 *sq.*; to an oak, 372
Precautions against witches, ii. 52 *sqq.*
Precious stones, homoeopathic magic of, i. 164 *sq.*
Pregnancy, ceremony in seventh month of, i. 72 *sq.*
Pregnant cows sacrificed to the Earth goddess, ii. 229; victims sacrificed to ensure fertility, i. 141; women employed to fertilise crops and fruit-trees, i. 140 *sq.*
Pretenders to divinity among Christians, i. 407 *sqq.*
Priest drenched with water as a rain-charm, ii. 77; rolled on fields as fertility charm, 103; of Diana at Nemi, i. 8 *sqq.*
—— of Nemi, i. 8 *sqq.*, 40, 41, ii. 376, 386, 387. *See also* King of the Wood
Priestesses, inspired, i. 379 *sq.*, 381 *sq.*
Priestly kings, i. 44 *sqq.*
Priests, magical powers attributed to priests by French peasants, i. 231-233; inspired, 377 *sqq.*
Princesses married to foreigners or men of low birth, ii. 274 *sqq.*
Private magic, i. 214 *sq.*
Procopius, ii. 365
Procreative virtue attributed to fire, ii. 233
Proculus Julius, ii. 182
Progress, intellectual, dependent on economic progress, i. 218; social, 421
Promathion's *History of Italy*, ii. 196, 197
Prometheus, ii. 260
Prophetic powers conferred by certain springs, ii. 172
Prophets, the Hebrew, their ethical religion, i. 223
Propitiation essential to religion, i. 222
Prostitution before marriage, practice of, ii. 282, 285, 287
Prothero, G. W., ii. 71 *n.*[1]
Provence, magical powers attributed to priests in, i. 232
Prpats, i. 274
Prunus Padus, L., ii. 344
Prussians, the old, their worship of trees, ii. 43
Prytaneum, fire in the, ii. 260
Psylli, the, i. 331
Public magic, i. 215
Purification by fire, ii. 327, 329
Purificatory rites for sexual crimes, ii. 107 *sqq.*, 115, 116
Pururavas and Urvasi, ii. 250
Pythagoras, maxims of, i. 211, 213 *sq.*
Pythaists at Athens, i. 33
Python, sacred, ii. 150

Quack, the, ii. 81
Quartz-crystals used in rain-making, i. 254, 255, 304
Queen of Egypt married to the god Ammon, ii. 131 *sqq.*; of Athens married to Dionysus, 136 *sq.*; of May, ii. 84, 87 *sq.*; Charlotte Islands, i. 70; sister in Uganda, licence accorded to the ii. 275 *sq.*
Queensland, rain-making in, i. 254 *sq.*
Querquetulani, Men of the Oak, ii. 188
Quirinal hill, the, ii. 182, 185
Quirinus, ii. 182, 185, 193 *n.*[1]
Quiteve, the, i. 392
Quivering of the body in a rain-charm, i. 260, 261

Ra, the Egyptian sun-god, i. 418, 419
Race, the King's, ii. 84; succession to kingdom determined by a, 299 *sqq.*; for a bride, 301 *sqq.*
Races at Whitsuntide, ii. 69, 84
Racoons in rain-charm, i. 288
Rain, extraction of teeth in connexion with, i. 98 *sq.*; the magical control of, 247 *sqq.*; made by homoeopathic or

imitative magic, 247 *sqq.* ; Mother of the, 276 ; supposed to fall only as a result of magic, 353 ; excessive, supposed to be an effect of sexual crime, ii. 108, 113 ; Zeus as the god of, 359 *sq.*
Rain-bird, i. 287
"Rain-bush," ii. 46
—— -charm by ploughing, i. 282 *sq.*
—— Country, i. 259
—— -doctor, i. 271
—— -god as dragon, i. 297
—— gods compelled to give rain by threats and violence, i. 296 *sqq.* ; appeal to the pity of the, 302 *sq.*
Rain King, i. 275, ii. 2
—— -maker among the Arunta, costume of the, i. 260 ; assimilates himself to water, 269 *sqq.*
—— makers, their importance in savage communitjes, i. 247 ; in Africa, their rise to political power, 342 *sqq.*, 352 ; on the Upper Nile, 345 *sqq.* ; unsuccessful, punished or killed, 345, 352 *sqq.*
—— -making by means of the dead, i. 284 *sqq.* ; by means of animals, 287 *sqq.* ; by means of stones, 304 *sqq.*
'Rain-stick," i. 254
"Rain-stones," i. 254, 305, 345, 346
—— -temple, i. 250
—— totem, i. 258
Rainbow in rain-charm, picture of, i. 258
Rajahs among the Malays, supernatural powers attributed to, i. 361
Ramsay, Sir W. M., i. 36 *n.*[2]
Rats and mice, teeth of, in magic, i. 178 *sqq.*
Raven in wind-charm, i. 320
Raven's eggs in magic, i. 154
Ray, S. H., ii. 208 *n.*[3]
Red colour in magic, i. 79, 81, 83
—— Karens of Burma, ii. 69
—— woollen threads, a charm against witchcraft, ii. 336
Reddening the faces of gods, custom of, ii. 175 *sq.*
Regalia of Malay kings, i. 362 *sq.* ; supernatural powers of, 398
Regia, the king's palace at Rome, ii. 201
Regifugium at Rome, ii. 290 ; perhaps a relic of a contest for the kingdom, 308 *sqq.*
Regillus, battle of Lake, i. 50
Reinach, Salomon, i. 27 *n.*[6], 87 *n.*[1], ii. 232 *n.*[2], 241 *n.*[1]
Reincarnation, belief of the aboriginal Australians in, i. 96, 99 *sq.* ; certain funeral rites perhaps intended to ensure, 101 *sqq.*
Religion defined, i. 222 ; two elements of, a theoretical and a practical, 222 *sq.* ; opposed in principle to science, 224 ; transition from magic to, 237 *sqq.*, ii. 376 *sq.*
—— and magic, i. 220-243, 250, 285, 286, 347 ; Hegel on, 423 *sqq.*
Religious dramas sometimes originate in magical rites, ii. 142 *sq.*
Remulus, ii. 180
Renan, E., i. 236 *n.*[1]
Renouf, Sir P. le P., i. 418
Rex Nemorensis, i. 11
Rhetra, i. 383
Rheumatism caused by magic, i. 207 *sq.*, 213
Rhodians worship the sun, i. 315
Rhys, Sir John, i. 17 *n.*[2], ii. 363 *n.*[4]
Ribald songs in rain-charm, i. 267
Rice, charm to make rice grow, i. 140 ; in bloom treated like pregnant woman, ii. 28 *sq.* ; chastity at sowing, 106
Ridgeway, Professor W., ii. 103
Rig Veda, i. 294 ; quoted, ii. 368 *sq.*
"Ringing out the grass," ii. 344
Rivers as lovers of women in Greek mythology, ii. 161 *sq.*
Rivers, Dr. W. H. R., i. 230 *n.*, 403 *n.*[1], 421 *n.*[1]
Rivos, harvest-god of Celts in Gaul, i. 17
Rivros, a Celtic month, i. 17 *n.*[2]
Robertson, Sir George Scott, i. 133
Rock-crystals in rain-charms, i. 345
Rogations, Monday of, ii. 166
Rolling on the fields as a fertility charm, ii. 103 ; at harvest, ii. 104
—— cakes on the ground for omens, ii. 338
Roman fire-customs compared to those of the Herero, ii. 227 *sqq.*
—— kings as deities in a Sacred Marriage, ii. 172 *sq.*, 192, 193 *sq.* ; as personifications of Jupiter, 266 *sq.* ; list of, 269 *sq.* ; rule of succession among, 270 *sq.* ; plebeians, not patricians, 289 ; how nominated, 295 *sq.* ; their mysterious or violent ends, 312 *sqq.* ; their obscure birth, 312 *sq.*
—— kingship, descent of, in the female line, ii. 270 *sq.* ; abolition of the, 289 *sqq.* ; a religious office, 289
—— punishment of parricide, ii. 110 *n.*[2]
Rome, the kings of, ii. 171 *sqq.* ; oak woods on the site of ancient, 184 *sqq.*
Romove, Romow, or Romowo, ii. 366 *n.*[2]
Romulus, fig-tree of, ii. 10, 318 ; legend of his birth from the fire, 196 ; hut of, 200 ; death of, 181 *sq.*, 313
Roscher, W. H., ii. 137 *n.*[1], 383 *n.*[3]
Roscoe, Rev. J., ii. 276 *n.*[2], 318 *n.*[1], 322 *n.*[2]

Rose, the Little May, ii. 74
Rostowski, S., ii. 366 *n.*[2].
Rouen, St. Romain at, ii. 164 *sqq.*
Roumania, rain-making ceremonies in, i. 273 *sq.*
Round huts of the ancient Latins, ii. 200 *sqq.*
Rouse, Dr. W. H. D., i. 15 *n.*[3], ii. 82
Rowan or mountain-ash used as a charm, ii. 331
—— tree, a protection against witches, ii. 53, 54
Royalty conservative of old customs, ii. 288
Rukmini, wife of Krishna, ii. 26
Runaway slave, charm to bring back a, i. 317
Runes, the magic, i. 241
Russia, St. George's Day in, ii. 332 *sqq.*
Russian celebration of Whitsuntide, ii. 64, 93
—— sect of the Christs, i. 407 *sq.*

Sacred beasts in Egypt, i. 29 *sq.*
—— groves in ancient Greece and Rome, ii. 121 *sqq.*
—— Marriage, the, ii. 120 *sqq.*
—— men, i. 386
—— sticks representing ancestors, ii. 222 *sqq.*
—— women, i. 391
Sacrifices offered to regalia, i. 363, 365; to trees, 366
Sacrificial King at Rome, i. 44
St. Anthony's fire treated by homoeopathic magic, i. 81 *sq.*
—— Bride in the Highlands of Scotland, ii. 94
—— Bridget, ii. 94 *sq.*, 242. *See* St. Brigit
—— Brigit, holy fire and nuns of, at Kildare, ii. 240 *sqq.*
—— Columba, i. 407, ii. 242 *sq.*
—— Dasius, ii. 310 *n.*[1]
—— Eany's Well, ii. 161
—— Fillan, well of, ii. 161
—— Francis of Paola, i. 300
—— George and the Dragon, ii. 163 *sq.*; and the Parilia, 324 *sqq.*; patron saint of cattle, horses, and wolves, 330, 336, 337, 338; chapel of, 337; as a spirit of trees or vegetation, 343 *sq.*; as giver of offspring to women, 344 *sqq.*; in relation to serpents, 344 *n.*[4]; in Syria, 346
—— George's Day (23rd April), ii. 56, 75, 79, 103, 164 *n.*[1], 330 *sqq.*; eve of, a time when witches steal milk from the cows, 334 *sqq.*
—— Gervais, spring of, i. 307
—— Hippolytus, i. 21
—— James, i. 266; quoted, 223, 224
St. John, Eve of, in Sweden, ii. 65; Sweethearts of, 92
—— John the Baptist, day of, i. 277; his Midsummer festival, ii. 273
—— Leonhard, i. 7 *sq.*
—— Mary, Wells of, ii. 161; *in Araceli*, 184
—— Ouen, ii. 165, 168
—— Paul, i. 407
—— Peter, as giver of rain, i. 307
—— Peter's Day (29th June), ii. 141
—— Romain and the dragon of Rouen, ii. 164 *sqq.*; the shrine (*fierte*) of, 167, 168, 170 *n.*[1]
—— Sécaire, Mass of, i. 232 *sq.*
Saints, violence done to images of saints in Sicily to procure rain, i. 300; images of saints dipped in water as a rain-charm, 307 *sq.*
Sakai, the, i. 360
Sakkalava, the, i. 397
Śakvarī song, i. 269 *sq.*
Sâl trees, ii. 41; and flowers, 76 *sq.*
Salagrama, fossil ammonite, ii. 26, 27 *n.*[2]
Salic law, re-marriage of widow under, ii. 285
Salmon, twins thought to be, i. 263
Salmoneus, King of Elis, i. 310, ii. 177, 181
Salt, abstinence from, i. 124, 266, ii. 98, 105, 149; as a charm, 331
Samagitians, the, ii. 125; their sacred groves, 43
Sami wood (*Prosopis spicigera*), ii. 248, 249, 250 *n.*
Samnites, marriage custom of the, ii. 305
Samoa, gods of, in animal and human form, i. 389
Sandwich Islands, King of, i. 377. *See also* Hawaii
Santiago, the horse of, i. 267
Sarah and Abraham, ii. 114
Sardinia, Midsummer customs in, ii. 92
Satapatha-Brâhmana, i. 380
Saturn personified at the Saturnalia, ii. 310 *sq.*
—— and Jupiter, ii. 323
Saturnalia, ii. 272; as a fertility rite, 99; how celebrated by Roman soldiers on the Danube, 310; Saturn personified at the, 310 *sq.*; King of the, 311; the festival of sowing, 311 *sq.*
Savile, Lord, his excavations at Nemi, i. 3 *n.*[2]
Saxo Grammaticus, i. 160, ii. 280
Saxons, marriage with a stepmother among the, ii. 283; of Transylvania, 337
Scaloi, i. 274
Scamander, the river, supposed to take the virginity of brides, ii. 162

Scandinavia, female descent of the kingship in, ii. 279 *sq.*
Sceptre of Agamemnon, i. 365
Schinz, Dr. H., ii. 213 *n.*[2], 218
Scotland, magical images in, i. 68-70
Scott, Sir Walter, i. 326
Scratching the person with the fingers forbidden, i. 254
Scrofula, kings thought to heal scrofula by their touch, i. 368 *sqq.*
Scythian kings, their regalia, i. 365
Scythians put their kings in bonds, i. 354
Sea, virgins married to the jinnee of the, ii. 153 *sq.*; phosphorescence of the, 154 *sq.*
Seasons, Athenian sacrifices to the, i. 310
Secret societies, i. 340
Semiramis, ii. 275
Sena, island of, ii. 241 *n.*[1]
Seneca, on sacred groves, ii. 123
Serpent, dried, in ceremony for stopping rain, i. 295 *sq.*; or dragon of water, 155 *sqq.*
Serpents in relation to St. George, ii. 344 *n.*[4]
Servia, rain-making ceremony in, i. 273
Servius on Virbius, i. 20 *sq.*, 40
—— Tullius, laws of, ii. 115, 129; and Fortuna, 193 *n.*[1], 272; legend of his birth from the fire, 195 *sq.*; his death, 320 *sq.*
Sewing forbidden, i. 121, 128
Sexes, influence of the, on vegetation, ii. 97 *sqq.*; of plants, 24
Sexual communism, tradition of, ii. 284
—— crime, blighting effects attributed to, ii. 107 *sqq.*
—— intercourse practised to make the crops and fruits grow, ii. 98 *sqq.*
—— orgies as a fertility charm, ii. 98 *sqq.*
Shaking of victim as sign of its acceptance, i. 384 *sq.*
Shans of Burma, i. 128
Sheaf of oats made up to represent St. Bride or Bridget, ii. 94 *sq.*; the last, 94 *n.*[2]
Sheep, black, sacrificed for rain, i. 290
—— driven through fire, ii. 327
Shepherd's prayer, ii. 327 *sq.*
Shepherds' festival, ancient Italian, ii. 326 *sqq.*
Shetland, witches in, i. 326
Shrew-mouse in magic, i. 83
Shuswap Indians, i. 265
Siam, King of, ii. 262; divinity of, i. 401
Sibyl, the, and the Golden Bough, i. 11
Sicily, attempts to compel the saints to give rain in, i. 299 *sq.*
Sick people passed through a hole in an oak, ii. 371
Sickness, homoeopathic magic for the cure of, i. 78 *sqq.*
Silesia, Whitsuntide customs in, ii. 85
Silk-cotton trees reverenced, ii. 14 *sq.*
Silvanus, forest god, ii. 121, 124
Silver poplar a charm against witchcraft, ii. 336
Silvii, the family name of the kings of Alba, ii. 178 *sqq.*, 192
Silvius, first king of Alba, ii. 179
Similarity in magic, law of, i. 52, 53
Simplification, danger of excessive simplification in science, i. 332 *sq.*
Singer, the best, chosen chief, ii. 298 *sq.*
Sins, confession of, i. 266
Sinuessa, waters of, ii. 161
Sister's children preferred to man's own children, mark of mother-kin, ii. 285
Sisters of king, licence accorded to, ii. 274 *sqq.*
Siva, i. 404, ii. 77, 78
Skeat, W. W., i. 360 *sq.*
Skeleton in rain-charm, i. 284
Skene, W. F., ii. 286 *n.*[2]
Skoptsy, the, a Russian sect, ii. 145 *n.*[1]
Skulls, ancestral, used in magical ceremonies, i. 163; in rain-charm, 285
Sky, twins called the children of the, i. 267, 268; Aryan god of the, ii. 374 *sq.*
Slave, charm to bring back a runaway, i. 152, 317
—— priests at Nemi, i. 11
Slaves, licence granted to, at Saturnalia, ii. 312; female, licence accorded to, at the *Nonae Caprotinae*, 313 *sq.*
Slavs, tree-worship among the heathen, ii. 9; the thunder-god Perun, of the, 365
Sleep, charms employed by burglars to cause, i. 148 *sq.*
"Sleep of war," ii. 147
Smith, W. Robertson, i. 301 *n.*[2]
Smiths sacred, i. 349
Smoke made as a rain-charm, i. 249; of cedar inhaled as means of inspiration, 383 *sq.*; as a charm against witchcraft, ii. 330
Snake-bites, charms against, i. 152 *sq.*
—— skin a charm against witchcraft, ii. 335
Snakes, human wives of, ii. 149, 150
"Sober" sacrifices, i. 311 *n.*[1]
Social progress, i. 420
Sodza, a lightning goddess, ii. 370
Sofâla, King of, i. 392
Sogamozo, the pontiff of, i. 416
Sogble, a lightning god, ii. 370
Solar myth theory, i. 333
Somerville, Professor W., ii. 328 *n.*[4]
Sophocles, ii. 115, 161
Sorcerers. *See* Magicians, Medicine-men

Sorcery. *See* Magic
Sorrows, Master of, i. 280
Soul, external, in afterbirth (placenta) or navel-string, i. 200 *sq.*
Souls ascribed to trees, ii. 12 *sqq.*; of ancestors supposed to be in fire on the hearth, 232
Sowing, curses at, i. 281; homoeopathic magic at, 136 *sqq.*; sexual intercourse before, ii. 98; continence at, 105, 106; in Italy and Sicily, time of, 311 *n.*[5]
Sparks of fire supposed to impregnate women, ii. 197, 231
Sparta, the two kings of, i. 46 *sq.*; their relation to Castor and Pollux, 48-50
Spartan sacrifice of horses to the sun, i. 315 *sq.*
Spencer and Gillen, i. 89, 107 *n.*[4]
Spieth, J., i. 397
Spinning forbidden, i. 113 *sq.*
Spirit, Brethren of the Free, i. 408
Spiritual husbands, ii. 316 *sq.*
Spittle, divination by, i. 99; used in magic, 57
Spring, oracular at Dodona, ii. 172
Springs troubled to procure rain, i. 301; which confer prophetic powers, ii. 172
Squirting water as a rain-charm, i. 249 *sq.*, 277 *sq.*
Star, falling, in magic, i. 84
Stepmother, marriage with a, among the Saxons, ii. 283
Stewart, C. S., i. 387 *n.*[1]
Sticks, sacred, representing ancestors, ii. 222 *sqq.*
Stone, holed, in magic, i. 313
—— curlew in magic, i. 80
—— throwing as a fertility charm, i. 39
Stones tied to trees to make them bear fruit, i. 140; oaths upon, 160 *sq.*; homoeopathic magic of, 160 *sqq.*; employed to make fruits and crops grow, 162 *sqq.*; precious, homoeopathic magic of, 164 *sq.*; the Day of, 279; rain-making by means of, 304 *sqq.*; in charms to make the sun shine, 312, 313, 314; put in trees to prevent sun from setting, 318; in wind charms, 319, 322 *sq.*
Storeroom (*penus*), sacred, ii. 205 *sq.*
Strabo, ii. 305
Stubbes, P., ii. 66
Subincision, use of blood shed at, i. 92, 94 *sq.*
Succession to the chieftainship or kingship alternating between several families, ii. 292 *sqq.*
—— to the kingdom, in ancient Latium, ii. 266 *sqq.*; determined by a race, 299 *sqq.*; determined by mortal combat, ii. 322
Sulka, the, of New Britain, ii. 148
Sumatra, i. 58, 71
Summer, bringing in the, ii. 74
Sun, homoeopathic magic of setting, i. 165 *sq.*; supposed to send new teeth, 181; magical control of the, 311 *sqq.*; charms to cause the sun to shine, 311 *sqq.*; eclipse of, ceremonies at 311, 312; human sacrifices to the 314 *sq.*; chief deity of the Rhodians, 315; supposed to drive in chariot, 315; caught by net or string, 316; charms to prevent the sun from going down, 316 *sqq.*; the father of the Incas, 415; Parthian monarchs the brothers of the, 417 *sq.*; sanctuary of the, ii. 107; high priest of the, 146 *sq.*; marriage of a woman to the, 146 *sq.*; worshipped by the Blackfoot Indians, 146; round temple of the, 147; temple of the Sun at Cuzco, 243; virgins of the Sun in Peru, 243 *sqq.*; the Great, title of chief, 262, 263
—— and Earth, marriage of the, ii. 98 *sq.*, 148
—— -god, no wine offered to the, i. 311
—— -god Ra in Egypt, i, 418, 419
—— goddess, i. 417
Superstitions as to the making of pottery, ii. 204 *sq.*
Svayamvara, ii. 306
Swami Bhaskaranandaji Saraswati, i. 404
Swearing on stones, i. 160 *sq.*
Sweden, midsummer customs in, ii. 65; Frey and his priestess in, 143 *sq.*; customs observed in, at turning out the cattle to graze for the first time in spring, 341 *sq.*
Swedes sacrifice their kings, i. 366 *sq.*
Sweethearts of St. John, ii. 92
Swine, herds of, in ancient Italy, ii. 354
Sycamores worshipped, ii. 15; sacred among the Gallas, 34
Sylvii or Woods, the kings of Alba, ii. 379
Sympathetic Magic, i. 51 *sqq.*; its two branches, 54; examples of, 55 *sqq.* *See also* Magic
Syria, St. George in, ii. 346

Taara, the thunder-god of the Esthonians, ii. 367
Taboo, a negative magic, i. 111 *sqq.*
Taboos, homoeopathic, i. 116; contagious, 117; on food, 117 *sqq.*; laid on the parents of twins, 262, 263 *sq.*, 266; observed after house-building, ii. 40
Tacitus, ii. 285
Tagales, the, ii. 36
Tahiti, kings of, deified, i. 388
"Tail-money," ii. 331

Tāli, tying the, ii. 57 *n.*[4]
Tamarinds, sacred, ii. 42, 44
Tammuz or Adonis, ii. 346
Tana, power of the disease-makers in, i. 341
Tanaquil, the Queen, ii. 195
Taoism, religious head of, i. 413 *sqq.*
Tapio, woodland god, ii. 124
Tarahumares of Mexico, i. 249
Tarquin the Elder, ii. 195
—— the Proud, his attempt to shift the line of descent of the kingship, ii. 291 *sq.*
Tasmanians, the, ii. 257
Tatius, death of, ii. 320
Tauric Diana, i. 10 *sq.*, 24
Taylor, Isaac, ii. 189 *n.*[3]
Teeth, ceremony of knocking out teeth at initiation, i. 97 *sqq.*; extraction of teeth in connexion with rain, 98 *sq.*; charms to strengthen, 153, 157; contagious magic of, 176-182; of rats and mice in magic, 178 *sqq.*
Telamon, ii. 278
Telchines, the, of Rhodes, i. 310
Telepathy, magical, i. 119 *sqq.*; in hunting and fishing, 120 *sqq.*; in war, 126 *sqq.*; in voyages, 126
Tertullian, i. 407; on the Etruscan crown, ii. 175 *n.*[1]
Teucer, ii. 278
Teutonic kings, i. 47; thunder god, ii. 364
Thargelion, Greek harvest month, i. 32
Thebes, the Egyptian, ii. 130, 134; high priests of Ammon at, 134
Theocritus, witch in, i. 206
Theogamy, divine marriage, ii. 121
Theophrastus, on the woods of Latium, ii. 188
Theopompus, ii. 287
Thevet, F. A., i. 358
Thieves' candles, i. 148, 149
Things, homoeopathic magic of inanimate, i. 157 *sqq.*
Thistles, a charm against witchcraft, ii. 339, 340
Thompson Indians, i. 70, 132; the fire-drill of the, ii. 208
Thor, the Norse thunder god, ii. 364
Thorn-bushes as charms against witches, ii. 338
Thoth, Egyptian god, ii. 131
Threatening the thunder god, ii. 183 *n.*[2]
Thrice born, said of Brahmans, i. 381
Thrones, sanctity of, i. 365
Thunder, imitation of, i. 248; kings expected to make, ii. 180 *sq.*; thought to be the roll of the drums of the dead, 183; rain, sky, and oak, god of the, 349 *sq.*; Esthonian prayer to, 367 *sq.*
—— and oak, the Aryan god of the, ii. 356 *sqq.*
Thunder-bird, i. 309
—— god, threatening the, ii. 183 *n.*[2], conceived as a deity of fertility, 368 *sqq.*
Thunderbolt of Indra, i. 269
—— Zeus, ii. 361
Thunderbolts, kings killed by, ii. 181; flint implements regarded as, 374
Thunderstorms, disappearance of Roman kings in, ii. 181 *sqq.*
Thurston, E., i. 56 *n.*[3]
Thyiads, the, i. 46
Tibet, the Grand Lamas of, i. 411 *sq.*
Tides, homoeopathic magic of the, i. 166 *sqq.*
Tiele, C. P., i. 419 *sq.*
Tifata, Mount, ii. 380
Timber, homoeopathic magic of house timber, i. 146; of houses, tree-spirits propitiated in, ii. 39 *sq.*
Timor, telepathy of high-priest of, in war, i. 128 *sq.*
Tinneh Indians, the, i. 357
Toad in charm against storms, i. 325
Toaripi or Motumotu, the, in New Guinea, i. 125, 337
Toboongkoos, the, ii. 35
Todas, the, i. 56; divine milkmen of the, 402 *sq.*; magic and medicine among the, 421 *n.*[1]
Togoland, i. 265
Tomori, the, of Celebes, ii. 29, 35, 110
Tonga, chiefs of, believed to heal scrofula, i. 371
Tonquin, kings of, responsible for drought and dearth, i. 355
Töppen, M., ii. 365 *n.*[5]
Toradjas, the, i. 109, 114, 129, 159
Torres Straits, i. 59
Tortoise, magic of, i. 151, 170
Totem, confusion between a man and his totem, i. 107
Totemism in Central Australia not a religion, i. 107 *sq.*
Totems in Central Australia, magical ceremonies for the multiplication of, i. 85 *sqq.*; custom of eating the, 107
Touch-me-not (*Impatiens sp.*), ii. 77
Touching for the King's Evil (scrofula), i. 368 *sqq.*
Transmigrations of human deities, i. 410 *sqq.*
Tree, life of child connected with, i. 184; that has been struck by lightning, 319; culprits tied to sacred, ii. 112 *sq.*; fire kindled from ancestral, 221; spirit represented simultaneously in vegetable and human form, ii. 73 *sqq.*
—— -spirits, ii. 7 *sqq.*; in house-timber propitiated, 39 *sq.*; beneficent powers of, 45 *sqq.*; give rain and sunshine.

45 *sq.*; make crops grow, 47 *sqq.*; make cattle and women fruitful, 50 *sqq.*, 55 *sqq.*; in human form or embodied in living people, 71 *sqq.*
Tree-worship among the European families of the Aryan stock, ii. 9 *sqq.*; in modern Europe, relics of, 59 *sqq.*
Trees, marriage to, i. 40 *sq.*, ii. 57; extracted teeth placed in, i. 98; burial in, 102; navel-strings placed in, 182, 183, 185, 186; afterbirth (placenta) placed in, 182, 187, 190, 191, 194, 199; worship of, ii. 7 *sqq.*; regarded as animate, 12 *sqq.*; sacrifices to, 15, 16 *sq.*, 34, 44, 46, 47; sensitive, 18; apologies offered to trees for cutting them down, 18 *sq.*, 36 *sq.*; bleeding, 18, 20, 33; threatened to make them bear fruit, 20 *sqq.*; married to each other, 24 *sqq.*; animated by the souls of the dead, 29 *sqq.*; planted on graves, 31; as the abode of spirits, 33 *sqq.*; ceremonies at cutting down, 34 *sqq.*; drenched with water as a rain-charm, 47; grant women an easy delivery, 57 *sq.*
—— and plants, attempts to deceive the spirits of, ii. 22 *sqq.*
—— sacred, ii. 40 *sqq.*; smeared with blood, 367
Trinity, the Hindoo, i. 225, 404; the Norse, ii. 364
Triumph, the Roman, ii. 174
Troezen, sanctuary of Hippolytus at, i. 24 *sq.*
Troy, sanctuary of Athena at, ii. 284
"True Man, the," i. 413
Trumpets, sacred, ii. 24
Tshi-speaking peoples of Gold Coast, i. 132
Tullius Hostilius, killed by lightning, ii. 181, 320
Tumleo, i. 213
Turner, Dr. George, i. 341
Turner's picture of "The Golden Bough," i. 1
Turning or whirling round, custom of, observed by mummers, i. 273, 275, ii. 74, 80, 81, 87
"Twin," name applied by the Baganda to the navel-string, i. 195, 196
Twins, i. 145; in war, 49 *n.*[3]; taboos laid on parents of, 262, 263 *sq.*; supposed to possess magical powers, especially over the weather and rain, 262-269; supposed to be salmon, 263; thought to be related to grizzly-bears, 264 *sq.*; thought to be related to apes, 265; thought to be the sons of lightning, 266; called the children of the sky, 267, 268; water poured on graves of twins as a rain-charm, 268; customs of the Baganda in regard to, ii. 102 *sq.*
Two-headed bust at Nemi, portrait of the King of the Wood, i. 41 *sq.*
Tydeus, ii. 278
Tylor, E. B., i. 53 *n.*[1], ii. 208, 244 *n.*1, 374 *n.*[2]; on fertilisation of date-palm, 25 *n.*
Tyndarids (Castor and Pollux), i. 49

Uganda, Queen Dowager and Queen Sister in, ii. 275 *sq.*
Ulysses and Aeolus, i. 326; and Penelope, ii. 300
Umbrians, ordeal of battle among the, ii. 321
Uncle, maternal, preferred to father, mark of mother-kin, ii. 285
Upsala, sacred grove at, ii. 9; temple of Frey at, 144; great temple and festival at, 364 *sq.*
Urns, funereal, in shape of huts, ii. 201 *sq.*
Urvasi and Pururavas, ii. 250

Vallabhacharyas, the, Hindoo sect, ii. 160
Varro, ii. 185, 200, 326, 381
Vatican hill, the, ii. 186
Vaughan Stevens, H., ii. 236 *n.*[1]
Vegetation, influence of the sexes on, ii. 97 *sqq.*; spirit of, represented by a king or queen, ii. 84, 87, 88; newly awakened in spring, ii. 70; brought to houses, 74; represented by mummers dressed in leaves, branches, and flowers, 74 *sqq.*, 78 *sqq.*; represented by a tree and a living man, 76; represented in duplicate by a girl and an effigy, 78; men and women masquerading as, 120
Vejovis, the Little Jupiter, ii. 179
Veleda, deified woman, i. 391
Veneti, the, ii. 353; breeders of horses, i. 27
Ventriloquism a basis of political power, i. 347
Venus (Aphrodite) and Adonis, i. 21, 25, 40, 41
Verrall, A. W., ii. 25 *n.*[2]
Vesta, her sacred fires in Latium, i. 13 *sq.*; at Rome, the grove of, ii. 185; called Mother, not Virgin, 198; round temple of, 200 *sq.*; as Mother, 227 *sqq.*; a goddess of fecundity, 229 *sq.*; her fire at Rome fed with oak wood, ii. 186
Vestal fire at Rome a successor of the fire on the king's hearth, ii. 200 *sqq.*; kindled by the friction of wood, 207; at Nemi, 378 *sq.*, 380; Virgins in Latium, i. 13 *sq.*; become mothers

by the fire, ii. 196 *sq.*; regarded as wives of the fire-god, 198, 199, 229; among the Baganda, 246
Vestals, house of the, ii. 201; of the Herero, 213, 214; custom of burying alive unfaithful Vestals, 228; adore the male organ, 229; rites performed by them for the fertility of the earth and the fecundity of cattle, 229, 326; African, 150; at Rome the wives or daughters of the kings, 228; Celtic, 241 *n.*[1]; Peruvian, 243 *sqq.*; in Yucatan, 245 *sq.*
Victims give signs of inspiration by shaking themselves, i. 384 *sq.*
Victoria, the late Queen, worshipped in Orissa, i. 404
Victoria Nyanza, god of the, ii. 150
Viehe, Rev. G., ii. 213 *n.*[2], 223 *sq.*
Vines blessed on the Assumption of the Virgin (15th August), i. 14 *sq.*
Violent deaths of the Roman kings, ii. 313 *sqq.*
Viracocha, i. 56
Virbius, the slope of, i. 4 *n.*[5], ii. 321; the mate of Diana at Nemi, i. 19-21, 40 *sq.*, ii. 129; etymology of the name, 379 *n.*[5].
Virgil, ii. 184, 186, 379; an antiquary as well as a poet, 178
Virgin, the Assumption of the, in relation to Diana, i. 14-16; festival of the, in the Armenian Church, 16; Mary of Kevlaar, i. 77; priestesses in Peru, Mexico, and Yucatan, ii. 243 *sqq.*
Virginity offered to rivers, ii. 162
Virility, hierophant at Eleusis temporarily deprived of his, ii. 130; sacrifice of, to a goddess, 144 *sq.*
Vishnu, ii. 26
Vitellius at Nemi, i. 5
Vituperation thought to cause rain, i. 278
Votive offerings at Nemi, i. 4, 6, 12, 19, 23
Voyages, telepathy in, i. 126
Vulcan, father of Caeculus, ii. 197
Vulture, magic of, i. 151

Wagogo, the, i. 123
Wagtail, the yellow, in magic, i. 79
Walber, the, ii. 75
Waldemar, I., King of Denmark, i. 367
Wallace, Sir D. Mackenzie, i. 407 *sq.*
Walos, the, of Senegal, i. 370
Walpurgis Night, ii. 52, 54, 55, 127
Walton, Izaak, i. 326 *n.*[2]
War, telepathy in, i. 126 *sqq.*
"War, the sleep of," ii. 147
Ward, Professor H. Marshall, ii. 252, 315 *n.*[1]
Ward, Professor James, i. 423
Warramunga, the, i. 93, 95, 99
Wasps in magic, i. 152
Water sprinkled as rain-charm, i. 248 *sqq.*; serpent or dragon of, ii. 155 *sqq.*
—— and Fire, kings of, ii. 3 *sqq.*
—— -lilies, charms to make water-lilies grow, i. 95, 97, 98
—— nymphs, fertilising virtue of, ii. 162
—— -spirits, propitiation of, ii. 76; sacrifices to, 155 *sqq.*; as beneficent beings, 159; bestow offspring on women, 159 *sqq.*
—— totem, i. 259
Waterfalls, spirits of, ii. 156, 157
Wax melted in magic, i. 77
Wealth acquired by magicians, i. 347, 348, 351, 352
Weapon and wound, contagious magic of, i. 201 *sqq.*
Weaving and twining thread forbidden, i. 131
Wellhausen, J., i. 303
Wells cleansed as rain-charm, i. 267; married to the holy basil, ii. 26 *sq.*; bestow offspring on women, 160 *sq.*
Wends, their superstition as to oaks, ii. 55
Werner, Miss A., ii. 317 *n.*[1]
Wernicke, quoted, i. 35 *sq.*
Wetting people with water as a rain-charm, i. 250, 251, 269 *sq.*, 272, 273, 274, 275, 277 *sq.*, ii. 77
Whale-fishing, telepathy in, i. 121
Whirling or turning round, custom of, observed by mummers, i. 273, 275, ii. 74, 80, 81, 87
Whirlwind, attacking the, i. 329 *sqq.*
White bulls sacrificed, ii. 188 *sq.*
—— horses, sacred, ii. 174 *n.*[2]
—— poplar, the, at Olympia, ii. 220
—— thorn, a charm against witches, ii. 191
—— victims sacrificed for sunshine, i. 291, 292
Whitekirk, ii. 161
Whit-Monday, the king's game on, ii. 89, 103
Whitsun-bride in Denmark, ii. 91 *sq.*
Whitsunday customs in Russia, ii. 64, 93; races, ii. 69, 84; contest for the kingship at, 89; custom of rolling on the fields at, 103; customs in Holland, 104
—— Bride, the, ii. 89, 96
—— Basket, the, ii. 83
—— Flower, ii. 80
—— King, ii. 84, 89, 90
—— -lout, the, ii. 81
—— Man, the Little, ii. 81
—— Queen, ii. 87, 90
Widow, re-marriage of, in Salic law, ii. 285 *sq.*
Wiedemann, A., i. 230 *sq.*

Wiglet and Feng, ii. 281, 283
Wilhelmina, a Bohemian woman, worshipped, i. 409
Wilkinson, R. J., ii. 383 *n.*[1]
William the Third, i. 369
Willow tree on St. George's Day, ii. 76
Wind, magical control of the, i. 319 *sqq.*; charms to make the wind drop, 320; fighting and killing the spirit of the, 327 *sqq.*
—— clan, i. 320
—— of the Cross, i. 325
—— doctor, i. 321
Winds tied up in knots, i. 326
Wine not offered to the sun-god, i. 311
Wiradjuri tribe, i. 335
Wissowa, Professor G., i. 22 *n.*[5], 23 *n.*, ii. 382 *n.*[1]
Witches raising the wind, i. 322, 326; buried under trees, ii. 32; steal milk on May Day or Walpurgis Night, 52 *sqq.*; steal milk on Midsummer Eve, 127; steal milk on Eve of St. George, 334 *sqq.*; precautions against, 52 *sqq.*; as cats and dogs, 334, 335
Witches' sabbath on the Eve of St. George, ii. 335, 338
Witchetty grubs, ceremony for the multiplication of, i. 85
"Wives of Marduk," ii. 130
Wizards who raise winds, i. 323 *sqq.*; Finnish, 325
Wolves in relation to horses, i. 27; feared by shepherds, ii. 327, 329, 330 *sq.*, 333, 334, 340, 341
Women, fruitful, supposed to fertilise crops and fruit-trees, i. 140 *sq.*; employed to sow the fields, 141 *sq.*; ploughing as a rain-charm, 282 *sq.*; worshipped by the ancient Germans, 391; married to gods, ii. 129 *sqq.*, 143 *sq.*, 146 *sq.*, 149 *sqq.*; fertilised by water-spirits, 159 *sqq.*; impregnated by fire, 195 *sqq.*, 230 *sq.*; alone allowed to make pottery, 204 *sq.*
—— barren, thought to sterilise gardens, i. 142; fertilised by trees, ii. 316 *sqq.*
Wood, fire kindled by the friction of, ii. 207 *sqq.*, 235 *sqq.*, 243, 248 *sqq.*, 258 *sq.*, 262, 263, 336, 366, 372
Wood, the King of the, i. 1 *sqq.*; Lord of the, ii. 36
Woods, species of, used in making fire by friction, ii. 248-252
Wordsworth, W., i. 104
Worship of trees, ii. 7 *sqq.*; of the oak, 349 *sqq.*
Wotyaks, the, ii. 43, 145, 146
Wound and weapon, contagious magic of, i. 201 *sqq.*
Wyse, Miss A., ii. 88 *n.*[1]
Wyse, William, i. 101 *n.*[2], 105 *n.*[5], ii. 356 *n.*[3]

Yakuts, the, i. 319
Yam vines, continence at training, ii. 105 *sq.*
Yegory or Yury (St. George), ii. 332, 333
Yellow birds in magic, i. 79 *sq.*
—— colour in magic, i. 79 *sqq.*
—— River, girls married to the, ii. 152
Ynglingar family, ii. 279
Yorubas, the, i. 364; chieftainship among the, ii. 293 *sq.*; rule of succession to the chieftainship among the, 293 *sq.*
Yucatan, Vestals in, ii. 245 *sq.*
Yuracares, the, of Bolivia, ii. 204

Zela, i. 47
Zeus, Greek kings called, ii. 177, 361; as god of the oak, the rain, the thunder, and the sky, 358 *sqq.*; surnamed Lightning, 361; surnamed Thunderbolt, 361; as sky-god, 374
—— and Demeter, their marriage at Eleusis, ii. 138 *sq.*
—— and Dione, at Dodona, ii. 189
—— and Hera, sacred marriage of, ii. 140 *sq.*, 142 *sq.*
—— at Dodona, ii. 177; priests of, 248
—— at Panamara in Caria, i. 28
—— Dictaean, ii. 122
—— Lightning, i. 33
—— Lycaeus, i. 309
—— Panhellenian, ii. 359
—— Rainy, ii. 376
—— Showery, ii. 360
—— the Descender, ii. 361
Zimmer, H., ii. 286 *n.*[2]
Zulus, foods tabooed among the, i. 118 *sq.*

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