

THE MAGIC ART

AND THE EVOLUTION OF KINGS

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"Nec indigeste tamquam in acervum conessimus digna memoratu: sed variarum rerum disparilitas, auctoribus diversa confusa temporibus, ita in quoddam digesta corpus est, ut quae indistincte atque promiscue ad subsidium memoriae annotaveramus in ordinem instar membrorum cohaerentia convenirent. Nec mihi vitio vertas, si res quas ex lectione varia mutuabor ipsis saepe verbis quibus ab ipsis auctoribus enarratae sunt explicabo, quia praesens opus non eloquentiae ostentationem sed noscendorum congeriem pollicetur: et boni consulas oportet, si notitiam vetustatis modo nostris non obscure modo ipsis antiquorum fideliter verbis recognoscas, prout quaeque se vel enarranda vel transferenda suggesserint. Apes enim quodammodo debemus imitari, quae vaguntur et flores carpunt, deinde quicquid attulere disponunt ac per favos dividunt et sucum varium in unum saporem mixtura quadam et proprietate spiritus sui mutant."

MACROBIUS, *Saturnalia*, Praefatio.

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TO
MY FRIEND
WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH
IN
GRATITUDE AND ADMIRATION

PREFACE

WHEN I originally conceived the idea of the work, of which the first part is now laid before the public in a third and enlarged edition, my intention merely was to explain the strange rule of the priesthood or sacred kingship of Nemi and with it the legend of the Golden Bough, immortalised by Virgil, which the voice of antiquity associated with the priesthood. The explanation was suggested to me by some similar rules formerly imposed on kings in Southern India, and at first I thought that it might be adequately set forth within the compass of a small volume. But I soon found that in attempting to settle one question I had raised many more: wider and wider prospects opened out before me; and thus step by step I was lured on into far-spreading fields of primitive thought which had been but little explored by my predecessors. Thus the book grew on my hands, and soon the projected essay became in fact a ponderous treatise, or rather a series of separate dissertations loosely linked together by a slender thread of connexion with my original subject. With each successive edition these dissertations have grown in number and swollen in bulk by the accretion of fresh materials, till the thread on which they are strung at last threatened to snap under their weight. Accordingly, following the hint of a friendly critic, I decided to resolve my overgrown book into its elements, and to publish separately the various disquisitions of which

it is composed. The present volumes, forming the first part of the whole, contain a preliminary enquiry into the principles of Magic and the evolution of the Sacred Kingship in general. They will be followed shortly by a volume which discusses the principles of Taboo in their special application to sacred or priestly kings. The remainder of the work will be mainly devoted to the myth and ritual of the Dying God, and as the subject is large and fruitful, my discussion of it will, for the sake of convenience, be divided into several parts, of which one, dealing with some dying gods of antiquity in Egypt and Western Asia, has already been published under the title of *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*.

But while I have thus sought to dispose my book in its proper form as a collection of essays on a variety of distinct, though related, topics, I have at the same time preserved its unity, as far as possible, by retaining the original title for the whole series of volumes, and by pointing out from time to time the bearing of my general conclusions on the particular problem which furnished the starting-point of the enquiry. It seemed to me that this mode of presenting the subject offered some advantages which outweighed certain obvious drawbacks. By discarding the austere form, without, I hope, sacrificing the solid substance, of a scientific treatise, I thought to cast my materials into a more artistic mould and so perhaps to attract readers, who might have been repelled by a more strictly logical and systematic arrangement of the facts. Thus, I put the mysterious priest of Nemi, so to say, in the forefront of the picture, grouping the other sombre figures of the same sort behind him in the background, not certainly because I deemed them of less moment but because the picturesque natural surroundings of the priest of Nemi among the wooded hills of Italy, the very mystery which enshrouds him, and not least the haunting magic of Virgil's verse, all combine to shed a glamour on the tragic figure with the Golden Bough, which fits him to

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stand as the centre of a gloomy canvas. But I trust that the high relief into which he has thus been thrown in my pages will not lead my readers either to overrate his historical importance by comparison with that of some other figures which stand behind him in the shadow, or to attribute to my theory of the part he played a greater degree of probability than it deserves. *Even if it should appear that this ancient Italian priest must after all be struck out from the long roll of men who have masqueraded as gods, the single omission would not sensibly invalidate the demonstration, which I believe I have given, that human pretenders to divinity have been far commoner and their credulous worshippers far more numerous than had been hitherto suspected. Similarly, should my whole theory of this particular priesthood collapse—and I fully acknowledge the slenderness of the foundations on which it rests—its fall would hardly shake my general conclusions as to the evolution of primitive religion and society, which are founded on large collections of entirely independent and well-authenticated facts.

Friends versed in German philosophy have pointed out to me that my views of magic and religion and their relations to each other in history agree to some extent with those of Hegel. The agreement is quite independent and to me unexpected, for I have never studied the philosopher's writings nor attended to his speculations. As, however, we have arrived at similar results by very different roads, the partial coincidence of our conclusions may perhaps be taken to furnish a certain presumption in favour of their truth. To enable my readers to judge of the extent of the coincidence, I have given in an appendix some extracts from Hegel's lectures on the philosophy of religion. The curious may compare them with my chapter on Magic and Religion, which was written in ignorance of the views of my illustrious predecessor.

With regard to the history of the sacred kingship which

I have outlined in these volumes, I desire to repeat a warning which I have given in the text. While I have shewn reason to think that in many communities sacred kings have been developed out of magicians, I am far from supposing that this has been universally true. The causes which have determined the establishment of monarchy have no doubt varied greatly in different countries and at different times: I make no pretence to discuss or even enumerate them all: I have merely selected one particular cause because it bore directly on my special enquiry; and I have laid emphasis on it because it seems to have been overlooked by writers on the origin of political institutions, who, themselves sober and rational according to modern standards, have not reckoned sufficiently with the enormous influence which superstition has exerted in shaping the human past. But I have no wish to exaggerate the importance of this particular cause at the expense of others which may have been equally or even more influential. No one can be more sensible than I am of the risk of stretching an hypothesis too far, of crowding a multitude of incongruous particulars under one narrow formula, of reducing the vast, nay inconceivable complexity of nature and history to a delusive appearance of theoretical simplicity. It may well be that I have erred in this direction again and again; but at least I have been well aware of the danger of error and have striven to guard myself and my readers against it. How far I have succeeded in that and the other objects I have set before me in writing this work, I must leave to the candour of the public to determine.

J. G. FRAZER.

CAMBRIDGE,
5th December 1910.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION OF *THE GOLDEN BOUGH*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Of his published works the most important are, first, two tracts, *Roggenwolf und Roggenhund*, Danzig, 1865 (second edition, Danzig, 1866), and *Die Korndämonen*, Berlin, 1868. These little works were put forward by him tentatively, in the hope of exciting interest in his enquiries and thereby securing the help of others in pursuing them. But, except from a few learned societies, they met with very little attention. Undeterred by the cold reception accorded to his efforts he worked steadily on, and in 1875 published his chief work, *Der Baumkultus der Germanen und ihrer Nachbarstämme*. This was followed in 1877 by *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*. His *Mythologische Forschungen*, a posthumous work, appeared in 1884.

Much as I owe to Mannhardt, I owe still more to my friend Professor W. Robertson Smith. My interest in the early history of society was first excited by the works of

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

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

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of them will, I hope, be published in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*.

The drawing of the Golden Bough which adorns the cover is from the pencil of my friend Professor J. H. Middleton. The constant interest and sympathy which he has shewn in the progress of the book have been a great help and encouragement to me in writing it.

The Index has been compiled by Mr. A. Rogers, of the University Library, Cambridge.

J. G. FRAZER.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

8th March 1890.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION OF *THE GOLDEN BOUGH*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

J. G. FRAZER.

CAMBRIDGE,
18th September 1900.

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CHAPTER I

THE KING OF THE WOOD

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

MACAULAY.

§ 1. *Diana and Virbius*

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

In antiquity this sylvan landscape was the scene of a ^{its tragic} strange and recurring tragedy. In order to understand it ^{memories} aright we must try to form in our minds an accurate picture of the place where it happened; for, as we shall see later on, a subtle link subsisted between the natural beauty of the spot and the dark crimes which under the mask of religion were often perpetrated there, crimes which after the lapse of

so many ages still lend a touch of melancholy to these quiet woods and waters, like a chill breath of autumn on one of those bright September days "while not a leaf seems faded."

The Alban
hills.

The Alban hills are a fine bold group of volcanic mountains which rise abruptly from the Campagna in full view of Rome, forming the last spur sent out by the Apennines towards the sea. Two of the extinct craters are now filled by two beautiful waters, the Alban lake and its lesser sister the lake of Nemi. Both lie far below the monastery-crowned top of Monte Cavo, the summit of the range, but yet so high above the plain that standing on the rim of the larger crater at Castel Gandolfo, where the Popes had their summer palace, you look down on the one hand into the Alban lake, and on the other away across the Campagna to where, on the western horizon, the sea flashes like a broad sheet of burnished gold in the sun.

The
sanctuary
of Diana
Nemo-
rensis.

The lake of Nemi is still as of old embowered in woods, where in spring the wild flowers blow as fresh as no doubt they did two thousand springs ago. It lies so deep down in the old crater that the calm surface of its clear water is seldom ruffled by the wind. On all sides but one the banks, thickly mantled with luxuriant vegetation, descend steeply to the water's edge. Only on the north a stretch of flat ground intervenes between the lake and the foot of the hills. This was the scene of the tragedy. Here, in the very heart of the wooded hills, under the abrupt declivity now crested by the village of Nemi, the sylvan goddess Diana had an old and famous sanctuary, the resort of pilgrims from all parts of Latium. It was known as the sacred grove of Diana Nemorensis, that is, Diana of the Wood, or, perhaps more exactly, Diana of the Woodland Glade.¹ Sometimes the lake and grove were called, after the nearest town, the lake

¹ Strictly speaking, *nemus* is a natural opening or glade in a forest. Thus Lucan says (*Pharsal.* i. 453 sq.) that the Druids inhabited "deep glades in sacred groves far from the haunts of men" ("*nemora alta remotis incolitis lucis*"), as the words are rendered by Haskins in his edition, who compares Propertius v. 9. 24, "*lucus ubi umbroso fecerat orbe nemus*." But commonly *nemus* means no more than a wood or

grove. See for example Lucan, *Pharsal.* iii. 396, "*procumbunt nemora et spoliantur robora silvae*." At Nemi the sacred grove (*lucus*) formed part of the woodlands (*nemus*), as we learn from Cato, quoted by Priscian, *Inst.* iv. 21 (vol. i. p. 129, ed. M. Hertz), "*lucum Dianium in nemora Aricino*," etc. As to the thick woods of Nemi in antiquity see Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 263 sq.; *id.*, *Metam.* xv. 485.

and grove of Aricia.¹ But the town, the modern Ariccia, lay three miles away at the foot of the mountains, and separated from the lake by a long and steep descent. A spacious terrace or platform contained the sanctuary. On the north and east it was bounded by great retaining walls which cut into the hillsides and served to support them. Semicircular niches sunk in the walls and faced with columns formed a series of chapels, which in modern times have yielded a rich harvest of votive offerings. On the side of the lake the terrace rested on a mighty wall, over seven hundred feet long by thirty feet high, built in triangular buttresses, like those which we see in front of the piers of bridges to break floating ice. At present this terrace-wall stands back some hundred yards from the lake; in other days its buttresses may have been lapped by the water. Compared with the extent of the sacred precinct, the temple itself was not large; but its remains prove it to have been neatly and solidly built of massive blocks of peperino, and adorned with Doric columns of the same material. Elaborate cornices of marble and friezes of terra-cotta contributed to the outward splendour of the edifice, which appears to have been further enhanced by tiles of gilt bronze.²

¹ Cato, *loc. cit.*; Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 756; Statius, *Sylvae*, iii. 1. 56; Philostratus, *Vit. Apollon.* iv. 36. A loose expression of Appian (*Bellum Civile*, v. 24) has sometimes given rise to the notion that there was a town called Nemus. But this is a mistake. See E. Desjardins, *Essai sur la Topographie du Latium* (Paris, 1854), p. 214, and on the other side, A. Bormann, *Altitalische Chorographie* (Halle, 1852), pp. 135 sq.

² The site was excavated in 1885 and 1886 by Sir John Savile Lumley, now Lord Savile, who was then English ambassador at Rome. Further excavations were conducted in 1886-1888 by Signor Luigi Boccanera, and again in 1895 by Signor Eliseo Borghi. See *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1885, pp. 159 sq., 192 sq., 227 sq., 254 sq., 317-321, 344, 428 sq., 478 sq.; *id.* 1887, pp. 23-25, 120 sq., 195-198; *id.* 1888, pp. 193 sq., 292 sq.; *id.* 1889, pp.

20-22; *id.* 1895, pp. 106-108, 206, 232, 324, 424-438; *Bullettino dell' Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica*, 1885, pp. 149-157, 225-242; R. Lanciani, in the *Athenaeum*, October 10, 1885, pp. 477 sq.; R. P. Pullan, in *Archaeologia: Miscellaneous Tracts relating to Antiquity*, 1. (1887) pp. 58-65; O. Rossbach, in *Verhandlungen der vierzigsten Versammlung deutscher Philologen und Schulmänner in Göttingen* (Leipzig, 1890), pp. 147-164; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue of Classical Antiquities from the Site of the Temple of Diana, Nemi, Italy* (preface dated 1893). The temple measured 30 metres in length by 15.90 in breadth (*Notizie degli Scavi*, 1885, p. 193). It had columns on either side of the *pronaos* (Vitruvius, iv. 7. 4). A few votive offerings found on the site in earlier times are described in Graevius's *Thesaurus Antiquitatum Romanarum*, xii. col. 752-757, 808.

Wealth
and
popularity
of the
shrine.

The great wealth and popularity of the sanctuary in antiquity are attested by ancient writers as well as by the remains which have come to light in modern times. In the civil war its sacred treasures went to replenish the empty coffers of Octavian,¹ who well understood the useful art of thus securing the divine assistance, if not the divine blessing, for the furtherance of his ends. But we are not told that he treated Diana on this occasion as civilly as his divine uncle Julius Caesar once treated Capitoline Jupiter himself, borrowing three thousand pounds' weight of solid gold from the god, and scrupulously paying him back with the same weight of gilt copper.² However, the sanctuary at Nemi recovered from this drain on its resources, for two centuries later it was still reputed one of the richest in Italy.³ Ovid has described the walls hung with fillets and commemorative tablets;⁴ and the abundance of cheap votive offerings and copper coins, which the site has yielded in our own day, speaks volumes for the piety and numbers, if not for the opulence and liberality, of the worshippers. Swarms of beggars used to stream forth daily from the slums of Aricia and take their stand on the long slope up which the labouring horses dragged well-to-do pilgrims to the shrine; and according to the response which their whines and importunities met with they blew kisses or hissed curses after the carriages as they swept rapidly down hill again.⁵

For the inscriptions of Nemi and Aricia see *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xiv. Nos. 2156-2226, 4180-4210, 4268-4275a; W. Henzen, in *Hermes*, vi. (1872) pp. 6-13; G. Tomassetti, in *Museo Italiano di Antichità Classica*, ii. (1888) coll. 481 sqq. Among these inscriptions the many dedications to Diana serve to identify the site beyond a doubt. The evidence of ancient writers is collected by Cluverius, *Italia Antiqua*, ii. pp. 920-935. See also H. Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde*, ii. (Berlin, 1902) pp. 588-592; and for the topography, Sir W. Gell, *The Topography of Rome and its Vicinity* (London, 1834), i. pp. 182-191, ii. pp. 112-117.

¹ Appian, *Bellum Civile*, v. 24.

² Suetonius, *Divus Julius*, 54. Serv.

ing his own gods thus, he naturally felt no compunction at relieving the barbarous Gaulish gods of their little savings (Suetonius, *ib.*).

³ Appian, *loc. cit.*

⁴ *Fasti*, iii. 267 sq.

⁵ Juvenal, *Sat.* iv. 117 sq.; Persius, *Sat.* vi. 56, with the scholiast's note; Martial, *Epigr.* ii. 19, xii. 32. 10. Persius calls this part of the road the slope of Virbius. Juvenal and Martial call it the Arician slope. But the former was probably the correct name, for at Rome also there was a "slope of Virbius" on the Esquiline, near a sanctuary of Diana (Livy, i. 48. 6). The double coincidence with Aricia is probably significant, as has been acutely pointed out by Mr. A. B. Cook (*Classical Review*, xvi. (1902)

Even peoples and potentates of the East did homage to the lady of the lake by setting up monuments in her sanctuary; and within the precinct stood shrines of the Egyptian goddesses Isis and Bubastis, with a store of gorgeous jewellery.¹

The retirement of the spot and the beauty of the landscape naturally tempted some of the luxurious Roman nobles to fix their summer residences by the lake.² Here Lucius Caesar had a house to which, on a day in early summer, only two months after the murder of his illustrious namesake, he invited Cicero to meet the assassin Brutus.³ The emperors themselves appear to have been partial to a retreat where they could find repose from the cares of state and the bustle of the great city in the fresh air of the lake and the stillness of the woods. Here Julius Caesar built himself a costly villa, but pulled it down because it was not to his mind.⁴ Here Caligula had two magnificent barges, or rather floating palaces, launched for him on the lake;⁵ and it was while dallying in the woods of Nemi that the sluggish Vitellius received the tidings of revolt which woke him from his dream of pleasure and called him to arms.⁶ Vespasian had a monument dedicated to his honour in the

Roman
villas at
Nemi.

p. 380, n. 3). We shall return to this later on. As to Virbius, we shall hear more of him presently.

¹ W. Henzen, in *Hermes*, vi. (1872) pp. 6-12; *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xiv., Nos. 2215, 2216, 2218.

² At the place called S. Maria, in the commune of Nemi, there have been found remains of a magnificent villa of the first or second century, built in terraces just above the lake and adorned with variegated marbles, frescoes, and works of art. See *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1888, pp. 194-196, 393 sq. The place is near the mouth of the ancient emissary, below the village of Genzano; the vineyards beside the lake are here littered with fragments of fine marbles. In January 1901 I visited the site in the company of Mr. St. Clair Baddeley, who has kindly furnished me with some notes on the subject.

³ Cicero, *Ad Atticum*, xv. 4-5.

⁴ Suetonius, *Divus Julius*, 46. From a letter of Cicero to Atticus (vi. 1. 25) we infer that the house was building in 50 B.C.

⁵ Some of the timbers and fittings of these vessels were fished up from the bottom of the lake in 1895. Especially remarkable are the beautiful bronze heads of lions and wolves with mooring-rings in their mouths. Caligula's name (C. CAESARIS . AVG . GERMANICI) is stamped on the leaden water-pipes, and the style of the bronzes is that of the first century. See *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1895, pp. 361-396, 461-474; J. C. G. Boot, in *Verlag en Mededeelingen der kon. Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afdeling Letterkunde*, III. Reeks, xii. deel (Amsterdam, 1895), pp. 278-285; R. Lanciani, *New Tales of Old Rome* (London, 1901), pp. 205-214.

⁶ Tacitus, *Histor.* iii. 36.

grove by the senate and people of Aricia: Trajan condescended to fill the chief magistracy of the town; and Hadrian indulged his taste for architecture by restoring a structure which had been erected in the precinct by a prince of the royal house of Parthia.¹

Diana as
the
mistress
of wild
animals.

Such, then, was the sanctuary of Diana at Nemi, a fitting home for the "mistress of mountains, and forests green, and lonely glades, and sounding rivers," as Catullus calls her.² Multitudes of her statuettes, appropriately clad in the short tunic and high buskins of a huntress, with the quiver slung over her shoulder, have been found on the spot. Some of them represent her with her bow in her hand or her hound at her side.³ Bronze and iron spears, and images of stags and hinds, discovered within the precinct,⁴ may have been offerings of huntsmen to the huntress goddess for success in the chase. Similarly the bronze tridents, which have also come to light at Nemi, were perhaps presented by fishermen who had speared fish in the lake, or maybe by hunters who had stabbed boars in the forest.⁵ The wild boar was still hunted in Italy down to the end of the first century of our era; for the younger Pliny tells us how, with his usual charming affectation, he sat meditating and reading by the nets, while three fine boars fell into them.⁶ Indeed, some fourteen-hundred years later boar-hunting was a favourite pastime of Pope

¹ *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xiv., Nos. 2213, 2216, 4191. Hadrian also had a monument in the grove dedicated to him by the senate and people of Aricia (*Notizie degli Scavi*, 1895, pp. 430 sq.). A bust of Caesar and a statue of Tiberius have been found on the spot. See G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, p. 31; O. Rossbach, in *Verhandlungen der vierzig. Versamml. deutscher Philologen*, p. 159.

² Catullus, xxxiv. 9 sqq.

³ *Bulletino dell' Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica*, 1885, pp. 228 sq.; *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1887, pp. 24, 195; *id.* 1888, p. 393; O. Rossbach, in *Verhandl. d. vierzig. Versamml. deutscher Philologen*, pp. 150 note, 161; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, pp. 4, 15, 34 sq.

⁴ *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1887, p. 195;

id. 1888, p. 393; *Bulletino di Corr. Archeol.* 1885, p. 230; O. Rossbach, *op. cit.*, pp. 150 note, 151 note, 163; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, pp. 35, 40. Greek hunters dedicated spears and javelins to Pan (*Anthologia Palatina*, vi. 57, 177). Compare W. H. D. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings* (Cambridge, 1902), p. 71.

⁵ W. Helbig, in *Bulletino dell' Inst. di Corr. Archeol.* 1885, pp. 231 sq.; *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1887, p. 195; *id.* 1888, p. 393. Helbig observes that the ancients sometimes used tridents in boar-hunts.

⁶ Pliny, *Epist.* i. 6. In the second century of our era the mountains and oak woods of Greece harboured numbers of wild boars. See Pausanias, i. 32. 1, iii. 20. 4, v. 6, vii. 26. 10, viii. 23. 9, ix. 23. 7.

Leo the Tenth.¹ A frieze of painted reliefs in terra-cotta, which was found in the sanctuary at Nemi, and may have adorned Diana's temple, portrays the goddess in the character of what is called the Asiatic Artemis, with wings sprouting from her waist and a lion resting its paws on each of her shoulders.² A few rude images of cows, oxen, horses, and pigs dug up on the site may perhaps indicate that Diana was here worshipped as the patroness of domestic animals as well as of the wild creatures of the wood.³ In like manner her Greek counterpart Artemis was a goddess not only of game but of herds. Thus her sanctuary in the highlands of north-western Arcadia, between Clitor and Cynaethae, owned sacred cattle which were driven off by Aetolian freebooters on one of their forays.⁴ When Xenophon returned from the wars and settled on his estate among the wooded hills and green meadows of the rich valley through which the Alpheus flows past Olympia, he dedicated to Artemis a little temple on the model of her great temple at Ephesus, surrounded it with a grove of all kinds of fruit-trees, and endowed it not only with a chase but also with a sacred pasture. The chase abounded in fish and game of all sorts, and the pasture sufficed to rear swine, goats, oxen, and horses; and on her yearly festival the pious soldier sacrificed to the goddess a tithe both of the cattle from the sacred pasture and of the game from the sacred chase.⁵ Again, the people of Hyampolis in Phocis worshipped Artemis and thought that no cattle thrived like those which they dedicated to her.⁶ Perhaps then the images of cattle found in Diana's precinct at Nemi were offered to her by herdsmen to ensure her blessing on their herds. In Catholic Germany at the present time the great patron of cattle, horses, and pigs is St. Leonhard, and models of cattle, horses, and pigs are dedicated to him, sometimes in order to ensure the health and increase of the flocks and herds through the coming year, sometimes in order to

Diana
as the
patroness
of cattle.

Analogy of
St. Leon-
hard in
Germany.

¹ W. Roscoe, *Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth*,² iv. 376.

² O. Rossbach, *op. cit.* pp. 157 sq.; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, pp. 3, 31, with the plate facing p. 43.

³ *Bullettino dell' Inst. di Corr.*

Archeol. 1885, p. 153; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, p. 23.

⁴ Polybius, *Hist.* iv. 18 and 19.

⁵ Xenophon, *Anabasis*, v. 3. 4-13.

⁶ Pausanias, x. 35. 7.

obtain the recovery of sick animals.¹ And, curiously enough, like Diana of Aricia, St. Leonhard is also expected to help women in travail and to bless barren wives with offspring.² Nor do these points exhaust the analogy between St. Leonard and Diana of Aricia; for like the goddess the saint heals the sick; he is the patron of prisoners, as she was of runaway slaves; and his shrines, like hers, enjoyed the right of asylum.³

Nemi an image of Italy in the olden time.

So to the last, in spite of a few villas peeping out here and there from among the trees, Nemi seems to have remained in some sense an image of what Italy had been in the far-off days when the land was still sparsely peopled with tribes of savage hunters or wandering herdsman, when the beechwoods and oakwoods, with their deciduous foliage, reddening in autumn and bare in winter, had not yet begun, under the hand of man, to yield to the evergreens of the south, the laurel, the olive, the cypress, and the oleander, still less to those intruders of a later age, which nowadays we are apt to think of as characteristically Italian, the lemon and the orange.⁴

Rule of succession to the priesthood of Diana at Nemi.

However, it was not merely in its natural surroundings that this ancient shrine of the sylvan goddess continued to be a type or miniature of the past. Down to the decline of Rome a custom was observed there which seems to transport us at once from civilisation to savagery. In the sacred grove there grew a certain tree round which at any time of the day, and probably far into the night, a grim figure might be seen to prowl. In his hand he carried a drawn sword, and he kept peering warily about him as if

¹ R. Andree, *Votive und Weihgaben des Katholischen Volks in Süddeutschland* (Brunswick, 1904), pp. 37, 50, 152 sqq.

² R. Andree, *op. cit.* p. 41.

³ R. Andree, *op. cit.* pp. 41-50.

⁴ See V. Hehn, *Kulturpflanzen und Haustiere in ihrem Übergang aus Asien* (Berlin, 1902), pp. 520 sq.: "In the course of history the flora of the Italian peninsula assumed more and more a southern character. When the first Greeks landed in lower Italy the forests consisted predominantly of

deciduous trees, the beeches reached lower down than now, when they are confined to the highest mountain regions. Centuries later in the landscapes on the walls of Pompeii we see nothing but evergreen trees, the *Laurus nobilis*, the olive, the cypress, the oleander; in the latest times of the empire and in the Middle Ages the lemon-trees and orange-trees appear, and since the discovery of America the magnolias, the agaves, and the Indian figs. There can be no question that this revolution has been wrought mainly by the hand of man."

at every instant he expected to be set upon by an enemy.¹ He was a priest and a murderer; and the man for whom he looked was sooner or later to murder him and hold the priesthood in his stead. Such was the rule of the sanctuary. A candidate for the priesthood could only succeed to office by slaying the priest, and having slain him, he retained office till he was himself slain by a stronger or a craftier.

The post which he held by this precarious tenure carried with it the title of king; but surely no crowned head ever lay uneasier, or was visited by more evil dreams, than his. For year in year out, in summer and winter, in fair weather and in foul, he had to keep his lonely watch, and whenever he snatched a troubled slumber it was at the peril of his life. The least relaxation of his vigilance, the smallest abatement of his strength of limb or skill of fence, put him in jeopardy; grey hairs might seal his death-warrant. His eyes probably acquired that restless, watchful look which, among the Esquimaux of Bering Strait, is said to betray infallibly the shedder of blood; for with that people revenge is a sacred duty, and the manslayer carries his life in his hand.² To gentle and pious pilgrims at the shrine the sight of him might well seem to darken the fair landscape, as when a cloud suddenly blots the sun on a bright day. The dreamy blue of Italian skies, the dappled shade of summer woods, and the sparkle of waves in the sun, can have accorded but ill with that stern and sinister figure. Rather we picture to ourselves the scene as it may have been witnessed by a belated wayfarer on one of those wild autumn nights when the dead leaves are falling thick, and the winds seem to sing the dirge of the dying year. It is a sombre picture, set to melancholy music—the background of forest shewing black and jagged against a lowering and stormy sky, the sighing of the wind in the branches, the rustle of the withered leaves under foot, the lapping of the cold water on the shore, and in the foreground, pacing to and fro, now in twilight and now in gloom, a dark figure with a glitter

The priest
who slew
the slayer.

¹ ἑφάρτης οὐκ ἔστιν δελ, περισκοπῶν τὰς ἐνδόχους, ἵταμος ἀμύνεσθαι, is Strabo's description (v. 3. 12), who may have seen him "pacing there alone."

² E. W. Nelson, "The Eskimo about Bering Strait," *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, Part I. (Washington, 1899) p. 293.

of steel at the shoulder whenever the pale moon, riding clear of the cloud-rack, peers down at him through the matted boughs.

Possibility
of explain-
ing the
rule of
succession
by the com-
parative
method.

The strange rule of this priesthood has no parallel in classical antiquity, and cannot be explained from it. To find an explanation we must go farther afield. No one will probably deny that such a custom savours of a barbarous age, and, surviving into imperial times, stands out in striking isolation from the polished Italian society of the day, like a primæval rock rising from a smooth-shaven lawn. It is the very rudeness and barbarity of the custom which allow us a hope of explaining it. For recent researches into the early history of man have revealed the essential similarity with which, under many superficial differences, the human mind has elaborated its first crude philosophy of life. Accordingly, if we can shew that a barbarous custom, like that of the priesthood of Nemi, has existed elsewhere; if we can detect the motives which led to its institution; if we can prove that these motives have operated widely, perhaps universally, in human society, producing in varied circumstances a variety of institutions specifically different but generically alike; if we can shew, lastly, that these very motives, with some of their derivative institutions, were actually at work in classical antiquity; then we may fairly infer that at a remoter age the same motives gave birth to the priesthood of Nemi. Such an inference, in default of direct evidence as to how the priesthood did actually arise, can never amount to demonstration. But it will be more or less probable according to the degree of completeness with which it fulfils the conditions I have indicated. The object of this book is, by meeting these conditions, to offer a fairly probable explanation of the priesthood of Nemi.

Legend of
the origin
of the
Nemi
worship:
Orestes
and the
Tauric
Diana.

I begin by setting forth the few facts and legends which have come down to us on the subject. According to one story the worship of Diana at Nemi was instituted by Orestes, who, after killing Thoas, King of the Tauric Chersonese (the Crimea), fled with his sister to Italy, bringing with him the image of the Tauric Diana hidden in a faggot of sticks. After his death his bones were transported from Aricia to Rome and buried in front of the temple of Saturn, on the

Capitoline slope, beside the temple of Concord. The bloody ritual which legend ascribed to the Tauric Diana is familiar to classical readers; it is said that every stranger who landed on the shore was sacrificed on her altar. But transported to Italy, the rite assumed a milder form. Within the sanctuary at Nemi grew a certain tree of which no branch might be broken. Only a runaway slave was allowed to break off, if he could, one of its boughs. Success in the attempt entitled him to fight the priest in single combat, and if he slew him he reigned in his stead with the title of King of the Wood (*Rex Nemorensis*). According to the public opinion of the ancients the fateful branch was that Golden Bough which, at the Sibyl's bidding, Aeneas plucked before he essayed the perilous journey to the world of the dead. The flight of the slave represented, it was said, the flight of Orestes; his combat with the priest was a reminiscence of the human sacrifices once offered to the Tauric Diana. This rule of succession by the sword was observed down to imperial times; for amongst his other freaks Caligula, thinking that the priest of Nemi had held office too long, hired a more stalwart ruffian to slay him; and a Greek traveller, who visited Italy in the age of the Antonines, remarks that down to his time the priesthood was still the prize of victory in a single combat.¹

The King
of the
Wood.

¹ Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 136, "*Licet de hoc ramo hi qui de sacris Proserpinae scripsisse dicuntur, quidam esse mysticum adfirmant, publica tamen opinio hoc habet. Orestes post occisum regem Thoantem,*" etc.; *id.* on Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 116; Valerius Flaccus, *Argonaut.* ii. 304 sq.; Strabo, v. 3. 12; Pausanias, ii. 27. 4; Solinus, ii. 11; Suetonius, *Caligula*, 35. The custom of breaking the branch, and its supposed connexion with the Golden Bough of Virgil, are recorded by Servius alone (on Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 136). For the title "King of the Wood" see Suetonius, *l.c.*; and compare Statius, *Sylv.* iii. 1. 55 sq.—

"*Jamque dies aderat, profugis cum regibus aptum fumat Aricinum Triviae nemus*";

Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 271 sq.—

"*Regna tenent fortesque manu, pedibusque fugaces;
Et perit exemplo postmodo quisque suo*";

id., *Ars am.* i. 259 sq.—

"*Ecce suburbanæ templum nemorale Dianæ,
Partaque per gladios regna nocente manu*";

Valerius Flaccus, *Argon.* ii. 304 sq.—

"*Jam namus Egeriae, jam te ciet alius
ad alba
Juppiter et soli non mistis Aricia regi.*"

An archaic Greek relief, found in 1791 near the outlet of the lake, in the Valle-riccia, has been sometimes thought to portray the combat between a priest and a candidate for the office. But

Chief features of the worship of Diana at Nemi.

Importance of fire in her ritual.

Of the worship of Diana at Nemi some leading features can still be made out. From the votive offerings which have been found on the site, it appears that she was conceived of especially as a huntress, and further as blessing men and women with offspring, and granting expectant mothers an easy delivery.¹ Again, fire seems to have played a foremost part in her ritual. For during her annual festival, held on the thirteenth of August, at the hottest time of the year, her grove shone with a multitude of torches, whose ruddy glare was reflected by the lake; and throughout the length and breadth of Italy the day was kept with holy rites at every domestic hearth.² Bronze statuettes found in her precinct represent the goddess herself holding a torch in her raised right hand;³ and women whose prayers had been heard by her came crowned with wreaths and bearing lighted torches to the sanctuary in fulfilment of their vows.⁴ Some one unknown

the subject is rather the murder of Aegisthus by Orestes in presence of Clytaemnestra and Electra. See Sir W. Gell, *Topography of Rome*, ii. 116 sq.; O. Jahn, in *Archäologische Zeitung*, vii. (1849) coll. 113-118; Baumeister's *Denkmäler*, p. 1112; O. Rossbach, *op. cit.* pp. 148 sq.; R. Lanciani, *New Tales of Old Rome*, p. 204.

¹ Thus there have been found many models of the organs of generation, both male and female, including wombs; figures of women with infants on their laps or on their arms; and couples seated side by side, the woman pregnant or carrying a child. See *Bulletino dell' Inst. di Corrisp. Archeologica*, 1885, pp. 183 sq.; *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1885, pp. 160, 254; *id.* 1895, p. 424; O. Rossbach, *op. cit.* p. 160; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, pp. 4, 15, 17. Another group represents a woman just after delivery, supported by the midwife, who holds the child in her lap. See Graevius, *The-saurus Antiquitatum Romanarum*, xii. col. 808. As to the huntress Diana, see above, p. 6.

² Statius, *Sylvae*, iii. 1. 52-60; Gratius Faliscus, *Cynageticon*, i. 484 sq. As to the date we know from the calendars (W. Warde Fowler, *The Roman Festivals of the Republic*, p.

198) and from Festus (p. 343 ed. Müller; compare Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 100) that the festival of Diana on the Aventine at Rome fell on the Ides, that is, the 13th of August. Further, the Ides of August was held as the birthday of Diana at Lanuvium (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xiv., No. 2112; G. Wilmanns, *Exempla Inscriptionum Latinarum*, No. 319; C. G. Bruns, *Fontes Juris Romani*,¹ ed. O. Gradenwitz, p. 389; H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, No. 7212). Moreover, Martial (xii. 67. 2) and Ausonius (*De feriis Romanis*, 5 sq.) speak of the Ides of August as Diana's day. Hence we may safely conclude that the *Heccatias idus* which Statius (*l.c.*) mentions as the date of the festival of Diana at Nemi were no other than the Ides of August, all the more that the poet describes the time as the hottest of the year. Compare G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer* (Munich, 1902), p. 201.

³ O. Rossbach, *op. cit.* pp. 150 note, 161. A coin of P. Clodius Turpinus (43 B.C.) portrays Diana with a long torch in either hand. See E. Babelon, *Monnaies de la République Romaine* (Paris, 1885), i. 355.

⁴ Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 269 sq.; Propertius, iii. 24. (30) 9 sq., ed. Paley.

dedicated a perpetually burning lamp in a little shrine at Nemi for the safety of the Emperor Claudius and his family.¹ The terra-cotta lamps which have been discovered in the grove² may perhaps have served a like purpose for humbler persons. If so, the analogy of the custom to the Catholic practice of dedicating holy candles in churches would be obvious.³ Further, the title of Vesta borne by Diana at Nemi⁴ points clearly to the maintenance of a perpetual holy fire in her sanctuary. A large circular basement at the north-east corner of the temple, raised on three steps and bearing traces of a mosaic pavement, probably supported a round temple of Diana in her character of Vesta, like the round temple of Vesta in the Roman Forum.⁵ Here the sacred fire would seem to have been tended by Vestal Virgins, for the head of a Vestal in terra-cotta was found on the spot,⁶ and the worship of a perpetual fire, cared for by holy maidens, appears to have been common in Latium from the earliest to the latest times.⁷ Thus we know that among the ruins of Alba the Vestal fire was kept burning by Vestal Virgins, bound to strict chastity, until the end of the fourth century of our era.⁸ There were Vestals at

Diana as
Vesta.

¹ *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1888, p. 193 sq.; O. Rossbach, *op. cit.* p. 164.

² *Bullettino dell' Inst. di corrisp. Archeologica*, 1885, p. 157; *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1888, p. 393; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, pp. 24-26.

³ On the dedication of burning lamps and candles in antiquity, see M. P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste* (Leipzig, 1906), p. 345, note 5. As to the derivation of the Catholic from the old heathen custom, see R. Andree, *Votive und Weihgaben des Katholischen Volkes in Süddeutschland* (Brunswick, 1904), p. 77.

⁴ *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xiv., No. 2213; G. Wilmanns, *Exempla Inscriptionum Latinarum*, No. 1767; H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, No. 3243.

⁵ *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1885, p. 478; O. Rossbach, *op. cit.* p. 158; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, pp. 9 sq. The true character of this circular basement was first pointed out by Mr. A. B. Cook (*Classical Review*, xvi.

(1902) p. 376). Previous writers had taken it for an altar or a pedestal. But the mosaic pavement and the bases of two columns which were found in position on it exclude the hypothesis of an altar and cannot easily be reconciled with that of a pedestal, for which, moreover, it appears to be too large. A rain-water gutter runs round it and then extends in the direction of the larger temple. As to the temple of Vesta at Rome see J. H. Middleton, *The Remains of Ancient Rome*, i. 297 sq.; O. Richter, *Topographie der Stadt Rom*³ (Munich, 1902), pp. 88 sq.; G. Boni, in *Notizie degli Scavi*, May 1900, pp. 159 sqq.

⁶ G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, p. 30.

⁷ J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.² 336.

⁸ Juvenal, iv. 60 sq.; Asconius, *In Milonianam*, p. 35, ed. Kiesseling and Schoell; Symmachus, *Epist.* ix. 128 and 129 (Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, xviii. col. 355); *Corpus In-*

Tibur¹ and doubtless also at Lavinium, for the Roman consuls, praetors, and dictators had to sacrifice to Vesta at that ancient city when they entered on or laid down their office.²

Diana's
festival on
August 13
converted
by the
Christian
Church
into the
festival
of the
Assumption
of the
Virgin on
August 15.

At her annual festival, which, as we have just seen, was celebrated all over Italy on the thirteenth of August, hunting dogs were crowned and wild beasts were not molested; young people went through a purificatory ceremony in her honour; wine was brought forth, and the feast consisted of a kid, cakes served piping hot on plates of leaves, and apples still hanging in clusters on the boughs.³ The Christian Church appears to have sanctified this great festival of the virgin goddess by adroitly converting it into the festival of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin on the fifteenth of August.⁴ The discrepancy of two days between the dates of the festivals is not a fatal argument against their identity; for a similar displacement of two days occurs in the case of St. George's festival on the twenty-third of April, which is probably identical with the ancient Roman festival of the Parilia on April twenty-first.⁵ On the reasons which prompted this conversion of the festival of the Virgin Diana into the festival of the Virgin Mary, some light is thrown by a passage in the Syriac text of *The Departure of My Lady Mary from this World*, which runs thus: "And the apostles also ordered that there should be a commemoration of the blessed one on the thirteenth of Ab [that is, August; another MS. reads the 15th of Ab], on account of the vines bearing bunches (of grapes), and on account of the trees bearing fruit, that clouds of hail, bearing stones of wrath, might not come, and the trees be broken, and their fruits, and the vines with their clusters."⁶ Here the festival of

scriptorium Latinarum, vi., No. 2172, xiv., No. 4120; Wilmanns, *Exempla Inscriptionum Latinarum*, No. 1750. The Alban Vestals gave evidence at Milo's trial in 52 B.C. (Asconius, *l.c.*); one of them was tried for breaking her vow of chastity late in the fourth century A.D. (Symmachus, *l.c.*).

¹ *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xiv., Nos. 3677, 3679.

² Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 296; Macrobius, *Saturn.* iii. 4. 11.

³ Statius, *Sylvae*, iii. 1. 55 sqq.; Grattius Faliscus, *Cynegeticum*, i. 483-492.

⁴ J. Rendel Harris, *The Annotators of the Codex Bezae* (London, 1901), pp. 93-102.

⁵ See below, vol. ii. pp. 324 sqq.

⁶ *Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record*, New Series, vii. (London, 1865); "The Departure of my Lady Mary from this World," p. 153. The Greek original of the treatise

the Assumption of the Virgin is definitely said to have been fixed on the thirteenth or fifteenth of August for the sake of protecting the ripening grapes and other fruits. Similarly in the Arabic text of the apocryphal work *On the Passing of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, which is attributed to the Apostle John, there occurs the following passage: "Also a festival in her honour was instituted on the fifteenth day of the month Ab [that is, August], which is the day of her passing from this world, the day on which the miracles were performed, and the time when the fruits of trees are ripening."¹ Further, in the calendars of the Syrian Church the fifteenth of August is repeatedly designated as the festival of the Mother of God "for the vines";² and to this day in Greece the ripening grapes and other fruits are brought to the churches to be blest by the priests on the fifteenth of August.³ Now we hear of vineyards and plantations dedicated to Artemis, fruits offered to her, and her temple standing in an orchard.⁴ Hence we may conjecture that her Italian sister Diana was also revered as a patroness of vines and fruit-trees, and that on the thirteenth of August the

The Virgin Mary seems to have succeeded Artemis and Diana as the patroness of the ripening fruits.

was discovered by Tischendorf. This passage was kindly indicated to me by my learned friend Mr. J. Rendel Harris. He writes to me: "In these late Syrian calendars the festivals are simply taken over from the Greek and Roman calendars without any adjustment at all, as a study of the detailed saints' days shows."

¹ *Johanni Apostoli de transitu Beatae Mariae Virginis Liber*: ex recensione et cum interpretatione Maximiliani Engel (Elberfeldae, 1854), pp. 101, 103. This and the preceding passage are both cited by the late Prof. E. Lucius in his book *Die Anfänge des Heiligenkultes in der christlichen Kirche* (Tübingen, 1904), pp. 488 sq., 521. From them and from the entries in the Syrian calendars (see the next note), Lucius rightly inferred that the Assumption of the Virgin Mary had been assigned by the Church to the 15th of August with reference to the ripening of the grapes and other fruits, and that the Christian festival replaced an old heathen festival of first-fruits, which

must have been held about the same time. But he appears to have overlooked the occurrence of Diana's festival on the 13th of August.

² N. Nilles, *Kalendarium Manuale utriusque Ecclesiae Orientalis et Occidentalis* (Innsbruck, 1896-7), i. pp. 249, 480. Professor Nilles compares the blessing of the herbs (*Krautweihe*), which still takes place in various parts of German-speaking lands on August 15th for the purpose of defeating the charms of witches.

³ B. Schmidt, *Das Volksleben der Neugriechen* (Leipzig, 1871), p. 58. My learned friend Dr. W. H. D. Rouse, who is well acquainted with Greece, both ancient and modern, gave me similar information.

⁴ Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclop. d. class. Wissenschaften*, ii. 1342; Pausanias, vii. 18. 12; Xenophon, *Anabasis*, v. 3. 12. On the other hand the very sight of the image of Artemis at Pellene was said to render trees barren and to blight the fruits of the earth. See Plutarch, *Aratus*, 32.

owners of vineyards and orchards paid their respects to her at Nemi along with other classes of the community. We have just seen that wine and apples still hanging on the boughs formed part of the festal cheer on that day; in an ancient fresco found at Ostia a statue of Diana is depicted in company with a procession of children, some of whom bear clusters of grapes;¹ and in a series of gems the goddess, is represented with a branch of fruit in one hand and a cup, which is sometimes full of fruit, in the other.² Catullus, too, tells us that Diana filled the husbandman's barns with a bounteous harvest.³ In some parts of Italy and Sicily the day of the Assumption of the Virgin is still celebrated, like Diana's day of old, with illuminations and bonfires; in many Sicilian parishes the corn is then brought in sacks to the churches to be blessed, and many persons, who have a favour to ask of the Virgin, vow to abstain from one or more kinds of fruit during the first fifteen days of August.⁴ Even in Scandinavia a relic of the worship of Diana survived in the custom of blessing the fruits of the earth of every sort, which in Catholic times was annually observed on the festival of the Assumption of the Virgin.⁵ There is no intrinsic improbability in the view that for the sake of edification the church may have converted a real heathen festival into a nominal Christian one. Similarly in the Armenian Church "according to the express evidence of the Armenian fathers of the year 700 and later, the day of the Virgin was placed on September the fifteenth, because that was the day of Anahite, the magnificence of whose feast the Christian doctors hoped thereby to transfer to Mary."⁶ This Anahite or Anaitis, as the Greeks called her, the Armenian predecessor of the Virgin Mary, was a great Oriental goddess,

Survivals
of Diana's
festival in
Italy,
Sicily, and
Scandi-
navia.

The Virgin
Mary
and the
goddess
Anaitis.

¹ A. Dieterich, "Sommertag," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, viii. (1905) Beiheft, pp. 108 sqq., with fig. 2.

² Furtwängler, *Die antiken Gemmen*, iii. 231, with plates XX. 66, XXII. 18, 26, 30, 32, all cited by Mr. A. B. Cook, *Classical Review*, xvi. (1902) p. 378, note 4. Furtwängler held that these gems portray Diana of Nemi herself.

³ Catullus, xxxiv. 17 sqq.

⁴ G. Pitre, *Spettacoli e Feste popolari Siciliane* (Palermo, 1881), pp. 356, 358, 360, 361, 362; G. Finamore, *Credenze, Usi e Costumi Abruzzesi* (Palermo, 1890), p. 176; G. Amalfi, *Tradizioni ed Usi nella penisola Sorrentina* (Palermo, 1890), p. 50.

⁵ Olaus Magnus, *Historia de Gentium Septentrionalium variis conditionibus*, xvi. 9..

⁶ Note of Mr. F. C. Conybeare.

whose worship was exceedingly popular not only in Armenia but in the adjoining countries. The loose character of her rites is plainly indicated by Strabo, himself a native of these regions.¹

Among the ancient Celts of Gaul, who, to judge by their speech, were near kinsmen of the ancient Latins, the thirteenth of August appears to have been the day when the harvest was dedicated to the harvest-god Rivos.² If that was so, we may conjecture that the choice of a day in mid-August for the solemn celebration of the harvest-home dates from the remote time when the ancestors of the Celtic and Italian peoples, having renounced the wandering life of the huntsman and herdsman, had settled down together in some land of fertile soil and temperate climate, where harvest fell neither so late as after the cool rainy summers of the North nor so early as before the torrid and rainless summers of southern Europe.

The 13th of August a harvest festival among the Celts of Gaul.

But Diana did not reign alone in her grove at Nemi.³ Two lesser divinities shared her forest sanctuary. One was Egeria, the nymph of the clear water which, bubbling from the basaltic rocks, used to fall in graceful cascades into the lake at the place called Le Mole, because here were established the mills of the modern village of Nemi. The purling of the stream as it ran over the pebbles is mentioned by Ovid, who tells us that he had often drunk of its water.⁴

Egeria, water-nymph and wife of Numa.

¹ Strabo, xi. 8. 12, xi. 14. 16, xii. 3. 37.

Academy, vol. iv.

² This is inferred from entries in the ancient Celtic calendar of which numerous fragments, engraved on bronze, were found in 1897 at Coligny near Lyons. In this calendar the month Rivos seems to mean "the harvest month" and to correspond to August. Sir John Rhys believes that the harvest-god Rivos, who is only known from this calendar, answers to the better-known Celtic god Lug. See Sir John Rhys, in *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religion* (Oxford, 1908), ii. 222 sqq.; and as to the Coligny calendar in general see further Sir John Rhys, "Celtic and Galli," *Proceedings of the British Academy, 1905-1906*, pp. 71 sqq.; *id.* "Notes on the Coligny Calendar," *Proceedings of the British*

³ Dedications to Juno and Venus have been found in the grove (*Notizie degli Scavi*, 1888, p. 393; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, p. 44), also a bronze statuette of Jupiter (O. Rossbach, *op. cit.* p. 162), and a mutilated or unfinished bust supposed to represent that deity (*Notizie degli Scavi*, 1885, p. 344; G. H. Wallis, *op. cit.* p. 54).

⁴ Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 762 sqq.; Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 273 sqq.; *id.*, *Melam.* xv. 482 sqq.; Strabo, v. 3. 12. As to the stream, see P. Rosa, in *Monumenti ed Annali pubblic. dall' Istituto di Correspondenza Archeologica nel 1886*, p. 7; R. Lanciani, in *Athenaeum*, October 10, 1885, p. 477. The water was diverted some years ago to supply Albano.

Women with child used to sacrifice to Egeria, because she was believed, like Diana, to be able to grant them an easy delivery.¹ Tradition ran that the nymph had been the wife or mistress of the wise king Numa, that he had consorted with her in the secrecy of the sacred grove, and that the laws which he gave the Romans had been inspired by communion with her divinity.² Plutarch compares the legend with other tales of the loves of goddesses for mortal men, such as the love of Cybele and the Moon for the fair youths Attis and Endymion.³ According to some, the trysting-place of the lovers was not in the woods of Nemi but in a grove outside the dripping Porta Capena at Rome, where another sacred spring of Egeria gushed from a dark cavern.⁴ Every day the Roman Vestals fetched water from this spring to wash the temple of Vesta, carrying it in earthenware pitchers on their heads.⁵ In Juvenal's time the natural rock had been encased in marble, and the hallowed spot was profaned by gangs of poor Jews, who were suffered to squat, like gypsies, in the grove. We may suppose that the spring which fell into the lake of Nemi was the true original Egeria, and that when the first settlers moved down from the Alban hills to the banks of the Tiber they brought

¹ Festus, p. 77, ed. C. O. Müller.

² Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 273 sqq.; *id.*, *Metam.* xv. 482 sqq.; Cicero, *De legibus*, i. 1. 4; Livy, i. 19. 5, i. 21. 3; Plutarch, *Numa*, 4, 8, 13, 15; Dionysius Halicarn. *Antiquit. Roman.* ii. 60 sq.; Juvenal, *Sat.* iii. 12; Lactantius, *Divin. Inst.* i. 22; Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, vii. 35; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 763. Ovid, Livy, Lactantius, and Augustine speak of Egeria as the wife of Numa, whereas Juvenal and Servius call her his mistress. The language of Plutarch is somewhat ambiguous, but he uses the phrase γάμων θεωρ ἡρώμενος (c. 4).

³ Plutarch, *Numa*, 4.

⁴ Juvenal, *Sat.* iii. 10 sqq.; Livy, i. 21. 3. As to the position of this grove and spring see O. Gilbert, *Geschichte und Topographie der Stadt Rom im Altertum*, i. 109 sqq., ii. pp. 152 sqq.; O. Richter, *Topographie*

*der Stadt Rom*² (Munich, 1902), pp. 342 sq. According to the latter writer, the valley of Egeria was outside the Servian wall, at the foot of the Caelian Mount, and is now traversed by the streets Via delle Mole di S. Sisto and Via della Ferratella. He identifies the sacred spring with a copious source at the Villa Fonseca. On the other hand, Statius (*Sylvae*, v. 3. 290 sq.), Lactantius (*Divin. Inst.* iii. 22), and Servius (on Virgil, vii. 763) held that Numa's Egeria was not at Rome but at Nemi. The grove of Egeria is now popularly identified with a little wood called the *Bosco Sacro*, which stands in a commanding situation to the left of the Appian Way, about a mile and a half from Rome (Baedeker's *Central Italy and Rome*,¹³ p. 378).

⁵ Plutarch, *Numa*, 13. That they carried the water in pitchers on their heads may be inferred from Propertius, v. 4. 15 sq.; Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 11-14.

the nymph with them and found a new home for her in a grove outside the gates.¹ The remains of baths which have been discovered within the sacred precinct,² together with many terra-cotta models of various parts of the human body,³ suggest that the waters of Egeria were used to heal the sick, who may have signified their hopes or testified their gratitude by dedicating likenesses of the diseased members to the goddess, in accordance with a custom which is still observed in many parts of Europe.⁴ To this day it would seem that the spring retains medicinal virtues.⁵

The other of the minor deities at Nemi was Virbius. Legend had it that Virbius was the young Greek hero Hippolytus, chaste and fair, who learned the art of ventry from the centaur Chiron, and spent all his days in the greenwood chasing wild beasts with the virgin huntress Artemis (the Greek counterpart of Diana) for his only comrade. Proud of her divine society, he spurned the love of women,⁶ and this proved his bane. For Aphrodite, stung by his scorn, inspired his stepmother Phaedra with love of him; and when he disdained her wicked advances she falsely accused him to his father Theseus. The slander was believed, and Theseus prayed to his sire Poseidon to avenge the imagined wrong. So while Hippolytus drove in a chariot by the shore of the Saronic Gulf, the sea-god

Virbius,
the male
companion
of Diana.

¹ This is the view of A. Schwegler (*Römische Geschichte*, i. 548 note), O. Gilbert (*Geschichte und Topographie der Stadt Rom im Altertum*, i. 111), and G. Wissowa (in W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, s.v. "Egeria").

² O. Rossbach, *op. cit.* p. 151. "The old bath" is mentioned in an inscription found on the spot (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xiv., No. 4190).

³ *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1885, pp. 159 sq., 192, 254; *id.* 1888, p. 193; *Bullettino dell' Inst. di corrisp. Archeologica*, 1885, pp. 153, 154 sq.; O. Rossbach, *op. cit.* p. 160; *Archæologia: or Miscellaneous Tracts relating to Antiquity*, I (1887), Pt. I pp. 61 sq., 64; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, pp. 2, 4, 22. Amongst these models may be specially noted the

torso of a woman clad in a long robe, with her breast cut open so as to expose the bowels. It may be the offering of a woman who suffered from some internal malady.

⁴ For an example of the custom in modern times see J. J. Blunt, *Vestiges of Ancient Manners and Customs discoverable in Modern Italy and Sicily* (London, 1823), p. 135. The custom is still widespread among the Catholic population of Southern Germany. See R. Andree, *Votive und Weihgaben des Katholischen Volks in Süddeutschland* (Brunswick, 1904), pp. 94 sqq., 112 sqq., 123 sqq.

⁵ R. Lanciani, in *Athenaeum*, October 10, 1885, p. 477.

⁶ Xenophon, *Cynæget.* i. 2 and 11; Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 10-19, 1092 sq.

sent a fierce bull forth from the waves. The terrified horses bolted, threw Hippolytus from the chariot, and dragged him at their hoofs to death.¹ But Diana, for the love she bore Hippolytus, persuaded the leech Aesculapius to bring her fair young hunter back to life by his simples. Jupiter, indignant that a mortal man should return from the gates of death, thrust down the meddling leech himself to Hades. But Diana hid her favourite from the angry god in a thick cloud, disguised his features by adding years to his life, and then bore him far away to the dells of Nemi, where she entrusted him to the nymph Egeria, to live there, unknown and solitary, under the name of Virbius, in the depth of the Italian forest. There he reigned a king, and there he dedicated a precinct to Diana. He had a comely son, Virbius, who, undaunted by his father's fate, drove a team of fiery steeds to join the Latins in the war against Aeneas and the Trojans.² Virbius was worshipped as a god not only at Nemi but elsewhere; for in Campania we hear of a special priest devoted to his service.³ Horses were excluded from the Arician grove and sanctuary because horses had killed Hippolytus.⁴ It was unlawful to touch his image. Some thought that he was the sun.⁵ "But the

¹ Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 20 sqq.; Apollodorus, *Epitoma*, i. 18 sq., ed. R. Wagner; Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 47; Ovid, *Metam.* xv. 497 sqq.

² Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 761 sqq., with the commentary of Servius; Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 263 sqq., vi. 735 sqq.; *id.*, *Metam.* xv. 497 sqq.; Scholiast on Persius, *Sat.* vi. 56, p. 347 sq., ed. O. Jahn; Lactantius, *Divin. Inst.* i. 17; Pausanias, ii. 27. 4; Apollodorus, iii. 10. 3; Scholiast on Pindar, *Pyth.* iii. 96. It was perhaps in his character of a serpent that Aesculapius was said to have brought the dead Hippolytus to life. See my note on Pausanias, ii. 10. 3.

³ An inscription in the public museum at Naples mentions a *flamen Virbialis* (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, x., No. 1493). Another inscription mentions a similar priesthood at Aricia, but the inscription is forged (Orelli, *Inscript. Latin.* No. 1457; compare H. Dessau on *Corpus Inscriptionum*

Latinarum, xiv., No. 2213). The same title *flamen Virbialis* has sometimes been wrongly read in an inscription of Gratianopolis, in Narbonensian Gaul (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xii., No. 2238; Orelli, *Inscript. Latin.* Nos. 2212, 4022). For the worship of Virbius we have also the testimony of Servius, on Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 776: "*Nam et Virbii inter deos colitur.*"

⁴ Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 779 sq.; Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 265 sq.

⁵ Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 776. Helbig proposed to identify as Virbius some bronze statuettes found at Nemi, which represent a young man naked except for a cloak thrown over his left arm, holding in his extended right hand a shallow bowl, while in his raised left hand he seems to have held a spear or staff on which he leaned. See *Bulletino dell' Inst. di corrisp. Archeologica*, 1885, p. 229. But to this it has been objected by Rossbach (*op. cit.* p. 162) that Virbius appears to have

truth is," says Servius, "that he is a deity associated with Diana, as Attis is associated with the Mother of the Gods, and Erichthonius with Minerva, and Adonis with Venus."¹ What the nature of that association was we shall enquire presently. Here it is worth observing that in his long and chequered career this mythical personage has displayed a remarkable tenacity of life. For we can hardly doubt that the Saint Hippolytus of the Roman calendar, who was dragged by horses to death on the thirteenth of August, Diana's own day, is no other than the Greek hero of the same name, who after dying twice over as a heathen sinner has been happily resuscitated as a Christian saint.²

It needs no elaborate demonstration to convince us that the stories told to account for Diana's worship at Nemi are unhistorical. Clearly they belong to that large class of myths which are made up to explain the origin of a religious ritual and have no other foundation than the resemblance, real or imaginary, which may be traced between it and some foreign ritual. The incongruity of these Nemi myths is indeed transparent, since the foundation of the worship is traced now to Orestes and now to Hippolytus, according as

The legends of Nemi invented to explain the ritual.

been portrayed as an older, probably bearded man (Ovid, *Metam.* xv. 538 sqq.).

¹ Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 761; compare *id.* on *Aen.* vii. 84. See also Ovid, *Metam.* xv. 545 sq.—

"*Hoc nemus inde colo de disquis minoribus unus*

Nomine sub dominae lateo atque accensor illi."

² P. Ribadeneira, *Flos Sanctorum* (Venice, 1763), ii. 93 sq.; *Acta Sanctorum*, August 13, pp. 4 sqq. (Paris and Rome, 1867). The merit of tracing the saint's pedigree belongs to Mr. J. Rendel Harris. See his *Annotators of Codex Bezae* (London, 1901), pp. 101 sq. Prudentius has drawn a picture of the imaginary martyrdom which might melt the stoniest heart (*Peristeph.* xi. p. 282 sqq., ed. Th. Obbarius). According to the *Acta Sanctorum* the saint shared the crown of martyrdom with twenty members of his household, of whom nineteen were beheaded, while one of

them, his nurse *Concordia*, was scourged to death ("*plumbatis caesa*"). It is an odd coincidence that his Greek prototype Hippolytus dedicated just twenty horses to Aesculapius (Pausanias, ii. 27. 4); and it is another odd coincidence, if it is nothing worse, that the bones of Orestes, the other mythical hero of Nemi, were buried beside the temple of *Concordia* in Rome, and that Servius, who mentions this tradition (on Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 116), should immediately afterwards quote the words "*virgine caesa.*" If we knew why the hero Hippolytus dedicated just twenty horses to the god who raised him from the dead, we might perhaps know why the saint Hippolytus went to heaven attended by a glorious company of just twenty martyrs. Bunsen courageously stood out for the historical reality of the martyr, whom he would fain identify with his namesake the well-known writer of the third century (*Hippolytus and his Age*, London, 1852, l. pp. 212 sqq.).

Tradition
that the
grove of
Nemi was
dedicated
by a Latin
dictator.

this or that feature of the ritual has to be accounted for. The real value of such tales is that they serve to illustrate the nature of the worship by providing a standard with which to compare it; and further, that they bear witness indirectly to its venerable age by shewing that the true origin was lost in the mists of a fabulous antiquity. In the latter respect these Nemi legends are probably more to be trusted than the apparently historical tradition, vouched for by Cato the Elder, that the sacred grove was dedicated to Diana by a certain Egerius Baebius or Laevius of Tusculum, a Latin dictator, on behalf of the peoples of Tusculum, Aricia, Lanuvium, Laurentum, Cora, Tibur, Pometia, and Ardea.¹ This tradition indeed speaks for the great age of the sanctuary, since it seems to date its foundation sometime before 495 B.C., the year in which Pometia was sacked by the Romans and disappears from history.² But we cannot suppose that so barbarous a rule as that of the Arician priesthood was deliberately instituted by a league of civilised communities, such as the Latin cities undoubtedly were. It must have been handed down from a time beyond the memory of man, when Italy was still in a far ruder state than any known to us in the historical period. The credit of the tradition is rather shaken than confirmed by another story which ascribes the foundation of the sanctuary to a certain Manius Egerius, who gave rise to the saying, "There are many Manii at Aricia." This proverb some explained by alleging that Manius Egerius was the ancestor of a long and distinguished line, whereas others thought it meant that there were many ugly and deformed people at Aricia, and they derived the name Manius from *Mania*, a bogey³ or bugbear to frighten children.⁴ A Roman satirist uses the name Manius as typical of the beggars who lay in wait for pilgrims on the Arician slopes.⁵ These differences of opinion, together with the discrepancy between Manius Egerius of Aricia and Egerius Laevius of Tusculum, as well as the resemblance of both names to the mythical Egeria,⁶ excite

¹ Cato, *Origines*, i., quoted by Priscian, *Inst.* iv. 21, vol. i. p. 129, ed. Hertz; *M. Catonis praeeter librum de re rustica quas extant*, ed. H. Jordan, p. 12.

² Livy, ii. 25; Dionysius Halicarnaeus, *Antiquit. Roman.* vi. 29.

³ Festus, p. 145, ed. C. O. Müller.

⁴ Persius, *Sat.* vi. 55 sqq.

⁵ Wissowa suggests that Manius

our suspicion. Yet the tradition recorded by Cato seems too circumstantial, and its sponsor too respectable, to allow us to dismiss it as an idle fiction.¹ Rather we may suppose that it refers to some ancient restoration or reconstruction of the sanctuary, which was actually carried out by the confederate states.² At any rate it testifies to a belief that the grove had been from early times a common place of worship for many of the oldest cities of the country, if not for the whole Latin confederacy.³

Another argument of antiquity may be drawn from some Evidence of the antiquity of the grove. of the votive offerings found on the spot, such as a sacrificial ladle of bronze bearing Diana's name in archaic Greek letters,⁴ and pieces of the oldest kind of Italian money, being merely shapeless bits of copper, unstamped and valued by weight.⁵ But as the use of such old-fashioned money

Egerius, was a half-forgotten male counterpart of Egeria (W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon d. griech. und röm. Mythologie*, s.v. "Egeria"); and Dessau observes that the name Egerius "*sine dubio cohaeret cum Egerio fonte*" (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xiv. p. 204). The same view is taken by Messrs. A. B. Cook and E. Pais. Mr. Cook holds that the original form of the names was Aegerius and Aegeria, which he would interpret as "the Oak God" and "the Oak Goddess." See A. B. Cook, "The European Sky-God," *Folk-lore*, xvi. (1905) pp. 291 sq.; E. Pais, *Ancient Legends of Roman History* (London, 1906), p. 142.

¹ As Cluverius seems to do (*Italia Antiqua*, p. 931).

² This is substantially the view of Prof. Wissowa, who holds that the reference is to the foundation of a common altar in the grove by all the members of the league (*Religion und Kultus der Römer*, p. 199).

³ Scholars are not agreed as to whether the list of confederate Latin cities in Cato is complete, and whether the Latin dictator he mentions was the head of the league or only of Tusculum. In regard to the former question we must remember that the passage of Cato is known to us only from Priscian, who seems to have quoted no more than suited his purpose, which was merely

to illustrate a grammatical termination (*Ardeatis* for the later *Ardeas*). Probably, therefore, the original passage contained many more names of towns which Priscian did not think it needful to cite. This is the view of H. Dessau (in *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xiv. p. 204). With regard to the second question, Mommsen held that the dictatorship in question was merely the chief magistracy of Tusculum, the presidency of the Latin league being vested in two praetors, not in a dictator (Livy, viii. 3. 9). Most scholars, however, appear to be of opinion that the dictator referred to was head of the league. See H. Jordan, *M. Catonis praeter librum de re rustica quae extant*, pp. xli. sqq.; J. Beloch, *Der italische Bund unter Römischer Hegemonie* (Leipzig, 1880), p. 188; H. Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde*, ii. (Berlin, 1902) pp. 557 sq.

⁴ G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, pp. 5, 36; *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, xiv., No. 4186.

⁵ *Bullettino di corrisp. Archeologica*, 1885, p. 232; *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1885, pp. 255, 320; *id.* 1895, p. 108; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue*, pp. 5, 55. The use of this rude currency is said to have been superseded in the reign of Servius Tullius, who substituted stamped ingots of copper (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxiii. 43).

survived in offerings to the gods long after it vanished from daily life,¹ no great stress can be laid on its occurrence at Nemi as evidence of the age of the shrine.

§ 2. *Artemis and Hippolytus*

Origin of
the Arician
myths of
Orestes
and
Hippolytus.

I have said that the Arician legends of Orestes and Hippolytus, though worthless as history, have a certain value in so far as they may help us to understand the worship at Nemi better by comparing it with the ritual and myths of other sanctuaries. We must ask ourselves, Why did the authors of these legends pitch upon Orestes and Hippolytus in order to explain Virbius and the King of the Wood? In regard to Orestes, the answer is obvious. He and the image of the Tauric Diana, which could only be appeased with human blood,² were dragged in to render intelligible the murderous rule of succession to the Arician priesthood. In regard to Hippolytus the case is not so plain. The manner of his death suggests readily enough a reason for the exclusion of horses from the grove; but this by itself seems hardly enough to account for the identification. We must try to probe deeper by examining the worship as well as the legend or myth of Hippolytus.

Worship of
Hippolytus
at
Troezen.

He had a famous sanctuary at his ancestral home of Troezen, situated on that beautiful, almost landlocked bay, where groves of oranges and lemons, with tall cypresses soaring like dark spires above the garden of the Hesperides, now clothe the strip of fertile shore at the foot of the rugged mountains. Across the blue water of the tranquil bay, which it shelters from the open sea, rises Poseidon's sacred island, its peaks veiled in the sombre green of the pines. On this fair coast Hippolytus was worshipped. Within his sanctuary stood a temple with an ancient image. His service was performed by a priest who held office for life: every year a sacrificial festival was held in his honour; and his untimely fate was yearly mourned, with weeping and

¹ Livy, xxvi. 11. 9; Tacitus, *Historiae*, iv. 53; E. Babelon, *Monnaies de la République romaine*, i. pp. ii. 24.

² Herodotus, iv. 103; Euripides,

Iphigenia in Tauris, 38 sqq.; Strabo, vi. 4. 2, p. 308; Pausanias, 38. 7-10; K. O. Müller, *Die Dämonen*, i. 385 sqq.

Hippolytus
a mythical
being of
the Adonis
type.

flict of the worship of Aphantodite with that of Artemis at Troezen" (*Der Baumkultus der Hellenen*, p. 445, n. 2).

⁴ Pausanias, ii. 32. 3.

⁵ Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* v. 72; Pausanias, vi. 24. 7. As to the myrtle and Aphrodite, see C. Boetticher, *Der Baumkultus der Hellenen*, pp. 444 sqq.; V. Hehn, *Kulturpflanzen und Haustiere*⁷ (Berlin, 1902), pp. 220 sqq.

lytus.¹ The conjunction, both in Troezen and in Athens, of his grave with a temple of the goddess of love is significant. Later on we shall meet with mounds in which the lovers of the great Asiatic goddess were said to lie buried.

The
divine mis-
tresses of
Hippolytus
associated
with oaks.

If this view of the relation of Hippolytus to Artemis and Aphrodite is right, it is somewhat remarkable that both his divine mistresses appear to have been associated at Troezen with oaks. For Aphrodite was here worshipped under the title of Askraia, that is, she of the Fruitless Oak;² and Hippolytus was said to have met his death not far from a sanctuary of Saronian Artemis, that is, Artemis of the Hollow Oak, for here the wild olive-tree was shewn in which the reins of his chariot became entangled, and so brought him to the ground.³

Orestes at
Troezen.

It may not be without significance that Orestes, the other mythical hero of Nemi, also appears in the legendary history of Troezen. For at Troezen there was a temple of Wolfish Artemis, said to have been dedicated by Hippolytus, and in front of the temple stood a sacred stone upon which nine men, according to the legend, had cleansed Orestes from the guilt of his mother's murder. In the solemn rite they made use of water drawn from the Horse's Fount; and as late as the second century of our era their descendants dined together on certain set days in a building called the Booth of Orestes. Before the building there grew a laurel-tree which was said to have sprung on the spot where the things used in purifying the matricide were buried. The old traveller Pausanias, to whom we owe so much of our knowledge of ancient Greece, could not learn why Hippo-

¹ Pausanias, i. 22. 1; Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 30 *sqq.*, with the scholiast's note; Diodorus Siculus, iv. 62; J. Tzetzes, *Scholion on Lycophron*, 1329.

² Pausanias, ii. 32. 6 Ἀφροδίτης Ἀσκαρίας, where Bekker and all subsequent editors have changed Ἀσκαρίας into Ἀσκαρίας. But Ἀσκαρίας has the better manuscript authority. The title is derived from *askra*, "a fruitless oak" (Hesychius, s.v. ἄσκρα). See Mr. A. B. Cook, "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xvii (1903) pp. 415 *sq.*

³ Pausanias, ii. 32. 10. In *Coak saronis* is a hollow oak. See Callimachus, *Hymn to Zeus*, 22; Hesychius and *Etymologicum Magnum*, s.v. σαρωνίδης; A. B. Cook, "Zeus, Jupiter, and the Oak," *Classical Review*, xviii. (1904) p. 370. Mythology derived the name Saronian from a certain Saron, an ancient king of Troezen and a mighty hunter, who had been drowned while swimming after a doe (Pausanias, ii. 30. 7). In this mythical hunter associated with Artemis we may perhaps detect a duplicate of Hippolytus.

lytus dedicated a temple to Wolfish Artemis; but he conjectured that it might have been because he extirpated the packs of wolves that used to scour the country.¹

Another point in the myth of Hippolytus which deserves attention is the frequent recurrence of horses in it. His name signifies either "horse-loosed" or "horse-looser";² he consecrated twenty horses to Aesculapius at Epidaurus;³ he was killed by horses; the Horse's Fount probably flowed not far from the temple which he built for Wolfish Artemis; and horses were sacred to his grandsire Poseidon, who had an ancient sanctuary in the wooded island across the bay, where the ruins of it may still be seen in the pine-forest.⁴ Lastly, Hippolytus's sanctuary at Troezen was said to have been founded by Diomedes, whose mythical connexion both with horses and wolves is attested. For the Veneti, at the head of the Adriatic, were famed for their breed of horses, and they had a sacred grove of Diomedes, at the spot where many springs burst forth from the foot of a lofty cliff, forming at once the broad and deep river Timavus (the modern Timao), which flows with a still and tranquil current into the neighbouring sea. Here the Veneti sacrificed a white horse to Diomedes; and associated with his grove were two others, sacred to Argive Hera and Aetolian Artemis. In these groves wild beasts were reported to lose their ferocity, and deer to herd with wolves. Moreover, the horses of the district, famed for their speed, were said to have been branded with the mark of a wolf.⁵ Thus Hippolytus was associated with the horse in many ways, and this association may have been used to explain more features of the Arician ritual than the mere exclusion of the animal from the sacred grove.⁶

¹ Pausanias, ii. 31. 4, 8, and 9.

² See Kühner-Blass, *Grammatik der Griech. Sprache*, ii. 288 sq.

³ Pausanias, ii. 27. 4.

⁴ Pausanias, ii. 33. 2 with my commentary, vol. iii. pp. 285 sq., vol. v. pp. 596 sqq.

⁵ Strabo, v. 1. 4, 8, and 9, pp. 212, 214 sq. As to the topography, see Bunbury in Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography*, s.v. "Timavus"; H. Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde*, ii. 233. I have to thank my friend Mr. A. B. Cook for drawing

my attention to the association of the horse and wolf in the early cults of Greece and Italy.

⁶ M. Salomon Reinach would explain Hippolytus at Troezen as a sacred horse, which was torn to pieces by his worshippers at a solemn sacrifice, just as Dionysus Zagreus was said to have been rent in pieces by his worshippers. See S. Reinach, "Hippolyte," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, x. (1907) pp. 47-60; *id.* *Cultes, Mythes, et Religions*, iii. (Paris, 1908) pp. 54-67.

Hippolytus
in relation
to horses
and
wolves.

To this point we shall return later on. Whether his relation to wolves was also invoked to account for any other aspect of the worship at Nemi we cannot say, since the wolf plays no part in the scanty notices of that worship which have come down to us.¹ But doubtless, as one of the wild creatures of the wood, the beast would be under the special care of Diana.

Hair
offered
before
marriage to
Hippolytus
and others.

The custom observed by Troezenian girls of offering tresses of their hair to Hippolytus before their wedding brings him into a relation with marriage, which at first sight seems out of keeping with his reputation as a confirmed bachelor. According to Lucian, youths as well as maidens at Troezen were forbidden to wed till they had shorn their hair in honour of Hippolytus, and we gather from the context that it was their first beard which the young men thus polled.² However we may explain it, a custom of this sort appears to have prevailed widely both in Greece and the East. Plutarch tells us that formerly it was the wont of boys at puberty to go to Delphi and offer of their hair to Apollo; Theseus, the father of Hippolytus, complied with the custom,³ which lasted down into historical times.⁴ Argive maidens, grown to womanhood, dedicated their tresses to Athena before marriage.⁵ On the same occasion Megarian girls poured libations and laid clippings of their hair on the tomb of the maiden Iphinoë.⁶ At the entrance to the temple of Artemis in Delos the grave of two maidens was shewn under an olive-tree. It was said that long ago they had come as pilgrims from a far northern land with offerings to Apollo, and dying in the sacred isle were buried there. The Delian virgins before marriage used to cut off a lock of their hair, wind it on a spindle, and lay it on the maidens' grave. The young men did the same, except that they twisted the down of their first beard round a wisp of grass or a green shoot.⁷ In some places it was Artemis who

¹ No argument can be drawn from the bronze wolf-heads of Caligula's ships (above, p. 5, note 5), since these may have been purely ornamental.

² Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 60.

³ Plutarch, *Theseus*, 5.

⁴ Athenaeus, xiii. 83, p. 605A. For

dedications of hair to Apollo see *Anthologia Palatina*, vi. 198, 279.

⁵ Statius, *Theb.* ii. 253 sqq.

⁶ Pausanias, i. 43. 4.

⁷ Herodotus, iv. 33 sq.; Callimachus, *Hymn to Delos*, 291 sqq.; Pausanias, i. 43. 4.

received the offering of a maiden's hair before marriage.¹ At Panamara in Caria men dedicated locks of their hair in the temple of Zeus. The locks were enclosed in little stone boxes, some of them fitted with a marble lid or shutter, and the name of the dedicator was engraved on a square sinking in the stone, together with the name of the priest for the time being. Many of these inscribed boxes have been found of late years on the spot. None of them bear the names of women; some of them are inscribed with the names of a father and his sons. All the dedications are to Zeus alone, though Hera was also worshipped with him at Panamara.² At Hierapolis, on the Euphrates, youths offered of their beards and girls of their tresses to the great Syrian goddess, and left the shorn hair in caskets of gold or silver, inscribed with their names, and nailed to the walls of the temple.³ The custom of dedicating the first beard seems to have been common at Rome under the Empire.⁴ Thus Nero consecrated his first beard in a golden box, studded with costly pearls, on the Capitol.⁵

Some light is perhaps thrown on the meaning of these practices by two ancient Oriental customs, the one Egyptian, the other Phoenician. When Egyptian boys or girls had recovered from sickness, their parents used to shave the children's heads, weigh the hair against gold or silver, and give the precious metal to the keepers of the sacred beasts, who bought food with it for the animals according to their tastes. These tastes varied with the nature of the beast, and the beast varied with the district. Where hawks were worshipped, the keepers chopped up flesh, and calling the birds in a loud voice, flung the gobbets up into the air, till the hawks stooped and caught them. Where cats, or ichneumons, or

Such offerings intended to communicate strength and fertility. Egyptian practice.

¹ *Anthologia Palatina*, vi. 276, 277; Pollux, iii. 38; Hesychius, s.v. γάμων ἕθῃ. Pollux seems to imply that the hair was dedicated to Hera and the Fates as well as to Artemis.

² G. Deschamps and G. Cousin, in *Bulletin de Correspondance hellénique*, xi. (1887) pp. 390 sq.; *id.* xii. (1888) pp. 97 sq., 249 sqq., 479-490.

³ Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 60.

⁴ J. Marquardt, *Privatleben der Römer*, pp. 599 sq.

⁵ Suetonius, *Nero*, 12. On hair-offerings in general see G. A. Wilken, *Ueber das Haaropfer* (Amsterdam, 1886) (reprinted from the *Revue Coloniale Internationale*). On the hair-offerings of the Greeks see Fr. Wieseler, in *Philologus*, ix. (1854), pp. 711-715; G. Deschamps and G. Cousin, in *Bulletin de Correspondance hellénique*, xii. (1888) pp. 479-490; W. H. D. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings* (Cambridge, 1902), pp. 240-245.

fish were the local deities, the keepers crumbled bread in milk and set it before them, or threw it into the Nile. And similarly with the rest of the divine menagerie.¹ Thus in Egypt the offerings of hair went to feed the worshipful animals.

Syrian
practice ;
sacrifice of
chastity
regarded
as a substi-
tute for the
sacrifice of
hair.

In the sanctuary of the great Phoenician goddess Astarte at Byblus the practice was different. Here, at the annual mourning for the dead Adonis, the women had to shave their heads, and such of them as refused to do so were bound to prostitute themselves to strangers and to sacrifice to the goddess with the wages of their shame.² Though Lucian, who mentions the custom, does not say so, there are some grounds for thinking that the women in question were generally maidens, of whom this act of devotion was required as a preliminary to marriage.³ In any case, it is clear that the goddess accepted the sacrifice of chastity as a substitute for the sacrifice of hair.⁴ Why? By many people, as we shall afterwards see, the hair is regarded as in a special sense the seat of strength; and at puberty it might well be thought to contain a double portion of vital energy, since at that season it is the outward sign and manifestation of the newly-acquired power of reproducing the species. For that reason, we may suppose, the beard rather than the hair of the head is offered by males on this occasion. Thus the substitution permitted at Byblus becomes intelligible: the women gave of their fecundity to the goddess, whether they offered their hair or their chastity. But why, it may be asked, should they make such an offering to Astarte, who was herself the great goddess of love and fertility? What need had she to receive fecundity from

¹ Herodotus, ii. 65; Diodorus Siculus, i. 83. The latter writer's account is the fuller, and has been followed in the text.

² Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 6.

³ W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,³ p. 329. He refers to Sozomenus, *Histor. Eccles.* v. 10. 7; Socrates, *Histor. Eccles.* i. 18; and Eusebius, *Vita Constant.* iii. 58, from whose testimonies we learn that at Heliopolis, in Syria, it was the custom

to prostitute maidens to strangers before marriage. Eusebius speaks of the religious prostitution of married women as well as of maidens. Constantine destroyed the temple of the goddess in which these impure rites seem to have been performed. To moderns, Heliopolis (the City of the Sun) is better known as Baalbec; its magnificent ruins are the finest remains of Greek architecture in the East.

⁴ This is recognised by G. A. Wilken (*Ueber das Haaropfer*, p. 105).

her worshippers? Was it not rather for her to bestow it on them? Thus put, the question overlooks an important side of polytheism, perhaps we may say of ancient religion in general. The gods stood as much in need of their worshippers as the worshippers in need of them. The benefits conferred were mutual. If the gods made the earth to bring forth abundantly, the flocks and herds to teem, and the human race to multiply, they expected that a portion of their bounty should be returned to them in the shape of tithe or tribute. On this tithe, indeed, they subsisted, and without it they would starve. Their divine bellies had to be filled, and their divine reproductive energies to be recruited; hence men had to give of their meat and drink to them, and to sacrifice for their benefit what is most manly in man and womanly in woman. Sacrifices of the latter kind have too often been overlooked or misunderstood by the historians of religion. Other examples of them will meet us in the course of our enquiry. At the same time it may well be that the women who offered their hair to Astarte hoped to benefit through the sympathetic connexion which they thus established between themselves and the goddess; they may in fact have expected to fecundate themselves by contact with the divine source of fecundity. And it is probable that a similar motive underlay the sacrifice of chastity as well as the sacrifice of hair.

If the sacrifice of hair, especially of hair at puberty, is sometimes intended to strengthen the divine beings to whom it is offered by feeding or fertilising them, we can the better understand, not only the common practice of offering hair to the shadowy dead,¹ but also the Greek usage of shearing it for rivers, as the Arcadian boys of Phigalia did for the stream that runs in the depths of the tremendous woody glen below the city.² For next perhaps to rain and sunshine, nothing in nature so obviously contributes to fertilise a country as its rivers. Again, this view may set in a clearer light the custom of the Delian youths and maidens,

Hair
offered to
rivers as
sources of
fertility.

¹ G. A. Wilken, *Das Haaropfer*, pp. 61 sqq.; W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,² pp. 323 sqq.; I. Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, i. (Halle a. S. 1888) pp. 247 sqq. See

also below, p. 102.

² Pausanias, viii. 41. 3. To the references given in my note on the passage add Pollux, ii. 30.

Delos and Delphi as centres of fertilisation and of fire.

who offered their hair on the maidens' tomb under the olive-tree. For at Delos, as at Delphi, one of Apollo's many functions was to make the crops grow and to fill the husbandman's barns; hence at the time of harvest tithe-offerings poured in to him from every side in the form of ripe sheaves, or, what was perhaps still more acceptable, golden models of them, which went by the name of the "golden summer."¹ The festival at which these first-fruits were dedicated may have been the 6th and 7th of the harvest-month Thargelion, corresponding to the 24th and 25th of May, for these were the birthdays of Artemis and Apollo respectively.² In Hesiod's day the corn-reaping began at the morning rising of the Pleiades, which then answered to our 9th of May,³ and in Greece the wheat is still ripe about that time.⁴ In return for these offerings the god sent out a sacred new fire from both his great sanctuaries at Delos and Delphi, thus radiating from them, as from central suns, the divine blessings of heat and light. A ship brought the new fire every year from Delos to Lemnos, the sacred island of the fire-god Hephaestus, where all fires were put out before its arrival, to be afterwards rekindled at the pure flame.⁵ The fetching of the new fire from Delphi to Athens appears to have been a ceremony of great solemnity and pomp. All the chief Athenian magistrates repaired to Delphi for the purpose. The holy fire blazed or smouldered in a sacred

¹ Callimachus, *Hymn to Delos*, 278 sqq.; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* iv. 91; Strabo, vi. 1. 15, p. 264; Plutarch, *De Pythiae oraculis*, 16. In Apollo's temple at Delphi there were dedicated a radish of gold, a beet of silver, and a turnip of lead, which was thought to signify the respective value of these vegetables (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xix. 86). A poet speaks of tithes and first-fruits hung up for Apollo on a high pillar at Delphi (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* i. 24. 164, p. 419, ed. Potter).

² Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Philos.* ii. 44, iii. 2; Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* viii. 1. 2; J. T. Wood, *Discoveries at Ephesus: Inscriptions from the great Theatre*, pp. 4, 16. Apollo's birthday (the 7th of Thargelion) was probably the festival known in the Delian calendar as the Apollonia, not the Delia as

was formerly supposed. The Delia seems to have fallen in early spring, not in early summer. See C. Robert in *Hermes*, xxi. (1886) pp. 161-169; Aug. Mommsen, *Feste der Stadt Athen* (Leipzig, 1898), p. 451. On this harvest-festival at Delos see W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, pp. 232 sqq., who, however, took the festival to be the Delia.

³ Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 383 sq.; L. Ideler, *Handbuch der mathematischen und technischen Chronologie*, i. 242.

⁴ Folk-lore, i. (1890) p. 518. As to the season of the ripening of the corn in Greece both in ancient and modern times, see G. Busolt's discussion of the evidence, *Griechische Geschichte*, iii. 2 (Gotha, 1904), pp. 909 sqq., note.

⁵ Philostratus, *Heriaca*, xx. 24.

tripod borne on a chariot and tended by a woman who was called the Fire-bearer. Soldiers, both horse and foot, escorted it; magistrates, priests, and heralds accompanied it; and the procession moved to the music of trumpet and fife.¹ We do not know on what occasion the fire was thus solemnly sent from Delphi to Athens, but we may conjecture that it was when the Pythaists at Athens, watching from the hearth of Lightning Zeus, saw lightning flash over Harma on Mount Parnes, for then they sent a sacrifice to Delphi and may have received the fire in return.² After the great defeat of the Persians at Plataea, the people of that city extinguished all the fires in the country, deeming them defiled by the presence of the barbarians. Having done so they relit them at a pure new fire fetched by a runner from the altar of the common hearth at Delphi.³

Now the maidens on whose grave the Delian youths and damsels laid their shorn locks before marriage, were said to have died in the island after bringing the harvest offering, wrapt in wheaten straw, from the land of the Hyperboreans in the far north.⁴ Thus they were in popular opinion the mythical representatives of those bands of worshippers who bore, year by year, the yellow sheaves with dance and song to Delos. But in fact they had once been much more than this. For an examination of their names, which are commonly given as Hekaerge and Opis, has led modern scholars to conclude, with every appearance of probability, that these maidens were originally mere duplicates of Artemis herself.⁵ Perhaps indeed we may

The graves of Apollo and Artemis at Delos.

¹ *Bulletin de Correspondance hellénique*, xviii. (1894) pp. 87-93; *id.* xx. (1896) pp. 639-641; E. Curtius in *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, 1895, pp. 109 sq.; Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*,³ Nos. 611, 665, 718.

² Strabo, ix. 2. 11, p. 404.

³ Plutarch, *Aristides*, 20. Probably the custom of sending out new fire from Delos and Delphi was common, though the existing evidence of it is scanty. The same remark applies to the practice of bringing tithes of the harvest to these sanctuaries.

⁴ Herodotus, iv. 33; Callimachus,

Hymn to Delos, 278 sqq. Herodotus does not tell us in what the sacred offerings consisted; Pausanias says (i. 31. 2) that no one knew what they were. But from the evidence of Callimachus, compared with that of Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* iv. 91) and Mela (iii. 37), it appears that they were believed to be the first-fruits of the corn.

⁵ H. Stein on Herodotus, iv. 33; O. Crusius in W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, i. 2813, 2831; Preller-Robert, *Griechische Mythologie*, i. 298 sq.; Wernicke, in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der*

go a step farther. For sometimes one of this pair of Hyperboreans appears as a male, not a female, under the name of the Far-shooter (Hekaergos), which was a common epithet of Apollo.¹ This suggests that the two were originally the heavenly twins themselves, Apollo and Artemis, and that the two graves which were shewn at Delos, one before and the other behind the sanctuary of Artemis, may have been at first the tombs of these great deities, who were thus laid to their rest on the spot where they had been born. As the one grave received offerings of hair, so the other received the ashes of the victims which were burned on the altar.² Both sacrifices, if I am right, were designed to strengthen and fertilise the divine powers who made the earth to wave with the golden harvest, and whose mortal remains, like the miracle-working bones of saints in the Middle Ages, brought wealth to their fortunate possessors. Ancient piety was not shocked by the sight of the tomb of a dead god. The grave of Apollo himself was shewn at his other great sanctuary of Delphi,³ and this perhaps explains its disappearance at Delos. The priests of the rival shrines may have calculated that one tomb sufficed even for a god, and that two might prove a stumbling-block to any but the most robust faith. Acting on this prudent conviction, they may have adjusted their respective claims to the possession of the holy sepulchre.

class. *Altertumswissenschaft*, ii. coll. 1355, 1356, 1357, 1358, 1359, 1380, 1383, 1393, 1402. The names of the maidens were variously given as Hyperoche and Laodice (Herodotus, iv. 33), or Hekaerge and Opis, (Pausanias, i. 43. 4, v. 7. 8; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* xi. 532), or Opis, Loxo, and Hekaerge (Callimachus, *Hymn to Delos*, 292). Herodotus further mentions (iv. 35) another pair of Hyperborean maidens, Arge and Opis by name, who came with Apollo and Artemis to Delos, and were buried behind the sanctuary of Artemis in the island. They are clearly the equivalents of the Hekaerge and Opis or Opis of the other writers. For Hekaerge as an epithet of Artemis see Servius, *loc. cit.*; Clement of

Alexandria, *Strom.* v. 8. 49, p. 674, ed. Potter, quoting Apollodorus of Corcyra: μέλντε ὁ παῖδες ἐκδέρπον καὶ ἐκαέρπον. For Opis or Upris as a name of Artemis see Macrobius, *Saturn.* v. 22. 3-6; Callimachus, *Hymn to Artemis*, 204; Palaephatus, *De incredib.* 32.

¹ Pseudo-Plato, *Axiochus*, p. 371A; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* xi. 532: "Alii putant Opim et Hecaergon nutritores Apollinis et Dianae fuisse; hinc itaque Opim ipsam Dianam cognominatam, quod supra dictum est, Apollinem vero Hecaergon."

² Herodotus, iv. 34 sq. According to Herodotus, each grave contained the dust of a pair of Hyperborean damsels.

³ Porphyry, *Vita Pythagorae*, 16.

by leaving Apollo to sleep undisturbed at Delphi, while his grave at Delos was dexterously converted into the tomb of a blessed virgin by the easy grammatical change of *Hekaergos* into *Hekaerge*.

But how, it may be asked, does all this apply to Hippolytus? Why attempt to fertilise the grave of a bachelor who paid all his devotions to a barren virgin? What seed could take root and spring up in so stony a soil? The question implies the popular modern notion of Diana or Artemis as the pattern of a straight-laced maiden lady with a taste for hunting. No notion could well be further from the truth.

To the ancients, on the contrary, she was the ideal and embodiment of the wild life of nature—the life of plants, of animals, and of men—in all its exuberant fertility and profusion. As a recent German writer has admirably put it: “From of old a great goddess of nature was everywhere worshipped in Greece. She was revered on the mountain heights as in the swampy lowlands, in the rustling woods and by the murmuring spring. To the Greek her hand was everywhere apparent. He saw her gracious blessing in the sprouting meadow, in the ripening corn, in the healthful vigour of all living things on earth, whether the wild creatures of the wood and the fell, or the cattle which man has tamed to his service, or man’s own offspring from the cradle upward. Her destroying anger he perceived in the blight of vegetation, in the inroads of wild beasts on his fields and orchards, as well as in the last mysterious end of life, in death. No empty personification, like the earth conceived as a goddess, was this deity, for such abstractions are foreign to every primitive religion; she was an all-embracing power of nature, everywhere the object of a similar faith, however her names differed with the place in which she was believed to abide, with the emphasis laid on her gloomy or kindly aspect, or with the particular side of her energy which was specially revered. And as the Greek divided everything in animated nature into male and female, he could not imagine this female power of nature without her male counterpart. Hence in a number of her older worship we find Artemis associated with a nature-god of similar character, to whom tradition assigned

Hippolytus and Artemis.

Artemis a goddess of the wild life of nature.

Hence in a number of her older worship we find Artemis associated with a nature-god of similar character, to whom tradition assigned

Artemis not originally regarded as a virgin.

different names in different places. In Laconia, for instance, she was mated with the old Peloponnesian god Karneios, in Arcadia more than once with Poseidon, elsewhere with Zeus, Apollo, Dionysus, and so on."¹ The truth is, that the word *parthenos* applied to Artemis, which we commonly translate virgin, means no more than an unmarried woman,² and in early days the two things were by no means the same. With the growth of a purer morality among men a stricter code of ethics is imposed by them upon their gods; the stories of the cruelty, deceit, and lust of these divine beings are glossed lightly over or flatly rejected as blasphemies, and the old ruffians are set to guard the laws which before they broke. In regard to Artemis, even the ambiguous *parthenos* seems to have been merely a popular epithet, not an official title. As Dr. Farnell has well pointed out, there was no public worship of Artemis the chaste; so far as her sacred titles bear on the relation of the sexes, they shew that, on the contrary, she was, like Diana in Italy, specially concerned with the

¹ Wernicke, in Pauly-Wissowa's *Real-Encyclopädie der class. Altertumswissenschaft*, ii. 1339. This general statement the writer supports with a wealth of detailed evidence, to which I can only refer the reader.

² This appears from the name *Partheniai* applied at Sparta to the men who were born of the *parthenoi* (unmarried women) during the absence of the married men at the Messenian war. See Ephorus, cited by Strabo, vi. 3. 3, p. 279. Whether this explanation was historically correct or not (and other explanations of it were given, see W. L. Newman on Aristotle, *Politics*, vii. (v.) 7, p. 1306 b 29), it proves that in Greek of the best period *parthenos* did not connote chastity. Compare what Herodotus says of the Thracians (v. 6): τὰς δὲ παρθένους οὐ φιλάσσουσι, ἀλλ' ἐδῶσι τοῖσι αὐταὶ βούλονται ἀνδράσι μογεσθαι. As to the worship of unmarried goddesses in Western Asia, Sir W. M. Ramsay observes: "It is, in fact, probable, though with our present knowledge not susceptible of proof,

that the term Parthenos in connection with the Anatolian system should be rendered simply as 'the Unmarried,' and should be regarded as evidence of the religious existence of the pre-Greek social system. The Parthenos goddess was also the Mother; and however much the Parthenoi who formed part of her official retinue may have been modified by Greek feeling, it is probable that originally the term indicated only that they were not cut off by marriage from the divine life" (*Cities and Bishoppers of Phrygia*, i. p. 96). Similarly in a celebrated passage of Isaiah (vii. 14) the Hebrew word (עַלְוָה) which is translated "virgin" in our English version means no more than "young woman." A correct translation would have obviated the necessity for the miracle which so many generations of devout but unlearned readers have discovered in the text; for while it would unquestionably be a miracle if a virgin were to conceive and bear a son, there is nothing whatever miraculous or even unusual about a young woman doing so.

loss of virginity and with child-bearing, and that she not only assisted but encouraged women to be fruitful and multiply; indeed, if we may take Euripides's word for it, in her capacity of midwife she would not even speak to childless women. Further, it is highly significant that while her titles and the allusions to her functions mark her out clearly as the patroness of childbirth, we find none that recognise her distinctly as a deity of marriage.¹ Nothing, however, sets the true character of Artemis as a goddess of fecundity, though not of wedlock, in a clearer light than her constant identification with the unmarried, but not chaste, Asiatic goddesses of love and fertility, who were worshipped with rites of notorious profligacy at their popular sanctuaries.² At Ephesus, the most celebrated of all the seats of her worship,³ her universal motherhood was set forth unmistakably in her sacred image. Copies of it have come down to us which agree in their main features, though they differ from each other in some details. They represent the goddess with a multitude of protruding breasts; the heads of animals of many kinds, both wild and tame, spring from the front of her body in a series of bands that extend from the breasts to the feet; bees, roses,

Artemis a goddess of childbirth.

The Ephesian Artemia.

¹ L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, ii. 444. The whole of Dr. Farnell's treatment of this subject is excellent (pp. 442-449). He suggests doubtfully that the epithets *Peitho*, *Hegemone*, and *Eukleia* may possibly refer to marriage. But clearly "persuasion," "leader," and "good fame" do not in themselves imply any allusion to wedlock. The passage of Euripides referred to in the text is *Supplikes*, 958 sq.: οὐδ' Ἀρτέμις λοχία προσφθέγεται ἂν τὰς ἀρέκνους.

² Thus she was identified with Anaitis (Plutarch, *Artaxerxes*, 27; Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscr. Graec.* No. 775), and with Nana (*Corpus Inscriptionum Atticarum*, iii. 131), or Nanaea, the goddess of Elymais (2 Maccabees, i. 13 and 15, compared with Polybius, xxxd. 11, and Josephus, *Antiquit. Jud.* xii. 9). This Nanaea was sometimes identified with Aphrodite instead of with Artemis (Appian, *Syriacae*, 66). She seems to have

been the old Babylonian goddess Nana, Nanai, or Nannaia, who was identical with the Ishtar (Astarte) of Erech. See H. Zimmern, in Schrader's *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*,³ p. 422; R. F. Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Literature* (New York, 1901), pp. 116 sq., 245; W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, iii. 4 sq. s.v. "Nana." For the identification of Artemis with another Semitic mother-goddess, see W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*² (London, 1903), p. 298. As to the dissolute worship of Anaitis, see Strabo, xi. 14, 16, p. 532. And as to the identification of Artemis with Asiatic goddesses of this type see L. R. Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States*, ii. 478 sqq.; Wernicke, in Pauly-Wissowa, *Encycl. d. class. Alter.* ii. 1369 sqq.

³ Pausanias, iv. 31. 8; Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscript. Graecarum*,² No. 656.

and sometimes butterflies, decorate her sides from the hips downward. The animals that thus appear to issue from her person vary in the different copies of the statue; they include lions, bulls, stags, horses, goats, and rams. Moreover, lions rest on her upper arms; in at least one copy, serpents twine round her lower arms; her bosom is festooned with a wreath of blossoms, and she wears a necklace of acorns. In one of the statues the breast of her robe is decorated with two winged male figures, who hold sheaves in both hands.¹ It would be hard to devise a more expressive symbol of exuberant fertility, of prolific maternity, than these remarkable images. No doubt the Ephesian Artemis, with her eunuch priests and virgin priestesses,² was an Oriental, whose worship the Greek colonists took over from the aborigines.³ But that they should have adopted it and identified the goddess with their own Artemis is proof enough that the Grecian divinity, like her Asiatic sister, was at bottom a personification of the teeming life of nature.

Hippolytus
the male
consort of
Artemis.

To return now to Troezen, we shall probably be doing no injustice either to Hippolytus or to Artemis if we suppose that the relation between them was once of a tenderer nature

¹ The statues on which this description is based are in the Vatican, the Lateran, and the Palazzo dei Conservatori on the Capitol at Rome. The first of these is figured and described in Baumeister's *Denkmaler*, i. 130 sq., and the second is described by O. Benndorf and R. Schoene, *Die antiken Bildwerke des Lateranischen Museums*, pp. 260 sq. See also Roscher's *Lexik. d. griech. und röm. Myth.* i. 588 sqq.; S. Reinach, *Répertoire de la Statuaire grecque et romaine*, i. pp. 298, 299, 300, 302, ii. pp. 321 sq. Both the Vatican and the Lateran statues have the necklace of acorns, and the Lateran copy (No. 768) has in addition a circlet of acorns hanging on the bosom. The acorns probably refer to the oak-tree under which the Amazons were said to have set up the image of the goddess at Ephesus (Callimachus, *Hymn to Artemis*, 237 sqq.). The statue in the Palazzo dei

Conservatori (No. 47) has serpents twined round the arms. The many breasts of the Ephesian Artemis are mentioned by Minucius Felix (*Octavius*, xxii. 5). On the worship of the Ephesian Artemis continued as that of the Virgin Mary see Sir W. M. Ramsay, "The Worship of the Virgin Mary at Ephesus," *The Expositor*, June 1905, pp. 401 sqq.

² Strabo, xiv. 1. 3, p. 641. That a goddess of fertility should be served by such ministers may strike us as a contradiction. Yet it is typical of the Oriental worship of the great Mother Goddess. I have suggested an explanation of the custom elsewhere. See *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, Second Edition, pp. 236 sqq.

³ Pausanias, vii. 2. 7 sq.; Preller-Robert, *Griechische Mythologie*, i. 329; L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, ii. 480 sqq.

than appears in classical literature. We may conjecture that if he spurned the love of women, it was because he enjoyed the love of a goddess.¹ On the principles of early religion, she who fertilises nature must herself be fertile, and to be that she must necessarily have a male consort. If I am right, Hippolytus was the consort of Artemis at Troezen, and the shorn tresses offered to him by the Troezenian youths and maidens before marriage were designed to strengthen his union with the goddess, and so to promote the fruitfulness of the earth, of cattle, and of mankind. It is some confirmation of this view that within the precinct of Hippolytus at Troezen there were worshipped two female powers named Damia and Auxesia, whose connexion with the fertility of the ground is unquestionable. When Epidaurus suffered from a dearth, the people, in obedience to an oracle, carved images of Damia and Auxesia out of sacred olive wood, and no sooner had they done so and set them up than the earth bore fruit again. Moreover, at Troezen itself, and apparently within the precinct of Hippolytus, a curious festival of stone-throwing was held in honour of these maidens, as the Troezenians called them; and it is easy to show that similar customs have been practised in many lands for the express purpose of ensuring good crops.² In the story of the tragic death of the youthful Hippolytus we may discern an analogy with similar tales of other fair but mortal youths who paid with their lives for the brief rapture of the love of an immortal goddess. These hapless lovers were probably not always mere myths, and the legends which traced their spilt blood in the purple bloom of the violet, the scarlet stain of the anemone, or the crimson flush of the rose were no idle poetic emblems of youth and beauty fleet-

¹ Indeed the eloquent church father Lactantius let the cat out of the bag when he bluntly called Hippolytus the lover of Artemis (*Divin. Institut.* i. 17).

² Herodotus, v. 82-87; Pausanias, ii. 30. 4, ii. 32. 2; Schol. on Aristides, vol. iii. pp. 598 *sq.*, ed. Dindorf. As H. Stein (on Herodotus, v. 82) rightly observes, Damia and Auxesia were

"goddesses of tilth and of the fruitful field, agrarian deities who were accordingly compared and identified with Demeter and Kora [Proserpine], but who were in truth only separate personifications of the two sides of Demeter's character." See further my note on Pausanias, ii. 30. 4. We shall return hereafter to the custom of stone-throwing as a charm to fertilise the fields.

ing as the summer flowers. Such fables contain a deeper philosophy of the relation of the life of man to the life of nature—a sad philosophy which gave birth to a tragic practice. What that philosophy and that practice were we shall learn later on.

§ 3. *Recapitulation*

Virbius
the male
consort of
Diana.

We can now perhaps understand why the ancients identified Hippolytus, the consort of Artemis, with Virbius, who, according to Servius, stood to Diana as Adonis to Venus, or Attis to the Mother of the Gods. For Diana, like Artemis, was a goddess of fertility in general, and of childbirth in particular.¹ As such she, like her Greek counterpart, needed a male partner. That partner, if Servius is right, was Virbius. In his character of the founder of the sacred grove and first king of Nemi, Virbius is clearly the mythical predecessor or archetype of the line of priests who served Diana under the title of Kings of the Wood, and who came, like him, one after the other, to a violent end.² It is natural, therefore, to conjecture that they stood to the goddess of the grove in the same relation in which Virbius stood to her; in short, that the mortal King of the Wood had for his queen the woodland Diana herself.³ If the sacred tree which he guarded with his life was supposed, as seems probable, to be her special embodiment, her priest may not only have worshipped it as his goddess but embraced it as his wife. There is at least nothing absurd in the supposition, since even in the time of Pliny a noble Roman used thus to treat a beautiful beech-tree in another sacred grove of Diana on the Alban hills. He embraced it, he kissed it, he lay under its shadow, he poured wine on its trunk. Apparently he took the tree for the goddess.⁴ The custom of physically marrying men and women to trees is still practised in India and other

¹ See, for example, Catullus's fine poem on her (No. xxxiv.).

² This was pointed out long ago by P. Buttmann (*Mythologus*, ii. 151).

³ Seneca speaks of Diana as "*regina nemorum*" or "Queen of the Woods" (*Hippolytus*, 406), perhaps

with a reminiscence of the *Rex Nemorensis*, as Mr. A. B. Cook has suggested (*Classical Review*, xvi. (1902) p. 373, note 4).

⁴ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 242, pointed out to me by Mr. A. B. Cook, who compares Herodotus, vii. 31.

parts of the East.¹ Why should it not have obtained in ancient Latium?

Reviewing the evidence as a whole, we may conclude that the worship of Diana in her sacred grove at Nemi was of great importance and immemorial antiquity; that she was revered as the goddess of woodlands and of wild creatures, probably also of domestic cattle and of the fruits of the earth; that she was believed to bless men and women with offspring and to aid mothers in childbirth; that her holy fire, tended by chaste virgins, burned perpetually in a round temple within the precinct; that associated with her was a water-nymph Egeria who discharged one of Diana's own functions by succouring women in travail, and who was popularly supposed to have mated with an old Roman king in the sacred grove; further, that Diana of the Wood herself had a male companion, Virbius by name, who was to her what Adonis was to Venus, or Attis to Cybele; and, lastly, that this mythical Virbius was represented in historical times by a line of priests known as Kings of the Wood, who regularly perished by the swords of their successors, and whose lives were in a manner bound up with a certain tree in the grove, because so long as that tree was uninjured they were safe from attack.

A curious monument of the ill-fated dynasty appears to have come down to us in a double-headed bust which was found in the sanctuary at Nemi. It represents two men of heavy and somewhat coarse features and a grim expression. The type of face is similar in both heads, but there are marked differences between them; for while the one is young and beardless with shut lips and a steadfast gaze, the other is a man of middle life with a tossed and matted beard, wrinkled brows, a wild anxious look in the eyes, and an open grinning mouth. But perhaps the most singular thing about the two heads are the leaves with scalloped edges which are plastered, so to say, on the necks of both busts and apparently also under the eyes of the younger figure. The leaves have been interpreted as oak leaves, and this interpretation, which is not free from doubt, is confirmed by the resemblance to an oak leaf which the

Summary
of results.

The
double-
headed
bust at
Nemi
probably
a portrait
of the
King of
the Wood
and his
successor.

¹ See below, vol. ii. pp. 26 sq., 56 sq., 100 sq., 316 sqq.

moustache of the older figure clearly presents when viewed in profile. Various explanations of this remarkable monument have been proposed; but the most probable theory appears to be that the older figure represents the priest of Nemi, the King of the Wood, in possession, while the other face is that of his youthful adversary and possible successor. This theory would explain the coarse heavy type of both faces, which is neither Greek nor Roman but apparently barbarian; for as the priest of Nemi had always to be a runaway slave, he would commonly be a member of an alien and barbarous race. Further, it would explain the striking contrast between the set determined gaze of the younger man and the haggard, scared look of the older; on the one face we seem to read the resolution to kill, on the other the fear to die. Lastly, it would explain very simply the leaves that cling like cerements to the necks and breasts of both; for we shall see later on that the priest was probably regarded as an embodiment of the tree which he guarded, and human representatives of tree spirits are most naturally draped in the foliage of the tree which they personate. Hence if the leaves on the two heads are indeed oak leaves, as they have been thought to be, we should have to conclude that the tree which the King of the Wood guarded and personated was an oak. There are independent reasons for holding that this was so, but the consideration of them must be deferred for the present.¹

A wider survey required to solve the problem of Nemi.

Clearly these conclusions do not of themselves suffice to explain the peculiar rule of succession to the priesthood. But perhaps the survey of a wider field may lead us to

¹ As to the double-headed bust see W. Helbig, in *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1885, p. 227; O. Rossbach, *op. cit.* p. 159; G. H. Wallis, *Illustrated Catalogue of Classical Antiquities from the Site of the Temple of Diana, Nemi*, pp. 32 sq.; A. B. Cook, in *Classical Review*, xvi. (1902) p. 373; *id.* "The European Sky-God," *Folk-lore*, xvi. (1905) pp. 289 sqq.; F. Granger, "A Portrait of the Rex Nemorensis," *Classical Review*, xxi. (1907) pp. 194-197; *id.* in *Classical Review*, xxii. (1908) p. 217; J. G. Frazer, "The Leafy Bust at Nemi," *Classical Review*,

xxii. (1908) pp. 147-149. The interpretation adopted in the text is that of Professor F. Granger. The way had been prepared for it by Mr. A. B. Cook's suggestion that the busts represent "the double form of Diana's favourite, Hippolytus-Virbius." Previous writers took the view that the heads were those of water-gods. As to the identification of the leaves on the busts, about which botanists are not agreed, see Mr. Francis Darwin's letter to me, quoted in my article, "The Leafy Bust at Nemi" (*l.c.*).

think that they contain in germ the solution of the problem. To that wider survey we must now address ourselves. It will be long and laborious, but may possess something of the interest and charm of a voyage of discovery, in which we shall visit many strange foreign lands, with strange foreign peoples, and still stranger customs. The wind is in the shrouds: we shake out our sails to it, and leave the coast of Italy behind us for a time.

CHAPTER II

PRIESTLY KINGS

The two questions to be answered.

THE questions which we have set ourselves to answer are mainly two: first, why had Diana's priest at Nemi, the King of the Wood, to slay his predecessor? second, why before doing so had he to pluck the branch of a certain tree which the public opinion of the ancients identified with Virgil's Golden Bough? The two questions are to some extent distinct, and it will be convenient to consider them separately. We begin with the first, which, with the preliminary enquiries, will occupy this and several following volumes. In the last part of the book I shall suggest an answer to the second question.

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

Priestly kings in ancient Italy and Greece.

The union of a royal title with priestly duties was common in ancient Italy and Greece. At Rome and in other cities of Latium there was a priest called the Sacrificial King or King of the Sacred Rites, and his wife bore the title of Queen of the Sacred Rites.¹ In republican Athens the second annual magistrate of the state was called the King, and his wife the Queen; the functions of both were religious. For example, the king superintended the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries, the Lenaeon festival of Dionysus, and the torch-races, which were held at several of

¹ J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.³ 321 *sqq.* Kings of the Sacred Rites are known from inscriptions to have existed at Lanuvium, Bovillae, and Tusculum. See *Corpus*

Inscriptionum Latinarum, xiv., Nos. 2089, 2413, 2634. At Rome the Sacrificial King held office for life (Dionysius Halicarn. *Antiquit. Rom.* iv. 74. 4).

the great Athenian festivals. Moreover, he presided at the curious trials of animals and inanimate objects, which had caused the death of a human being. To him in short were assigned, in the words of Plato, "the most solemn and most truly ancestral rites of the ancient sacrifices."¹ Many other Greek democracies had titular kings, whose duties, so far as they are known, seem to have been priestly, and to have centred round the Common Hearth of the state.² For example, in Cos the King sacrificed to Hestia, the goddess of the hearth, the equivalent of the Italian Vesta; and he received the hide and one leg of the victim as his perquisite.³ In Mytilene the kings, of whom there were several, invited to banquets at the Common Hearth those guests whom the state delighted to honour.⁴ In Chios, if any herdsman or shepherd drove his cows, his sheep, or his swine to pasture in a sacred grove, the first person who witnessed the transgression was bound to denounce the transgressor to the kings, under pain of incurring the wrath of the god and, what was perhaps even worse, of having to pay a fine to the offended deity.⁵ In the same island the king was charged with the duty of pronouncing the public curses,⁶ a spiritual weapon of which much use was made by the ancients.⁷ Every eighth year the King at Delphi took part in a quaint

¹ Plato, *Politicus*, p. 290 E; Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*, 57; Lysias, *Or.* vi. 4; G. Gilbert, *Handbuch der griechischen Staatsalterthümer*,³ i. 281 sqq.

² Aristotle, *Politics*, viii. (vi.) 8. 20, p. 1322 b 26 sqq.; G. Gilbert, *op. cit.* ii. 323 sq.; G. F. Schömann, *Griechische Alterthümer*,⁴ i. 145 sq., ii. 423 sq.

³ Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*,³ No. 616; Ch. Michel, *Recueil d'Inscriptions grecques*, No. 716.

⁴ P. Cauer, *Delectus Inscriptionum Graecarum*,³ No. 431, lines 46 sqq. Another inscription in the same collection (No. 428) also refers to the kings of Mytilene. Both inscriptions are printed in Ch. Michel's *Recueil*, Nos. 356, 357.

⁵ Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum*

Graecarum,² No. 570; Ch. Michel, *Recueil*, No. 707.

⁶ P. Cauer, *Delectus Inscriptionum Graecarum*,³ No. 496; Ch. Michel, *Recueil*, No. 1383.

⁷ G. F. Schömann, *Handbuch der griech. Alterthümer*,⁴ ii. 270 sqq.; E. Ziebarth, "Der Fluch im griechischen Recht," *Hermes*, xxx. (1895) pp. 57-70; Miss J. E. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*² (Cambridge, 1908), pp. 138-145; and my note on Pausanias, iii. 2. 7. For example, the people of Teos cursed poisoners and all persons who hindered the importation of corn (Cauer, *op. cit.* No. 480; Ch. Michel, *op. cit.* No. 1318). On the other hand, at Athens in the time of Solon public curses were levelled at all who exported anything but olive oil (Plutarch, *Solon*, 24). These particular curses may interest students of the history of free trade.

ceremony. He sat in public distributing barley-meal and pulse to all who chose to apply for the bounty, whether citizens or strangers. Then an image of a girl was brought to him, and he slapped it with his shoe. After that the president of the Thyiads, a college of women devoted to the orgiastic worship of Bacchus, carried away the image to a ravine and there buried it with a rope round its neck. The ceremony was said to be an expiation for the death of a girl who in a time of famine had been publicly buffeted by the king and, smarting under the insult, had hanged herself.¹ In some cities, such as Megara, Aegosthena, and Pagae, the kingship was an annual office and the years were dated by the kings' names.² The people of Priene appointed a young man king for the purpose of sacrificing a bull to Poseidon at the Panionian festival.³ Some Greek states had several of these titular kings, who held office simultaneously.⁴ At Rome the tradition was that the Sacrificial King had been appointed after the abolition of the monarchy in order to offer the sacrifices which before had been offered by the kings.⁵ A similar view as to the origin of the priestly kings appears to have prevailed in Greece.⁶ In itself the opinion is not improbable, and it is borne out by the example of Sparta, almost the only purely Greek state which retained the kingly form of government in historical times. For in Sparta all state sacrifices were offered by the kings as descendants of the god.⁷ One of the two Spartan kings held

Traditional
origin of
these
priestly
kings.

¹ Plutarch, *Quaest. Graec.* 12. Aug. Mommsen (*Delphika*, pp. 250 sq.) is probably right in comparing this ceremony with the swinging-festival (*Aiora*) at Athens, as to which see *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, ii. 453 sqq.

² *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum Graeciae Septentrionalis*, i. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 188, 223; G. F. Schömann, *op. cit.* i. 146; G. Gilbert, *op. cit.* ii. 323 sqq.

³ Strabo, viii. 7. 2, p. 384. In this passage the word βασιλεύς is omitted in some editions, but has the authority of several MSS. (Strabo ed. C. Müller, p. 998), and is probably right.

⁴ This was the case at Elis (H. Roehl, *Inscriptiones Graecae antiquissimae*, No. 112; P. Cauer, *op. cit.* No. 253;

E. S. Roberts, *Introduction to Greek Epigraphy*, i. No. 292), in Cos (Dittenberger, *op. cit.* No. 616), in Chios (*ib.* No. 570), at Mytilene (Cauer, *op. cit.* Nos. 428, 431), at Cyme (Plutarch, *Quaest. Graec.* 2), and perhaps in Siphnos (Isocrates, *Or.* xix. 36). The Kings of Elis may have been the officials called *Basilai* who sacrificed on the top of Mount Cronius at Olympia at the spring equinox (Pausanias, vi. 20. 1).

⁵ Livy, ii. 2. 1; Dionysius Halicarn., *Antiquit. Rom.* iv. 74. 4.

⁶ Aristotle, *Politics*, iii. 14. 13, p. 1285 b 14 sqq.; Demosthenes, *Contra Neaer.* § 74 sqq. p. 1370; Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 63.

⁷ Xenophon, *Repub. Lacadaem.* 15,

the priesthood of Zeus Lacedaemon, the other the priesthood of Heavenly Zeus.¹ Sometimes the descendants of the old kings were allowed to retain this shadowy royalty after the real power had departed from them. Thus at Ephesus the descendants of the Ionian kings, who traced their pedigree to Codrus of Athens, kept the title of king and certain privileges, such as the right to occupy a seat of honour at the games, to wear a purple robe and carry a staff instead of a sceptre, and to preside at the rites of Eleusinian Demeter.² So at Cyrene, when the monarchy was abolished, the deposed King Battus was assigned certain domains and allowed to retain some priestly functions.³ Thus the classical evidence points to the conclusion that in prehistoric ages, before the rise of the republican form of government, the various tribes or cities were ruled by kings, who discharged priestly duties and probably enjoyed a sacred character as reputed descendants of deities

This combination of priestly functions with royal authority is familiar to every one. Asia Minor, for example, was the seat of various great religious capitals peopled by thousands of sacred slaves, and ruled by pontiffs who wielded at once temporal and spiritual authority, like the popes of mediaeval Rome. Such priest-ridden cities were Zela and Pessinus.⁴ Teutonic kings, again, in the old heathen days seem to have stood in the position, and to have exercised the powers, of high priests.⁵ The Emperors of China offer public sacrifices, the details of which are regulated by the ritual books.⁶ The King of Madagascar was

Priestly
kings in
various
parts of
the world.

compare *id.* 13; Aristotle, *Politics*, iii. 14. 3, p. 1285 a 3 *sqq.* Argos was governed, at least nominally, by a king as late as the time of the great Persian war (Herodotus, vii. 149); and at Orchomenus, in the secluded highlands of Northern Arcadia, the kingly form of government persisted till towards the end of the fifth century B.C. (Plutarch, *Parallela*, 32). As to the kings of Thessaly in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., see F. Hiller von Gaertringen in *Aus der Anomia* (Berlin, 1890), pp. 1-16.

¹ Herodotus, vi. 56.

² Strabo, xiv. 1. 3, pp. 632 *sq.*

These Ephesian kings, who probably held office for life, are not to be confounded with the purely priestly functionaries called Essenes or King Bees, whose tenure of office was annual. See below, vol. ii. p. 135.

³ Herodotus, iv. 162.

⁴ Strabo, xii. 3. 37, 5. 3; compare xi. 4. 7, xii. 2. 3, 2. 6, 3. 31 *sq.*, 3. 34, 8. 9, 8. 14. But see *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th ed. art. "Priest," xix. 729.

⁵ J. Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, p. 243.

⁶ See the *Lt.-Kt* (Legge's transla-

high-priest of the realm. At the great festival of the new year, when a bullock was sacrificed for the good of the kingdom, the king stood over the sacrifice to offer prayer and thanksgiving, while his attendants slaughtered the animal.¹ In the monarchical states which still maintain their independence among the Gallas of Eastern Africa, the king sacrifices on the mountain tops and regulates the immolation of human victims;² and the dim light of tradition reveals a similar union of temporal and spiritual power, of royal and priestly duties, in the kings of that delightful region of Central America whose ancient capital, now buried under the rank growth of the tropical forest, is marked by the stately and mysterious ruins of Palenque.³ Among the Matabeles the king is high-priest. Every year he offers sacrifices at the great and the little dance, and also at the festival of the new fruits, which ends the dances. On these occasions he prays to the spirits of his forefathers and likewise to his own spirit; for it is from these higher powers that he expects every blessing.⁴

Divinity of
kings.

The
Spartan
kings sup-
posed to be
attended
by Castor
and Pollux,
who were
thought to
manifest
themselves
in certain
electric
lights.

This last example is instructive because it shews that the king is something more than a priest. He prays not only to the spirits of his fathers but to his own spirit. He is clearly raised above the standard of mere humanity; there is something divine about him. Similarly we may suppose that the Spartan kings were thought not only to be descended from the great god Zeus but also to partake of his holy spirit. This is indeed indicated by a curious Spartan belief which has been recorded by Herodotus. The old historian tells us that formerly both of the Spartan kings went forth with the army to battle, but that in later times a rule was made that when one king marched out to fight the other should stay at home. "And accordingly," says

tion), *passim* (*Sacred Books of the East*, vols. xxvii., xxviii.).

¹ W. Ellis, *History of Madagascar* (London, N.D.), i. 359 sq.

² Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: die geistige Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Somäl* (Berlin, 1896), p. 129.

³ Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des nations civilisées du Mexique et de*

l'Amérique-Centrale, i. 94. As to the ruins of Palenque, see H. H. Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, iv. 288 sqq.; T. Maler, "Mémoire sur l'état de Chiapa (Mexique)," *Revue d'Ethnographie*, iii. (1885) pp. 327 sqq.

⁴ Father Croonenberghs, "La Mission du Zambèze," *Missions Catholiques*, xiv. (1882) p. 453.

Herodotus, "one of the kings remaining at home, one of the Tyndarids is left there too; for hitherto both of them were invoked and followed the kings."¹ The Tyndarids are, of course, the heavenly twins Castor and Pollux, the sons of Zeus; and it should be remembered that the two Spartan kings themselves were believed to be descended from twins² and hence may have been credited with the wondrous powers which superstition often associates with twins.³ The belief described by Herodotus plainly implies that one of the heavenly twins was supposed to be in constant attendance on each of their human kinsmen the two Spartan kings, staying with them where they stayed and going with them wherever they went; hence they were probably thought to aid the kings with their advice in time of need. Now Castor and Pollux are commonly represented as spearmen, and they were constantly associated or identified, not only with stars, but also with those lurid lights which, in an atmosphere charged with electricity, are sometimes seen to play round the masts of ships under a murky sky.⁴ Moreover, similar lights were observed by the ancients to glitter in the darkness on the points of spears. Pliny tells us that he had seen such lambent flames on the spears of Roman sentinels

¹ Herodotus, v. 75.

² Pausanias, iii. 1. 5.

³ J. Rendel Harris, *The Dioscuri in the Christian Legends* (London, 1903); *id.*, *The Cult of the Heavenly Twins* (Cambridge, 1906). See also below, pp. 262 sqq. With the Spartan custom we may compare the use which the Zulus made of twins in war. See Dudley Kidd, *Savage Childhood, a Study of Kafir Children* (London, 1906), p. 47 sq.: "In war time a twin used to be hunted out and made to go right in front of the attacking army, some few paces in front of the others. He was supposed to be fearless and wild. His twin, if a sister, and if surviving, was compelled to tie a cord very tightly round her loins during the fight, and had to starve herself; she was also expected to place the twin brother's sleeping-mat in that part of the hut which the

istongo [ancestral spirits] loved to haunt. This brought success in war. But the great chief Tshaka stopped this practice, for he said that the wild twin did foolhardy things and brought the army into needless danger."

⁴ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 101; Dioscorus Siculus, iv. 43; Seneca, *Natur. Quaest.* i. 1. 13; Lucian, *Dial. deorum*, xxvi. 2; Ovid, *Fasti*, v. 720; Plutarch, *De defect. oraculorum*, 30; Lactantius Placidus, *Comment. in Statii Theb.* viii. 792; Th. Henri Martin, in *Revue Archéologique*, N.S. xiii. (1866) pp. 168-174; P. Sébillot, *Légendes, Croyances et Superstitions de la Mer* (Paris, 1886), ii. 87-109. Seafaring men in different parts of the world still see and draw omens from these weird lights on the masts. See Edward FitzGerald, quoted in *County Folk-lore, Suffolk* (London, 1893), pp. 121 sq.; W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic* (London, 1900), p. 279.

as they paced their rounds by night in front of the camp;¹ and it is said that Cossacks riding across the steppes on stormy nights perceive flickerings of the same sort at their lance-heads.² Since, therefore, the divine brothers Castor and Pollux were believed to attend the Spartan kings, it seems not impossible that they may have been thought to accompany the march of a Spartan army in a visible form, appearing to the awe-stricken soldiers in the twilight or the darkness either as stars in the sky or as the sheen of spears on earth. Perhaps the stories of the appearance of the heavenly twins in battle, charging on their milk-white steeds at the head of the earthly chivalry, may have originated in similar lights seen to glitter in the gloaming on a point here and there in the long hedge of levelled or ported spears; for any two riders on white horses whose spear-heads happened to be touched by the mystic light might easily be taken for Castor and Pollux in person. If there is any truth in this conjecture, we should conclude that the divine brothers were never seen in broad day, but only at dusk or in the darkness of night. Now their most famous appearance was at the battle of Lake Regillus, as to which we are expressly told that it was late in the evening of a summer day before the fighting was over.³ Such statements should not be lightly dismissed as late inventions of a rhetorical historian. The memories of great battles linger long among the peasantry of the neighbourhood.

The
divinity of
kings in
early
society.

But when we have said that the ancient kings were commonly priests also, we are far from having exhausted the religious aspect of their office. In those days the divinity that hedges a king was no empty form of speech, but the expression of a sober belief. Kings were revered, in many cases not merely as priests, that is, as intercessors between man and god, but as themselves gods, able to bestow upon their subjects and worshippers those blessings which are commonly supposed to be beyond the reach of mortals, and are sought, if at all, only by prayer and sacrifice

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 101. Compare Seneca, *Natur. Quaest.* i. 1. 14.
² Potocki, *Voyages dans les Steps d'Astrakhan et du Caucase*, i. 143.

³ Dionysius Halicarn. *Antiquit. Roman.* vi. 13; Cicero, *De natura deorum*, ii. 2. 6.

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

This is one way in which the idea of a man-god is reached. But there is another. Along with the view of the world as pervaded by spiritual forces, savage man has a different, and probably still older, conception in which we may detect a germ of the modern notion of natural law or the view of nature as a series of events occurring in an invariable order without the intervention of personal agency. The germ of which I speak is involved in that sympathetic magic, as it may be called, which plays a large part in most systems of superstition. In early society the king is frequently a magician as well as a priest; indeed he appears to have often attained to power by virtue of his supposed proficiency in the black or white art. Hence in order to understand the evolution of the kingship and the sacred character with which the office has commonly been invested in the eyes of savage or barbarous peoples, it is essential to have some acquaintance with the principles of magic and to form some conception of the extraordinary hold which that ancient system of superstition has had on the human mind in all ages and all countries. Accordingly I propose to consider the subject in some detail.

Sympathetic
magic.

CHAPTER III

SYMPATHETIC MAGIC

§ 1. *The Principles of Magic*

The two principles of Sympathetic Magic are the Law of Similarity and the Law of Contact or Contagion.

IF we analyse the principles of thought on which magic is based, they will probably be found to resolve themselves into two : first, that like produces like, or that an effect resembles its cause ; and, second, that things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact has been severed. The former principle may be called the Law of Similarity, the latter the Law of Contact or Contagion. From the first of these principles, namely the Law of Similarity, the magician infers that he can produce any effect he desires merely by imitating it : from the second he infers that whatever he does to a material object will affect equally the person with whom the object was once in contact, whether it formed part of his body or not. Charms based on the Law of Similarity may be called Homoeopathic or Imitative Magic.¹ Charms based on the Law of Contact or Contagion may be called Contagious Magic. To denote the first of these branches of magic the term Homoeopathic is perhaps preferable, for the alternative term Imitative or Mimetic suggests, if it does not imply, a conscious agent who imitates, thereby limiting the scope of magic too narrowly. For the same principles

¹ The expression Homoeopathic Magic was first used, so far as I am aware, by Mr. Y. Hirn (*Origins of Art* (London, 1900), p. 282). The expression Mimetic Magic was suggested by a writer in *Folk-lore* (viii.

1897, p. 65), whom I believe to be Mr. E. S. Hartland. The expression Imitative Magic was used incidentally by me in the first edition of *The Golden Bough* (vol. ii. p. 268).

which the magician applies in the practice of his art are implicitly believed by him to regulate the operations of inanimate nature ; in other words, he tacitly assumes that the Laws of Similarity and Contact are of universal application and are not limited to human actions. In short, magic is a spurious system of natural law as well as a fallacious guide of conduct ; it is a false science as well as an abortive art. Regarded as a system of natural law, that is, as a statement of the rules which determine the sequence of events throughout the world, it may be called Theoretical Magic : regarded as a set of precepts which human beings observe in order to compass their ends, it may be called Practical Magic. At the same time it is to be borne in mind that the primitive magician knows magic only on its practical side ; he never analyses the mental processes on which his practice is based, never reflects on the abstract principles involved in his actions. With him, as with the vast majority of men, logic is implicit, not explicit : he reasons just as he digests his food in complete ignorance of the intellectual and physiological processes which are essential to the one operation and to the other. In short, to him magic is always an art, never a science ; the very idea of science is lacking in his undeveloped mind. It is for the philosophic student to trace the train of thought which underlies the magician's practice ; to draw out the few simple threads of which the tangled skein is composed ; to disengage the abstract principles from their concrete applications ; in short, to discern the spurious science behind the bastard art.

If my analysis of the magician's logic is correct, its two great principles turn out to be merely two different misapplications of the association of ideas.¹ Homoeopathic magic is founded on the association of ideas by similarity : contagious magic is founded on the association of ideas by contiguity. Homoeopathic magic commits the mistake of assuming that things which resemble each other are the same : contagious magic commits the mistake of assuming that things which have once been in contact with

The two principles are misapplications of the association of ideas.

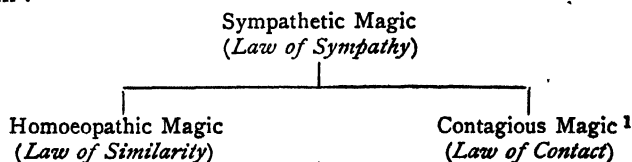
¹ That magic is based on a mistaken association of ideas was pointed out long ago by Professor E. B. Tylor

(*Primitive Culture*,² i. 116), but he did not analyse the different kinds of association.

each other are always in contact. But in practice the two branches are often combined ; or, to be more exact, while homoeopathic or imitative magic may be practised by itself, contagious magic will generally be found to involve an application of the homoeopathic or imitative principle. Thus generally stated the two things may be a little difficult to grasp, but they will readily become intelligible when they are illustrated by particular examples. Both trains of thought are in fact extremely simple and elementary. It could hardly be otherwise, since they are familiar in the concrete, though certainly not in the abstract, to the crude intelligence not only of the savage, but of ignorant and dull-witted people everywhere. Both branches of magic, the homoeopathic and the contagious, may conveniently be comprehended under the general name of Sympathetic Magic, since both assume that things act on each other at a distance through a secret sympathy, the impulse being transmitted from one to the other by means of what we may conceive as a kind of invisible ether, not unlike that which is postulated by modern science for a precisely similar purpose, namely, to explain how things can physically affect each other through a space which appears to be empty.

Table
of the
branches
of Sympa-
thetic
Magic.

It may be convenient to tabulate as follows the branches of magic according to the laws of thought which underlie them :—



I will now illustrate these two great branches of sympathetic magic by examples, beginning with homoeopathic magic.

¹ It has been ingeniously suggested by Mr. Y. Hirn that magic by similarity may be reduced to a case of magic by contact. The connecting link, on his hypothesis, is the old doctrine of emanations, according to which everything is continually sending out in all directions copies of itself in the shape of thin membranes, which appear to the senses not only as

shadows, reflections, and so forth, but also as sounds and names. See Y. Hirn, *Origins of Art* (London, 1900), pp. 293 *seq.* This hypothesis certainly furnishes a point of union for the two apparently distinct sides of sympathetic magic, but whether it is one that would occur to the savage mind may be doubted.

§ 2. Homoeopathic or Imitative Magic

Perhaps the most familiar application of the principle that like produces like is the attempt which has been made by many peoples in many ages to injure or destroy an enemy by injuring or destroying an image of him, in the belief that, just as the image suffers, so does the man, and that when it perishes he must die. A few instances out of many may be given to prove at once the wide diffusion of the practice over the world and its remarkable persistence through the ages. For thousands of years ago it was known to the sorcerers of ancient India, Babylon, and Egypt, as well as of Greece and Rome,¹ and at this day it is still resorted to by cunning and malignant savages in Australia, Africa, and Scotland. Thus the North American Indians, we are told, believe that by drawing the figure of a person in sand, ashes, or clay, or by considering any object as his body, and then pricking it with a sharp stick or doing it any other injury, they inflict a corresponding injury on the person represented.² For example, when an Ojebway Indian desires to work evil on any one, he makes a little wooden image of his enemy and runs a needle into its head or heart, or he shoots an arrow into it, believing that wherever the needle pierces or the arrow strikes the image, his foe will the same instant be seized with a sharp pain in the corresponding part of his body; but if he intends to kill the person outright, he burns or buries the puppet, uttering certain magic words as he does so.³ So when a Cora Indian

Magical
images
among the
American
Indians. !

¹ For the Greek and Roman practice, see Theocritus, *Id.* ii.; Virgil, *Ecl.* viii. 75-82; Ovid, *Heroides*, vi. 91 sq.; *id.* *Amores*, iii. 7. 29 sq.; R. Wünsch, "Eine antike Rache-puppe," *Philologus*, lxi. (1902) pp. 26-31.

² Henry's *Travels among the Northern and Western Indians*, quoted by the Rev. Jedediah Morse, *Report to the Secretary of War of the United States on Indian Affairs* (Newhaven, 1822), Appendix, p. 102. I have not seen Henry's book.

³ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, p. 146; W. H. Keat-

ing, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River* (London, 1825), ii. 159; J. G. Kohl, *Kitschi-Gami*, ii. 80. Similar practices are reported among the Illinois, the Mandans, and the Hidatsas of North America (Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 88; Maximilian, Prinz zu Wied, *Reise in das Innere Nord-America*, ii. 188; Washington Matthews, *Ethnography and Philology of the Hidatsa Indians*, p. 50), and the Aymaras of Bolivia and Peru (D. Forbes, "On the Aymara Indians of Bolivia and Peru," *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London*, ii. (1870) p. 236).

of Mexico wishes to kill a man, he makes a figure of him out of burnt clay, strips of cloth, and so forth, and then, muttering incantations, runs thorns through the head or stomach of the figure to make his victim suffer correspondingly. Sometimes the Cora Indian makes a more beneficent use of this sort of homoeopathic magic. When he wishes to multiply his flocks or herds, he models a figure of the animal he wants in wax or clay, or carves it from tuff, and deposits it in a cave of the mountains; for these Indians believe that the mountains are masters of all riches, including cattle and sheep. For every cow, deer, dog, or hen he wants, the Indian has to sacrifice a corresponding image of the creature.¹ This may help us to understand the meaning of the figures of cattle, deer, horses, and pigs which were dedicated to Diana at Nemi.² They may have been the offerings of farmers or huntsmen who hoped thereby to multiply the cattle or the game. Similarly when the Todas of Southern India desire to obtain more buffaloes, they offer silver images of these animals in the temples.³ The Peruvian Indians moulded images of fat mixed with grain to imitate the persons whom they disliked or feared, and then burned the effigy on the road where the intended victim was to pass. This they called burning his soul. But they drew a delicate distinction between the kinds of materials to be used in the manufacture of these images, according as the victim was an Indian or a Viracocha, that is, a Spaniard. To kill an Indian they employed maize and the fat of a llama, to kill a Spaniard they used wheat and the fat of a pig, because Viracochas did not eat llamas and preferred wheat to maize.⁴

¹ C. Lumholtz, *Unknown Mexico* (London, 1903), i. 485 sq.

² Above, p. 7.

³ W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas* (London, 1906), p. 458. Among the Kusavans or potters of Southern India "if a male or female recovers from cholera, small-pox, or other severe illness, a figure of the corresponding sex is offered. A childless woman makes a vow to offer up the figure of a baby, if she brings forth offspring. Figures of animals—cattle, sheep,

horses, etc.—are offered at the temple when they recover from sickness, or are recovered after they have been stolen" (E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, iv. 192; *id.*, *Ethnographic Notes in Southern India*, p. 349). The analogy of these offerings to the various votive figures found in the sanctuary of Diana at Nemi is obvious.

⁴ P. J. de Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la Idolatria del Piru* (Lima, 1621), pp. 25 sq. The meaning and origin of the

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

Magical
images
among the
Malaya.

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

After the seventh time burn the figure, and your victim will die. This charm obviously combines the principles of homoeopathic and contagious magic ; since the image which is made in the likeness of an enemy contains things which once were in contact with him, namely, his nails, hair, and spittle. Another form of the Malay charm, which resembles the Ojebway practice still more closely, is to make a corpse of wax from an empty bees' comb and of the length of a footstep ; then pierce the eye of the image, and your enemy

name Viracocha, as applied by the Peruvians to the Spaniards, is explained with great frankness by the Italian historian G. Benzoni, who had himself travelled in America at the time of the conquest. He says (*History of the New World*, pp. 252 sq., Hakluyt Society) : "When the Indians saw the very great cruelties which the Spaniards committed everywhere on entering Peru, not only would they never believe us to be Christians and children of God, as boasted, but not even that we were born on this earth, or generated by a man and born of a woman ; so fierce an animal they concluded must be the offspring of the sea, and therefore called us *Viracochie*, for in their language they call the sea *cocchie* and the froth *vira* ; thus they think that we are a congelation of the sea, and have been nourished by the froth ; and that we are come to destroy the world, with other things in which the Omnipotence of God would not suffice to undeceive them. They say that the winds ruin houses and break down trees, and the fire burns them ; but the *Viracochie* devour everything, they consume the very earth, they

force the rivers, they are never quiet, they never rest, they are always rushing about, sometimes in one direction and sometimes in the other, seeking for gold and silver ; yet never contented, they game it away, they make war, they kill each other, they rob, they swear, they are renegades, they never speak the truth, and they deprive us of our support. Finally, the Indians curse the sea for having cast such very wicked and harsh beings on the land. Going about through various parts of this kingdom I often met some natives, and for the amusement of hearing what they would say, I used to ask them where such and such a *Christian* was, when not only would they refuse to answer me, but would not even look me in the face : though if I asked them where such and such a *Viracochie* was, they would reply directly." An explanation of the name much more flattering to Spanish vanity is given by Garcilasso de la Vega, himself half a Spaniard (*Royal Commentaries of the Yncas*, vol. ii. pp. 65 sqq., Hakluyt Society, Markham's translation).

Magical
images
among the
Malays.

is blind ; pierce the stomach, and he is sick ; pierce the head, and his head aches ; pierce the breast, and his breast will suffer. If you would kill him outright, transfix the image from the head downwards ; enshroud it as you would a corpse ; pray over it as if you were praying over the dead ; then bury it in the middle of a path where your victim will be sure to step over it. In order that his blood may not be on your head, you should say :

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

Thus the guilt of the murder will be laid on the shoulders of the archangel Gabriel, who is a great deal better able to bear it than you are.¹ In eastern Java an enemy may be killed by means of a likeness of him drawn on a piece of paper, which is then incensed or buried in the ground.² Among the Minangkabauers of Sumatra a man who is tormented by the passion of hate or of unrequited love will call in the help of a wizard in order to cause the object of his hate or love to suffer from a dangerous ulcer known as a *tinggam*. After giving the wizard the necessary instructions as to the name, bodily form, dwelling, and family of the person in question, he makes a puppet which is supposed to resemble his intended victim ; and repairs with it to a wood, where he hangs the image on a tree that stands quite by itself. Muttering a spell, he then drives an instrument through the navel of the puppet into the tree, till the sap of the tree oozes through the hole thus made. The instrument which inflicts the wound bears the same name (*tinggam*) as the ulcer which is to be raised on the body of the victim, and the oozing sap is believed to be his or her life-spirit. Soon afterwards the person against whom the charm is directed begins to suffer from an ulcer, which grows worse and worse till he dies, unless a friend can procure a piece of the wood of the tree to which the image is attached.³

¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic* (London, 1900), pp. 570-572.

² J. Kreemer, "Regenmaken, Oed-joeng, Tooverij onder de Javanen," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xxx.

(1886) pp. 117 sq.

³ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkskunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890) p. 56.

The sorcerers of Mabuiag or Jervis Island, in Torres Straits, kept an assortment of effigies in stock ready to be operated on at the requirement of a customer. Some of the figures were of stone; these were employed when short work was to be made of a man or woman. Others were wooden; these gave the unhappy victim a little more rope, only, however, to terminate his prolonged sufferings by a painful death. The mode of operation in the latter case was to put poison, by means of a magical implement, into a wooden image, to which the name of the intended victim had been given. Next day the person aimed at would feel chilly, then waste away and die, unless the same wizard who had wrought the charm would consent to undo it.¹ If the sorcerer pulled off an arm or leg of the image, the human victim felt pain in the corresponding limb of his body; but if the sorcerer restored the severed arm or leg to the figure, the man recovered. Another mode of compassing a man's death in Torres Straits was to prick a wax effigy of him or her with the spine of a sting-ray; so when the man whose name had been given to the waxen image next went afishing on the reef a sting-ray would sting him in the exact part of his body where the waxen image had been pierced. Or the sorcerer might hang the effigy on the bough of a tree, and as it swayed to and fro in the wind the person represented by it would fall sick. However, he would get well again if a friend of his could induce the magician to steady the figure by sticking it firmly in the sandy bottom of the sea.² When the Lerons of Borneo wish to be revenged on an enemy, they make a wooden image of him and leave it in the jungle. As it decays, he dies.³ More elaborate is the proceeding adopted by the Kenyahs of Borneo in similar circumstances. The operator retires with the image to a quiet spot on the river bank, and when a hawk appears in a certain part of the sky, he kills a fowl, smears its blood on the image, and puts a bit of fat in the mouth of the figure, saying, "Put fat in his mouth." By that he means, "May

Magical
images
in Torres
Straits and
Borneo.

¹ A. C. Haddon, "The Ethnography of the Western Tribe of Torres Straits," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890) pp. 399 sq.

² *Reports of the Cambridge Anthro-*

pological Expedition to Torres Straits, v. (Cambridge, 1904) pp. 324 sq.

³ W. H. Furness, *The Home-life of Borneo Head-hunters* (Philadelphia, 1902), pp. 93.

his head be cut off, hung up in an enemy's house, and fed with fat in the usual way." Then he strikes at the breast of the image with a small wooden spear, throws it into a pool of water reddened with red earth, and afterwards takes it out and buries it in the ground.¹

Magical
images in
Japan and
China.

If an Aino of Japan desires to compass the destruction of an enemy, he will make a likeness of him out of mugwort or the guelder-rose and bury it in a hole upside down or under the trunk of a rotten tree, with a prayer to a demon to carry off the man's soul or to make his body rot away with the tree. Sometimes an Aino woman will attempt to get rid of her husband in this fashion by wrapping up his head-dress in the shape of a corpse and burying it deep in the ground, while she breathes a prayer that her husband may rot and die with the head-dress.² The Japanese themselves are familiar with similar modes of enchantment. In one of their ancient books we read of a rebellious minister who made figures of the heir to the throne with intent, no doubt, to do him grievous bodily harm thereby; and sometimes a woman who has been deserted by her lover will make a straw effigy of the faithless gallant and nail it to a sacred tree, adjuring the gods to spare the tree and to visit the sacrilege on the traitor. At a shrine of Kōmpira there stood a pine-tree studded with nails which had been thus driven in for the purpose of doing people to death.³ The Chinese also are perfectly aware that you can harm a man by maltreating or cursing an image of him, especially if you have taken care to write on it his name and horoscope. This mode of venting spite on an enemy is said to be commonly practised in China. In Amoy such images, roughly made of bamboo splinters and paper, are called "substitutes of persons" and may be bought very cheap for a cash or so apiece at any shop which sells paper articles for the use of the dead or the gods; for the frugal Chinese are in the habit of palming off paper imitations of all kinds of valuables on the simple-minded ghosts and gods, who take them in all good faith for the genuine articles. As

¹ C. Hose and W. McDougall, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxi. (1901) p. 178.

Folklore (London, 1901), pp. 329-331.

² J. Batchelor, *The Ainu and their*

³ W. G. Aston, *Shinto (the Way of the Gods)* (London, 1905), pp. 331 sq.

usual, the victim suffers a hurt corresponding to the hurt done to his image. Thus if you run a nail or a needle into the eyes of the puppet, your man will go more or less blind ; if you stick a pin in its stomach, he will be doubled up with colic ; a stab in the heart of the effigy may kill him outright ; and in general the more you prick it and the louder you speak the spell, the more certain is the effect. To make assurance doubly sure it is desirable to impregnate the effigy, so to say, with the personal influence of the man by passing it clandestinely beforehand over him or hiding it, unbeknown to him, in his clothes or under his bed. If you do that, he is quite sure to die sooner or later.¹ Naturally these nefarious practices are no new thing in the Chinese empire. There is a passage in the Chinese *Book of Rewards and Penalties* which illustrates their prevalence in days gone by. There, under the rubric "To hide an effigy of a man for the purpose of giving him the nightmare," we read as follows : "This means hiding the carved wooden effigy of a man somewhere with intent to give him the nightmare. Kong-sun-tcho having died suddenly some time after he had succeeded to the post of treasurer, he appeared in a dream to the governor of his district and said unto him : 'I have been the victim of an odious crime, and I am come, my lord, to pray you to avenge me. My time to die had not yet come ; but my servants gave me the nightmare, and I was choked in my sleep. If you will send secretly some dauntless soldiers, not one of the varlets will escape you. Under the seventh tile of the roof of my house will be found my image carved of wood. Fetch it and punish the criminals.' Next day the governor of the district had all the servants arrested, and sure enough, after some search, they found under the afore-said tile the figure of a man in wood, a foot high, and bristling all over with nails. Bit by bit the wood changed into flesh and uttered inarticulate cries when it was struck. The governor of the district immediately reported to the prefect of the department, who condemned several of the servants to suffer the extreme rigour of the law."²

¹ J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, v. (Leyden, 1907) pp. 920 sq.

² *Le Livre des Récompenses et des Peines, traduit du Chinois*, par Stanislas Julien (Paris, 1835), p. 345.

Magical
images in
Australia.

When some of the aborigines of Victoria desired to destroy an enemy, they would occasionally retire to a lonely spot, and drawing on the ground a rude likeness of the victim would sit round it and devote him to destruction with cabalistic ceremonies. So dreaded was this incantation that men and women, who learned that it had been directed against them, have been known to pine away and die of fright.¹ On the Bloomfield River in Queensland the natives think they can doom a man by making a rough wooden effigy of him and burying it in the ground, or by painting his likeness on a bull-roarer; and they believe that persons whose portraits are carved on a tree at Cape Bedford will waste away.² When the wife of a Central Australian native has eloped from him and he cannot recover her, the disconsolate husband repairs with some sympathising friends to a secluded spot, where a man skilled in magic draws on the ground a rough figure supposed to represent the woman lying on her back. Beside the figure is laid a piece of green bark, which stands for her spirit or soul, and at it the men throw miniature spears which have been made for the purpose and charmed by singing over them. This barken effigy of the woman's spirit, with the little spears sticking in it, is then thrown as far as possible in the direction which she is supposed to have taken. During the whole of the operation the men chant in a low voice, the burden of their song being an invitation to the magic influence to go out and enter her body and dry up all her fat. Sooner or later—often a good deal later—her fat does dry up, she dies, and her spirit is seen in the sky in the form of a shooting star.³

Magical
images in
Burma,
and Africa.

In Burma a rejected lover sometimes resorts to a sorcerer and engages him to make a small image of the scornful fair one, containing a piece of her clothes, or of something which she has been in the habit of wearing. Certain charms or medicines also enter into the composition of the doll, which is then hung up or thrown into the water. As a conse-

¹ E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, 1903), p. 31.
iii. 547.

² W. E. Roth, *North Queensland
Ethnography*: Bulletin No. 5 (Brisbane,

³ Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen,
The Native Tribes of Central Australia
(London, 1899), pp. 549 sq.

quence the girl is supposed to go mad.¹ In this last example, as in the first of the Malay charms noticed above, homoeopathic or imitative magic is blent with contagious magic in the strict sense of the word, since the likeness of the victim contains something which has been in contact with her person. A Matabele who wishes to avenge himself on an enemy makes a clay figure of him and pierces it with a needle; next time the man thus represented happens to engage in a fight he will be speared, just as his effigy was stabbed.² The Ovambo of South-western Africa believe that some people have the power of bewitching an absent person by gazing into a vessel full of water till his image appears to them in the water; then they spit at the image and curse the man, and that seals his fate.³

The ancient books of the Hindoos testify to the use of similar enchantments among their remote ancestors. To destroy his foe a man would fashion a figure of him in clay and transfix it with an arrow which had been barbed with a thorn and winged with an owl's feathers. Or he would mould the figure of wax and melt it in a fire. Sometimes effigies of the soldiers, horses, elephants, and chariots of a hostile army were modelled in dough, and then pulled in pieces.⁴ Again, to destroy an enemy the magician might kill a red-headed lizard with the words, "I am killing So-and-so," smear it with blood, wrap it in a black cloth, and having pronounced an incantation burn it.⁵ Another way was to grind up mustard into meal, with which a figure was made of the person who was to be overcome or destroyed. Then having muttered certain spells to give efficacy to the rite, the enchanter chopped up the image, anointed it with melted butter, curds, or some such thing, and finally burnt it in a sacred pot.⁶ In the so-called "sanguinary chapter" of the *Calica Puran* there occurs the following passage: "On

Magical
images in
ancient
India.

¹ C. J. F. S. Forbes, *British Burma* (London, 1878), p. 232.

² L. Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa* (London, 1898), p. 153.

³ H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, p. 314.

⁴ A. Hillebrandt, *Vedische Opfer und Zauber* (Strasburg, 1897), p. 177; W. Caland, *Altindisches Zauberritual*

(Amsterdam, 1900), pp. 121, 166, 173, 184. Compare H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda* (Berlin, 1894), p. 508.

⁵ W. Caland, *op. cit.* p. 164.

⁶ H. W. Magoun, "The Asuri-Kalpa; a Witchcraft Practice of the Atharva-Veda," *American Journal of Philology*, x, (1889) pp. 165-197.

Magical
images in
modern
India.

the autumnal *Maha-Navami*, or when the month is in the lunar mansion *Scanda*, or *Bishâcâ*, let a figure be made, either of barley-meal or earth, representing the person with whom the sacrificer is at variance, and the head of the figure be struck off; after the usual texts have been used, the following text is to be used in invoking an axe on the occasion: 'Effuse, effuse blood; be terrific, be terrific; seize, destroy, for the love of *Ambica*, the head of this enemy.'¹

In modern India the practices described in these old books are still carried on with mere variations of detail. The magician compounds the fatal image of earth taken from sixty-four filthy places, and mixed up with clippings of hair, parings of nails, bits of leather, and so on. Upon the breast of the image he writes the name of his enemy; then he pierces it through and through with an awl, or maims it in various ways, hoping thus to maim or kill the object of his vengeance.² Among the Nambutiris of Malabar a figure representing the enemy to be destroyed is drawn on a small sheet of metal, gold by preference, on which some mystic diagrams are also inscribed. The sorcerer then declares that the bodily injury or death of the person shall take place at a certain time. After that he wraps up the little sheet in another sheet or leaf of metal (gold if possible), and buries it in a place where the victim is expected to pass. Sometimes instead of a small sheet of metal he buries a live frog or lizard enclosed in a coco-nut shell, after sticking nails into its eyes and stomach. At the same moment that the animal dies the person expires also.³ Among the Mohammedans of Northern India the proceeding is as follows. A doll is made of earth taken from a grave or from a place where bodies are cremated, and some sentences of the Coran are read backwards over twenty-one small wooden pegs. These pegs the operator next strikes into various parts of the body of the image, which is afterwards shrouded like a corpse, carried to a graveyard, and buried in the name of the enemy whom it is intended to injure. The man, it is

¹ *Asiatick Researches*, v. (Fourth Edition, London, 1807) p. 389.

² J. A. Dubois, *Mœurs, institutions, et cérémonies des peuples de l'Inde* (Paris,

1825), ii. 63.

³ Fr. Fawcett, in *Madras Government Museum, Bulletin*, iii. No. 1 (Madras, 1900), p. 85.

believed, will die without fail after the ceremony.¹ A slightly different form of the charm is observed by the Bām-Margi, a very degraded sect of Hindoos in the North-West Provinces. To kill an enemy they make an image of flour or earth, and stick razors into the breast, navel, and throat, while pegs are thrust into the eyes, hands, and feet. As if this were not enough, they next construct an image of Bhairava or Durga holding a three-pronged fork in her hand; this they place so close to the effigy of the person to whom mischief is meant that the fork penetrates its breast.² To injure a person a Singhalese sorcerer will procure a lock of his intended victim's hair, a paring of his nails, or a thread of his garment. Then he fashions an image of him and thrusts nails made of five metals into the joints. All these he buries where the unfortunate man is likely to pass. No sooner has he done so than the victim falls ill with swelling or stiffness of joints, or burning sensations in the body, or disfigurements of the mouth, legs, and arms.³

Similar enchantments are wrought by the Moslem peoples of North Africa. Thus an Arabic treatise on magic directs that if you wish to deprive a man of the use of his limbs you should make a waxen image of him, and engrave his name and his mother's name on it with a knife of which the handle must be made of the same wax; then smite the limb of the image which answers to the particular limb of the man which you desire to disable; at the same moment the limb of flesh and blood will be paralysed.⁴ The following is another extract from the same treatise: "To injure the eyes of an enemy, take a taper and fashion it into the likeness of him whom you would harm. Write on it the seven signs, along with the name of your enemy and the name of his mother and gouge out the two eyes of the figure with two points. Then put it in a pot with quick-

Magical
images
among the
Arabs of
North
Africa.

¹ W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), ii. 278 sq.

² *Id.*, *The Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh* (Calcutta, 1896), i. 137.

³ A. A. Perera, "Glimpses of Singhalese Social Life," *Indian Antiquary*, xxxiii. (1904) p. 57. For

more evidence of such practices in India, see E. Thurston, *Ethnographic Notes in Southern India*, pp. 328 sqq.; *id.*, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, iv. 489 sq., vi. 124; W. Crooke, *Natives of Northern India*, pp. 248 sq.

⁴ E. Doutté, *Magie et Religion dans l'Afrique du Nord* (Algiers, 1908), pp. 61 sq.

lime on which you must throw a little *chârîb el kamâm*, and bury the whole near the fire. The fire will make your victim to shriek and will hurt his eyes so that he will see nothing, and that the pain will cause him to utter cries of distress. But do not prolong the operation more than seven days, for he would die and you would have to answer for it at the day of the last judgment. If you wish to heal him, withdraw the figure and throw it into water. He will recover, with God's leave."¹

Magical
images in
ancient
Egypt and
Babylon.

Nowhere, perhaps, were the magic arts more carefully cultivated, nowhere did they enjoy greater esteem or exercise a deeper influence on the national life than in the land of the Pharaohs. Little wonder, therefore, that the practice of enchantment by means of images was familiar to the wizards of Egypt. A drop of a man's blood, some clippings of his hair or parings of his nails, a rag of the garment which he had worn, sufficed to give a sorcerer complete power over him. These relics of his person the magician kneaded into a lump of wax, which he moulded into the likeness and dressed after the fashion of his intended victim, who was then at the mercy of his tormentor. If the image was exposed to the fire, the person whom it represented straightway fell into a burning fever; if it were stabbed with a knife, he felt the pain of the wound.² Thus, for instance, a certain superintendent of the king's cattle was once prosecuted in an Egyptian court of law for having made figures of men and women in wax, thereby causing paralysis of their limbs and other grievous bodily harm. He had somehow obtained a book of magic which contained the spells and directions how to act in reciting them. Armed with this powerful instrument the rogue had shut himself up in a secret chamber, and there proceeded to cast spells over the people of his town.³ In ancient Babylonia also it was

¹ E. Doutté, *op. cit.* p. 299.

² G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique; les origines* (Paris, 1895), pp. 213 sq.

³ F. Chabas, *Le Papyrus magique Harris* (Chalon-sur-Saône, 1860), pp. 169 sqq.; E. A. Wallis Budge, in *Archæologia*, Second Series, vol. ii.

(1890) pp. 428 sq.; *id.*, *Egyptian Magic* (London, 1899), pp. 73 sqq. The case happened in the reign of Rameses III., about 1200 B.C. Compare A. Erman, *Ägypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, p. 475. As to Egyptian magic in general see A. Erman, *Die ägyptische Religion* (Berlin, 1905), pp. 148 sqq.

a common practice to make an image of clay, pitch, honey, fat, or other soft material in the likeness of an enemy, and to injure or kill him by burning, burying, or otherwise ill-treating it. Thus in a hymn to the fire-god Nusku we read :

"Those who have made images of me, reproducing my features,
Who have taken away my breath, torn my hairs,
Who have rent my clothes, have hindered my feet from treading the dust,
May the fire-god, the strong one, break their charm."¹

But both in Babylon and in Egypt this ancient tool of superstition, so baneful in the hands of the mischievous and malignant, was also pressed into the service of religion and turned to glorious account for the confusion and overthrow of demons. In a Babylonian incantation we meet with a long list of evil spirits whose effigies were burnt by the magician in the hope that, as their images melted in the fire, so the fiends themselves might melt away and disappear.² Every night when the sun-god Ra sank down to his home in the glowing west he was assailed by hosts of demons under the leadership of the arch-fiend Apepi. All night long he fought them, and sometimes by day the powers of darkness sent up clouds even into the blue Egyptian sky to obscure his light and weaken his power. To aid the sun-god in this daily struggle, a ceremony was daily performed in his temple at Thebes. A figure of his foe Apepi, represented as a crocodile with a hideous face or a serpent with many coils, was made of wax, and on it the demon's name was written in green ink. Wrapt in a papyrus case, on which another likeness of Apepi had been drawn in green ink, the figure was then tied up with black hair, spat upon, hacked with a stone knife, and cast on the ground. There the priest trod on it with his left foot again and again, and then burned it in a fire made of a certain plant or grass. When Apepi himself had thus been effectually disposed of, waxen effigies of each of his principal demons, and of their fathers, mothers, and children, were

Magical
images in
Babylon
and Egypt
for the dis-
comfiture
of demons

¹ M. Jastrow, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria* (Boston, U.S.A., 1898), pp. 268, 286, compare pp. 270, 272, 276, 278; R. F. Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Literature*

(New York, 1901), pp. 375, 376, 377 sqq.; C. Fossey, *La Magie assyrienne* (Paris, 1902), pp. 77-81.

² M. Jastrow, *op. cit.* pp. 286 sq.; C. Fossey, *op. cit.* p. 78.

made and burnt in the same way. The service, accompanied by the recitation of certain prescribed spells, was repeated not merely morning, noon, and night, but whenever a storm was raging, or heavy rain had set in, or black clouds were stealing across the sky to hide the sun's bright disc. The fiends of darkness, clouds, and rain felt the injuries inflicted on their images as if they had been done to themselves; they passed away, at least for a time, and the beneficent sun-god shone out triumphant once more.¹

Magical
images in
Scotland.

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

¹ E. A. Wallis Budge, "On the Hieratic Papyrus of Nesi-Amsu, a scribe in the temple of Amen-Rā at Thebes, about B.C. 305," *Archæologia*, Second

Series, ii. (1890) pp. 393-601; *id.*, *Egyptian Magic*, pp. 77 *sqq.*; *id.*, *The Gods of the Egyptians* (London, 1904), i. 270-272.

turned to make the human victim writhe in agony. The *corp clire* is reported to have been employed of late years in the counties of Inverness, Ross, and Sutherland. A specimen from Inverness-shire may be seen in the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford.¹ It is remarkable, however, that in the Highlands this form of magic has no power over a man who has lost any of his members. For example, though Ross-shire witches made a clay figure of "Donald of the Ear," they could not destroy him, because he had lost an ear in battle.² A similar form of witchcraft, known as "burying the sheaf," seems still to linger in Ireland among the dwellers in the Bog of Ardee. The person who works the charm goes first to a chapel and says certain prayers with his back to the altar; then he takes a sheaf of wheat, which he fastens into the likeness of a human body, sticking pins in the joints of the stems and, according to one account, shaping a heart of plaited straw. This sheaf he buries in the devil's name near the house of his enemy, who will, it is supposed, gradually pine away as the sheaf decays, dying when it finally decomposes. If the enchanter desires his foe to perish speedily, he buries the sheaf in wet ground, where it will soon moulder away; but if on the other hand his wish is that his victim should linger in pain, he chooses a dry spot, where decomposition will be slow.³ However, in Scotland, as in Babylon and Egypt, the destruction of an image has also been employed for the discomfiture of fiends. When Shetland fishermen wish to disenchant their boat, they

¹ See an article by R. M. O. K. entitled "A Horrible Rite in the Highlands," in the *Weekly Scotsman*, Saturday, August 24, 1889; Professor J. Rhys in *Folklore*, iii. (1892) p. 385; R. C. Maclagan, "Notes on Folklore Objects collected in Argyle-shire," *Folklore*, vi. (1895) pp. 144-148; J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth* (London, 1893), pp. 3 sq.; J. G. Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1902), pp. 46-48. Many older examples of the practice of this form of enchantment in Scotland are collected by J. G. Dalyell in his *Darker Superstitions of Scotland* (Edin-

burgh, 1834), pp. 328 sqq.

² J. G. Campbell, *op. cit.* pp. 47, 48.

³ Bryan J. Jones, in *Folklore*, vi. (1895) p. 302. For evidence of the custom in the Isle of Man see J. Train, *Historical and Statistical Account of the Isle of Man*, ii. 168; in England, see Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 10 sqq.; in Germany, see J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 913 sq.; F. Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 272 sq. As to the custom in general, see E. B. Tylor, *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*,⁵ pp. 106 sqq.; R. Andree, "Sympathie-Zauber," *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, Neue Folge, pp. 8 sqq.

row it out to sea before sunrise, and as the day is dawning they burn a waxen figure in the boat, while the skipper exclaims, "Go hence, Satan."¹

Magical
images to
procure
offspring
in America
and Africa.

If homoeopathic or imitative magic, working by means of images, has commonly been practised for the spiteful purpose of putting obnoxious people out of the world, it has also, though far more rarely, been employed with the benevolent intention of helping others into it. In other words, it has been used to facilitate childbirth and to procure offspring for barren women. Thus among the Esquimaux of Bering Strait a barren woman desirous of having a son will consult a shaman, who commonly makes, or causes her husband to make, a small doll-like image over which he performs certain secret rites, and the woman is directed to sleep with it under her pillow.² Amongst the many ceremonies which a Thompson Indian girl of British Columbia had formerly to perform at puberty was the following. She had to run four times in the morning, carrying two small stones which had been obtained from underneath the water. These were put in her bosom; and as she ran, they slipped down between her body and her clothes and fell to the ground. While she ran, she prayed to the Dawn that when she should be with child she might be delivered as easily as she had been delivered of these stones.³ Similarly among the Haida Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands a pregnant woman would let round stones, eels, chips, or other small objects slip down over her abdomen for the sake of facilitating her delivery.⁴ Among the Nishinam Indians of California, when a woman is childless, her female friends sometimes make out of grass a rude image of a baby and tie it in a small basket after the Indian fashion. Some day, when the woman is from home, they lay this grass baby in her hut. On finding it she holds it to her breast, pretends

¹ Ch. Rogers, *Social Life in Scotland*, iii. 220.

² E. W. Nelson, "The Eskimo about Bering Strait," *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, Part I. (Washington, 1899) p. 435.

³ J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians

of British Columbia," *Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. i. No. 4 (April 1900), p. 314.

⁴ J. R. Swanton, "Contributions to the Ethnology of the Haida" (Leyden and New York, 1905), pp. 47 sq. (*The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. v.).

to nurse it, and sings it lullabies. This is done as a charm to make her conceive.¹ The Huichol Indians of Mexico believe in a certain Mother who is the goddess of conception and childbirth, and lives in a cave near Santa Catarina. A woman desirous of offspring deposits in this cave a doll made of cotton cloth to represent the baby on which her heart is set. After a while she goes back to the cave, puts the doll under her girdle, and soon afterwards is supposed to be pregnant.² With a like intent Indian women in Peru used to wrap up stones like babies and leave them at the foot of a large stone, which they revered for this purpose.³ Among the Makatisses, a Caffre tribe of South Africa, a traveller observed a woman carefully tending a doll made out of a gourd, adorned with necklaces of glass beads, and heavily weighted with iron ore. On enquiry he learned that she had been directed by the medicine-man to do this as a means of obtaining a child.⁴ Among the Basutos childless wives make rude effigies of clay, and give them the name of some tutelar deity. They treat these dolls as if they were real children, and beseech the divinity to whom they have dedicated them to grant them the power of conception.⁵ In Anno, a district of West Africa, women may often be seen carrying wooden dolls strapped, like babies, on their backs as a cure for sterility.⁶ In Japan, when a marriage is unfruitful, the old women of the neighbourhood come to the house and go through a pretence of delivering the wife of a child. The infant is represented by a doll.⁷ The Maoris had a household god whose image was in the form of an infant. The image was very carefully made, generally life-size, and adorned with the family jewels. Barren women nursed it and addressed it in the most endearing terms in order to become mothers.⁸

Among the Battas of Sumatra a barren woman, who would become a mother, will make a wooden image of a

¹ S. Powers, *Tribes of California* (Washington, 1877), p. 318.

² C. Lumholtz, "Symbolism of the Huichol Indians," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. iii. (May 1900) p. 52.

³ P. J. de Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la idolatria del Perú* (Lima, 1621), p. 37.

⁴ A. Delegorgue, *Voyage dans l'Afrique*

Australe (Paris, 1847), ii. 325 sq.

⁵ E. Catellis, *The Basutos*, p. 251.

⁶ Binger, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée* (Paris, 1892), ii. 230.

⁷ W. G. Aston, *Shinto (the Way of the Gods)* (London, 1905), p. 331.

⁸ R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants* (London, 1870), p. 213.

Magical
images to
procure
offspring
in the
Eastern
Archipelago.

child and hold it in her lap, believing that this will lead to the fulfilment of her wish.¹ In the Babar Archipelago, when a woman desires to have a child, she invites a man who is himself the father of a large family to pray on her behalf to Upulero, the spirit of the sun. A doll is made of red cotton, which the woman clasps in her arms as if she would suckle it. Then the father of many children takes a fowl and holds it by the legs to the woman's head, saying, "O Upulero, make use of the fowl; let fall, let descend a child, I beseech you, I entreat you, let a child fall and descend into my hands and on my lap." Then he asks the woman, "Has the child come?" and she answers, "Yes, it is sucking already." After that the man holds the fowl on the husband's head, and mumbles some form of words. Lastly, the bird is killed and laid, together with some betel, on the domestic place of sacrifice. When the ceremony is over, word goes about in the village that the woman has been brought to bed, and her friends come and congratulate her.² Here the pretence that a child has been born is a purely magical rite designed to secure, by means of imitation or mimicry, that a child really shall be born; but an attempt is made to add to the efficacy of the rite by means of prayer and sacrifice. To put it otherwise, magic is here blent with and reinforced by religion. In Saibai, one of the islands in Torres Straits, a similar custom of purely magical character is observed, without any religious alloy. Here, when a woman is pregnant, all the other women assemble. The husband's sister makes an image of a male child and places it before the pregnant woman; afterwards the image is nursed until the birth of the child in order to ensure that the baby shall be a boy. To secure male offspring a woman will also press to her abdomen a fruit resembling the male organ of generation, which she then passes to another woman who has borne none but boys. This, it is clear, is imitative magic in a slightly different form.³ In the seventh month of a woman's

¹ J. B. Neumann, "Het Pane- en Bila-Stroomgebied op het eiland Sumatra," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, deel iii. (1886) Afdeeling, meer uitgebreide artikelen, No. 3, p. 515.

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

³ Dr. MacFarlane, quoted by A. C. Haddon, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890) pp. 389 sq.

pregnancy common people in Java observe a ceremony which is plainly designed to facilitate the real birth by mimicking it. Husband and wife repair to a well or to the bank of a neighbouring river. The upper part of the woman's body is bare, but young banana leaves are fastened under her arms, a small opening, or rather fold, being left in the leaves in front. Through this opening or fold in the leaves on his wife's body the husband lets fall from above a weaver's shuttle. An old woman receives the shuttle as it falls, takes it up in her arms and dandles it as if it were a baby, saying, "Oh, what a dear little child! Oh, what a beautiful little child!" Then the husband lets an egg slip through the fold, and when it lies on the ground as an emblem of the afterbirth, he takes his sword and cuts through the banana leaf at the place of the fold, obviously as if he were severing the navel-string.¹ Persons of high rank in Java observe the ceremony after a fashion in which the real meaning of the rite is somewhat obscured. The pregnant woman is clothed in a long robe, which her husband, kneeling before her, severs with a stroke of his sword from bottom to top. Then he throws his sword on the ground and runs away as fast as he can.² According to another account, the woman is wrapt round with white thread; her husband cuts it with his sword, throws away an oblong white gourd, dashes a fowl's egg to the ground, rolls along a young coco-nut on which the figures of a man and woman have been painted, and so departs in haste.³ Among some of the Dyaks of Borneo, when a woman is in hard labour, a wizard is called in, who essays to facilitate the delivery in a rational manner by manipulating the body of the sufferer. Meantime another wizard outside the room exerts himself to attain the same

¹ C. Poensen, "Iets over de kleding der Javanen," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendeling-genootschap*, xx. (1876) pp. 274 sq.; C. M. Pleyte, "Plechtigheden en gebruiken uit den cyclus van het familienleven der volken van den Indischen Archipel," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xli. (1892) p. 578. A slightly different account of the ceremony is given by J. Kreemer ("Hoe

de Javanen zijne zieken verzorgt," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendeling-genootschap*, xxxvi. (1892) p. 116).

² S. A. Buddingh, "Gebruiken bij Javaansche Grooten," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1840, deel ii. pp. 239-243.

³ J. Knobel, "Varia Javanica," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xliiv. (1901) pp. 34-37.

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

Simulation
of birth at
adoption,
and after
supposed
death.

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

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

² Diodorus Siculus, iv. 39.

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

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

stroked with the sweet-scented blossoms of the areca palm, and tied to the woman. Then the adopting mother and the adopted son or daughter, thus bound together, waddle to the end of the house and back again in front of all the spectators. The tie established between the two by this graphic imitation of childbirth is very strict ; an offence committed against an adopted child is reckoned more heinous than one committed against a real child.¹ In Central Africa "the Bahima practise adoption ; the male relatives always take charge of a brother's children. When a man dies his brother takes any children of the deceased and places them one by one in his wife's lap. Then he binds round her waist the thong used for tying the legs of restive cows during milking, just as is done after childbirth. The children are then brought up with his own family."² In ancient Greece any man who had been supposed erroneously to be dead, and for whom in his absence funeral rites had been performed, was treated as dead to society till he had gone through the form of being born again. He was passed through a woman's lap, then washed, dressed in swaddling-clothes, and put out to nurse. Not until this ceremony had been punctually performed might he mix freely with living folk.³ In ancient India, under similar circumstances, the supposed dead man had to pass the first night after his return in a tub filled with a mixture of fat and water ; there he sat with doubled-up fists and without uttering a syllable, like a child in the womb, while over him were performed all the sacraments that were wont to be celebrated over a pregnant woman. Next morning he got out of the tub and went through once more all the other sacraments he had formerly partaken of from his youth up ; in particular, he married a wife or espoused his old one over again with due solemnity.⁴

Amongst the Akikuyu of British East Africa every member of the tribe, whether male or female, has to go

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

² Rev. J. Roscoe, "The Bahima," *Journal of the R. Anthropological Institute*, xxxvii. (1907) p. 104.

³ Plutarch, *Quæstiones Romanæ*, 5 ;

Hesychius, s.v. *Δευτερογενής*.

⁴ W. Caland, *Die altindischen Toten- und Bestattungsgewohnheiten* (Amsterdam, 1896), p. 89. Among the Hindoos of Kumaon the same custom is reported to be still observed. See Major Reade in *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 74, § 452.

Simulation
of birth
among the
Akiuyu.

through a pretence of being born again. The age at which the ceremony is performed varies with the ability of the father to provide the goat or sheep which is required for the due observance of the rite; but it seems that the new birth generally takes place when a child is about ten years old or younger. If the child's father or mother is dead, a man or woman acts as proxy on the occasion, and in such a case the woman is thenceforth regarded by the child as its own mother. A goat or sheep is killed in the afternoon and the stomach and intestines are reserved. The ceremony takes place at evening in a hut; none but women are allowed to be present. A circular piece of the goat-skin or sheep-skin is passed over one shoulder and under the other arm of the child who is to be born again; and the animal's stomach is similarly passed over the child's other shoulder and under its other arm. The mother, or the woman who acts as mother, sits on a hide on the floor with the child between her knees. The sheep's or goat's gut is passed round her and brought in front of the child. She groans as if in labour, another woman cuts the gut as if it were the navel-string, and the child imitates the cry of a new-born infant. Until a lad has thus been born again in mimicry, he may not assist at the disposal of his father's body after death, nor help to carry him out into the wilds to breathe his last. Formerly the ceremony of the new birth was combined with the ceremony of circumcision; but the two are now kept separate.¹ In origin we may suppose that this curious pretence of being born again regularly formed part of the initiatory rites through which every Kikuyu lad and every Kikuyu girl had to pass before he or she was recognised as a full-grown member of the tribe;² for in many parts of the world a simulation of death and resurrection has been enacted by candidates on such occasions as well as on admission to the membership of certain secret societies.³ The intention of the mock birth

¹ W. S. Routledge and K. Routledge, *With a Prehistoric People, the Akiuyu of British East Africa* (London, 1910), pp. 151 sq. The ceremony was briefly described by me on Dr. Crawford's authority in *Totemism and*

Exogamy, iv. 228.

² As to these rites among the Akiuyu see W. S. Routledge and K. Routledge, *op. cit.* pp. 154 sqq.

³ *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, iii. 422 sqq.; *Totemism and Exogamy*,

or mock resurrection is not clear; but we may conjecture that it is designed, on the principles of homoeopathic or imitative magic, either to impart to the candidate the powers of a ghost or to enable him to be reborn again into the world whenever he shall have died in good earnest.

Magical images have often been employed for the amiable purpose of winning love. Thus to shoot an arrow into the heart of a clay image was an ancient Hindoo mode of securing a woman's affection; only the bow-string must be of hemp, the shaft of the arrow must be of black *ala* wood, its plume an owl's feather, and its barb a thorn.¹ No doubt the wound inflicted on the heart of the clay image was supposed to make a corresponding impression on the woman's heart. Among the Chippeway Indians there used to be few young men or women who had not little images of the persons whose love they wished to win. They pricked the hearts of the images and inserted magical powders in the punctures, while they addressed the effigies by the names of the persons whom they represented, bidding them requite their affection.² Ancient witches and wizards melted wax in the fire in order to make the hearts of their sweethearts to melt of love.³ And as the wound of love may be inflicted by an image, so by an image it may be healed. How that can be done is told by Heine in a poem based on the experience of one of his own schoolfellows. It is called *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar*, and describes how sick people offer waxen models of their ailing members to the Virgin Mary at Kevlaar in order that she may heal them of their infirmities. In the poem a lover, wasting away for love and sorrow at the death of his sweetheart, offers to the Virgin the waxen model of a heart with a prayer that she would heal his heart-ache.⁴ Such customs, still commonly

Magical
images to
procure
love.

i. 44, iii. 463 sqq., 485, 487 sq., 489 sq., 505, 532, 542, 545, 546, 549.

¹ W. Caland, *Altindisches Zauber-ritual* (Amsterdam, 1900), p. 119; M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda* (Oxford, 1897), pp. 358 sq. (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xlii.).

² W. H. Keating, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River* (London, 1825), ii. 159.

³ Theocritus, *Id.* ii. 28 sq.; Virgil, *Ecl.* viii. 81 sq. In neither of these passages is the wax said to have been fashioned in the likeness of the beloved one, but it may have been so.

⁴ As to the waxen models of the human body, or parts of it, which are still dedicated to the Virgin Mary at Kevlaar, see R. Andree, *Votives und Weihgaben des Katholischen Volks in*

observed in some parts of Catholic Europe, are interesting because they shew how in later times magic comes to be incorporated with religion. The moulding of wax images of ailing members is in its origin purely magical: the prayer to the Virgin or to a saint is purely religious: the combination of the two is a crude, if pathetic, attempt to turn both magic and religion to account for the benefit of the sufferer.

Magical
images to
maintain
domestic
harmony.

The natives of New Caledonia make use of effigies to maintain or restore harmony between husband and wife. Two spindle-shaped bundles, one representing the man and the other the woman, are tied firmly together to symbolise and ensure the amity of the couple. They are made up of various plants, together with some threads from the woman's girdle and a piece of the man's apron; a bone needle forms the axis of each. The talisman is meant to render the union of the spouses indissoluble, and is carefully treasured by them both. If, nevertheless, a domestic jar should unfortunately take place, the husband repairs to the family burying-ground with the precious packet. There he lights a fire with a wood of a particular kind, fumigates the talisman, sprinkles it with water from a prescribed source, waves it round his head, and then stirring the needle in the bundle which represents himself he says, "I change the heart of this woman, that she may love me." If the wife still remains obdurate, he ties a sugar-cane to the bundle, and presents it to her through a third person. If she eats of the sugar-cane, she feels her love for her husband revive. On her side she has the right to operate in like manner on the bundle which represents herself, always provided that she does not go to the burying-ground, which is strictly forbidden to women.¹

Homoeo-
pathic
magic in
medicine.

Another beneficent use of homoeopathic magic is to heal or prevent sickness. In ancient Greece, when a man died of dropsy, his children were made to sit with their feet in water until the body was burned. This was supposed to prevent the disease from attacking them.² Similarly, on

Süddeutschland (Brunswick, 1904) p. 85; and as to votive images of hearts in general, see *id.* pp. 127 sq.

liques, xii. (1880) p. 41; *id.*, *Mœurs et Superstitions des Néo-Calédoniens* (Nouméa, 1900), pp. 97 sq.

² Plutarch, *De sera numinis vindicta*,

¹ Father Lambert, in *Missions Catho-*

14.

the principle of water to water, among the natives of the hills near Rajamahall in India, the body of a person who has died of dropsy is thrown into a river; they think that if the corpse were buried, the disorder would return and carry off other people.¹

The ancient Hindoos performed an elaborate ceremony, based on homoeopathic magic, for the cure of jaundice. Its main drift was to banish the yellow colour to yellow creatures and yellow things, such as the sun, to which it properly belongs, and to procure for the patient a healthy red colour from a living, vigorous source, namely a red bull. With this intention, a priest recited the following spell: "Up to the sun shall go thy heart-ache and thy jaundice: in the colour of the red bull do we envelop thee! We envelop thee in red tints, unto long life. May this person go unscathed and be free of yellow colour! The cows whose divinity is Rohini, they who, moreover, are themselves red (*rohinih*)—in their every form and every strength do we envelop thee. Into the parrots, into the thrush, do we put thy jaundice, and, furthermore, into the yellow wag-tail do we put thy jaundice." While he uttered these words, the priest, in order to infuse the rosy hue of health into the fallow patient, gave him water to sip which was mixed with the hair of a red bull; he poured water over the animal's back and made the sick man drink it; he seated him on the skin of a red bull and tied a piece of the skin to him. Then in order to improve his colour by thoroughly eradicating the yellow taint, he proceeded thus. He first daubed him from head to foot with a yellow porridge made of turmeric or curcuma (a yellow plant), set him on a bed, tied three yellow birds, to wit a parrot, a thrush, and a yellow wagtail, by means of a yellow string to the foot of the bed; then pouring water over the patient, he washed off the yellow porridge, and with it no doubt the jaundice, from him to the birds. After that, by way of giving a final bloom to his complexion, he took some hairs of a red bull, wrapt them in gold leaf, and glued them to the patient's skin.² The

Homoeo-
pathic
treatment
of jaundice

¹ Th. Shaw, "The Inhabitants of the Hills near Rajamahall," *Asiatic Researches*, iv. 69 (8vo edition, London, 1807).

² M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda* (Oxford, 1897), pp. 7

Homoeopathic
treatment
of jaundice.

ancients held that if a person suffering from jaundice looked sharply at a stone-curlew, and the bird looked steadily at him, he was cured of the disease. "Such is the nature," says Plutarch, "and such the temperament of the creature that it draws out and receives the malady which issues, like a stream, through the eyesight."¹ So well recognised among bird-fanciers was this valuable property of the stone-curlew that when they had one of these birds for sale they kept it carefully covered, lest a jaundiced person should look at it and be cured for nothing.² The virtue of the bird lay not in its colour but in its large golden eye, which, if it do not pass for a tuft of yellow lichen, is the first thing that strikes the searcher, as the bird cowers, to escape observation, on the sandy, flint-strewn surface of the ground which it loves to haunt, and with which its drab plumage blends so well that only a practised eye can easily detect it.³ Thus the yellow eye of the bird drew out the yellow jaundice. Pliny tells of another, or perhaps the same, bird, to which the Greeks gave their name for jaundice, because if a jaundiced man saw it, the disease left him and slew the bird.⁴ He mentions also a stone which was supposed to cure jaundice because its hue resembled that of a jaundiced skin.⁵ In modern Greece jaundice goes by the name of the Golden Disease, and very naturally it can be healed by gold. To effect a perfect cure all that you have to do is this. Take a piece of gold (best of all an English sovereign, since English gold is the purest) and put it in a measure of wine. Expose the wine with the gold to the stars for three nights; then drink three glasses of it daily till it is used up. By that time the jaundice will be quite washed out of your system. The cure is, in the strictest sense of the word, a sovereign one.⁶

sq., 263 sq.; W. Caland, *Altindisches Zauberritual* (Amsterdam, 1900), pp. 75 sq.

¹ Plutarch, *Quaest. conviv.* v. 7. 2, 8 sq.; Aelian, *Nat. animalium*, xvii. 13.

² Schol. on Aristophanes, *Birds*, 266; Schol. on Plato, *Gorgias*, p. 494 B.

³ Alfred Newton, *Dictionary of Birds* (London, 1893-1896), p. 129.

⁴ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxx. 94. The Greek name for jaundice, and for this singular bird, was *ikteros*. The Romans called jaundice "the king's malady" (*morbus regius*). See below, p. 371, note 4.

⁵ *Nat. Hist.* xxxvii. 170.

⁶ This precious remedy was communicated to me by my colleague and friend Professor R. C. Bosanquet of

A Wend cure for jaundice, like the modern Greek one, is to drink a glass of water in which a gold coin has been left overnight.¹ A remedy based on the principle of contraries is to look steadily at pitch or other black substances.² In South Russia a Jewish remedy for jaundice is to wear golden bracelets.³ Here the great homoeopathic principle is clearly the same as in the preceding cases, though its application is different. In Germany yellow turnips, gold coins, gold rings, saffron, and other yellow things are still esteemed remedies for jaundice, just as a stick of red sealing-wax carried on the person cures the red eruption popularly known as St. Anthony's fire, or the blood-stone with its blood-red spots allays bleeding.⁴ Another popular remedy in Germany for the red St. Anthony's fire and also for bleeding is supplied by the common crossbills. In this bird "after the first moult the difference between the sexes is shewn by the hens inclining to yellowish-green, while the cocks become diversified by orange-yellow and red, their plumage finally deepening into a rich crimson-red, varied in places by a flame-colour."⁵ The smallest reflection may convince us that these gorgeous hues must be endowed with very valuable medical properties. Accordingly in some parts of Bavaria, Saxony, and Bohemia people keep crossbills in cages in order that the red birds may draw the red St. Anthony's fire and the inflammation of fever to themselves and so relieve the human patient. Often in a peasant's cottage you may see the red bird in its cage hanging beside a sick-bed and drawing to itself the hectic flush from the cheeks of the hot and restless patient, who lies tossing under the blankets. And the dried body of a crossbill has only to be placed on a wound to stop the bleeding at once. It is not the colour only of the feathers which produces this salutary effect; the peculiar

Homoeopathic treatment of St. Anthony's fire.

Liverpool. The popular Greek name for jaundice is *χρυσή*.

¹ W. von Schulenburg, *Wendische Volksagen und Gebräuche* (Leipzig, 1880), p. 223.

² J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 981; G. Lammert, *Volksmedizin und medizinischer Aberglaube in Bayern* (Würzburg, 1869), p. 248.

³ Dr. S. Weissenberg, "Krankheit und Tod bei den südrussischen Juden," *Globus*, xci. (1907) p. 358.

⁴ K. Freiherr von Leoprechting, *Aus dem Lechrain* (Munich, 1855), p. 92; A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,³ p. 302, § 477.

⁵ Alfred Newton, *Dictionary of Birds*, p. 115.

Homoeopathic
virtue of
crossbills.

shape of the bill, which gives the bird its English and German name, is a contributory cause. For the horny sheaths of the bill cross each other obliquely, and this formation undoubtedly enables the bird to draw diseases to itself more readily than a beak of the common shape could possibly do. Curious observers have even remarked that when the upper bill crosses the lower to the right, the bird will attract the diseases of men, whereas if the upper bill crosses the lower to the left, it will attract the diseases of women. But I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this particular observation. However that may be, certain it is that no fire will break out in a house where a crossbill is kept in a cage, neither will lightning strike the dwelling; and this immunity can only be ascribed to the protective colouring of the bird, the red hue of its plumage serving to ward off the red lightning and to nip a red conflagration in the bud. However, the poor bird seldom lives to old age; nor could this reasonably be expected of a creature which has to endure so much vicarious suffering. It generally falls a victim to one or other of the maladies of which it has relieved our ailing humanity. The causes which have given the crossbill its remarkable colour and the peculiar shape of its bill have escaped many naturalists, but they are familiar to children in Germany. The truth is that when Jesus Christ hung on the cross a flight of crossbills fluttered round him and tugged with their bills at the nails in his hands and feet to draw them out, till their feathers, which were grey before, were all bedabbled with blood, and their beaks, which had been straight, were twisted awry. So red have been their feathers and twisted their beaks from that day to this.¹ Another cure prescribed in Germany for St. Anthony's fire is to rub the patient with ashes from a house that has been burned down;² for it is easy to see that as the fire died out in that house, so St. Anthony's fire will die out in that man.

A curious application of homoeopathic magic to the

¹ Dr. J. Gengler, "Der Kreuzschnabel als Hausarzt," *Globus*, xci. (1907) pp. 193 sq.; A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 117, § 164; Alois John, *Sitte, Brauch und Volksaberglaube im deutschen Westböhmen*

(Prague, 1905), p. 218; P. Drechsler, *Sitte, Brauch und Volksaberglaube in Schlesien*, ii. (Leipsic, 1906) p. 231.

² A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 302, § 477.

cure of disease is founded on the old English superstition that if a shrew-mouse runs over a beast, be it horse, cow, or sheep, the animal suffers cruelly and may lose the use of its limb. Against this accident the farmer used to keep a shrew-ash at hand as a remedy. A shrew-ash was prepared thus. A deep hole was bored in the tree, and a shrew-mouse was thrust in alive and plugged in, probably with some incantations which have been forgotten.¹ An ancient Indian cure for a scanty crop of hair was to pour a solution of certain plants over the head of the patient; this had to be done by a doctor who was dressed in black and had eaten black food, and the ceremony must be performed in the early morning, while the stars were fading in the sky, and before the black crows had risen cawing from their nests.² The exact virtue of these plants has escaped our knowledge, but we can hardly doubt that they were dark and hairy; while the black clothes of the doctor, his black food, and the swarthy hue of the crows unquestionably combined to produce a crop of black hair on the patient's head. A more disagreeable means of attaining the same end is adopted by some of the tribes of Central Australia. To promote the growth of a boy's hair a man with flowing locks bites the youth's scalp as hard as he can, being urged thereto by his friends, who sit round watching him at his task, while the sufferer howls aloud with pain.³ Clearly, on the principle of capillary attraction, if I may say so, he thus imparts of his own mature abundance to the scarcity of his youthful friend.

The shrew-mouse and the shrew-ash.

Homoeopathic prescriptions to make the hair grow.

One of the great merits of homoeopathic magic is that it enables the cure to be performed on the person of the doctor instead of on that of his victim, who is thus relieved of all trouble and inconvenience, while he sees his medical man writhe in anguish before him. For example, the peasants of

Various homoeopathic remedies.

¹ Gilbert White, *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne*, part ii. letter 28.

² M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharva. Veda*, pp. 31, 536 sq.; W. Caland, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p. 103. In ancient Indian magic it is often prescribed that charms to heal sickness should be performed at the

hour when the stars are vanishing in the sky. See W. Caland, *op. cit.* pp. 85, 86, 88, 96. Was this in order that the ailment might vanish with the stars?

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (London, 1904), p. 332; *id.*, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 251.

Homoeo-
pathic
cures.

Perche, in France, labour under the impression that a prolonged fit of vomiting is brought about by the patient's stomach becoming unhooked, as they call it, and so falling down. Accordingly, a practitioner is called in to restore the organ to its proper place. After hearing the symptoms he at once throws himself into the most horrible contortions, for the purpose of unhooking his own stomach. Having succeeded in the effort, he next hooks it up again in another series of contortions and grimaces, while the patient experiences a corresponding relief. Fee five francs.¹ In like manner a Dyak medicine-man, who has been fetched in a case of illness, will lie down and pretend to be dead. He is accordingly treated like a corpse, is bound up in mats, taken out of the house, and deposited on the ground. After about an hour the other medicine-men loose the pretended dead man and bring him to life; and as he recovers, the sick person is supposed to recover too.² A cure for a tumour, based on the principle of homoeopathic magic, is prescribed by Marcellus of Bordeaux, court physician to Theodosius the First, in his curious work on medicine. It is as follows. Take a root of vervain, cut it across, and hang one end of it round the patient's neck, and the other in the smoke of the fire. As the vervain dries up in the smoke, so the tumour will also dry up and disappear. If the patient should afterwards prove ungrateful to the good physician, the man of skill can avenge himself very easily by throwing the vervain into water; for as the root absorbs the moisture once more, the tumour will return.³ The same sapient writer recommends you, if you are troubled with pimples, to watch for a falling star, and then instantly, while the star is still shooting from the sky, to wipe the pimples with a cloth or anything that comes to hand. Just as the star falls from the sky, so the pimples will fall from your body; only you must be very careful not to wipe them with your bare hand, or the pimples will be transferred to it.⁴

¹ F. Chapiseau, *Le Folk-lore de la Beauce et du Perche* (Paris, 1902), i. 172 sq.

² J. Perham, "Manangism in Borneo," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 19 (1887),

p. 100; H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 280.

³ Marcellus, *De medicamentis*, xv. 82.

⁴ Marcellus, *op. cit.* xxxiv. 100.

Further, homoeopathic and in general sympathetic magic plays a great part in the measures taken by the rude hunter or fisherman to secure an abundant supply of food. On the principle that like produces like, many things are done by him and his friends in deliberate imitation of the result which he seeks to attain; and, on the other hand, many things are scrupulously avoided because they bear some more or less fanciful resemblance to others which would really be disastrous.

Nowhere is the theory of sympathetic magic more systematically carried into practice for the maintenance of the food supply than in the barren regions of Central Australia. Here the tribes are divided into a number of totem clans, each of which is charged with the duty of propagating and multiplying their totem for the good of the community by means of magical ceremonies and incantations. The great majority of the totems are edible animals and plants, and the general result supposed to be accomplished by these magical totemic ceremonies or *intichiuma*, as the Arunta call them, is that of supplying the tribe with food and other necessities. Often the rites consist of an imitation of the effect which the people desire to produce; in other words, their magic is of the homoeopathic or imitative sort.

Thus among the Arunta the men of the witchetty grub totem perform a series of elaborate ceremonies for multiplying the grub which the other members of the tribe use as food. One of the ceremonies is a pantomime representing the fully-developed insect in the act of emerging from the chrysalis. A long narrow structure of branches is set up to imitate the chrysalis case of the grub. In this structure a number of men, who have the grub for their totem, sit and sing of the creature in its various stages. Then they shuffle out of it in a squatting posture, and as they do so they sing of the insect emerging from the chrysalis. This is supposed to multiply the numbers of the grubs.¹ Again, in order to multiply emus, which are an important article of food, the men of the emu totem in the Arunta tribe proceed as follows. They clear a small spot of level ground, and opening veins in their arms they let the

Sympathetic magic to ensure the food supply.

Systematic use of sympathetic magic in Central Australia.

Intichiuma, or magical ceremonies for the increase of the totemic animals and plants in Central Australia. Witchetty grub ceremony.

Emu ceremony.

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

blood stream out until the surface of the ground, for a space of about three square yards, is soaked with it. When the blood has dried and caked, it forms a hard and fairly impermeable surface, on which they paint the sacred design of the emu totem, especially the parts of the bird which they like best to eat, namely, the fat and the eggs. Round this painting the men sit and sing. Afterwards performers, wearing head-dresses to represent the long neck and small head of the emu, mimic the appearance of the bird as it stands aimlessly peering about in all directions.¹ Again, men of the hakea flower totem in the Arunta tribe perform a ceremony to make the hakea tree burst into blossom. The scene of the ceremony is a little hollow, by the side of which grows an ancient hakea tree. In the middle of the hollow is a small worn block of stone, supposed to represent a mass of hakea flowers. Before the ceremony begins, an old man of the totem carefully sweeps the ground clean, and then strokes the stone all over with his hands. After that the men sit round the stone and chant invitations to the tree to flower much and to the blossoms to be filled with honey. Finally, at the request of the old leader, one of the young men opens a vein in his arm and lets the blood flow freely over the stone, while the rest continue to sing. The flow of blood is supposed to represent the preparation of the favourite drink of the natives, which is made by steeping the hakea flower in water. As soon as the stone is covered with blood the ceremony is complete.² Again, the men of the kangaroo totem in the Arunta tribe perform ceremonies for the multiplication of kangaroos at a certain rocky ledge, which, in the opinion of the natives, is full of the spirits of kangaroos ready to go forth and inhabit kangaroo bodies. A little higher up on the hillside are two blocks of stone, which represent a male and female kangaroo respectively. At the ceremony these two blocks are rubbed with a stone by two men. Then the rocky ledge below is decorated with alternate vertical stripes of red and white, to indicate the red fur and white bones of the kangaroo. After that a number of young men sit on the ledge, open veins in

Hakea
flower
ceremony.

Kangaroo
ceremony.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* pp. 179 sqq.

² Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* pp. 184 sq.

their arms, and allow the blood to spurtle over the edge of the rock on which they are seated. This pouring out of the blood of the kangaroo men on the rock is thought to drive out the spirits of the kangaroos in all directions, and so to increase the number of the animals. While it is taking place, the other men sit below watching the performers and singing songs which refer to the expected increase of kangaroos.¹ In the Kaitish tribe, when the headman of the grass seed totem wishes to make the grass grow, he takes two sacred sticks or stones (*churinga*) of the well-known bull-roarer pattern, smears them with red-ochre, and decorates them with lines and dots of down to represent grass seed. Then he rubs the sticks or stones together so

Grass seed ceremony.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* pp. 193 *sqq.*, 199 *sqq.*, 206 *sq.* In the south of France and in the Pyrenees a number of caves have been found adorned with paintings or carvings of animals which have long been extinct in that region, such as the mammoth, the reindeer, and the bison. All the beasts thus represented appear to be edible, and none of them to be fierce carnivorous creatures. Hence it has been ingeniously suggested by M. S. Reinach that the intention of these works of art may have been to multiply by magic the animals so represented, just as the Central Australians seek to increase kangaroos and emus in the manner described above. He infers that the comparatively high development of prehistoric art in Europe among men of the reindeer age may have been due in large measure to the practice of sympathetic magic. See S. Reinach, "L'Art et la magie," *L'Anthropologie*, xiv. (1903) pp. 257-266; *id.*, *Cultes, Myths et Religions*, i. (Paris, 1905) pp. 125-136. Paintings and carvings executed in caves and on rocks by the aborigines have been described in various parts of Australia. See G. Grey, *Journals of two Expeditions of Discovery* (London, 1841), i. 201-206; R. Brough Smyth, *The Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 289-294, ii. 309; E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, ii. 476; Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 614-618; J. F. Mann, in *Pro-*

ceedings of the Geographical Society of Australia, i. (1885) pp. 50 *sq.*, with illustrations; W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies among the North-west-central Queensland Aborigines*, p. 116. We may conjecture that the Hebrew prohibition to make "the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the heaven, the likeness of anything that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth" (*Deuteronomy* iv. 17 *sq.*), was primarily directed rather against magic than idolatry in the strict sense. Ezekiel speaks (viii. 10-12) of the elders of Israel offering incense to "every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts," portrayed on the walls of their chambers. If hieroglyphs originated, as seems possible, in representations of edible animals and plants which had long been in use for the purpose of magically multiplying the species, we could readily understand why, for example, dangerous beasts of prey should be conspicuously absent from the so-called Hittite system of hieroglyphs, without being forced to have recourse to the rationalistic explanation of their absence which has been adopted by Professors G. Hirschfeld and W. M. Ramsay. See W. M. Ramsay, *The Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, i. p. xv. On the relations of art and magic, see Y. Hirn, *Origins of Art* (London, 1900), pp. 278-297.

that the down flies off in all directions. The down is supposed to carry with it some virtue from the sacred stick or stone whereby the grass seed is made to grow. For days afterwards the headman walks about by himself in the bush singing the grass seed and carrying one of the sacred bull-roarers (*churinga*) with him. At night he hides the implement in the bush and returns to camp, where he may have no intercourse with his wife. For during all this time he is believed to be so full of magic power, derived from the bull-roarer, that if he had intercourse with her the grass seed would not grow properly and his body would swell up when he tasted of it. When the seed begins to grow, he still goes on singing to make it grow more, but when it is fully grown he brings back the sacred implement to his camp hidden in bark; and having gathered a store of the seed he leaves it with the men of the other half of the tribe, saying, "You eat the grass seed in plenty, it is very good and grows in my country."¹

Manna
ceremony.

A somewhat similar ceremony is performed by men of the manna totem in the Arunta tribe for the increase of their totem. This manna is a product of the mulga tree (*Acacia aneura*), and resembles the better-known sugar-manna of gum trees. When the men of the totem wish to multiply the manna, they resort to a great boulder of grey rock, curiously streaked with black and white seams, which is thought to represent a mass of manna deposited there long ago by a man of the totem. The same significance is attributed to other smaller stones which rest on the top of the boulder. The headman of the totem begins the ceremony by digging up a sacred bull-roarer (*churinga*), which is buried in the earth at the foot of the boulder. It is supposed to represent a lump of manna and to have lain there ever since the remote *alcheringa* or dream time, the farthest past of which these savages have any conception. Next the headman climbs to the top of the boulder and rubs it with the bull-roarer, and after that he takes the smaller stones and with them rubs the same spot on the boulder. Meantime the other men, sitting round about, chant loudly an invitation to the dust produced by

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 291-294.

the rubbing of the stones to go out and generate a plentiful supply of manna on the mulga-trees. Finally, with twigs of the mulga the leader sweeps away the dust which has gathered on the surface of the stone; his intention is to cause the dust to settle on the mulga-trees and so produce manna.¹

Again, in a rocky gorge of the Murchison Range there are numbers of little heaps of rounded, water-worn stones, carefully arranged on beds of leaves and hidden away under piles of rougher quartzite blocks. In the opinion of the Warramunga tribe, these rounded stones represent euros, that is, a species of kangaroo. According to their size they stand for young or old, male or female euros. Any old man of the euro totem who happens to pass the spot may take the stones out, smear them with red ochre and rub them well. This is supposed to cause the spirits of euros to pass out from the stones and to be born as animals, thus increasing the food supply.² Again, in the Warramunga tribe Messrs. Spencer and Gillen saw and heard a ceremony which was believed to multiply white cockatoos to a wonderful extent. From ten o'clock one evening until after sunrise next morning the headman of the white cockatoo totem held in his hand a rude effigy of the cockatoo and imitated the harsh cry of the bird, with exasperating monotony, all night long. When his voice failed him, his son took up the call and relieved the old man until such time as his father was rested enough to begin again.³

In this last ceremony the homoeopathic or imitative character of the rite is particularly plain: the shape of the bird which is to be multiplied is mimicked by an effigy, its cry is imitated by the human voice. In others of the ceremonies just described the homoeopathic principle works by means of stones, which resemble in shape the edible animals or plants that the natives desire to increase. We shall see presently that the Melanesians similarly attribute fertilising virtues to stones of certain shapes.⁴ Meantime it

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 185 sq.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 310.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 309 sq.

⁴ See below, pp. 162-164.

Use of
human
blood in
these cere-
monies.

deserves to be noticed that in some of these Australian rites for the multiplication of the totemic animals the blood of the men of the totem plays an important part. Similarly in a ceremony performed by men of the Dieri tribe for the multiplication of carpet-snakes and iguanas the performers wound themselves and the blood that drips from their wounds is poured on a sandhill in which a mythical ancestor is believed to be buried and from which carpet-snakes and iguanas are confidently expected to swarm forth.¹ Again, when the headman of the fish totem in the Wonkgongaru tribe desires to make fish plentiful, he paints himself all over with red ochre, and, taking little pointed bones, goes into a pool. There he pierces his scrotum and the skin around the navel with the bones, and sits down in the water. The blood from the wounds, as it mingles with the water, is supposed to give rise to fish.² In all these cases clearly a fertilising virtue is ascribed to human blood. The ascription is interesting and may possibly go some way to explain the widely-spread custom of voluntary wounds and mutilations in religious or magical rites. It may therefore be worth while, even at the cost of a digression, to enquire a little more closely into the custom as it is practised by the rude savages of Australia.³

Blood
poured
into graves.

In the first place, then, the Dieri custom of pouring blood over the supposed remains of the ancestor in his sandhill closely resembles the custom observed by some of the Australian aborigines at the graves of their relatives. Thus among the tribes on the River Darling several men used to stand by the open grave and cut each other's heads with a boomerang, and then hold their bleeding heads over the grave so that the blood dripped on the corpse at the bottom of it. If the deceased was highly esteemed, the bleeding was repeated after some earth had been thrown on the corpse.⁴ Among

¹ A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia* (London, 1904), p. 798.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 287 sq.

³ With what follows compare my article "The Origin of Circumcision," *The Independent Review*, November

1904, pp. 204 sqq.; *Totemism and Exogamy*, iv. 181-184.

⁴ F. Bonney, "On some Customs of the Aborigines of the River Darling, New South Wales," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884) pp. 134 sq. Compare J. Fraser, "The Aborigines of New South Wales," *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal*

the Arunta it is customary for the women kinsfolk to cut themselves at the grave so that blood flows upon it.¹ Again, at the Vasse River, in Western Australia, before the body was lowered into the grave, the natives used to gash their thighs, and at the flowing of the blood they all said, "I have brought blood," and they stamped the foot forcibly on the ground, sprinkling the blood around them; then wiping the wounds with a wisp of leaves, they threw it, all bloody, on the dead man. After that they let the body down into the grave.² Further, it is a common practice with the Central Australians to give human blood to the sick and aged for the purpose of strengthening them; and in order that the blood may have this effect it need not always be drunk by the infirm person, it is enough to sprinkle it on his body. For example, a young man will often open a vein in his arm and let the blood trickle over the body of an older man in order to strengthen his aged friend; and sometimes the old man will drink a little of the blood.³ So in illness the blood is sometimes applied outwardly as well as inwardly, the patient both drinking it and having it rubbed over his body; sometimes apparently he only drinks it. The blood is drawn from a man or woman who is related to the sufferer either by blood or marriage, and the notion always is to convey to the sick person some of the strength of the blood-giver.⁴ In the Wiimbaio tribe, if a man had nearly killed his wife in a paroxysm of rage, the woman was laid out on the ground, and the husband's arms being tightly bound above the elbows, the medicine-man opened the veins in them and allowed the blood to flow on the prostrate body of the victim till the man grew faint.⁵ The intention of thus bleeding the man over the woman

Blood
given to
the sick
and aged

Society of New South Wales, xvi. (1882) pp. 229, 231; A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 451, 465.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 507, 509 sq.

² Mr. Bussell in Sir G. Grey's *Journals of Two Expeditions of Discovery in North-West and Western Australia* (London, 1841), ii. 330.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 382, 461;

id., *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 598.

⁴ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 464; *id.*, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 599 sqq.; W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies*, p. 162, § 283. In North-Western Queensland the blood may be drawn for this purpose from any healthy man, not necessarily from a kinsman.

⁵ A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 380.

Blood used
by an
avenging
party.

+

was apparently to restore her to life by means of the blood drawn from her assailant. Again, before an avenging party starts to take the life of a distant enemy, all the men stand up, open veins in their genital organs with sharp flints or pointed sticks, and allow the blood to spurtle over each other's thighs. This ceremony is supposed to strengthen the men mutually, and also to knit them so closely together that treachery henceforth becomes impossible. Sometimes for the same purpose blood is drawn from the arm and drunk by the men of the avenging party, and if one of them refuses thus to pledge himself the others will force his mouth open and pour the blood into it. After that, even if he wishes to play the traitor and to give the doomed man warning, he cannot do so; he is bound by a physical necessity to side with the avengers whose blood he has swallowed.¹

Blood of
circum-
cision
and sub-
incision;
uses made
of it.

Further, it is worth while to notice some uses made of human blood in connexion with the ceremonies of circumcision and subincision, which all lads of the Central Australian tribes have to undergo before they are recognised as full-grown men. For example, the blood drawn from them at these operations is caught in a hollow shield and taken to certain kinsmen or kinswomen, who drink it or have it smeared on their breasts and foreheads.² The motive of this practice is not mentioned, but on the analogy of the preceding customs we may conjecture that it is to strengthen the relatives who partake of the blood. This interpretation is confirmed by an analogous use in Queensland of the blood drawn from a woman at the operation which in the female sex corresponds to subincision in the male; for that blood, mixed with another ingredient, is kept and drunk as a medicine by any sick person who may be in the camp at the time.³ Moreover, it is corroborated by a similar use of the foreskin which has been removed at circumcision; for among the southern Arunta this piece of skin is given to the younger brother of the circumcised lad and he swallows

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 461 sq.; *id.*, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 560, 562, 598.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes*

of Central Australia, pp. 251, 463; *id.*, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 352, 355.

³ W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies*, p. 174, § 305.

it, in the belief that it will make him grow strong and tall.¹ In the tribe at Fowler's Bay, who practise both circumcision and subincision, the severed foreskin is swallowed by the operator,² perhaps in order to strengthen the lad sympathetically. In some tribes of North-West Australia it is the lad himself who swallows his own foreskin mixed with kangaroo flesh; while in other tribes of the same region the severed portion is taken by the relations and deposited under the bark of a large tree.³ The possible significance of this latter treatment of the foreskin will appear presently. Among the Kolkodoons of Cloniny, in Northern Queensland, the foreskin is strung on twine made of human hair, and is then tied round the mother's neck "to keep off the devil."⁴ In the Warramunga tribe the old men draw blood from their own subincised urethras in presence of the lads who a few days before have undergone the operation of subincision. The object of this custom, we are told, is to promote the healing of the young men's wounds and to strengthen them generally.⁵ It does not appear that the blood of the old men is drunk by or smeared upon the youths; seemingly it is supposed to benefit them sympathetically without direct contact. A similar action of blood at a distance may partly explain a very singular custom observed by the Arunta women at the moment when a lad is being subincised. The operation is performed at a distance from, but within hearing of, the women's camp. When the boy is seized in order to be operated on, the men of the

Anodynes based on the principle of homoeopathic magic.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 250 sq. Among the northern Arunta the foreskin is buried, along with the blood, in a hole (*ib.* p. 268).

² A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 667.

³ E. Clement, "Ethnographical Notes on the Western Australian Aborigines," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, xvi. (1904) p. 11. Among the western coastal tribes of the Northern Territory of South Australia the foreskin is held against the bellies of those who have been present at the operation, then it is placed in a bag which the operator wears round

his neck till the wound has healed, when he throws it into the fire. See H. Basedow, *Anthropological Notes on the Western Coastal Tribes of the Northern Territory of South Australia*, p. 12 (printed by Hussey and Gillingham, Adelaide).

⁴ B. H. Purcell, "Rites and Customs of the Australian Aborigines," *Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie*, p. (287) (*Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxv. 1893). Cloniny is perhaps a misprint for Cloncurry.

⁵ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 360 sq., 599. Compare *id.*, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 257.

party raise a loud shout of "Pirr-rr." At that sound the women immediately assemble in their camp, and the boy's mother cuts gashes across the stomach and shoulders of the boy's sisters, her own elder sisters, an old woman who furnished the boy with a sacred fire at circumcision, and all the women whose daughters he would be allowed to marry; and while she cuts she imitates the sound made by the men who are subincising her son. These cuts generally leave behind them a definite series of scars; they have a name of their own (*urpma*), and are often represented by definite lines on the bull-roarers.¹ What the exact meaning of this extraordinary ceremony may be, I cannot say; but perhaps one of its supposed effects may be to relieve the boy's pain by transferring it to his women-kind. In like manner, when the Warramunga men are fighting each other with blazing torches, the women burn themselves with lighted twigs in the belief that by so doing they prevent the men from inflicting serious injuries on each other.² The theory further receives some support from certain practices formerly observed by the natives inhabiting the coast of New South Wales. Before lads had their noses bored, the medicine men threw themselves into contortions on the ground, and after pretending to suffer great pain were delivered of bones, which were to be used at the ceremony of nose-boring. The lads were told that the more the medicine men suffered, the less pain they themselves would feel.³ Again, among the same natives, when a woman was in labour, a female friend would tie one end of a cord round the sufferer's neck and rub her own gums with the other end till they bled,⁴ probably in order to draw away the pain from the mother to herself. For a similar reason, perhaps, in Samoa, while blood was being drawn from a virgin bride, her friends, young and old, beat their heads with stones till they bled.⁵

Lastly, in some tribes the blood shed at the circumcision

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 256 sq.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 391.

³ Lieut.-Colonel D. Collins, *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, Second Edition (London, 1804), p. 366.

⁴ D. Collins, *op. cit.* p. 363.

⁵ G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 94; compare W. T. Pritchard, "Notes on certain Anthropological Matters respecting the South Sea Islanders (the Samoans)," *Memoirs of the Anthropological Society of London*, i. (1863-4), pp. 324-326.

and subincision of lads is collected in paper bark and buried in the bank of a pool where water-lilies grow; this is supposed to promote the growth of the lilies.¹ Needless to say, this rude attempt at horticulture is not prompted by a simple delight in contemplating these beautiful bright blue flowers which bloom in the Australian wilderness, decking the surface of pools by countless thousands. The savages feed on the stems and roots of the lilies; that is why they desire to cultivate them.² In this last practice a fertilising virtue is clearly attributed to the blood of circumcision and subincision. The Anula tribe, who among others observe the custom, obviously ascribe the same virtue to the severed foreskin, for they bury it also by the side of a pool.³ The Warramunga entertain the same opinion of this part of the person, for they place the foreskin in a hole made by a witchetty grub in a tree, believing that it will cause a plentiful supply of these edible grubs.⁴ Among the Unmatjera the custom is somewhat different, but taken in connexion with their traditions it is even more significant. The boy puts his severed foreskin on a shield, covers it up with a broad spear-thrower, and then carries it in the darkness of night, lest any woman should see what he is doing, to a hollow tree in which he deposits it. He tells no one where he has hidden it, except a man who stands to him in the relation of father's sister's son. Nowadays there is no special relation between the boy and the tree, but formerly the case seems to have been different. For according to

Fertilising
virtue
attributed
to blood
of circum-
cision and
sub-
incision.

Fertilising
virtue
attributed
to foreskin.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 367, 368, 599.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 9, 368, 552, 553, 554 sq. See further E. Palmer, "On Plants used by the Natives of North Queensland," *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales for 1883*, xvii. 101. The seeds of the splendid pink water-lily (the sacred lotus) are also eaten by the natives of North Queensland. The plant grows in lagoons on the coast. See E. Palmer, *loc. cit.*

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 372.

⁴ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 353 sq. Some of the dwarf tribes of the Gaboon, who practise circumcision, place the severed foreskins in the trunks of a species of nut-tree (*Kula edulis*), which seems to be their totem; for the tree is said to have a certain sanctity for them, and some groups take their name from it, being called *A-Kula*, "the people of the nut-tree." They eat the nuts, and have a special ceremony at the gathering of the first nuts of the season. See Mgr. Le Roy, "Les Pygmées," *Missions Catholiques*, xxix. (1897) pp. 222 sq., 237.

tradition the early mythical ancestors of the tribe placed their foreskins in their *nanja* trees, that is, in their local totem centres, the trees from which their spirits came forth at birth and to which they would return after death.¹ If, as seems highly probable, such a custom as that recorded by the tradition ever prevailed, its intention could hardly be any other than that of securing the future birth and reincarnation of the owner of the foreskin when he should have died and his spirit returned to its abode in the tree. For among all these Central tribes the belief is firmly rooted that the human soul undergoes an endless series of reincarnations, the living men and women of one generation being nothing but the spirits of their ancestors come to life again, and destined to be themselves reborn in the persons of their descendants. During the interval between two incarnations the souls live in their *nanja* spots or local totem centres, which are always natural objects such as trees or rocks. Each totem clan has a number of such totem centres scattered over the country. There the souls of the dead men and women of the totem, but of no other, congregate during their disembodied state, and thence they issue and are born again in human form when a favourable opportunity presents itself.² It might well be thought that a man's new birth would be facilitated if, in his lifetime, he could lay up a stock of vital energy for the use of his disembodied spirit after death. That he did, apparently, by detaching a portion of himself, namely the foreskin, and depositing it in his *nanja* tree, or rock, or whatever it might be.

Belief of the Central Australian tribes in the reincarnation of the dead.

Circumcision perhaps intended to ensure reincarnation.

Is it possible that in this belief and this practice we have the long lost key to the meaning of circumcision? In other words, can it be that circumcision was originally intended to ensure the rebirth at some future time of the circumcised man by disposing of the severed portion of his body in such a way as to provide him with a stock of energy on which his disembodied spirit could draw when the critical moment of reincarnation came round? The conjecture is confirmed by the observation that among the Akikuyu of

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 341.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 123 sqq.

British East Africa the ceremony of circumcision used to be regularly combined with a graphic pretence of rebirth enacted by the novice.¹ If this should prove to be indeed the clue to the meaning of circumcision, it would be natural to look for an explanation of subincision along the same lines. Now we have seen that the blood of subincision is used both to strengthen relatives and to make water-lilies grow. Hence we may conjecture that the strengthening and fertilising virtue of the blood was applied, like the foreskin at circumcision, to lay up a store of energy in the *nanja* spot against the time when the man's feeble ghost would need it. The intention of both ceremonies would thus be to ensure the future reincarnation of the individual by quickening the local totem centre, the home of his disembodied spirit, with a vital portion of himself. That portion, whether the foreskin or the blood, was in a manner seed sown to grow up and provide his immortal spirit with a new body when his old body should have mouldered in the dust.

Perhaps the same theory may serve to explain another initiatory rite practised by some of the Australian aborigines, namely, the knocking out of teeth. This is the principal ceremony of initiation amongst the tribes of eastern and south-eastern Australia; and it is often practised, though not as an initiatory rite, by the Central tribes, with whom the essential rites of initiation are circumcision and subincision.² On the hypothesis here suggested, we should expect to find the tooth regarded as a vital part of the man which was sacrificed to ensure another life for him after death. The durability of the teeth, compared to the corruptible nature of the greater part of the body, might be a sufficient reason with a savage philosopher for choosing this portion of the corporeal frame on which to pin his hope of immortality. The evidence at our disposal certainly does not suffice to establish this explanation of the rite; but there are some facts which seem to point in that direction. In the first

¹ See above, pp. 75-77.

² A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 538 sqq., 563, 564, 565, 566, 569, 571, 576, 586 sq., 588, 589, 592, 613, 616, 641,

655 sq., 675 sq.; Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 213 sq., 450 sqq.; *id.*, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 18, 329, 588 sqq.

place, the extracted tooth is supposed to remain in sympathetic connexion with the man from whom it has been removed; and if proper care is not taken of it, he may fall ill.¹ With some Victorian tribes the practice was for the mother of the lad to choose a young gum-tree and to insert her son's teeth in the bark, at the fork of two of the topmost boughs. Ever afterwards the tree was held in a sense sacred. It was made known only to certain persons of the tribe, and the youth himself was never allowed to learn where his teeth had been deposited. When he died, the tree was killed by fire.² Thus in a fashion the tree might be said to be bound up with the life of the man whose teeth it contained, since when he died it was destroyed. Further, among some of the Central tribes the extracted tooth is thrown away as far as possible in the direction of the spot where the man's mother is supposed to have had her camp in the far-off legendary time which is known as the *alcheringa*.³ May not this be done to secure the rebirth of the man's spirit in that place? In the Gnanji tribe the extracted tooth is buried by the man's or woman's mother beside a pool, for the purpose of stopping the rain and increasing the number of water-lilies that grow in the pool.⁴ Thus the same fertilising virtue is ascribed to the tooth which is attributed to the foreskin severed at circumcision and to the blood drawn at subincision. Why the drawing of teeth should be supposed to stop rain, I cannot guess. Curiously enough, among the Central tribes generally, the extraction of teeth has a special association with rain and water. Thus among the Arunta it is practised chiefly by the members of the rain or water totem; and it is nearly if not quite obligatory on all the men and women of that totem, whereas it is merely optional with members of the other clans. Further, the ceremony is always performed among the

Extraction of teeth associated with rain.

¹ See below, pp. 176 sq.

² W. Blandowski, "Personal Observations made in an Excursion towards the Central Parts of Victoria," *Transactions of the Philosophical Society of Victoria*, i. (Melbourne, 1855) p. 72. Compare R. Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 61; Spencer and Gillen,

Native Tribes of Central Australia, pp. 453 sq.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 452 sq.

⁴ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 594, 596.

Arunta immediately after the magical ceremony for the making of rain.¹ In the Warramunga tribe the knocking out of the teeth generally takes place towards the end of the wet season, when the water-holes are full, and the natives do not wish any more rain to fall. Moreover, it is always performed on the banks of a water-hole. The persons to be operated on enter the pool, fill their mouths with water, spit it out in all directions, and splash the water over themselves, taking care to wet thoroughly the crown of the head. Immediately afterwards the tooth is knocked out. The Chingilli also knock out teeth towards the close of the wet season, when they think they have had enough of rain. The extracted tooth is thrown into a water-hole, in the belief that it will drive rain and clouds away.² I merely note, without attempting to account for, this association between the extraction of teeth and the stopping of rain.

The natives of the Cape York Peninsula in Queensland use the extraction of the tooth to determine both a man's totem and the country to which he belongs. While the tooth is being knocked out, they mention the various districts owned or frequented by the lad's mother, her father, or other of her relatives. The one which happens to be mentioned at the moment when the tooth breaks away is the country to which the lad belongs in future, that is, the country where he will have the right to hunt and to gather roots and fruits. Further, the bloody spittle which he ejects after the extraction of the tooth is examined by the old men, who trace some likeness between it and a natural object, such as an animal, a plant, or a stone. Henceforth that object will be the young man's *ari* or totem.³ Some light is thrown on this ceremony by a parallel custom which the natives of the Pennefather River in Queensland observe at the birth of a child. They believe that every person's spirit undergoes a series of reincarnations, and that during the interval between two

Extraction
of tooth
used to
determine
a man's
country
and totem.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 451.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 592-594.

³ A. C. Haddon, *Head-hunters*, p. 193; *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, v. 193, 221.

Belief in re-
incarnation
among the
natives of
the Penne-
father River
in Queens-
land.

successive reincarnations the spirit stays in one or other of the haunts of Anjea, the being who causes conception in women by putting mud babies into their wombs. Hence, in order to determine where the new baby's spirit resided since it was last in the flesh, they mention Anjea's haunts one after the other while the grandmother is cutting the child's navel-string; and the place which happens to be mentioned when the navel-string breaks is the spot where the spirit lodged since its last incarnation. That is the country to which the child belongs; there he will have the right of hunting when he grows up. Hence, according to the home from which its spirit came to dwell among men, a child may be known as a baby obtained from a tree, a rock, or a pool of fresh water. Anjea, with whom the souls of the dead live till their time comes to be born again, is never seen; but you may hear him laughing in the depths of the woods, among the rocks, down in the lagoons, and along the mangrove swamps.¹ Hence we may fairly infer that the country assigned to a man of the Cape York Peninsula at the extraction of his tooth is the one where his spirit tarried during the interval which elapsed since its last incarnation. His totem, which is determined at the same time, may possibly be the animal, plant, or other natural object in which his spirit resided since its last embodiment in human form, or perhaps rather in which a part of his spirit may be supposed to lodge outside of his body during life. The latter view is favoured by the belief of the tribe of the Pennefather River, whose practice at childbirth so closely resembles that of the Cape York natives at puberty; for the Pennefather people hold that during a man's life a portion of his spirit lodges outside of his body in his after-birth.² However that may be, it seems probable that among the Cape York natives the custom of knocking out the tooth is closely associated with a theory of reincarna-

¹ W. E. Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography*, Bulletin No. 5 (Brisbane, 1903), pp. 18, 23, §§ 68, 83. We are reminded of the old Greek saying to be born "of an oak or a rock" (Homer, *Odyssey*, xix. 163). See A. B. Cook, "Oak and Rock," *Classical Review*, xv. (1901) pp. 322-

326. In Samoa, a child sometimes received as his god for life the deity who chanced to be invoked at the moment of his birth, whether that was his father's or his mother's god. See G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 79.

² See below, pp. 183 sq.

tion. Perhaps the same theory explains a privilege enjoyed by the Kamilaroi tribe of New South Wales. They claimed a superiority over the surrounding tribes, and enforced their claim by exacting from them the teeth knocked out at puberty. The exaction of this tribute might have passed for a mere assertion of suzerainty, were it not that the Kamilaroi knocked out their own teeth also.¹ Perhaps the extracted teeth were believed to secure to their present possessors a magical control over their former owners, not only during life but after death, so that armed with them the Kamilaroi could help or hinder the rebirth of their departed friends or enemies.²

Thus, if I am right, the essential feature in all the three great initiatory rites of the Australians is the removal of a vital part of the person which shall serve as a link between two successive incarnations by preparing for the novice a new body to house his spirit when its present tabernacle shall have been worn out. Now, if there is any truth in this suggestion, we should expect to find that measures to ensure reincarnation are also taken at death and burial. This seems in fact to be done. For, in the first place, the practice of pouring the blood of kinsmen and kinswomen into the grave is obviously susceptible of this explanation, since, in accordance with the Australian usages which I have cited, the blood might well be thought

Australian
initiatory
rites meant
to secure
rebirth.

Certain
funeral
rites also
intended
to ensure
reincarna-
tion.

¹ Lieut.-Colonel D. Collins, *Account of the English Colony of New South Wales*, Second Edition (London, 1804), pp. 353, 372 *sqq.* The Cammeray of whom Collins speaks are no doubt the tribe now better known as the Kamilaroi. *Carrahdy*, which he gives as the native name for a high-priest, is clearly the Kamilaroi *kuradyi*, "medicine-man" (W. Ridley, *Kamilaroi and other Australian Languages*, Sydney, 1875, p. 158).

² If the possession of the foreskin conferred on the possessor a like power over the person to whom it had belonged, we can readily understand why the Israelites coveted the foreskins of their enemies the Philistines (1 Samuel xviii. 25-27, 2 Samuel iii. 14). Professor H. Gunkel interprets a passage

of Ezekiel (xxxii. 18-32) as contrasting the happy lot of the circumcised warrior in the under world with the misery of his uncircumcised foe in the same place, and confesses himself unable to see why circumcision should be thought to benefit the dead. See H. Gunkel, "Über die Beschneidung im alten Testament," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung*, ii. (1903) p. 21. (Prof. Gunkel's paper was pointed out to me by my friend Mr. W. Wyse.) The benefit, on the theory here suggested, was very substantial, since it allowed the dead to come to life again, the grave being a bourne from which only uncircumcised travellers fail, sooner or later, to return. But I confess that Prof. Gunkel's explanation of the passage seems to me rather far-fetched.

Australian funeral ceremonies intended to ensure the reincarnation of the dead.

to strengthen the feeble ghost for a new birth. The same may be said of the Australian custom of depositing hair with the dead,¹ for it is a common notion that the hair is the seat of strength.² Again, it has been a rule with some Australian tribes to bury their dead on the spot where they were born.³ This was very natural if they desired the dead man to be born again. Further, the common Australian practice of depositing the dead in trees⁴ may, in some cases at least, have been designed to facilitate rebirth; for trees are often the places in which the souls of the dead reside, and from which they come forth to be born again in human shape. Thus the Unmatjera and Kaitish tribes bury very aged women and decrepit old men in the ground; but the bodies of children, young women, and men in the prime of life are laid on platforms among the boughs of trees; and in regard to children we are definitely told that this is done in the hope that "before very long its spirit may come back again and enter the body of a woman—in all probability that of its former mother."⁵ Further, the Arunta, who bury their dead, are careful to leave a low depression on one side of the mound, in order that the spirit may pass out and in; and this depression always faces towards the dead man's or woman's camping-ground in the *alcheringa* or remote past, that is, the spot which he or she inhabited in spirit form.⁶ Is not this done to let the spirit rid itself of its decaying tabernacle and repair to the place where in due time it will find a new and better body? In this connexion the final burial rites in the Binbinga, Anula, and Mara tribes are worthy of remark. Among these people the bones of the dead are, after a series of ceremonies, deposited in a hollow log, on which the dead man's totem is painted. This log is then placed, with the

¹ G. Grey, *Journals of Two Expeditions of Discovery*, ii. 335.

² See above, pp. 28 sqq.

³ J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 62; J. F. Mann, in *Proceedings of the Geographical Society of Australia*, i. (1885) p. 48.

⁴ E. J. Eyre, *Journals of Expeditions of Discovery into Central Australia* (London, 1845), ii. 345 sq.; W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies*, pp. 165

sq.; J. Mathew, *Eaglehawk and Crow*, p. 122; Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 498; *id.*, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 505 sqq.

⁵ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 506.

⁶ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 497. Compare *id.*, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 506.

bones, in the boughs of a tree beside a pool, so that if possible it overhangs the water. For about three wet seasons the father and son of the deceased, who placed the log there, are alone allowed to eat water-lilies out of that pool, and no woman is permitted to go near the spot. There the bones of the dead man remain till the log rots and they fall into the water or are carried away by a flood. When the burial rites are all over, the spirit of the deceased returns to its *mungai* spot, that is, to the place where it dwells in the interval between two successive incarnations. Sooner or later it will be born again.¹ These rites seem, therefore, clearly to be a preparation for the new birth.

As the belief in reincarnation is shared by many peoples besides the Australians, it is natural to suppose that funeral rites intended to facilitate the rebirth of the deceased may be found in other parts of the world. Elsewhere I have cited examples of these rites:² here I will add a few more. It is especially the bodies of dead infants which are the object of such ceremonies; for since their lives have been cut prematurely short, it seems reasonable to give their souls a chance of beginning again and lengthening out their existence on earth to its natural close. But it is not always dead babies only whom the living seek thus to bring back to life. For example, we read that round about Mount Elgon in East Africa "the custom of throwing out the dead is universal among all the clans of Bagishu, except in the case of the youngest child or the old grandfather or grandmother, for whom, like the child, a prolonged life on earth is desired. . . . When it is desired to perpetuate on the earth the life of some old man or woman, or that of some young baby, the corpse is buried inside the house or just under the eaves, until another child is born to the nearest relation of the corpse. This child, male or female, takes the name of the corpse, and the Bagishu firmly believe that the spirit of the dead has passed into this new child and lives again on earth. The remains are then dug up and thrown out into the open."³ Similarly among the

Belief in
reincarna-
tion and
measures
taken to
secure it
among
other
peoples.

Reincarna-
tion among
the Bagishu
of Mount
Elgon.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 552 sqq.

Edition (1907), pp. 77 sqq.

² Adonis, *Atis, Osiris*, Second

³ J. B. Purvis, *Through Uganda to Mount Elgon* (London, 1909), pp. 302 sq.

Reincarnation among the tribes of the Lower Congo.

tribes of the Lower Congo "a baby is always buried near the house of its mother, never in the bush. They think that, if the child is not buried near its mother's house, she will be unlucky and never have any more children. It is believed that the only new thing about a child is its body. The spirit is old and formerly belonged to some deceased person, or it may have the spirit of some living person. They have two reasons for believing this. The child speaks early of strange things the mother has never taught it, so that they believe the old spirit is talking in the child. Again, if the child is like its mother, father, or uncle, they think it has the spirit of the person it resembles, and that that person will soon die. Hence a parent will resent it if you say that the baby is like him or her."¹ Thus it appears that the argument for the pre-existence of the human soul, which Plato and Wordsworth² drew from reminiscence, is fully

Reincarnation in India.

accepted by some negro tribes of West Africa. In the Bilaspore district of India "a still-born child, or one who has passed away before the *Chhatti* (the sixth day, the day of purification) is not taken out of the house for burial, but is placed in an earthen vessel (a *gharā*) and is buried in the doorway or in the yard of the house. Some say that this is done in order that the mother may bear another child."³ It is said that among the Kondhs of India, on the day after a death, some boiled rice and a small fowl are taken to the place where the body was burned; there the fowl is split down the breast and placed on the spot, after which it is eaten and the soul of the departed is invited to enter a new-born child.⁴ On the fifth day after a death the Gonds perform the ceremony of bringing back the soul. They go to the riverside and call aloud the name of the deceased.

¹ J. H. Weeks, "Notes on some Customs of the Lower Congo People," *Folk-lore*, xix. (1908) p. 422.

² Plato, *Phaedo*, 18, p. 72 E καὶ μὴν, ἔφη ὁ Κλέβης ὑπολαβὼν, καὶ κατ' ἐκείνων γε τὸν λόγον, ὃ Σώκρατες, εἰ ἀληθὲς ἐστίν, ὃν σὺ εἰπῶς θαυμά λέγειν, ὅτι ἡμῖν ἡ μάθησις οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἢ ἀνάμνησις τυγχάνει οὕσα, καὶ κατὰ τοῦτον ἀνάγκη πῶς ἡμᾶς ἐν προτέρῳ τιπὶ χρόνῳ μεμαθηκέναι ἃ νῦν ἀναμνησκόμεθα. τοιοῦτο δὲ ἀδύνατον, εἰ μὴ ἦν πῶς ἡμῶν

ἡ ψυχὴ πρὶν ἐν τῷδε τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ εἶδει γενέσθαι· ὥστε καὶ ταύτη ἀθάνατον τι εἶκον ἡ ψυχὴ εἶναι. Compare Wordsworth, *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting.

³ E. M. Gordon, *Indian Folk-tales* (London, 1908), p. 49.

⁴ E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, iii. 398.

Then they enter the river, catch a fish or an insect, and taking it home place it among the sainted dead of the family, believing that the spirit of their lost one has thus been brought back to the house. Sometimes the fish or insect is eaten in order that the spirit which it contains may be born again as a child.¹ When a baby died within a month or two of birth, the Hurons did not dispose of its little body like those of grown people by depositing it on a scaffold; they buried it beside the road in order, so they said, that the child might enter secretly into the womb of some woman passing by and be born again into the world.² Some of the ancient rules observed with regard to funerals in the Greek island of Ceos have been ingeniously explained by Mr. F. B. Jevons as designed to secure the rebirth of the departed in one of the women of the family.³ The widespread custom of burying the dead in the house was perhaps instituted for the same purpose,⁴ and the ancient Greek practice of sacrificing to the dead man at the grave on his birthday may possibly have originated in the same train of thought.⁵ For example, sacrifices were annually offered on their birthdays to Hippocrates by the Coans, to Aratus by the Sicyonians, and to Epicurus by his disciples.⁶

Reincarnation among the Hurons.

Reincarnation among the ancient Greeks.

Now too we can fully understand the meaning of the bloody ritual in the ceremonies for the multiplication of the totem animals and plants. We have seen that a strengthening and fertilising virtue is attributed to human blood. What

Rites to procure the rebirth of edible animals and plants.

¹ R. V. Russel, in *Census of India*, 1901, vol. xiii. *Central Provinces*, p. 93.

² *Relations des Jésuites*, 1636, p. 130 (Canadian Reprint).

³ "Greek Law and Folklore," *Classical Review*, ix. (1895) pp. 247-250. For the rules themselves see H. Roehl, *Inscriptiones Graecae Antiquissimae*, No. 395; Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*,² No. 877; Ch. Michel, *Recueil d'inscriptions grecques*, No. 398.

⁴ This has been suggested by Mr. J. E. King for infant burial (*Classical Review*, xvii. (1903) p. 83 sq.); but we need not confine the suggestion to the case of infants.

⁵ Herodotus, iv. 26; Hesychius, s.v. *Γενέσια*; Im. Bekker, *Anecdota Graeca*, i. pp. 86, 231; Isaeus, ii. 46; *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, ed. Grenfell and Hunt, part iii. (London, 1903), p. 203 *ἐδωχεν ἡν ποιήσονται πλεόντων τοῦ τόφου μου κατ' ἐτος τῇ γενέσθῃ μου ἐφ' ᾧ διέπυν ἀπυπλοῦ δραχμὰς ἑκατόν*. My attention was called to this subject by my friend Mr. W. Wyse, who supplied me with many of the Greek passages referred to, including the one in the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*.

⁶ *Vitarum Scriptores Graeci*, ed. A. Westermann, p. 450; Plutarch, *Aratus*, 53; Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Philosoph.* x. 18.

more natural than that it should be poured out by the men of the totem on the spot in which the disembodied spirits of the totem animals or plants are waiting for reincarnation? Clearly the rite seems intended to enable these spirits to take bodily shape and be born again, in order that they may again serve as food, if not to the men of the totem clan, at least to all the other members of the tribe. Later on we shall find that the attempt to reincarnate the souls of dead animals, in order that their bodies may be eaten over again, is not peculiar to the Australian savages, but is practised with many curious rites by peoples in other parts of the world.

General
theory of
intichiuma
and
initiatory
rites in
Australia.

To sum up briefly the general theory to which the foregoing facts have thus far led us, I would say that just as the *intichiuma* rites of the Australians are, for the most part, magical ceremonies intended to secure the reïmbodiment of the spirits of edible animals and plants, so their initiatory rites may perhaps be regarded as magical ceremonies designed mainly to ensure the reincarnation of human souls. Now the motive for procuring the rebirth of animals and plants is simply the desire to eat them. May not this have been one motive for attempting to resuscitate the human dead? It would seem so, for all the tribes on the Gulf of Carpentaria who have been examined by Spencer and Gillen eat their dead,¹ and the ceremonies and traditions of the Arunta indicate that their ancestors also ate the bodies of their fellow tribesmen.² In this respect the practice of the Binbinga tribe is particularly instructive. For among them the bodies of the dead are cut up and eaten, not by men of the same tribal subclass as the deceased, but by men belonging to the subclasses which compose the other intermarrying half of the tribe.³ This is exactly analogous to the practice which at present prevails as to the eating of the totem animal or plant among all these central and northern tribes. Among them each clan that has an edible animal or plant for its totem is supposed to provide that animal or

Cannibal-
ism in
Australia.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 473-475.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 547.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes*

of Central Australia, p. 548.

plant for all the other clans to eat; and similarly among the Binbinga the men of any particular subclass do actually provide their own bodies for the members of the other intermarrying half of the tribe to devour. And just as in the far past the members of a totem clan appear to have subsisted regularly (though not exclusively, and perhaps not even mainly) on their totem animal or plant,¹ so at a remote time they seem regularly to have eaten each other. Thus the Wild Dog clan of the Arunta has many traditions that their ancestors killed and ate Wild Dog men and women.² Such traditions probably preserve a true reminiscence of a state of things still more savage than the present practice of the Binbinga. At that more or less remote time, if we may trust the scattered hints of custom and legend which are the only evidence we have to go upon, the men and women of a totem clan, in defiance of the customs of a later age, regularly cohabited with each other,³ ate their totems, and devoured each other's dead bodies. In such a state of things there was no sharp line of distinction drawn, either in theory or in practice, between a man and his totem; and this confusion is again confirmed by the legends, from which it is often difficult to make out whether the totemic ancestor spoken of is a man or an animal.⁴ And if measures were taken to resuscitate both, it may well have been primarily in order that both might be eaten again. The system was thoroughly practical in its aim; Australian totemism only the means it took to compass its ends were mistaken. It was in no sense a religion, unless we are prepared to bestow not a religion. the name of religion on the business of the grazier and the market-gardener; for these savages certainly bred animals and plants, and perhaps bred men, for much the same reasons that a grazier and a market-gardener breed cattle and vegetables.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 207-211.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 434 sq., 475.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 418 sqq.

⁴ "In the Alcheringa lived ancestors who, in the native mind, are so intimately associated with the animals or

plants the names of which they bear that an Alcheringa man of, say, the kangaroo totem may sometimes be spoken of either as a man-kangaroo or as a kangaroo-man. The identity of the human individual is often sunk in that of the animal or plant from which he is supposed to have originated" (Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 119).

Present
function of
totemism
in Central
Australia.

But whereas the methods of the grazier and market-gardener rest upon the laws of nature, and therefore do really produce the effects they aim at, the methods of these savages are based on a mistaken conception of natural law, and therefore totally fail to bring about the intended result. Only they do not perceive their failure. Kindly nature, if we may personify her for a moment, draws a veil before their eyes, and herself works behind the veil those wonders of reproduction which the poor savage vainly fancies that he has wrought by his magical ceremonies and incantations. In short, totemism, as it exists at present among these tribes, appears to be mainly a crude, almost childlike attempt to satisfy the primary wants of man, especially under the hard conditions to which he is subject in the deserts of Central Australia, by magically creating everything that a savage stands in need of, and food first of all. But to say so is not to affirm that this has been the purpose, and the only purpose, of Australian totemism from the beginning. That beginning lies far behind us in the past, and is therefore necessarily much more obscure and uncertain than the function of totemism as a fully developed system, to which alone the preceding remarks are applicable.

Our examination of the magical rites performed by the Australians for the maintenance of the food supply has led us into this digression. It is time to pass to ceremonies practised for the same purpose and on the same principles by peoples in other parts of the world.

Homoeopathic or imitative magic in fishing and hunting.

The Indians of British Columbia live largely upon the fish which abound in their seas and rivers. If the fish do not come in due season, and the Indians are hungry, a Nootka wizard will make an image of a swimming fish and put it into the water in the direction from which the fish generally appear. This ceremony, accompanied by a prayer to the fish to come, will cause them to arrive at once.¹ The islanders of Torres Straits use models of dugong and turtles to charm dugong and turtle to their destruction.²

¹ Franz Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 45 (separate reprint from the *Report of*

the *British Association* for 1890).

² A. C. Haddon in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890)

The Toradjas of Central Celebes believe that things of the same sort attract each other by means of their indwelling spirits or vital ether. Hence they hang up the jawbones of deer and wild pigs in their houses, in order that the spirits which animate these bones may draw the living creatures of the same kind into the path of the hunter.¹ In the island of Nias, when a wild pig has fallen into the pit prepared for it, the animal is taken out and its back is rubbed with nine fallen leaves, in the belief that this will make nine more wild pigs fall into the pit, just as the nine leaves fell from the tree.² In the East Indian islands of Saparoea, Haroekoe, and Noessa Laut, when a fisherman is about to set a trap for fish in the sea, he looks out for a tree, of which the fruit has been much pecked at by birds. From such a tree he cuts a stout branch and makes of it the principal post in his fish-trap; for he believes that just as the tree lured many birds to its fruit, so the branch cut from that tree will lure many fish to the trap.³

The western tribes of British New Guinea employ a charm to aid the hunter in spearing dugong or turtle. A small beetle, which haunts coco-nut trees, is placed in the hole of the spear-haft into which the spear-head fits. This is supposed to make the spear-head stick fast in the dugong or turtle, just as the beetle sticks fast to a man's skin when it bites him.⁴ When a Cambodian hunter has set his nets and

p. 427; *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, v. 333, 338.

¹ A. C. Kruyt, "Het koppen-snellens der Toradja's," *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der konink. Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Afdeling Letterkunde, IV. Reeks, III. Deel (Amsterdam, 1899), pp. 203 sq. I follow the experienced Messrs. N. Adriani and A. C. Kruijt (Kruyt) in calling the natives of Central Celebes by the name of Toradjas, though that name is not used by the people themselves, but is only applied to them in a derogatory sense by the Buginese. It means no more than "inlanders." The people are divided into a number of tribes, each with its own name, who speak for the most part one language but have no common name for themselves

collectively. See Dr. N. Adriani, "Mededeelingen omtrent de Toradjas van Midden-Celebes," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- en Volkenkunde*, xlv. (1901) p. 221.

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

³ Van Schmid, "Aanteekeningen nopens de zeden, gewoonten en gebruiken, benevens de vóóroordeelen en bijgeloovigheden der bevolking van de eilanden Saparoea, Haroekoe, Noessa Laut," *Tijdschrift voor Nèderlands Indië*, 1843, dl. II. pp. 601 sq.

⁴ B. A. Hely, "Notes on Totemism, etc., among the Western Tribes," *British New Guinea, Annual Report for 1894-95*, p. 56.

Homoeopathic or imitative magic in fishing and hunting.

Homoeopathic or imitative magic in fishing and bunting.

taken nothing, he strips himself naked, goes some way off, then strolls up to the net as if he did not see it, lets himself be caught in it, and cries, "Hillo! what's this? I'm afraid I'm caught." After that the net is sure to catch game.¹ A pantomime of the same sort has been acted within living memory in our Scottish Highlands. The Rev. James Macdonald, now of Reay in Caithness, tells us that in his boyhood when he was fishing with companions about Loch Aline and they had had no bites for a long time, they used to make a pretence of throwing one of their fellows overboard and hauling him out of the water, as if he were a fish; after that the trout or silloch would begin to nibble, according as the boat was on fresh or salt water.² Before a Carrier Indian goes out to snare martens, he sleeps by himself for about ten nights beside the fire with a little stick pressed down on his neck. This naturally causes the fall-stick of his trap to drop down on the neck of the marten.³ Among the Galelareese, who inhabit a district in the northern part of Halmahera, a large island to the west of New Guinea, it is a maxim that when you are loading your gun to go out shooting, you should always put the bullet in your mouth before you insert it in the gun; for by so doing you practically eat the game that is to be hit by the bullet, which therefore cannot possibly miss the mark.⁴ A Malay who has baited a trap for crocodiles, and is awaiting results, is careful in eating his curry always to begin by swallowing three lumps of rice successively; for this helps the bait to slide more easily down the crocodile's throat. He is equally scrupulous not to take any bones out of his curry; for, if he

¹ E. Aymonier, "Notes sur les coutumes et croyances superstitieuses des Cambodgiens," *Cochinchine française: excursions et reconnaissances*, No. 16 (Saigon, 1883), p. 157.

² James Macdonald, *Religion and Myth* (London, 1893), p. 5.

³ A. G. Morice, "Notes, archaeological, industrial, and sociological, on the Western Dénés," *Transactions of the Canadian Institute*, iv. (1892-93) p. 108; *id.*, *Au pays de l'Ours Noir chez les sauvages de la Colombie Britannique* (Paris and Lyons, 1897), p. 71.

⁴ M. J. van Baaida, "Fabelen, verhalen en overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895) p. 502. As to the district of Galela in Halmahera see G. Lafond in *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), ii. série, ix. (1838) pp. 77 sqq. (where Galela is apparently a misprint for Galela); F. S. A. de Clercq, *Bijdragen tot de Kennis der Residentie Ternate* (Leyden, 1890), pp. 112 sq.; W. Kükenthal, *Forschungsreise in den Molukken und in Borneo* (Frankfort, 1896), pp. 147 sqq.

did, it seems clear that the sharp-pointed stick on which the bait is skewered would similarly work itself loose, and the crocodile would get off with the bait. Hence in these circumstances it is prudent for the hunter, before he begins his meal, to get somebody else to take the bones out of his curry, otherwise he may at any moment have to choose between swallowing a bone and losing the crocodile.¹

This last rule is an instance of the things which the hunter abstains from doing lest, on the principle that like produces like, they should spoil his luck. For it is to be observed that the system of sympathetic magic is not merely composed of positive precepts; it comprises a very large number of negative precepts, that is, prohibitions. It tells you not merely what to do, but also what to leave undone. The positive precepts are charms: the negative precepts are taboos. In fact the whole doctrine of taboo, or at all events a large part of it, would seem to be only a special application of sympathetic magic, with its two great laws of similarity and contact.² Though these laws

Negative
magic or
taboo.

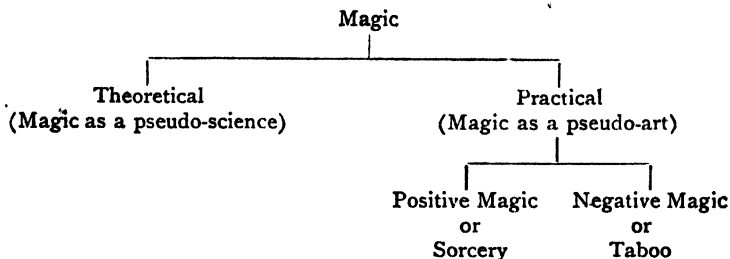
¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 300.

² The theory that taboo is a negative magic was first, I believe, clearly formulated by Messrs. Hubert and Mauss in their essay, "Esquisse d'une théorie générale de la magie," *L'Année Sociologique*, vii. (Paris, 1904) p. 56. Compare A. van Gennep, *Tabou et Totémisme à Madagascar* (Paris, 1904), pp. 19 sqq. I reached the same conclusion independently and stated it in my *Lectures on the Early History of the Kingship* (London, 1905), pp. 52-54, a passage which I have substantially reproduced in the text. When I wrote it I was unaware that the view had been anticipated by my friends Messrs. Hubert and Mauss. See my note in *Man*, vi. (1906) pp. 55 sq. The view has been criticised adversely by my friend Mr. R. R. Marett (*The Threshold of Religion*, pp. 85 sqq.). But the difference between us seems to be mainly one of words; for I regard the supposed mysterious force, to which he gives the Melanesian name of *mana*,

as supplying, so to say, the physical basis both of magic and of taboo, while the logical basis of both is furnished by a misapplication of the laws of the association of ideas. And with this view Mr. Marett, if I apprehend him aright, is to a certain extent in agreement (see particularly pp. 102 sq., 113 sq. of his essay). However, in deference to his criticisms I have here stated the theory in question less absolutely than I did in my *Lectures*. As to the supposed mysterious force which I take to underlie magic and taboo I may refer particularly to what I have said in *The Golden Bough*,² i. 319-322, 343. In speaking of taboo I here refer only to those taboos which are protected by magical or religious sanctions, not to those of which the sanctions are purely civil or legal; for I take civil or legal taboos to be merely a later extension of magical or religious taboos, which form the original stock of the institution. See my article "Taboo" in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Ninth Edition, vol. xxiii. pp. 16, 17.

Negative
magic or
taboo.

are certainly not formulated in so many words nor even conceived in the abstract by the savage, they are nevertheless implicitly believed by him to regulate the course of nature quite independently of human will. He thinks that if he acts in a certain way, certain consequences will inevitably follow in virtue of one or other of these laws; and if the consequences of a particular act appear to him likely to prove disagreeable or dangerous, he is naturally careful not to act in that way lest he should incur them. In other words, he abstains from doing that which, in accordance with his mistaken notions of cause and effect, he falsely believes would injure him; in short, he subjects himself to a taboo. Thus taboo is so far a negative application of practical magic. Positive magic or sorcery says, "Do this in order that so and so may happen." Negative magic or taboo says, "Do not do this, lest so and so should happen." The aim of positive magic or sorcery is to produce a desired event; the aim of negative magic or taboo is to avoid an undesirable one. But both consequences, the desirable and the undesirable, are supposed to be brought about in accordance with the laws of similarity and contact. And just as the desired consequence is not really effected by the observance of a magical ceremony, so the dreaded consequence does not really result from the violation of a taboo. If the supposed evil necessarily followed a breach of taboo, the taboo would not be a taboo but a precept of morality or common sense. It is not a taboo to say, "Do not put your hand in the fire"; it is a rule of common sense, because the forbidden action entails a real, not an imaginary evil. In short, those negative precepts which we call taboo are just as vain and futile as those positive precepts which we call sorcery. The two things are merely opposite sides or poles of one great disastrous fallacy, a mistaken conception of the association of ideas. Of that fallacy, sorcery is the positive, and taboo the negative pole. If we give the general name of magic to the whole erroneous system, both theoretical and practical, then taboo may be defined as the negative side of practical magic. To put this in tabular form:—



I have made these remarks on taboo and its relations to magic because I am about to give some instances of taboos observed by hunters, fishermen, and others, and I wished to shew that they fall under the head of Sympathetic Magic, being only particular applications of that general theory. Thus, it is a rule with the Galelareese that when you have caught fish and strung them on a line, you may not cut the line through, or next time you go a-fishing your fishing-line will be sure to break.¹ Among the Esquimaux of Baffin Land boys are forbidden to play cat's cradle, because if they did so their fingers might in later life become entangled in the harpoon-line.² Here the taboo is obviously an application of the law of similarity, which is the basis of homoeopathic magic: as the child's fingers are entangled by the string in playing cat's cradle, so they will be entangled by the harpoon-line when he is a man and hunts whales. Again, among the Huzuls, who inhabit the wooded north-eastern slopes of the Carpathian Mountains, the wife of a hunter may not spin while her husband is eating, or the game will turn and wind like the spindle, and the hunter will be unable to hit it.³ Here again the taboo is clearly derived from the law of similarity. So, too, in most parts of ancient Italy women were forbidden by law to spin on the highroads as they walked, or even to carry their spindles openly, because any such action was believed to injure the crops.⁴ Probably the notion was that the

Taboos to be observed in fishing and hunting on the principle of sympathetic magic.

Spinning tabooed in certain cases on the principle of homoeopathic magic.

¹ M. J. van Baarda, in *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895) p. 507.

² F. Boas, "The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay," *Bulletin of*

the American Museum of Natural History, xv. Part I. (1901) p. 161.

³ R. F. Kündl, "Zaubererglaube bei den Huzulen," *Globus*, lxxvi. (1899) p. 273.

⁴ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 28.

twirling of the spindle would twirl the corn-stalks and prevent them from growing straight. So, too, among the Ainos of Saghalien a pregnant woman may not spin nor twist ropes for two months before her delivery, because they think that if she did so the child's guts might be entangled like the thread.¹ For a like reason in Bilaspore, a 'district of India, when the chief men of a village meet in council, no one present should twirl a spindle; for they think that if such a thing were to happen, the discussion, like the spindle, would move in a circle and never be wound up.² In the East Indian islands of Saporoea, Haroekoe, and Noessa Laut, any one who comes to the house of a hunter must walk straight in; he may not loiter at the door, for were he to do so, the game would in like manner stop in front of the hunter's snares and then turn back, instead of being caught in the trap.³ For a similar reason it is a rule with the Toradjas of Central Celebes that no one may stand or loiter on the ladder of a house where there is a pregnant woman, for such delay would retard the birth of the child;⁴ and in various parts of Sumatra the woman herself in these circumstances is forbidden to stand at the door or on the top rung of the house-ladder under pain of suffering hard labour for her imprudence in neglecting so elementary a precaution.⁵ Malays engaged in the search for camphor eat their food dry and take care not to pound their salt fine. The reason is that the camphor occurs in the form of small grains

Taboos
observed
in the
search for

¹ B. Pilsudski, "Schwangerhaft, Entbindung und Fehlgeburt bei den Bewohnern der Insel Sachalin," *Anthropos*, v. (1910) p. 763.

² Rev. E. M. Gordon, in *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, New Series, i. (1905) p. 185; *id.*, *Indian Folk Tales* (London, 1908), pp. 82 sq.

³ Van Schmid, "Aanteekeningen nopens de zeden, gewoonten en gebruiken, benevens de vooroordeelen en bijgeloovigheden der bevolking van de eilanden Saporoea, Haroekoe, Noessa Laut," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1843, dl. ii. p. 604.

⁴ A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maat-

schappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xl. (1896) pp. 262 sq; *id. ib.* xlv. (1900) p. 235.

⁵ C. Snouck Hurgronje, *De Atjehers* (Batavia and Leyden, 1893-94), i. 409; E. A. Klerks, "Geographisch en ethnographisch opstal over de landschappen Korintje, Sérampas en Soengai Ténang," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxix. (1897) p. 73; J. C. van Eerde, "Een huwelijk bij de Minangkabausche Maliers," *ib.* xlv. (1901) pp. 490 sq.; M. Joustra, "Het leven, de zeden en gewoonten der Bataks," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xlv. (1902) p. 406.

deposited in the cracks of the trunk of the camphor-tree. Accordingly it seems plain to the Malay that if, while seeking for camphor, he were to eat his salt finely ground, the camphor would be found also in fine grains; whereas by eating his salt coarse he ensures that the grains of the camphor will also be large.¹ Camphor hunters in Borneo use the leathery sheath of the leaf-stalk of the Penang palm as a plate for food, and during the whole of the expedition they will never wash the plate, for fear that the camphor might dissolve and disappear from the crevices of the tree.² Apparently they think that to wash their plates would be to wash out the camphor crystals from the trees in which they are imbedded. In Laos, a province of Siam, a rhinoceros hunter will not wash himself for fear that as a consequence the wounds inflicted on the rhinoceros might not be mortal, and that the animal might disappear in one of the caves full of water in the mountains.³ The chief product of some parts of Laos is lac. This is a resinous gum exuded by a red insect on the young branches of trees, to which the little creatures have to be attached by hand. All who engage in the business of gathering the gum abstain from washing themselves and especially from cleansing their heads, lest by removing the parasites from their hair they should detach the other insects from the boughs.⁴ Some of the Brazilian Indians would never bring a slaughtered deer into their hut without first hamstringing it, believing that if they failed to do so, they and their children would never be able to run down their enemies.⁵ Apparently they thought that by hamstringing the animal they at the same stroke deprived their foemen of the use of their legs. No Arikara Indian would break a marrow bone in a hut; for

camphor
on the
principle
of homoeo-
pathic
magic.

Taboos
observed
by hunters
on the
principle
of homoeo-
pathic
magic.

¹ H. Lake and H. J. Kelsall, "The Camphor-tree and Camphor Language of Johore," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 26 (January 1894), p. 40; W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 213.

² W. H. Furness, *Home-life of Borneo Head-hunters* (Philadelphia, 1902), p. 169.

³ E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos* (Saigon, 1885), p. 269.

⁴ E. Aymonier, *Voyage dans le Laos* (Paris, 1895-97), i. 322. As to lac and the mode of cultivating it, see *id.* ii. 18 sq. The superstition is less explicitly stated in the same writer's *Notes sur le Laos* (Saigon, 1885), p. 110.

⁵ A. Thevet, *Les Singularités de la France Antarctique, autrement nommée Amérique* (Antwerp, 1558), p. 93; *id.*, *Cosmographie Universelle* (Paris, 1575), ii. 970 [wrongly numbered 936] sq.

they think that were he to do so their horses would break their legs in the prairie.¹ Again, a Blackfoot Indian who has set a trap for eagles, and is watching it, would not eat rosebuds on any account; for he argues that if he did so, and an eagle alighted near the trap, the rosebuds in his own stomach would make the bird itch, with the result that instead of swallowing the bait the eagle would merely sit and scratch himself. Following this train of thought the eagle hunter also refrains from using an awl when he is looking after his snares; for surely if he were to scratch with an awl, the eagles would scratch him. The same disastrous consequence would follow if his wives and children at home used an awl while he is out after eagles, and accordingly they are forbidden to handle the tool in his absence for fear of putting him in bodily danger.²

Homoeopathic
taboos and
contagious
taboos.

All the foregoing taboos being based on the law of similarity may be called homoeopathic taboos. The Cholones, an Indian tribe of eastern Peru, make use of poisoned arrows in the chase, but there are some animals, such as armadillos, certain kinds of falcons, and a species of vulture, which they would on no account shoot at with these weapons. For they believe that between the poisoned arrows which they use and the supply of poison at home there exists a sympathetic relation of such a sort that if they shot at any of these creatures with poisoned shafts, all the poison at home would be spoilt, which would be a great loss to them.³ Here the exact train of thought is not clear; but we may suppose that the animals in question are believed to possess a power of counteracting and annulling the effect of the poison, and that consequently if they are touched by it, all the poison, including the store of it at home, would be robbed of its virtue. However that may be, it is plain that the superstition rests on the law of contact, on the notion, namely, that things which have once been in contact remain sympathetically in contact with each other always. The poison with which the hunter wounds an animal has once

¹ Maximilian, Prinz zu Wied, *Reise in das innere Nord-America*, ii. 247.

² G. B. Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge*

Tales (London, 1893), pp. 237, 238.

³ E. Poeppig, *Reise in Chile, Peru und auf dem Amazonenstrom* (Leipzig, 1835-36), ii. 323.

been in contact with the store of poison at home ; hence if the poison in the wound loses its venom, so necessarily will all the poison at home. These may be called contagious taboos.

Among the taboos observed by savages none perhaps are more numerous or important than the prohibitions to eat certain foods, and of such prohibitions many are demonstrably derived from the law of similarity and are accordingly examples of negative magic. Just as the savage eats many animals or plants in order to acquire certain desirable qualities with which he believes them to be endowed, so he avoids eating many other animals and plants lest he should acquire certain undesirable qualities with which he believes them to be infected. In eating the former he practises positive magic ; in abstaining from the latter he practises negative magic. Many examples of such positive magic will meet us later on ;¹ here I will give a few instances of such negative magic or taboo. For example, in Madagascar soldiers are forbidden to eat a number of foods lest on the principle of homoeopathic magic they should be tainted by certain dangerous or undesirable properties which are supposed to inhere in these particular viands. Thus they may not taste hedgehog, "as it is feared that this animal, from its propensity of coiling up into a ball when alarmed, will impart a timid shrinking disposition to those who partake of it." Again, no soldier should eat an ox's knee, lest like an ox he should become weak in the knees and unable to march. Further, the warrior should be careful to avoid partaking of a cock that has died fighting or anything that has been speared to death ; and no male animal may on any account be killed in his house while he is away at the wars. For it seems obvious that if he were to eat a cock that had died fighting, he would himself be slain on the field of battle ; if he were to partake of an animal that had been speared, he would be speared himself ; if a male animal were killed in his house during his absence, he would himself be killed in like manner and perhaps at the same instant. Further, the Malagasy soldier must eschew kidneys, because in the Malagasy language the word for kidney is the same as that

Foods
taboos
on the
principle
of homoeo-
pathic
magic.

Malagasy
taboos on
food based
on the
principle
of homoeo-
pathic
magic.

¹ Meanwhile I may refer the reader to *The Golden Bough*,² ii. 353 sqq.

Caffre
and Zulu
taboos on
food based
on the
principle
of homoeo-
pathic
magic.

x

for "shot"; so shot he would certainly be if he ate a kidney.¹ Again, a Caffre has been known to refuse to eat two mice caught at the same time in one trap, alleging that were he to do so his wife would give birth to twins; yet the same man would eat freely of mice if they were caught singly.² Clearly he imagined that if he ate the two mice he would be infected with the virus of doublets and would communicate the infection to his wife. Amongst the Zulus there are many foods which are similarly forbidden on homoeopathic principles. It may be well to give some specimens of these prohibitions as they have been described by the Zulus themselves. "There is among the black men," they say, "the custom of abstaining from certain foods. If a cow has the calf taken from her dead, and the mother too dies before the calf is taken away, young people who have never had a child abstain from the flesh of that cow. I do not mean to speak of girls; there is not even a thought of whether they can eat it; for it is said that the cow will produce a similar evil among the women, so that one of them will be like the cow when she is in childbirth, be unable to give birth, like the cow, and die together with her child. On this account, therefore, the flesh of such a cow is abstained from. Further, pig's flesh is not eaten by girls on any account; for it is an ugly animal; its mouth is ugly, its snout is long; therefore girls do not eat it, thinking if they eat it, a resemblance to the pig will appear among their children. They abstain from it on that account. There are many things which are abstained from among black people through fear of bad resemblance; for it is said there was a person who once gave birth to an elephant, and a horse; but we do not know if that is true; but they are now abstained from on that account, through thinking that they will produce an evil resemblance if eaten; and the elephant is said to produce an evil resemblance, for when it is killed many parts of its body resemble those of a female; its breasts, for instance, are just like those of a woman. Young people,

¹ H. F. Standing, "Malagasy fady," *Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine*, vol. ii. (reprint of the second four numbers, 1881-1884) (Antanan-

arivo, 1896), p. 261.

² Dudley Kidd, *Savage Childhood* (London, 1906), p. 48.

therefore, fear to eat it ; it is only eaten on account of famine, when there is no food ; and each of the young women say, 'It is no matter if I do give birth to an elephant and live ; that is better than not to give birth to it, and die of famine.' So it is eaten from mere necessity. Another thing which is abstained from is the entrails of cattle. Men do not eat them, because they are afraid if they eat them, the enemy will stab them in the bowels. Young men do not eat them ; they are eaten by old people. Another thing which is not eaten is the under lip of a bullock ; for it is said, a young person must not eat it, for it will produce an evil resemblance in the child ; the lip of the child will tremble continually, for the lower lip of a bullock moves constantly. They do not therefore eat it ; for if a child of a young person is seen with its mouth trembling, it is said, 'It was injured by its father, who ate the lower lip of a bullock.' Also another thing which is abstained from is that portion of the paunch of a bullock which is called *umtala* ; for the *umtala* has no *villi*, it has no pile ; it is merely smooth and hard. It is therefore said, if it is eaten by young people, their children will be born without hair, and their heads will be bare like a man's knee. It is therefore abstained from."¹

The reader may have observed that in some of the fore-^{Magical}going examples of taboos the magical influence is supposed^{telepathy} to operate at considerable distances ; thus among the Black-foot Indians the wives and children of an eagle hunter are forbidden to use an awl during his absence, lest the eagles should scratch the distant husband and father ;² and again no male animal may be killed in the house of a Malagasy soldier while he is away at the wars, lest the killing of the animal should entail the killing of the man.³ This belief in the sympathetic influence exerted on each other by persons or things at a distance is of the essence of magic. Whatever doubts science may entertain as to the possibility of action at a distance, magic has none ; faith in telepathy is one of its first principles. A modern advocate of the influence of mind upon mind at a distance would have no difficulty in

¹ H. Callaway, *Nursery Tales*, pp. 280-282.

Traditions, and Histories of the ² Above, p. 116.

Zulus, i. (Natal and London, 1868),

³ Above, p. 117.

convincing a savage ; the savage believed in it long ago, and what is more, he acted on his belief with a logical consistency such as his civilised brother in the faith has not yet, so far as I am aware, exhibited in his conduct. For the savage is convinced not only that magical ceremonies affect persons and things afar off, but that the simplest acts of daily life may do so too. Hence on important occasions the behaviour of friends and relations at a distance is often regulated by a more or less elaborate code of rules, the neglect of which by the one set of persons would, it is supposed, entail misfortune or even death on the absent ones. In particular when a party of men are out hunting or fighting, their kinsfolk at home are often expected to do certain things or to abstain from doing certain others, for the sake of ensuring the safety and success of the distant hunters or warriors. I will now give some instances of this magical telepathy both in its positive and in its negative aspect.

Telepathy
in hunting
among the
Dyaks,
Chams,
Hottentots,
etc.

In Laos when an elephant hunter is starting for the chase, he warns his wife not to cut her hair or oil her body in his absence ; for if she cut her hair the elephant would burst the toils, if she oiled herself it would slip through them.¹ When a Dyak village has turned out to hunt wild pigs in the jungle, the people who stay at home may not touch oil or water with their hands during the absence of their friends ; for if they did so, the hunters would all be "butter-fingered" and the prey would slip through their hands.² In setting out to look for the rare and precious eagle-wood on the mountains, Cham peasants enjoin their wives, whom they leave at home, not to scold or quarrel in their absence, for such domestic brawls would lead to their husbands being rent in pieces by bears and tigers.³ A Hottentot woman whose husband is out hunting must do one of two things all the time he is away. Either she must light a fire and keep it burning till he comes back ; or if she does not choose to do that, she must go to the water

¹ E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos*, pp. 25 sq. ; *id.*, *Voyage dans le Laos* (Paris, 1895-97), i. 62, 63.

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

British North Borneo, i. 430.

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

and continue to splash it about on the ground. When she is tired with throwing the water about, her place may be taken by her servant, but the exercise must in any case be kept up without cessation. To cease splashing the water or to let the fire out would be equally fatal to the husband's prospect of a successful bag.¹ In Yule Island, Torres Straits, when the men are gone to fetch sago, a fire is lit and carefully kept burning the whole time of their absence; for the people believe that if it went out the voyagers would fare ill.² At the other end of the world the Lapps similarly object to extinguish a brand in water while any members of the family are out fishing, since to do so would spoil their luck.³

Among the Koniags of Alaska a traveller once observed a young woman lying wrapt in a bearskin in the corner of a hut. On asking whether she were ill, he learned that her husband was out whale-fishing, and that until his return she had to lie fasting in order to ensure a good catch.⁴ Among the Esquimaux of Alaska similar notions prevail. The women during the whaling season remain in comparative idleness, as it is considered not good for them to sew while the men are out in the boats. If during this period any garments should need to be repaired, the women must take them far back out of sight of the sea and mend them there in little tents in which just one person can sit. And while the crews are at sea no work should be done at home which would necessitate pounding or hewing or any kind of noise; and in the huts of men who are away in the boats no work of any kind whatever should be carried on.⁵ When the Esquimaux of Aivilik and Iglulik are away hunting on the ice, the bedding may not be raised up, because they think that to do so would cause the ice to crack and drift off, and so the men might be lost. And among these people, in the winter,

Telepathy
in hunting
among the
Koniags,
Esquimaux
and
Californian
Indians.

¹ Th. Hahn, *Tsuni-|| Goam* (London, 1881), p. 77.

² A. C. Haddon, *Head-hunters* (London, 1901), p. 259.

³ C. Leemius, *De Lapponibus Finmarchiae* (Copenhagen, 1767), p. 500.

⁴ H. J. Holmberg, "Über die Völker des russischen Amerika," *Acta*

Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae, iv. (1856) p. 392.

⁵ *Arctic Papers for the Expedition of 1875* (published by the Royal Geographical Society), pp. 261 sq.; *Report of the International Polar Expedition to Point Barrow, Alaska* (Washington, 1885), p. 39.

when the new moon appears, boys must run out of the snow-house, take a handful of snow, and put it into the kettle. It is believed that this helps the hunter to capture the seal and to bring it home.¹ When the Maidu Indians of California were engaged in driving deer into the snares which they had prepared for them, and which consisted of fences stretched from tree to tree, the women and children who were left behind in the village had to observe a variety of regulations. The women had to keep quiet and spend much of the time indoors, and children might not romp, shout, jump over things, kick, run, fall down, or throw stones. If these rules were broken, it was believed that the deer would become unmanageable and would jump the fence, so that the whole drive would be unsuccessful.²

Telepathy
in hunting
among the
Gilyaks,
Jukagirs,
etc.

While a Gilyak hunter is pursuing the game in the forest, his children at home are forbidden to make drawings on wood or on sand; for they fear that if the children did so, the paths in the forest would become as perplexed as the lines in the drawings, so that the hunter might lose his way and never return. A Russian political prisoner once taught some Gilyak children to read and write; but their parents forbade them to write when any of their fathers was away from home; for it seemed to them that writing was a peculiarly complicated form of drawing, and they stood aghast at the idea of the danger to which such a drawing would expose the hunters out in the wild woods.³ Among the Jukagirs of north-eastern Siberia, when a young man is out hunting, his unmarried sister at home may not look at his footprints nor eat certain parts of the game killed by him. If she leaves the house while he is absent at the chase, she must keep her eyes fixed on the ground, and may not speak of the chase nor ask any questions about it.⁴ When a Nuba of north-eastern Africa goes to El Obeid for the first time, he tells his wife not to wash or oil herself and not to wear pearls

¹ F. Boas, "The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay," *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, xv. part i. (1901) pp. 149, 160.

² Roland B. Dixon, "The Northern Maidu," *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, xvii. part

iii. (New York, 1905) p. 193.

³ P. Labbé, *Un Baigne Russe, l'Île de Sakhaline* (Paris, 1903), p. 268.

⁴ W. Jochelson, "Die Jukagiren im aussersten Nordosten Asiens," *Jahresbericht der geograph. Gesellschaft von Bern*, xvii. (1900) p. 14.

round her neck during his absence, because by doing so she would draw down on him the most terrible misfortunes.¹ When Bushmen are out hunting, any bad shots they may make are set down to such causes as that the children at home are playing on the men's beds or the like, and the wives who allow such things to happen are blamed for their husbands' indifferent marksmanship.²

Elephant-hunters in East Africa believe that, if their wives prove unfaithful in their absence, this gives the elephant power over his pursuer, who will accordingly be killed or severely wounded. Hence if a hunter hears of his wife's misconduct, he abandons the chase and returns home.³ If a Wagogo hunter is unsuccessful, or is attacked by a lion, he attributes it to his wife's misbehaviour at home, and returns to her in great wrath. While he is away hunting, she may not let any one pass behind her or stand in front of her as she sits; and she must lie on her face in bed.⁴ The Moxos Indians of eastern Bolivia thought that if a hunter's wife was unfaithful to him in his absence he would be bitten by a serpent or a jaguar. Accordingly, if such an accident happened to him, it was sure to entail the punishment, and often the death, of the woman, whether she was innocent or guilty.⁵ An Aleutian hunter of sea-otters thinks that he cannot kill a single animal if during his absence from home his wife should be unfaithful or his sister unchaste.⁶

Telepathy in hunting: supposed disastrous effect of wife's infidelity.

The Huichol Indians of Mexico treat as a demi-god a species of cactus which throws the eater into a state of ecstasy. The plant does not grow in their country, and has to be fetched every year by men who make a journey of forty-three days for the purpose. Meanwhile the wives at home contribute to the safety of their absent husbands by never walking fast, much less running, while the men are on the road. They also do their best to ensure the benefits which, in the shape of rain,

Telepathy in the search for the sacred cactus.

¹ *Missions Catholiques*, xiv. (1882) p. 460.

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

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

⁴ H. Cole, "Notes on the Wagogo

of German East Africa," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 318 sq.

⁵ A. D'Orbigny, *Voyage dans l'Amérique Méridionale*, iii. part I. p. 226.

⁶ I. Petroff, *Report on the Population, Industries, and Resources of Alaska*, p. 155.

good crops, and so forth, are expected to flow from the sacred mission. With this intention they subject themselves to severe restrictions like those imposed upon their husbands. During the whole of the time which elapses till the festival of the cactus is held, neither party washes except on certain occasions, and then only with water brought from the distant country where the holy plant grows. They also fast much, eat no salt, and are bound to strict continence. Any one who breaks this law is punished with illness, and, moreover, jeopardises the result which all are striving for. Health, luck, and life are to be gained by gathering the cactus, the gourd of the God of Fire; but inasmuch as the pure fire cannot benefit the impure, men and women must not only remain chaste for the time being, but must also purge themselves from the taint of past sin. Hence four days after the men have started the women gather and confess to Grandfather Fire with what men they have been in love from childhood till now. They may not omit a single one, for if they did so the men would not find a single cactus. So to refresh their memories each one prepares a string with as many knots as she has had lovers. This she brings to the temple, and, standing before the fire, she mentions aloud all the men she has scored on her string, name after name. Having ended her confession, she throws the string into the fire, and when the god has consumed it in his pure flame, her sins are forgiven her and she departs in peace. From now on the women are averse even to letting men pass near them. The cactus-seekers themselves make in like manner a clean breast of all their frailties. For every peccadillo they tie a knot on a string, and after they have "talked to all the five winds" they deliver the rosary of their sins to the leader, who burns it in the fire.¹

Telepathy
in the
search for
camphor.

Many of the indigenous tribes of Sarawak are firmly persuaded that were the wives to commit adultery while their husbands are searching for camphor in the jungle, the camphor obtained by the men would evaporate.²

¹ C. Lumholtz, *Unknown Mexico*, ii. 126 *sqq.*; as to the sacred cactus, which the Indians call *hikuli*, see *id.* i. 357 *sqq.*

² For this information I am indebted to Dr. C. Hose, formerly Resident Magistrate of the Baram district, Sarawak.

Husbands can discover, by certain knots in the tree, when their wives are unfaithful; and it is said that in former days many women were killed by jealous husbands on no better evidence than that of these knots. Further, the wives dare not touch a comb while their husbands are away collecting the camphor; for if they did so, the interstices between the fibres of the tree, instead of being filled with the precious crystals, would be empty like the spaces between the teeth of a comb.¹ While men of the Toaripi or Motumotu tribe of eastern New Guinea are away hunting, fishing, fighting, or on any long journey, the people who remain at home must observe strict chastity, and may not let the fire go out. Those of them who stay in the men's club-houses must further abstain from eating certain foods and from touching anything that belongs to others. A breach of these rules might, it is believed, entail the failure of the expedition.² Among the tribes of Geelvink Bay, in north-western New Guinea, when the men are gone on a long journey, as to Ceram or Tidore, the wives and sisters left at home sing to the moon, accompanying the lay with the booming music of gongs. The singing takes place in the afternoons, beginning two or three days before the new moon, and, lasting for the same time after it. If the silver sickle of the moon is seen in the sky, they raise a loud cry of joy. Asked why they do so, they answer, "Now we see the moon, and so do our husbands, and now we know that they are well; if we did not sing, they would be sick or some other misfortune would befall them."³ On nights when the moon is at the full the natives of Doreh, in north-western New Guinea, go out fishing on the lagoons. Their mode of proceeding is to poison the water with the pounded roots of a certain plant which has a powerful narcotic effect; the fish are stunned by it, and so easily caught. While the men are at work on the moonlit water, the people on the shore must

Telepathy
in hunting,
fishing,
and
trading.

Telepathy
in New
Guinea.

¹ W. H. Furness, *Home-life of Borneo Head-hunters*, p. 169.

² J. Chalmers, "Toaripi," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvii. (1898) p. 327.

³ J. L. van Hasselt, "Eenige Aanteekeningen aangaande de Bewoners

der N. Westkust van Nieuw Guinea, meer bepaaldelijk den Stam der Noefoerezen," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxii. (1889) p. 263; *id.*, "Die Papuastämme an der Geelvinkbai," *Mitteilungen der geograph. Gesellschaft zu Jena*, ix. (1891) pp. 101 sq.

Telepathy
in the Kei
Islands.

keep as still as death with their eyes fixed on the fishermen ; but no woman with child may be among them, for if she were there and looked at the water, the poison would at once lose its effect and the fish would escape.¹ In the Kei Islands, to the south-west of New Guinea, as soon as a vessel that is about to sail for a distant port has been launched, the part of the beach on which it lay is covered as speedily as possible with palm branches, and becomes sacred. No one may thenceforth cross that spot till the ship comes home. To cross it sooner would cause the vessel to perish.² Moreover, all the time that the voyage lasts three or four young girls, specially chosen for the duty, are supposed to remain in sympathetic connexion with the mariners and to contribute by their behaviour to the safety and success of the voyage. On no account, except for the most necessary purpose, may they quit the room that has been assigned to them. More than that, so long as the vessel is believed to be at sea they must remain absolutely motionless, crouched on their mats with their hands clasped between their knees. They may not turn their heads to the left or to the right or make any other movement whatsoever. If they did, it would cause the boat to pitch and toss ; and they may not eat any sticky stuff, such as rice boiled in coco-nut milk, for the stickiness of the food would clog the passage of the boat through the water. When the sailors are supposed to have reached their destination, the strictness of these rules is somewhat relaxed ; but during the whole time that the voyage lasts the girls are forbidden to eat fish which have sharp bones or stings, such as the sting-ray, lest their friends at sea should be involved in sharp, stinging trouble.³

Telepathy
in war.

Where beliefs like these prevail as to the sympathetic connexion between friends at a distance, we need not wonder that above everything else war, with its stern yet stirring appeal to some of the deepest and tenderest of human

¹ H. von Rosenberg, *Der malayische Archipel* (Leipsic, 1878), pp. 453, 462.

² C. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei-Eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijks-*

kundig Genootschap, Tweede Serie, x. (1893) p. 831.

³ H. Geurtjens, "Le Cérémonial des Voyages aux Iles Keij," *Anthropos*, v. (1910) pp. 337, 353. The girls bear the title of *wat moel*.

emotions, should quicken in the anxious relations left behind a desire to turn the sympathetic bond to the utmost account for the benefit of the dear ones who may at any moment be fighting and dying far away. Hence, to secure an end so natural and laudable, friends at home are apt to resort to devices which will strike us as pathetic or ludicrous, according as we consider their object or the means adopted to effect it. Thus in some districts of Borneo, when a Dyak is out head-hunting, his wife or, if he is unmarried, his sister must wear a sword day and night in order that he may always be thinking of his weapons; and she may not sleep during the day nor go to bed before two in the morning, lest her husband or brother should thereby be surprised in his sleep by an enemy.¹ In other parts of Borneo, when the men are away on a warlike expedition, their mats are spread in their houses just as if they were at home, and the fires are kept up till late in the evening and lighted again before dawn, in order that the men may not be cold. Further, the roofing of the house is opened before daylight to prevent the distant husbands, brothers, and sons from sleeping too late, and so being surprised by the enemy.² While a Malay of the Peninsula is away at the wars, his pillows and sleeping-mat at home must be kept rolled up. If any one else were to use them, the absent warrior's courage would fail and disaster would befall him. His wife and children may not have their hair cut in his absence, nor may he himself have his hair shorn.³

Telepathy
in war
among the
Dyaks.

Among the Sea Dyaks of Banting in Sarawak the women strictly observe an elaborate code of rules while the men are away fighting. Some of the rules are negative and some are positive, but all alike are based on the principles of magical homoeopathy and telepathy. Amongst them are the following. The women must wake very early in the morning and open the windows as soon as it is light; otherwise their absent husbands will oversleep themselves. The women may not oil their hair, or the men will slip. The women may neither sleep nor doze by day,

Telepathy
in war
among the
Sea Dyaks.

¹ J. C. E. Tromp, "De Rambai en Sebroeang Dajaks," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxv. 118.

of Borneo," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxii. (1893) p. 56.

³ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 524.

² H. Ling Roth, "Low's Natives

or the men will be drowsy on the march. The women must cook and scatter popcorn on the verandah every morning; so will the men be agile in their movements. The rooms must be kept very tidy, all boxes being placed near the walls; for if any one were to stumble over them, the absent husbands would fall and be at the mercy of the foe. At every meal a little rice must be left in the pot and put aside; so will the men far away always have something to eat and need never go hungry. On no account may the women sit at the loom till their legs grow cramped, otherwise their husbands will likewise be stiff in their joints and unable to rise up quickly or to run away from the foe. So in order to keep their husband's joints supple the women often vary their labours at the loom by walking up and down the verandah. Further, they may not cover up their faces, or the men would not be able to find their way through the tall grass or jungle. Again, the women may not sew with a needle, or the men will tread on the sharp spikes set by the enemy in the path. Should a wife prove unfaithful while her husband is away, he will lose his life in the enemy's country. Some years ago all these rules and more were observed by the women of Banting, while their husbands were fighting for the English against rebels. But alas! these tender precautions availed them little; for many a man, whose faithful wife was keeping watch and ward for him at home, found a soldier's grave.¹

* Telepathy
in war
among the
Shans, the
Timorese,
and the
Toradjas.

Among the Shans of Burma the wife of an absent warrior has to observe certain rules. Every fifth day she rests and does no work. She fills an earthen goblet with water to the brim and puts flowers into it every day. If the water sinks or the flowers fade, it is an omen of death. Moreover, she may not sleep on her husband's bed during his absence, but she sweeps the bedding clean and lays it out every night.² In the island of Timor, while war is being waged, the high-priest never quits the temple; his food is brought to him or cooked inside; day and night he must keep the fire burning, for if he were to let it die out, disaster would befall the warriors and would continue so

¹ Mrs. Hewitt, "Some Sea-Dayak
Tabus," *Man*, viii. (1908) pp. 186 sq.

² *Indian Antiquary*, xxi. (1892) p. 120.

long as the hearth was cold. Moreover, he must drink only hot water during the time the army is absent; for every draught of cold water would damp the spirits of the people, so that they could not vanquish the enemy.¹ Among the Toradjas of Central Celebes, when a party of men is out hunting for heads, the villagers who stay at home, and especially the wives of the head-hunters, have to observe certain rules in order not to hinder the absent men at their task. In the first place, the entrance to the *lobo* or spirit-house is shut. For the spirits of their fathers, who live in that house, are now away with the warriors, watching over and guarding them; and if any one entered their house in their absence they would hear the noise and return and be very angry at being thus called back from the campaign. Moreover, the people at home have to keep the house tidy: the sleeping-mats of the absent men must be hung on beams, not rolled up as if they were to be away a long time: their wives and next-of-kin may not quit the house at night: every night a light burns in the house, and a fire must be kept up constantly at the foot of the house-ladder: garments, turbans, and head-dresses may not be laid aside at night, for if the turban or head-dress were put off the warrior's turban might drop from his head in the battle; and the wives may sew no garments. When the spirit of the head-hunter returns home in his sleep (which is the Toradja expression for a soldier's dream) he must find everything there in good order and nothing that could vex him. By the observance of these rules, say the Toradjas, the souls of the head-hunters are "covered" or protected. And in order to make them strong, that they may not soon grow weary, rice is strewed morning and evening on the floor of the house. The women too go about constantly with a certain plant of which the pods are so light and feathery that they are easily wafted by the wind, for that helps to make the men nimble-footed.²

¹ H. O. Forbes, "On some Tribes of the Island of Timor," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884) p. 414.

der Toradja's van Midden-Celebes, en zijne beteekenis," *Verlagen en Mededeelingen der konink. Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afdeling Letterkunde*, IV. Reeks, III. Deel (Amsterdam, 1899), pp. 158 *sq.*

² A. C. Kruyt, "Het koppensnellen" VOL. I

Telepathy
in war
among the
Galelareese
and the
Kei
Islanders.

When Galelareese men are going away to war, they are accompanied down to the boats by the women. But after the leave-taking is over, the women, in returning to their houses, must be careful not to stumble or fall, and in the house they may neither be angry nor lift up weapons against each other; otherwise the men will fall and be killed in battle.¹ Similarly, we saw that among the Chams domestic brawls at home are supposed to cause the searcher for eagle-wood to fall a prey to wild beasts on the mountains.² Further, Galelareese women may not lay down the chopping knives in the house while their husbands are at the wars; the knives must always be hung up on hooks.³ The reason for the rule is not given; we may conjecture that it is a fear lest, if the chopping knives were laid down by the women at home, the men would be apt to lay down their weapons in the battle or at other inopportune moments. In the Kei Islands, when the warriors have departed, the women return indoors and bring out certain baskets containing fruits and stones. These fruits and stones they anoint and place on a board, murmuring as they do so, "O lord sun, moon, let the bullets rebound from our husbands, brothers, betrothed, and other relations, just as raindrops rebound from these objects which are smeared with oil." As soon as the first shot is heard, the baskets are put aside, and the women, seizing their fans, rush out of the houses. Then, waving their fans in the direction of the enemy, they run through the village, while they sing, "O golden fans! let our bullets hit, and those of the enemy miss."⁴ In this custom the ceremony of anointing stones, in order that the bullets may recoil from the men like raindrops from the stones, is a piece of pure homoeopathic or imitative magic; but the prayer to the sun, that he will be pleased to give effect to the charm, is a religious and perhaps later addition. The waving of the fans seems to be a charm to direct the bullets towards or away from their

¹ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, verhalen en overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1895) p. 507.

² See above, p. 120.

³ M. J. van Baarda, *l.c.*

⁴ C. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei-Eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893) p. 805.

mark, according as they are discharged from the guns of friends or foes.

An old historian of Madagascar informs us that "while the men are at the wars, and until their return, the women and girls cease not day and night to dance, and neither lie down nor take food in their own houses. And although they are very voluptuously inclined, they would not for anything in the world have an intrigue with another man while their husband is at the war, believing firmly that if that happened, their husband would be either killed or wounded. They believe that by dancing they impart strength, courage, and good fortune to their husbands; accordingly during such times they give themselves no rest, and this custom they observe very religiously."¹ Similarly a traveller of the seventeenth century writes that in Madagascar "when the man is in battle or under march, the wife continually dances and sings, and will not sleep or eat in her own house, nor admit of the use of any other man, unless she be desirous to be rid of her own; for they entertain this opinion among them, that if they suffer themselves to be overcome in an *intestin war* at home, their husbands must suffer for it, being engaged in a *forreign expedition*; but, on the contrary, if they behave themselves chastely, and dance lustily, that then their husbands, by some certain sympathetical operation, will be able to vanquish all their combatants."² We have seen that among hunters in various parts of the world the infidelity of the wife at home is believed to have a disastrous effect on her absent husband. In the Babar Archipelago, and among the Wagogo of East Africa, when the men are at the wars the women at home are bound to chastity, and in the Babar Archipelago they must fast besides.³ Under similar circumstances in the islands of Leti, Moa, and Lakor the women and children are forbidden to remain inside of the houses and to twine thread or weave.⁴

Telepathy
in war
among the
Malagasy.

¹ De Flacourt, *Histoire de la Grande Isle Madagascar* (Paris, 1658), pp. 97 sq. A statement of the same sort is made by the Abbé Rochon, *Voyage to Madagascar and the East Indies*, translated from the French (London, 1792), pp. 46 sq.

² John Struys, *Voyages and Travels* (London, 1684), p. 22. Struys may

have copied from De Flacourt.

³ J. G. F. Riedel, *De shuk- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Soelabes en Papua*, p. 343; H. Cole, "Notes on the Wagogo of German East Africa," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxiii. (1902) pp. 312, 317.

⁴ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 377.

Telepathy
in war
among the
natives of
West
Africa.

Among the Tshi-speaking peoples of the Gold Coast the wives of men who are away with the army paint themselves white, and adorn their persons with beads and charms. ' On the day when a battle is expected to take place, they run about armed with guns, or sticks carved to look like guns, and taking green paw-paws (fruits shaped somewhat like a melon), they hack them with knives, as if they were chopping off the heads of the foe.¹ The pantomime is no doubt merely an imitative charm, to enable the men to do to the enemy as the women do to the paw-paws. In the West African town of Framin, while the Ashantee war was raging some years ago, Mr. Fitzgerald Marriott saw a dance performed by women whose husbands had gone as carriers to the war. They were painted white and wore nothing but a short petticoat. At their head was a shrivelled old sorceress in a very short white petticoat, her black hair arranged in a sort of long projecting horn, and her black face, breasts, arms, and legs profusely adorned with white circles and crescents. All carried long white brushes made of buffalo or horse tails, and as they danced they sang, "Our husbands have gone to Ashanteeland; may they sweep their enemies off the face of the earth!"² Among the Thompson Indians of British Columbia, when the men were on the war-path, the women performed dances at frequent intervals. These dances were believed to ensure the success of the expedition. The dancers flourished their knives, threw long sharp-pointed sticks forward, or drew sticks with hooked ends repeatedly backward and forward. Throwing the sticks forward was symbolic of piercing or warding off the enemy, and drawing them back was symbolic of drawing their own men from danger. The hook at the end of the stick was particularly well adapted to serve the purpose of a life-saving apparatus. The women always pointed their weapons towards the enemy's country. They painted their faces red and sang as they danced, and they prayed to the weapons to preserve their husbands and help them to kill many foes. Some had

Telepathy
in war
among the
American
Indians.

¹ A. B. Ellis, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, p. 226.

² H. P. Fitzgerald Marriott, *The Secret Tribal Societies of West Africa*, p.

17 (reprinted from *Ars quatuor Coronatorum*, the transactions of a Masonic lodge of London). The lamented Miss Mary H. Kingsley was so kind as to lend me a copy of this work.

eagle-down stuck on the points of their sticks. When the dance was over, these weapons were hidden. If a woman whose husband was at the war thought she saw hair or a piece of a scalp on the weapon when she took it out, she knew that her husband had killed an enemy. But if she saw a stain of blood on it, she knew he was wounded or dead.¹ When the men of the Yuki tribe of Indians in California were away fighting, the women at home did not sleep; they danced continually in a circle, chanting and waving leafy wands. For they said that if they danced all the time, their husbands would not grow tired.² Among the Haida Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands, when the men had gone to war, the women at home would get up very early in the morning and pretend to make war by falling upon their children and feigning to take them for slaves. This was supposed to help their husbands to go and do likewise. If a wife were unfaithful to her husband while he was away on the war-path, he would probably be killed. For ten nights all the women at home lay with their heads towards the point of the compass to which the war-canoes had paddled away. Then they changed about, for the warriors were supposed to be coming home across the sea. At Masset the Haida women danced and sang war-songs all the time their husbands were away at the wars, and they had to keep everything about them in a certain order. It was thought that a wife might kill her husband by not observing these customs.³ In the Kafir district of the Hindoo Koosh, while the men are out raiding, the women abandon their work in the fields and assemble in the villages to dance day and night. The dances are kept up most of each day and the whole of each night. Sir George Robertson, who reports the custom, more than once watched the dancers dancing at midnight and in the early morning, and could see by the fitful glow of the wood-

Telepathy
in war
among the
Kafirs of
the Hindoo
Koosh.

¹ J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. I. No. 4 (April 1900), p. 356.

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

³ J. R. Swanton, "Contributions to the Ethnology of the Haida" (Leyden and New York, 1905), pp. 55 sq. (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. v. part I.)

fire how haggard and tired they* looked, yet how gravely and earnestly*they persisted in what they regarded as a serious duty.¹ The dances of these Kafirs are said to be performed in honour of certain of the national gods, but when we consider the custom in connexion with the others which have just been passed in review, we may reasonably surmise that it is or was originally in its essence a sympathetic charm intended to keep the absent warriors wakeful, lest they should be surprised in their sleep by the enemy. When a band of Carib Indians of the Orinoco had gone on the war-path, their friends left in the village used to calculate as nearly as they could the exact moment when the absent warriors would be advancing to attack the enemy. Then they took two lads, laid them down on a bench, and inflicted a most severe scourging on their bare backs. This the youths submitted to without a murmur, supported in their sufferings by the firm conviction, in which they had been bred from childhood, that on the constancy and fortitude with which they bore the cruel ordeal depended the valour and success of their comrades in the battle.²

Homoeopathic
magic at
making
drums.

So much for the savage theory of telepathy in war and the chase. We pass now to other cases of homoeopathic or imitative magic. While marriageable boys of the Mekeo district in British New Guinea are making their drums, they have to live alone in the forest and to observe a number of rules which are based on the principle of homoeopathic magic. The drums will be used in the dances, and in order that they may give out a resonant sonorous note, great care must be taken in their construction. The boys may spend from two days to a week at the task. Having chosen a suitable piece of wood, they scrape the outside into shape with a shell, and hollow out the inside by burning it with a hot coal till the sides are very thin. The skin of an iguana, made supple by being steeped in coco-nut milk, is then stretched over the hollow and tightened with string and glue. All the time a boy is at work on his drum, he must carefully avoid

¹ Sir George Scott Robertson, *The Kafirs of the Hindu Kush* (London, 1896), pp. 335, 621-626.

² Antonio Caulin, *Historia Coro-*

graphica natural y evangelica de la Nueva Andalucia de Cumana, Guayana y Vertientes del Río Orinoco (1779), p. 97.

women ; for if a woman or a girl were to see him, the drum would split and sound like an old cracked pot. If he ate fish, a bone would prick him and the skin of the drum would burst. If he ate a red banana it would choke him, and the drum would give a dull stifled note ; if he tasted grated coco-nut, the white ants, like the white particles of the nut, would gnaw the body of the drum ; if he cooked his food in the ordinary round-bellied pot, he would grow fat and would not be able to dance, and the girls would despise him and say, "Your belly is big ; it is a pot !" Moreover, he must strictly shun water ; for if he accidentally touched it with his feet, his hands, or his lips before the drum was quite hollowed out, he would throw the instrument away, saying : "I have touched water ; my hot coal will be put out, and I shall never be able to hollow out my drum."¹

A Highland witch can sink a ship by homoeopathic or imitative magic. She has only to set a small round dish floating in a milk-pan full of water, and then to croon her spell. When the dish upsets in the pan, the ship will go down in the sea. They say that once three witches from Harris left home at night after placing the milk-pan thus on the floor, and strictly charging a serving-maid to let nothing come near it. But while the girl was not looking a duck came in and squattered about in the water on the floor. Next morning the witches returned and asked if anything had come near the pan. The girl said "No," whereupon one of the witches said to the others, "What a heavy sea we had last night coming round Cabag head !"² If a wolf has carried off a sheep or a pig, the Esthonians have a very simple mode of making him drop it. They let fall anything that they happen to have at hand, such as a cap or a glove, or, what is perhaps still better, they lift a heavy stone and then let it go. By that act, on the principle of homoeopathic magic, they compel the wolf to let go his booty.³

Various applications of homoeopathic magic.

Among the many beneficent uses to which a mistaken

¹ Father Guis, "Les Canaques, ce qu'ils font, ce qu'ils disent," *Missions Catholiques*, xxx. (1898) p. 29 ; A. C. Haddon, *Head-hunters*, p. 257.

² J. G. Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and*

Islands of Scotland (Glasgow, 1902), pp. 21 sq.

³ Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Esten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, p. 122.

Homoeopathic magic applied to make plants grow.
Magic at sowing and planting.

ingenuity has applied the principle of homoeopathic or imitative magic, is that of causing trees and plants to bear fruit in due season. In Thüringen the man who sows flax carries the seed in a long bag which reaches from his shoulders to his knees, and he walks with long strides, so that the bag sways to and fro on his back. It is believed that this will cause the flax to wave in the wind.¹ In the interior of Sumatra rice is sown by women who, in sowing, let their hair hang loose down their back, in order that the rice may grow luxuriantly and have long stalks.² Similarly, in ancient Mexico a festival was held in honour of the goddess of maize, or "the long-haired mother," as she was called. It began at the time "when the plant had attained its full growth, and fibres shooting forth from the top of the green ear indicated that the grain was fully formed. During this festival the women wore their long hair unbound, shaking and tossing it in the dances which were the chief feature in the ceremonial, in order that the tassel of the maize might grow in like profusion, that the grain might be correspondingly large and flat, and that the people might have abundance."³ It is a Malay maxim to plant maize when your stomach is full, and to see to it that your dibble is thick; for this will swell the ear of the maize.⁴ And they say that you should sow rice also with a full stomach, for then the ears will be full.⁵ The eminent novelist, Mr. Thomas Hardy, was once told that the reason why certain trees in front of his house, near Weymouth, did not thrive, was that he looked at them before breakfast on an empty stomach.⁶ More elaborate still are the measures taken by an Esthonian peasant woman to make her cabbages thrive. On the day when they are

¹ Aug. Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen* (Vienna, 1878), p. 218, § 36.

² A. L. van Hasselt, *Volksbeschrijving van Midden-Sumatra* (Leyden, 1882), p. 323; J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xxxix. (1890) p. 64.

³ E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. (Oxford,

1892) p. 421. Compare Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, i. 518 sq.

⁴ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 217.

⁵ A. L. van Hasselt, "Nota betreffende de rijstcultuur in de Residentie Tapanoeli," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxvi. (1893) p. 529.

⁶ This I learned from Mr. Hardy in conversation. See also his letter in *Folklore*, viii. (1897) p. 11.

sown she bakes great pancakes, in order that the cabbages may have great broad leaves; and she wears a dazzling white hood in the belief that this will cause the cabbages to have fine white heads. Moreover, as soon as the cabbages are transplanted, a small round stone is wrapt up tightly in a white linen rag and set at the end of the cabbage bed, because in this way the cabbage heads will grow very white and firm.¹ Among the Huzuls of the Carpathians, when a woman is planting cabbages, she winds many cloths about her head, in order that the heads of the cabbages may also be thick. And as soon as she has sown parsley, she grasps the calf of her leg with both hands, saying, "May it be as thick as that!"² Among the Kurs of East Prussia, who inhabit the long sandy tongue of land known as the Nehrung which parts the Baltic from a lagoon, when a farmer sows his fields in spring, he carries an axe and chops the earth with it, in order that the cornstalks may be so sturdy that an axe will be needed to hew them down.³ For much the same reason a Bavarian sower in sowing wheat will sometimes wear a golden ring, in order that the corn may have a fine yellow colour.⁴ The Malagasy think that only people with a good even set of teeth should plant maize, for otherwise there will be empty spaces in the maize cob corresponding to the empty spaces in the planter's teeth.⁵

In many parts of Europe dancing or leaping high in the air are approved homoeopathic modes of making the crops grow high. Thus in Franche-Comté they say that you should dance at the Carnival in order to make the hemp grow tall.⁶ In the Vosges mountains the sower of hemp pulls his nether garments up as far as he can, because he imagines that the hemp he is sowing will

Dancing and leaping high as a charm to make the crops grow high

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

² R. F. Kaindl, "Zauberglaube bei den Huzulen," *Globus*, lxxvi. (1899) p. 276.

³ F. Tetzner, "Die Kuren in Ostpreussen," *Globus*, lxxv. (1899) p. 148.

⁴ F. Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. p. 207, § 362; *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 297, iii. 343.

⁵ H. F. Standing, "Malagasy fady," *Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine*, vol. ii. (reprint of the second four numbers, 1881-1884) (Antananarivo, 1896), p. 257.

⁶ Ch. Beauquier, *Les Mois en Franche-Comté* (Paris, 1900), p. 30.

Dancing
and leap-
ing high as
a charm
to make
the crops
grow high.

attain the precise height to which he has succeeded in hitching up his breeches;¹ and in the same region another way of ensuring a good crop of hemp is to dance on the roof of the house on Twelfth Day.² In Swabia and among the Transylvanian Saxons it is a common custom for a man who has sown hemp to leap high on the field, in the belief that this will make the hemp grow tall.³ All over Baden till recently it was the custom for the farmer's wife to give the sower a dish of eggs or a cake baked with eggs either before or after sowing, in order that he might leap as high as possible. This was deemed the best way of making the hemp grow high. For the same purpose some people who had sown hemp used to dance the hemp dance, as it was called, on Shrove Tuesday, and in this dance also the dancers jumped as high as they could. In some parts of Baden the hemp seed is thrown in the air as high as possible, and in Katzenthal the urchins leap over fires in order that the hemp may grow tall.⁴ Similarly in many other parts of Germany and Austria the peasant imagines that he makes the flax grow tall by dancing or leaping high, or by jumping backwards from a table; the higher the leap the taller will the flax be that year. The special season for thus promoting the growth of flax is Shrove Tuesday, but in some places it is Candlemas or Walpurgis Night (the eve of May Day). The scene of the performance is the flax field, the farmhouse, or the village tavern.⁵ In

¹ L. F. Sauvé, *Le Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges* (Paris, 1889), p. 142.

² L. F. Sauvé, *op. cit.* pp. 17 sq.

³ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 499; A. Heinrich, *Agrarische Sitten und Gebräuche unter den Sachsen Siebenbürgens* (Hermannstadt, 1880), p. 11.

⁴ E. H. Meyer, *Badisches Volksleben im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Strasburg, 1900), pp. 421 sq.

⁵ A. Kuhn und W. Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 445, § 354; J. V. Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 95, § 664; A. Peter, *Volktümliches aus österreichisch-Schlesien*, ii. 266; Von Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus*

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

some parts of Eastern Prussia the girls dance one by one in a large hoop at midnight on Shrove Tuesday. The hoop is adorned with leaves, flowers, and ribbons, and attached to it are a small bell and some flax. Strictly speaking, the hoop should be wrapt in white linen handkerchiefs, but the place of these is often taken by many-coloured bits of cloth, wool, and so forth. While dancing within the hoop each girl has to wave her arms vigorously and cry "Flax grow!" or words to that effect. When she has done, she leaps out of the hoop, or is lifted out of it by her partner.¹ In Anhalt, when the sower had sown the flax, he leaped up and flung the seed-bag high in the air, saying, "Grow and turn green! You have nothing else to do." He hoped that the flax would grow as high as he flung the seed-bag in the air. At Quellendorff, in Anhalt, the first bushel of seed-corn had to be heaped up high in order that the corn-stalks should grow tall and bear plenty of grain.² When Macedonian farmers have done digging their fields, they throw their spades up into the air, and catching them again, exclaim, "May the crop grow as high as the spade has gone!"³

The notion that a person can influence a plant homoeopathically by his act or condition comes out clearly in a remark made by a Malay woman. Being asked why she stripped the upper part of her body naked in reaping the rice, she explained that she did it to make the rice-husks

Plants and trees influenced homoeopathically by a person's act or state.

Überlieferungen im Voigtlande, pp. 368 sq.; *Die gestriegelte Rockenphilosophie* (Chemnitz, 1759), p. 103; M. Toeppen, *Aberglauben aus Masuren*,³ p. 68; A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,³ p. 396, § 657; U. Jahn, *Die deutsche Opfergebräuche bei Ackerbau und Viehzucht*, pp. 194 sq.; R. Wuttke, *Sächsische Volkskunde* (Dresden, 1901), p. 370; E. Hoffmann-Krayer, "Fruchtbarkeitsriten im schweizerischen Volksbrauch," *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde*, xi. (1907) p. 260. According to one account, in leaping from the table you should hold in your hand a long bag containing flax seed (Woeste, l.c.). The dancing or leaping is often done specially by girls or women (Kuhn

und Schwartz, Grohmann, Witzschel, Heinrich, l.c.). Sometimes the women dance in the sunlight (*Die gestriegelte Rockenphilosophie*, l.c.); but in Voigtland the leap from the table should be made by the housewife naked and at midnight on Shrove Tuesday (Köhler, l.c.). On Walpurgis Night the leap is made over an alder branch stuck at the edge of the flax field (Sommer, l.c.).

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

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

³ G. F. Abbott, *Macedonian Folklore* (Cambridge, 1903), p. 122.

Fertilising influence supposed to be exercised on plants by pregnant women or by women who have borne many children.

thinner, as she was tired of pounding thick-husked rice.¹ Clearly, she thought that the less clothing she wore the less husk there would be on the rice. Among the Minangkabauers of Sumatra, when a rice barn has been built a feast is held, of which a woman far advanced in pregnancy must partake. Her condition will obviously help the rice to be fruitful and multiply.² Among the Zulus a pregnant woman sometimes grinds corn, which is afterwards burnt among the half-grown crops in order to fertilise them.³ For a similar reason in Syria when a fruit-tree does not bear, the gardener gets a pregnant woman to fasten a stone to one of its branches; then the tree will be sure to bear fruit, but the woman will run a risk of miscarriage,⁴ having transferred her fertility, or part of it, to the tree. The practice of loading with stones a tree which casts its fruit is mentioned by Maimonides,⁵ though the Rabbis apparently did not understand it. The proceeding was most probably a homoeopathic charm designed to load the tree with fruit.⁶ In Swabia they say that if a fruit-tree does not bear, you should keep it loaded with a heavy stone all summer, and next year it will be sure to bear.⁷ The custom of tying stones to fruit-trees in order to ensure a crop of fruit is followed also in Sicily.⁸ The magic virtue of a pregnant woman to communicate fertility is known to Bavarian and Austrian peasants, who

¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 248.

² J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xxxix. (1890) p. 67.

³ Dudley Kidd, *Savage Childhood* (London, 1906), p. 291.

⁴ Eijüb Abêla, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss abergläubischer Gebräuche in Syrien," *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins*, vii. (1884) p. 112, § 202. Compare L'Abbé B. Chémali, "Naissance et premier âge au Liban," *Anthropos*, v. (1910) pp. 734, 735.

⁵ Quoted by D. Chwolson, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus* (St. Petersburg, 1856), ii. 469.

⁶ W. Mannhardt (*Baumkultus*, p. 419) promised in a later investigation to prove that it was an ancient custom at harvest or in spring to load or pelt trees and plants, as well as the representatives of the spirit of vegetation, with stones, in order thereby to express the weight of fruit which was expected. This promise, so far as I know, he did not live to fulfil. Compare, however, his *Mythologische Forschungen*, p. 324.

⁷ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, pp. 249 sq. The placing of the stone on the tree is described as a punishment, but this is probably a misunderstanding.

⁸ G. Pitre, *Usi e costumi, credenze e pregiudizi del popolo siciliano*, iii (Palermo, 1889) pp. 113 sq.

think that if you give the first fruit of a tree to a woman with child to eat, the tree will bring forth abundantly next year.¹ In Bohemia for a similar purpose the first apple of a young tree is sometimes plucked and eaten by a woman who has borne many children, for then the tree will be sure to bear many apples.² In the Zürcher Oberland, Switzerland, they think that a cherry-tree will bear abundantly if its first fruit is eaten by a woman who has just given birth to her first child.³ In Macedonia the first fruit of a tree should not be eaten by a barren woman but by one who has many children.⁴ The Nicobar Islanders think it lucky to get a pregnant woman and her husband to plant seed in gardens.⁵ The Greeks and Romans sacrificed pregnant victims to the goddesses of the corn and of the earth, doubtless in order that the earth might teem and the corn swell in the ear.⁶ When a Catholic priest remonstrated with the Indians of the Orinoco on allowing their women to sow the fields in the blazing sun, with infants at their breasts, the men answered, "Father, you don't understand these things, and that is why they vex you. You know that women are accustomed to bear children, and that we men are not. When the women sow, the stalk of the maize bears two or three ears, the root of the yucca yields two or three

¹ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 299; T. Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche des Volkes in Österreich*, p. 315. On the other hand, in some parts of north-west New Guinea a woman with child may not plant, or the crop would be eaten up by pigs; and she may not climb a tree in the rice-field, or the crop would fail. See J. L. van Hasselt, "Enige aantekeningen aangaande de Bewoners der N. Westkust van Nieuw Guinea," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxii. (1889) p. 264; *id.*, "Die Papuastämme an der Geelvinkbai," *Mitteilungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft zu Jena*, ix. (1891) p. 102. Similarly the Galelareese say that a pregnant woman must not sweep under a shaddock tree, or knock the fruit from the bough, else it will taste sour instead of sweet. See M. J. van Baarda,

"Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1895) p. 457.

² J. V. Grohman, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mahren*, p. 143, § 1053.

³ E. Hoffmann-Krayer, "Fruchtbarkeitsriten im schweizerischen Volksbrauch," *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde*, xi. (1907) p. 263.

⁴ G. F. Abbott, *Macedonia Folklore*, p. 122.

⁵ *Census of India, 1901*, vol. iii. p. 206.

⁶ Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*,² No. 615, line 17 $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\rho\ \kappa\alpha\pi\tau\epsilon\upsilon\ \Delta\eta\mu\eta\tau\epsilon\ \delta\upsilon\ \epsilon\kappa\epsilon\upsilon\mu\omicron\upsilon\alpha\ \pi\rho\omega\tau\omicron\rho\acute{\omicron}\kappa\omicron\upsilon$; compare *id.*, No. 616, line 61 *sq.*, No. 617, line 3; Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 633 *sq.*; Macrobius, *Saturn.* i. 12. 20; Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, iv. 22.

basketfuls, and everything multiplies in proportion. Now why is that? Simply because the women know how to bring forth, and know how to make the seed which they sow bring forth also. Let them sow, then; we men don't know as much about it as they do."¹ For the same reason, probably, the Tupinambas of Brazil thought that if a certain earth-almond were planted by the men, it would not grow.² Among the Ilocans of Luzon the men sow bananas, but the sower must have a young child on his shoulder, or the bananas will bear no fruit.³ When a tree bears no fruit, the Galelareese think it is a male; and their remedy is simple. They put a woman's petticoat on the tree, which, being thus converted into a female, will naturally prove prolific.⁴ On the other hand the Baganda believe that a barren wife infects her husband's garden with her own sterility and prevents the trees from bearing fruit; hence a childless woman is generally divorced.⁵ For a like reason, probably, the Wajagga of East Africa throw away the corpse of a childless woman, with all her belongings, in the forest or in any other place where the land is never cultivated; moreover her body is not carried out of the door of the hut, but a special passage is broken for it through the wall,⁶ no doubt to prevent her dangerous ghost from finding its way back.⁷

Barren women supposed to make the fruit-trees barren.

Taboos based on the belief that persons can influence vegetation homoeopathically by their acts or states.

Thus on the theory of homoeopathic magic a person can influence vegetation either for good or for evil according to the good or the bad character of his acts or states: for example, a fruitful woman makes plants fruitful, a barren woman makes them barren. Hence this belief in the noxious and infectious nature of certain personal qualities or accidents

¹ J. Gumilla, *Histoire naturelle, civile et géographique de l'Orénoque* (Avignon, 1758), iii. 184.

² R. Southey, *History of Brasil*, i. 3 (London, 1822) p. 253.

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

⁴ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkskunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1895) p. 489.

⁵ Rev. J. Roscoe, "Further Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 38.

⁶ B. Guttman, "Trauer und Begräbnissitten der Wadschagga," *Globus*, lxxxix. (1906) p. 200.

⁷ J. G. Frazer, "On certain Burial Customs as illustrative of the Primitive Theory of the Soul," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xv. (1886) pp. 69 sq.

has given rise to a number of prohibitions or rules of avoidance: people abstain from doing certain things lest they should homoeopathically infect the fruits of the earth with their own undesirable state or condition. All such customs of abstention or rules of avoidance are examples of negative magic or taboo.¹ Thus, for example, arguing from what may be called the infectiousness of personal acts or states, the Galelareese say that you ought not to shoot with a bow and arrows under a fruit-tree, or the tree will cast its fruit even as the arrows fall to the ground;² and that when you are eating water-melon you ought not to mix the pips which you spit out of your mouth with the pips which you have put aside to serve as seed; for if you do, though the pips you spat out may certainly spring up and blossom, yet the blossoms will keep falling off just as the pips fell from your mouth, and thus these pips will never bear fruit.³ Precisely the same train of thought leads the Bavarian peasant to believe that if he allows the graft of a fruit-tree to fall on the ground, the tree that springs from that graft will let its fruit fall untimely.⁴ The Indians of Santiago Tepehuacan suppose that if a single grain of the maize which they are about to sow were eaten by an animal, the birds and the wild boars would come and devour all the rest, and nothing would grow. And if any of these Indians has ever in his life buried a corpse, he will never be allowed to plant a fruit-tree, for they say that the tree would wither. And they will not let such a man go fishing with them, for the fish would flee from him.⁵ Clearly these Indians imagine that anybody who has buried a corpse is thereby tainted, so to say, with an infection of death, which might prove fatal to fruits and fish. In Nias, the day after a man has made preparations for planting rice he may not use fire, or the crop would be parched; he may not spread his mats on the ground, or the young plants would droop towards the earth.⁶

¹ As to negative magic or taboo, see above, pp. 111 sqq.

² M. J. van Baarda, *op. cit.* p. 488.

³ M. J. van Baarda, *op. cit.* pp. 496 sq.

⁴ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 299.

⁵ "Lettre du curé de Santiago Tepehuacan," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), II^eme Série, ii. (1834) pp. 181 sq., 183.

⁶ E. Medigliani, *Un Viaggio a Nias* (Milan, 1890), p. 590.

When the Chams of Cochinchina are sowing their dry rice-fields and desire that no rain should fall, they eat their rice dry instead of moistening it, as they usually do, with the water in which vegetables and fish have been boiled. That prevents rain from spoiling the rice.¹

Persons in-
fluenced
homoeo-
pathically
by plants.

In the foregoing cases a person is supposed to influence vegetation homoeopathically. He infects trees or plants with qualities or accidents, good or bad, resembling and derived from his own. But on the principle of homoeopathic magic the influence is mutual: the plant can infect the man just as much as the man can infect the plant. In magic, as I believe in physics, action and reaction are equal and opposite. The Cherokee Indians are adepts in practical botany of the homoeopathic sort. Thus wiry roots of the catgut plant or devil's shoestring (*Tephrosia*) are so tough that they can almost stop a ploughshare in the furrow. Hence Cherokee women wash their heads with a decoction of the roots to make the hair strong, and Cherokee ball-players wash themselves with it to toughen their muscles. To help them to spring quickly to their feet when they are thrown to the ground, these Indian ball-players also bathe their limbs with a decoction of the small rush (*Juncus tenuis*), which, they say, always recovers its erect position, no matter how often it is trampled down. To improve a child's memory the Cherokees beat up burs in water which has been fetched from a roaring waterfall. The virtue of the potion is threefold. The voice of the Long Man or river-god is heard in the roar of the cataract; the stream seizes and holds things cast upon its surface; and there is nothing that sticks like a bur. Hence it seems clear that with the potion the child will drink in the lessons taught by the voice of the waters, will seize them like the stream, and stick fast to them like a bur. For a like reason the Cherokee fisherman ties the plant called Venus' flytrap (*Dionaea*) to his fishtrap, and he chews the plant and spits it on the bait. That will be sure to make the trap and the bait catch fish, just as Venus' flytrap catches and digests the insects which alight on it.²

¹ Damien Grangeon, "Les Cham et leurs superstitions," *Missions Catho-*

liques, xxviii. (1896) p. 83.

² J. Mooney, "Myths of the

The Kei islanders think that certain creepers which adhere firmly to the trunks of trees prevent voyagers at sea from being wafted hither and thither at the mercy of the wind and the waves; the adhesive power of the plants enables the mariners to go straight to their destination.¹ It is a Galelareese belief that if you eat a fruit which has fallen to the ground, you will yourself contract a disposition to stumble and fall; and that if you partake of something which has been forgotten (such as a sweet potato left in the pot or a banana in the fire), you will become forgetful.² The Galelareese are also of opinion that if a woman were to consume two bananas growing from a single head she would give birth to twins.³ The Guarani Indians of South America thought that a woman would become a mother of twins if she ate a double grain of millet.⁴ In Vedic times a curious application of this principle supplied a charm by which a banished prince might be restored to his kingdom. He had to eat food cooked on a fire which was fed with wood which had grown out of the stump of a tree which had been cut down. The recuperative power manifested by such a tree would in due course be communicated through the fire to the food, and so to the prince, who ate the food which was cooked on the fire which was fed with the wood which grew out of the tree.⁵ Among the Lkufgen Indians of Vancouver Island an infallible means of making your hair grow long is to rub it with fish oil and the pulverised fruit of a particular kind of poplar (*Populus trichocarpa*). As the fruit grows a long way up the tree, it cannot fail to make your hair grow long too.⁶ At Allumba, in Central Australia, there is a tree to

Cherokee," *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington, 1900), pt. I, pp. 425-427; compare *id.*, "Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees," *Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1891), p. 329.

¹ H. Geurtjens, "Le Cérémonial des voyages aux Îles Keij," *Anthropos*, v. (1910) p. 352.

² M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-*

Indië, xlv. (1895) pp. 466, 468.

³ M. J. van Baarda, *op. cit.* p. 467.

⁴ R. Southey, *History of Brazil*, ii. (London, 1817) p. 37.

⁵ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 505; M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda*, p. 240; W. Caland, *Altindisches Zauberitual*, p. 37.

⁶ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 25 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

People
supposed
to be
influenced
homoeo-
pathically
by the
nature of
the timber
of which
their houses
are built.

which the sun, in the shape of a woman, is said to have travelled from the east. The natives believe that if the tree were destroyed, they would all be burned up; and that were any man to kill and eat an opossum from this tree, the food would burn up all his inward parts so that he would die.¹

The Sundanese of the Indian Archipelago regard certain kinds of wood as unsuitable for use in house-building, especially such trees as have prickles or thorns on their trunks. They think that the life of people who lived in a house made of such timber would be thorny and full of trouble. Again, if a house is built of trees that have fallen, or lost their leaves through age, the inmates would die soon or would be hard put to it to earn their bread. Again, wood from a house that has been burnt down should never be used in building, for it would cause a fire to break out in the new house.² In Java some people would not build a house with the wood of a tree that has been uprooted by a storm, lest the house should fall down in like manner; and they take care not to construct the upright and the horizontal parts (the standing and lying parts, as they call them) of the edifice out of the same tree. The reason for this precaution is a belief that if the standing and lying woodwork was made out of the same tree, the inmates of the house would constantly suffer from ill health; no sooner had one of them got up from a bed of sickness than another would have to lie down on it; and so it would go on, one up and another down, perpetually.³ Before Cherokee braves went forth to war the medicine-man used to give each man a small charmed root which made him absolutely invulnerable. On the eve of battle the warrior bathed in a running stream, chewed a portion of the root and spat the juice on his body in order that the bullets might slide from his skin like the drops of water. Some of my readers perhaps doubt whether this really made the men bomb-proof. There is a barren and paralysing spirit of scepticism abroad at

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 624 sq.

² J. Habbema, "Bijgeloof in de Praenger-Regentschappen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, li. (1900) p. 113.

³ D. Louwerier, "Bijgeloovige gebruiken, die door de Javanen worden in acht genomen bij het bouwen hunner huizen," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xlviii. (1904) pp. 380 sq.

the present day which is most deplorable. However, the efficacy of this particular charm was proved in the Civil War, for three hundred Cherokees served in the army of the South; and they were never, or hardly ever, wounded in action.¹ Near Charlotte Waters, in Central Australia, there is a tree which sprang up to mark the spot where a blind man died. It is called the Blind Tree by the natives, who think that if it were cut down all the people of the neighbourhood would become blind. A man who wishes to deprive his enemy of sight need only go to the tree by himself and rub it, muttering his wish and exhorting the magic virtue to go forth and do its baleful work.²

In this last example the infectious quality, though it emanates directly from a tree, is derived originally from a man—namely, the blind man—who was buried at the place where the tree grew. Similarly, the Central Australians believe that a certain group of stones at Undiara are the petrified boils of an old man who long ago plucked them from his body and left them there; hence any man who wishes to infect his enemy with boils will go to these stones and throw miniature spears at them, taking care that the points of the spears strike the stones. Then the spears are picked up, and thrown one by one in the direction of the person whom it is intended to injure. The spears carry with them the magic virtue from the stones, and the result is an eruption of painful boils on the body of the victim. Sometimes a whole group of people can be afflicted in this way by a skilful magician.³ These examples introduce us to a fruitful branch of homoeopathic magic, namely to that department of it which works by means of the dead; for just as the dead can neither see nor hear nor speak, so you may on homoeopathic principles render people blind, deaf, and dumb by the use of dead men's bones or anything else that is tainted by the infection of death. Thus among the Galelareese, when a young man goes a-wooing at night, he takes a little earth from a grave and strews it on the

Homoeopathic magic of the dead.

¹ J. Mooney, "Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees," *Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1891), p. 389.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 552.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* p. 550.

Homoeopathic magic of the dead employed by burglars for the purpose of concealment.

roof of his sweetheart's house just above the place where her parents sleep. This, he fancies, will prevent them from waking while he converses with his beloved, since the earth from the grave will make them sleep as sound as the dead.¹ Burglars in all ages and many lands have been patrons of this species of magic, which is very useful to them in the exercise of their profession. Thus a South Slavonian housebreaker sometimes begins operations by throwing a dead man's bone over the house, saying, with pungent sarcasm, "As this bone may waken, so may these people waken"; after that not a soul in the house can keep his or her eyes open.² Similarly, in Java the burglar takes earth from a grave and sprinkles it round the house which he intends to rob; this throws the inmates into a deep sleep.³ With the same intention a Hindoo will strew ashes from a pyre at the door of the house;⁴ Indians of Peru scatter the dust of dead men's bones;⁵ and Ruthenian burglars remove the marrow from a human shin-bone, pour tallow into it, and having kindled the tallow, march thrice round the house with this candle burning, which causes the inmates to sleep a death-like sleep. Or the Ruthenian will make a flute out of a human leg-bone and play upon it; whereupon all persons within hearing are overcome with drowsiness.⁶ The Indians of Mexico employed for this maleficent purpose the left fore-arm of a woman who had died in giving birth to her first child; but the arm had to be stolen. With it they beat the ground before they entered the house which they designed to plunder; this caused every one in the house to lose all power of speech and motion; they were as dead, hearing and seeing everything, but perfectly powerless; some of them, however, really slept and even snored.⁷ In Europe similar properties were

¹ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1895) p. 462.

² F. S. Krauss, *Volksgebräue und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 146.

³ J. Knebel, "Amulettes javanaises," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xl. (1898) p. 506.

⁴ *North Indian Notes and Queries*,

ii. 215, No. 760; W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 261.

⁵ P. J. de Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la idolatria del Piru* (Lima, 1621), p. 22.

⁶ R. F. Kaindl, "Zauberbräue bei den Ruthenen," *Globus*, lxi. (1892) p. 282.

⁷ B. de Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle-Espagne* (Paris, 1880), bk. iv. ch. 31, pp. 274 sq.; E.

ascribed to the Hand of Glory, which was the dried and pickled hand of a man who had been hanged. If a candle made of the fat of a malefactor who had also died on the gallows was lighted and placed in the Hand of Glory as in a candlestick, it rendered motionless all persons to whom it was presented; they could not stir a finger any more than if they were dead.¹ Sometimes the dead man's hand is itself the candle, or rather bunch of candles, all its withered fingers being set on fire; but should any member of the household be awake, one of the fingers will not kindle. Such nefarious lights can only be extinguished with milk.² Often it is prescribed that the thief's candle should be made of the finger of a new-born or, still better, unborn child; sometimes it is thought needful that the thief should have one such candle for every person in the house, for if he has one candle too little somebody in the house will wake and catch him. Once these tapers begin to burn, there is nothing but milk that will put them out. In the seventeenth century robbers used to murder pregnant women in order thus to extract candles from their wombs.³ An ancient Greek robber or burglar thought he could silence and put to flight the fiercest watchdogs by carrying with him a brand plucked from a funeral pyre.⁴

Again, Servian and Bulgarian women who chafe at the restraints of domestic life will take the copper coins from the eyes of a corpse, wash them in wine or water, and give the liquid to their husbands to drink. After swallowing it, the husband will be as blind to his wife's peccadilloes as the dead man was on whose eyes the coins were laid.⁵ When a

Homoeopathic magic of the dead employed for various purposes.

Seier, *Altmaxikanische Studien*, ii. (Berlin, 1899) pp. 51 sq. (*Veröffentlichungen aus dem königlichen Museum für Völkerkunde*, vi.).

¹ J. Brand, *Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*, iii. 278 sq. (Bohn's ed.).

² W. Henderson, *Folklore of the Northern Counties of England*, pp. 239 sqq.; J. W. Wolf, *Niederländische Sagen* (Leipsic, 1843), pp. 363-365.

³ L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, i. 100 sq. § 141; J. V. Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 106 § 758, p. 205 § 1421; A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche*

Volksaberglaube,³ pp. 126 sq. § 184; A. Gittée, *De hand en de vingeren in het volksgeloof*, pp. 31 sqq. Compare Tettau und Temme, *Volksagen Ostpreussens, Lithauens und Westpreussens*, p. 266.

⁴ Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* i. 38.

⁵ F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 140. The custom of placing coins on the eyes of a corpse to prevent them from opening is not uncommon. Its observance in England is attested by the experienced Mrs. Gamp:—"When Gamp was summonsed to his long home, and I see him a-lying in Guy's Hospital with

Blackfoot Indian went out eagle-hunting, he used to take a skull with him, because he believed that the skull would make him invisible, like the dead person to whom it had belonged, and so the eagles would not be able to see and attack him.¹ The Tarahumares of Mexico are great runners, and parties of them engage in races with each other. They believe that human bones induce fatigue; hence before a race the friends of one side will bury dead men's bones in the track, hoping that the runners of the other side will pass over them and so be weakened. Naturally they warn their own men to shun the spot where the bones are buried.² The Belep of New Caledonia think that they can disable an enemy from flight by means of the leg-bone of a dead foe. They stick certain plants into the bone, and then smash it between stones before the skulls of their ancestors. It is easy to see that this breaks the leg of the living enemy and so hinders him from running away. Hence in time of war men fortify themselves with amulets of this sort.³ The ancient Greeks seem to have thought that to set a young male child on a tomb would be to rob him of his manhood by infecting him with the impotence of the dead.⁴ And as there is no memory in the grave the Arabs think that earth from a grave can make a man forget his griefs and sorrows, especially the sorrow of an unhappy love.⁵

Homoeopathic magic of animals.

Again, animals are often conceived to possess qualities or properties which might be useful to man, and homoeopathic or imitative magic seeks to communicate these properties to human beings in various ways. Thus some Bechuanas wear a ferret as a charm, because, being very tenacious of life, it will make them difficult to kill.⁶ Others

a penny piece on each eye, and his wooden leg under his left arm, I thought I should have fainted away. But I bore up" (C. Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, ch. xix.).

¹ G. B. Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, p. 238.

² C. Lumholtz, *Unknown Mexico*, I. 284.

³ Father Lambert, in *Missions Catholiques*, xi. (1879) p. 43; *id.*, *Mœurs et superstitions des Néo-Calédoniens* (Nouméa, 1900), pp. 30 sq.

⁴ Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 750 sqq. But the lines are not free from ambiguity. See F. A. Paley's note on the passage.

⁵ E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord* (Algiers, 1908), pp. 302 sq.

⁶ J. Campbell, *Travels in South Africa, Second Journey* (London, 1822), ii. 206; Barnabas Shaw, *Memorials of South Africa* (London, 1840), p. 66.

wear a certain insect, mutilated, but living, for a similar purpose.¹ Yet other Bechuana warriors wear the hair of a hornless ox among their own hair, and the skin of a frog on their mantle, because a frog is slippery, and the ox, having no horns, is hard to catch ; so the man who is provided with these charms believes that he will be as hard to hold as the ox and the frog.² Again, it seems plain that a South African warrior who twists tufts of rats' hair among his own curly black locks will have just as many chances of avoiding the enemy's spear as the nimble rat has of avoiding things thrown at it ; hence in these regions rats' hair is in great demand when war is expected.³ In Morocco a fowl or a pigeon may sometimes be seen with a little red bundle tied to its foot ; the bundle contains a charm, and it is believed that as the charm is kept in constant motion by the bird, a corresponding restlessness is kept up in the mind of him or her against whom the charm is directed.⁴ When a Galla sees a tortoise, he will take off his sandals and step on it, believing that the soles of his feet are thereby made hard and strong like the shell of the animal.⁵ The Wajaggas of Eastern Africa think that if they wear a piece of the wing-bone of a vulture tied round their leg they will be able to run and not grow weary, just as the vulture flies unwearied through the sky.⁶ The Esquimaux of Baffin Land fancy that if part of the intestines of a fox is placed under the feet of a baby boy, he will become active and skilful in walking over thin ice, like a fox.⁷ One of the ancient books of India prescribes that when a sacrifice is offered for victory, the earth out of which the altar is to be made should be taken from a place where a boar has been wallowing, since the strength of the boar will be in that earth.⁸

¹ E. Casalis, *The Basutos*, pp. 271
29.

² E. Casalis, *op. cit.* p. 272.

³ Rev. James Macdonald, "Manners, Customs, Religions, and Superstitions of South African Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891) p. 132.

⁴ A. Leared, *Morocco and the Moors* (London, 1876), p. 272.

⁵ Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographische Nordost-Afrikas: die geistige Cultur*

der Danakil, Galla und Somali (Berlin, 1896), p. 27.

⁶ M. Merker, *Rechtsverhältnisse und Sitten der Wadschagga* (Gotha, 1902), p. 21 (*Petermanns Mittheilungen, Ergänzungsheft*, No. 138).

⁷ F. Boas, "The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay," *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, xv. pt. i. (1901) p. 160.

⁸ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 505.

Homoeopathic magic of insects.

When you are playing the one-stringed lute, and your fingers are stiff, the thing to do is to catch some long-legged field spiders and roast them, and then rub your fingers with the ashes; that will make your fingers as lithe and nimble as the spiders' legs—at least so think the Galelareese.¹ As the sea-eagle is very expert at seizing fish in its talons, the Kei islanders use its claws as a charm to enable them to make great gain on their trading voyages.² The children of the Baronga on Delagoa Bay are much troubled by a small worm which burrows under their skin, where its meanderings are visible to the eye. To guard her little one against this insect pest a Baronga mother will attach to its wrist the skin of a mole which burrows just under the surface of the ground, exactly as the worm burrows under the infant's skin.³ To bring back a runaway slave an Arab of North Africa will trace a magic circle on the ground, stick a nail in the middle of it, and attach a beetle by a thread to the nail, taking care that the sex of the beetle is that of the fugitive. As the beetle crawls round and round it will coil the thread about the nail, thus shortening its tether and drawing nearer to the centre at every circuit. So by virtue of homoeopathic magic the runaway slave will be drawn back to his master.⁴ The Patagonian Indians kill a mare and put a new-born boy in its body, believing that this will make him a good horseman.⁵ The Lkufgen Indians of Vancouver's Island believe that the ashes of wasps rubbed on the faces of warriors going to battle will render the men as pugnacious as wasps, and that a decoction of wasps' nests or of flies administered internally to barren women will make them prolific like the insects.⁶

Among the western tribes of British New Guinea, a

¹ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1895) p. 484.

² H. Geurtjens, "Le Cérémonial des voyages aux Îles Keij," *Anthropos*, v. (1910) p. 352.

³ H. A. Junod, *Les Ba-ronga* (Neuchâtel, 1898), pp. 472 sq.

⁴ E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord* (Algiers, 1908), pp. 244 sq.

⁵ *Journal of American Folk-lore*, xvii. (1904) p. 293, referring to Hesketh Pritchard, *Through the Heart of Patagonia* (London, 1902).

⁶ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 25 (separate reprint from *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

man who has killed a snake will burn it and smear his legs with the ashes when he goes into the forest; for no snake will bite him for some days afterwards.¹ The Baronga of Delagoa Bay carry the powdered ashes of a serpent in a little bag as a talisman which guards them from snake-bites.² Among the Arabs of Moab a woman will give her infant daughter the ashes of a scorpion mixed with milk to drink in order to protect her against the stings of scorpions.³ The Cholones of eastern Peru think that to carry the poison tooth of a serpent is a protection against the bite of a serpent, and that to rub the cheek with the tooth of an ounce is an infallible remedy for toothache and face-ache.⁴ In order to strengthen her teeth some Brazilian Indians used to hang round a girl's neck at puberty the teeth of an animal which they called *capugouare*, that is "grass-eating."⁵ When a thoroughbred mare has drunk at a trough, an Arab woman will hasten to drink any water that remains in order that she may give birth to strong children.⁶ If a South Slavonian has a mind to pilfer and steal at market, he has nothing to do but to burn a blind cat, and then throw a pinch of its ashes over the person with whom he is higgling; after that he can take what he likes from the booth, and the owner will not be a bit the wiser, having become as blind as the deceased cat with whose ashes he has been sprinkled. The thief may even ask boldly "Did I pay for it?" and the deluded huckster will reply, "Why, certainly."⁷ Equally simple and effectual is the expedient adopted by natives of Central Australia who desire to cultivate their beards. They prick the chin all over with a pointed bone, and then stroke it carefully with a magic stick or stone, which represents a kind of rat that has very long whiskers. The virtue of these whiskers naturally passes into the representative stick or

Homoeopathic magic of snakes and other animals.

¹ B. A. Hely, "Notes on Totemism, etc., among the Western Tribes," *British New Guinea: Annual Report for 1894-95*, p. 56.

² H. A. Junod, *Les Ba-ronga* (Neuchâtel, 1898), p. 472.

³ A. Jausen, *Contumes arabes au pays de Moab* (Paris, 1908), p. 29.

⁴ E. Poeppig, *Reise in Chile, Peru und auf dem Amazonenstromen*, ii. 323.

⁵ A. Thevet, *Cosmographie universelle* (Paris, 1575), ii. 946 [980].

⁶ A. Jausen, "Contumes arabes," *Revue Biblique*, April 1903, p. 245; *id.*, *Contumes arabes au pays de Moab*, p. 36.

⁷ F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 147.

stone, and thence by an easy transition to the chin, which, consequently, is soon adorned with a rich growth of beard.¹ When a party of these same natives has returned from killing a foe, and they fear to be attacked by the ghost of the dead man in their sleep, every one of them takes care to wear the tip of the tail of a rabbit-kangaroo in his hair. Why? Because the rabbit-kangaroo, being a nocturnal animal, does not sleep of nights; and therefore a man who wears a tip of its tail in his hair will clearly be wakeful during the hours of darkness.² The Unmatjera tribe of Central Australia use the tip of the tail of the same animal for the same purpose, but they draw out the sympathetic chain one link farther. For among them, when a boy has undergone subincision and is leading a solitary life in the bush, it is not he but his mother who wears the tip of the nocturnal creature's tail in order that he may be watchful at nights, lest harm should befall him from snakes and so forth.³ The ancient Greeks thought that to eat the flesh of the wakeful nightingale would prevent a man from sleeping; that to smear the eyes of a blear-sighted person with the gall of an eagle would give him the eagle's vision; and that a raven's eggs would restore the blackness of the raven to silvery hair. Only the person who adopted this last mode of concealing the ravages of time had to be most careful to keep his mouth full of oil all the time he applied the eggs to his venerable locks, else his teeth as well as his hair would be dyed raven black, and no amount of scrubbing and scouring would avail to whiten them again.⁴ The hair-restorer was in fact a shade too powerful, and in applying it you might get more than you bargained for.

Homoeopathic magic of animals among the Cherokees and other American Indians.

The Huichol Indians of Mexico admire the beautiful markings on the backs of serpents. Hence when a Huichol woman is about to weave or embroider, her husband catches a large serpent and holds it in a cleft stick, while the woman strokes the reptile with one hand down the whole length of its back; then she passes the same hand over her forehead

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 545 sq. *Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 344.

² *Ibid.* pp. 494 sq.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern* ⁴ Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* i. 42, 43, and 48.

and eyes, that she may be able to work as beautiful patterns in the web as the markings on the back of the serpent.¹ Among the Tarahumares of Mexico men who run races tie deer-hoofs to their backs in the belief that this will make them swift-footed like the deer.² Cherokee ball-players rub their bodies with eel-skins in order to make themselves as slippery and hard to hold as eels; and they also apply land-tortoises to their legs in the hope of making them as thick and strong as the legs of these animals. But they are careful not to eat frogs, lest the brittleness of the frog's bones should infect their own bones. Moreover, they will not eat the flesh of the sluggish hog-sucker, lest they should lose their speed, nor the flesh of rabbits, lest, like the rabbit, they should become confused in running. On the other hand, their friends sprinkle a soup made of rabbit hamstrings along the path to be taken by their rivals, in order to make these rivals timorous in action. Moreover, the ball-players will not wear the feathers of the bald-headed buzzard, for fear of themselves becoming bald, nor turkey feathers, lest they should suffer from a goitrous growth on the throat like the red appendage on the throat of a turkey.³ The flesh of the common grey squirrel is forbidden to Cherokees who suffer from rheumatism, because the squirrel eats in a cramped position, which would clearly aggravate the pangs of the rheumatic patient.⁴ And a Cherokee woman who is with child may not eat the flesh of the ruffed grouse, because that bird hatches a large brood, but loses most of them before maturity. Strict people, indeed, will not allow a woman to taste of the bird till she is past child-bearing.⁵ When a Cherokee is starting on a journey on a cold winter morning he rubs his feet in the ashes of the fire and sings four verses by means of which he can set the cold at defiance, like the wolf, the deer, the fox, and the opossum, whose feet, so the Indians think, are never frost-bitten. After each verse he imitates the cry and action of the animal, thus homoeopathically identifying himself with the creature. The

¹ C. Lumholtz, *Unknown Mexico*,
ii. 234.

² C. Lumholtz, *op. cit.* i. 290.

³ J. Mooney, "Myths of the
Cherokee," *Nineteenth Annual Report*

of the Bureau of American Ethnology
(Washington, 1900), part i. pp. 262,
284, 285, 306, 308.

⁴ *Id.*, *ib.* p. 262.

⁵ *Id.*, *ib.* p. 285.

Homoeopathic magic of animals among the Cherokees.

song he sings may be rendered, "I become a real wolf, a real deer, a real fox, and a real opossum." After stating that he has become a real wolf, the songster utters a prolonged howl and paws the ground like a wolf with his feet. After giving notice that he has become a real deer, he imitates the call and jumping of a deer. And after announcing his identification, for all practical purposes, with a fox and an opossum, he mimicks the barking and scratching of a fox and the cry of an opossum when it is driven to bay, also throwing his head back just as an opossum does when it feigns death.¹ Some Cherokees are said to drink tea made of crickets in order to become good singers like the insects.² If the eyes of a Cherokee child be bathed with water in which a feather of an owl has been soaked, the child will be able, like the owl, to keep awake all night. The mole-cricket has claws with which it burrows in the earth, and among the Cherokees it is reputed to be an excellent singer. Hence when children are long of learning to speak, their tongues are scratched with the claw of a live mole-cricket in order that they may soon talk as distinctly as the insect. Grown persons also, who are slow of speech, may acquire a ready flow of eloquence, if only the inside of their throat be scratched on four successive mornings with a mole-cricket.³ The negroes of the Maroni river in Guiana have a somewhat similar cure for stammering. Day and night the shrieks of a certain species of ape resound through the forest. Hence when the negroes kill one of these pests, they remove its larynx and make a cup out of it. If a stammering child drinks out of such a cup for a few months, it ceases to stammer.⁴ Cherokee parents scratch the hands of their children with the pincers of a live red crawfish, resembling a lobster, in order to give the infants a strong grip, like that of the crawfish.⁵ This may help us to understand why on the fifth day after birth a Greek child used to receive presents of octopuses and cuttle-fish from its friends and relations.⁶ For the numerous arms, legs, and tentacles of

¹ *Id.*, *ib.* p. 266.

² *Id.*, *ib.* p. 309.

³ *Id.*, *ib.* p. 309.

⁴ J. Crevaux, *Voyages dans l'Amér.*

rique du Sud (Paris, 1883), pp. 159 *sq.*

⁵ J. Mooney, *op. cit.* p. 308.

⁶ Scholiast on Plato, *Theaetetus*,

p. 160 A.

these creatures seem well calculated to strengthen the grip of a baby's hands and to impart the power of toddling to its little toes.

On the principle of homoeopathic magic, inanimate things, as well as plants and animals, may diffuse blessing or bane around them, according to their own intrinsic nature and the skill of the wizard to tap or dam, as the case may be, the stream of weal or woe. Thus, for example, the Galelareese think that when your teeth are being filed you should keep spitting on a pebble, for this establishes a homoeopathic connexion between you and the pebble, by virtue of which your teeth will henceforth be as hard and durable as a stone. On the other hand, you ought not to comb a child before it has teethed, for if you do, its teeth will afterwards be separated from each other like the teeth of a comb.¹ Nor should children look at a sieve, otherwise they will suffer from a skin disease, and will have as many sores on their bodies as there are holes in the sieve.² In Samaracand women give a baby sugar candy to suck and put glue in the palm of its hand, in order that, when the child grows up, his words may be sweet and precious things may stick to his hands as if they were glued.³ The Greeks thought that a garment made from the fleece of a sheep that had been torn by a wolf would hurt the wearer, setting up an itch or irritation in his skin. They were also of opinion that if a stone which had been bitten by a dog were dropped in wine, it would make all who drank of that wine to fall out among themselves.⁴ Among the Arabs of Moab a childless woman often borrows the robe of a woman who has had many children, hoping with the robe to acquire the fruitfulness of its owner.⁵ The Caffres of Sofala, in East Africa, had a great dread of being struck with anything hollow, such as a reed or a straw, and greatly preferred being thrashed with a good thick cudgel or an iron bar, even though it hurt very much. For they thought that if a man

Homoeopathic magic of inanimate things.

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

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

³ E. Chavannes, *Documents sur les Tou-Kiué (Turcs) Occidentaux* (St. Petersburg, 1903), p. 134.

⁴ Aelian, *Nat. anim.* i. 38.

⁵ A. Janssen, *Contumes arabes au pays de Moab*, p. 35.

Homoeopathic magic of inanimate things.

were beaten with anything hollow, his inside would waste away till he died.¹ In eastern seas there is a large shell which the Buginese of Celebes call the "old man" (*kadjawo*). On Fridays they turn these "old men" upside down and place them on the thresholds of their houses, believing that whoever then steps over the threshold of the house will live to be old.² Again, the Galelareese think that, if you are imprudent enough to eat while somebody is sharpening a knife, your throat will be cut that same evening, or next morning at latest.³ The disastrous influence thus attributed, under certain circumstances, to a knife in the East Indies, finds its counterpart in a curious old Greek story. A certain king had no child, and he asked a wise man how he could get one. The wise man himself did not know, but he thought that the birds of the air might, and he undertook to enquire of them. For you must know that the sage understood the language of birds, having learned it through some serpents whose life he had saved, and who, out of gratitude, had cleansed his ears as he slept. So he sacrificed two bulls, and cut them up, and prayed the fowls to come and feast on the flesh; only the vulture he did not invite. When the birds came, the wise man asked them what the king must do to get a son; but none of them knew. At last up came the vulture, and he knew all about it. He said that once when the king was a child his royal father was gelding rams in the field, and laid down the bloody knife beside his little son; nay, he threatened the boy with it. The child was afraid and ran away, and the father stuck the knife in a tree, either a sacred oak or a wild pear-tree. Meanwhile, the bark of the tree had grown round the knife and hidden it. The vulture said that if they found the knife, scraped the rust off it, and gave the rust, mixed with wine, to the king to drink for ten days, he would beget a son. They did so, and it fell out exactly as the vulture had said.⁴ In this story a knife

¹ J. Dos Santos, *Eastern Ethiopia*, book i. ch. 20 (G. McCall Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, vii. 224).

² One of these shells is exhibited in the Anthropological Museum at Berlin, with a label explaining its use. I do not know to what species it belongs.

It appeared to me to be of a sort which may often be seen on mantelpieces in England.

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

⁴ The king was Iphiclus; the wise man was Melampus. See Apollodorus, i. 9. 12; Eustathius on Homer, *Od.* xi. 292; Schol. on Theocritus, iii. 43.

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

The strengthening virtue of iron is highly appreciated by the Toradjas of Central Celebes, only they apply it externally, not internally, as we do in Europe. For this purpose the people of a village assemble once a year in the smithy. The master of the ceremonies opens the proceedings by carrying a little pig and a white fowl round the smithy, after which he kills them and smears a little of their blood on the forehead of every person present. Next he takes a doît, a chopping-knife, and a bunch of leaves in his hand, and strikes with them the palm of the right hand of every man, woman, and child, and ties a leaf of the *Dracaena terminalis* to every wrist. Then a little fire is made in the furnace and blown up with the bellows. Every one who feels sick or unwell now steps up to the anvil, and the master of the ceremonies sprinkles a mixture of pigs' blood, water, and herbs on the joints of his body, and finally on his head, wishing him a long life. Lastly, the patient takes the chopping-knife, heats it in the furnace, lays it on the anvil, and strikes it seven times with the hammer. After that he has only to cool the knife in water and the iron cure is complete. Again, on the seventh day after a birth the Toradjas hold a little feast, at which the child is carried down the house ladder and its feet set on a piece of iron, in order to strengthen its feeble soul with the strong soul of the iron.¹ At critical times the Mahakam Dyaks of Central Borneo seek to strengthen their souls

Homoeopathic magic of iron.

The way in which the king's impotence was caused by the knife is clearly indicated by the scholiast on Theocritus: συνέβη ἐπενεγκεῖν αὐτὴν [scil. τὴν μάχαιραν] τοῖς μορλοῖς τοῦ παιδός. In this scholium we must correct ἐκτρέμονται . . . δένδρον into ἐκτρέμονται . . . ἱῶα. Eustathius (l.c.) quotes the scholium in

this latter form. The animals were rams, according to Apollodorus.

¹ A. C. Kruijt, "Het ijzer in Midden-Celebes," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, liii. (1901) pp. 157 sq., 159.

Homoeopathic magic of stones.

Oaths upon stones.

by biting on an old sword or setting their feet upon it.¹ At initiation a Brahman boy is made to tread with his right foot on a stone, while the words are repeated, "Tread on this stone; like a stone be firm";² and the same ceremony is performed, with the same words, by a Brahman bride at her marriage.³ In Madagascar a mode of counteracting the levity of fortune is to bury a stone at the foot of the heavy house-post.⁴ The common custom of swearing upon a stone may be based partly on a belief that the strength and stability of the stone lend confirmation to an oath. Thus the old Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus tells us that "the ancients, when they were to choose a king, were wont to stand on stones planted in the ground, and to proclaim their votes, in order to foreshadow from the steadfastness of the stones that the deed would be lasting."⁵ There was a stone at Athens on which the nine archons stood when they swore to rule justly and according to the laws.⁶ A little to the west of St. Columba's tomb in Iona "lie the black stones, which are so called, not from their colour, for that is grey, but from the effects that tradition says ensued upon perjury, if any one became guilty of it after swearing on these stones in the usual manner; for an oath made on them was decisive in all controversies. Mac-Donald, king of the isles, delivered the rights of their lands to his vassals in the isles and

¹ A. W. Nieuwenhuis, *Quer durch Borneo*, ii. (Leyden, 1907) p. 173.

² *Grihya-Sūtras*, translated by H. Oldenberg, part ii. p. 146.

³ *Grihya-Sūtras*, translated by H. Oldenberg, part i. pp. 168, 282 sq., part ii. p. 188 (*Sacred Books of the East*, vols. xxix. and xxx.). Compare Sonnerat, *Voyage aux Indes Orientales* (Paris, 1782), ii. 81; E. Thurston, *Ethnographic Notes in Southern India* (Madras, 1906), p. 1. So among the Kookies of Northern Cachar in India the young couple at marriage place each a foot on a large stone in the middle of the village. See Lieut. R. Stewart, "Notes on Northern Cachar," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, xxiv. (1855) pp. 620 sq. In the old ruined church

of Balquhider in Perthshire there is an ancient gravestone on which people used to stand barefoot at marriages and baptisms. See *The Folk-lore Journal*, vi. (1888) p. 271.

⁴ Father Abinal, "Astrologie Malgache," *Missions Catholiques*, xl. (1879) p. 482.

⁵ *The First Nine Books of the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus*, translated by O. Elton (London, 1894), p. 16. The original runs thus: *Lecturi regem veteres affixis humo saxis insistere suffragiaque promere consueverant, subjectorum lapidum firmitate facti constantiam ominaturi* (*Historia Danica*, lib. i. p. 22, ed. P. E. Müller).

⁶ Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*, 7 and 55; Plutarch, *Solon*, 25; Pollux, viii. 86.

continent, with uplifted hands and bended knees, on the black stones; and in this posture, before many witnesses, he solemnly swore that he would never recall those rights which he then granted: and this was instead of his great seal. Hence it is that when one was certain of what he affirmed, he said positively, I have freedom to swear this matter upon the black stones."¹ Again, in the island of Arran there was a green globular stone, about the size of a goose's egg, on which oaths were taken. It was also endowed with healing virtue, for it cured stitches in the sides of sick people if only it was laid on the affected part. They say that Macdonald, the Lord of the Isles, carried this stone about with him, and that victory was always on his side when he threw it among the enemy.² Once more, in the island of Fladda there was a round blue stone, on which people swore decisive oaths, and it too healed stitches in the side like the green stone of Arran.³ When two Bogos of eastern Africa have a dispute, they will sometimes settle it at a certain stone, which one of them mounts. His adversary calls down the most dreadful curses on him if he forswears himself, and to every curse the man on the stone answers "Amen!"⁴ In Laconia an unwrought stone was shewn which, according to the legend, relieved the matricide Orestes of his madness as soon as he had sat down on it;⁵ and Zeus is said to have often cured himself of his love for Hera by sitting down on a certain rock in the island of Leucadia.⁶ In these cases it may have been thought that the wayward and flighty impulses of love and madness were counteracted by the steadying influence of a heavy stone.

But while a general magical efficacy may be supposed

¹ Martin, "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 657.

² Martin, *op. cit.* p. 646.

³ Martin, *op. cit.* pp. 627 sq.

⁴ W. Munzinger, *Sitten und Recht der Bogos* (Winterthur, 1859), pp. 33 sq. For an Indian example of swearing on a stone see J. Eliot, "Observations on the Inhabitants of the Garrow

Hills," *Asiatick Researches*, iii. 30 sq. (8vo ed.). On the custom see further my article, "Folk-lore in the Old Testament," in *Anthropological Essays presented to E. B. Tylor* (Oxford, 1907), pp. 131 sqq.

⁵ Pausanias, iii. 22. 1; compare *id.* ii. 31. 4.

⁶ Ptolemaeus, *Nova Historia*, in Photius, *Bibliotheca*, p. 153, ed. I. Bekker; *id.* in *Mythographi Graeci*, ed. A. Westermann, p. 198.

Homoeopathic magic of special kinds of stones.

to reside in all stones by reason of their common properties of weight and solidity, special magical virtues are attributed to particular stones, or kinds of stone, in accordance with their individual or specific qualities of shape and colour. For example, a pot-hole in a rocky gorge of Central Australia contains many rounded boulders which, in the opinion of the Warramunga tribe, represent the kidneys, heart, tail, intestines, and so forth of an old euro, a species of kangaroo. Hence the natives jump into the pool, and after splashing the water all over their bodies rub one another with the stones, believing that this will enable them to catch euros.¹ Again, not very far from Alice Springs, in Central Australia, there is a heap of stones supposed to be the vomit of two men of the eagle-hawk totem who had dined too copiously on eagle-hawk men, women, and children. The natives think that if any person caught sight of these stones he would be taken very sick on the spot; hence the heap is covered with sticks, to which every passer-by adds one in order to prevent the evil magic from coming out and turning his stomach.² The Indians of Peru employed certain stones for the increase of maize, others for the increase of potatoes, and others again for the increase of cattle. The stones used to make maize grow were fashioned in the likeness of cobs of maize, and the stones destined to multiply cattle had the shape of sheep.³

Homoeopathic magic of stones in New Caledonia.

No people perhaps employ stones more freely for the purposes of homoeopathic magic than the natives of New Caledonia. They have stones of the most diverse shapes and colours to serve the most diverse ends—stones for sunshine, rain, famine, war, madness, death, fishing, sailing, and so forth. Thus in order to make a plantation of taro thrive they bury in the field certain stones resembling taros, praying to their ancestors at the same time. A stone marked with black lines like the leaves of the coco-nut palm helps to produce a good crop of coco-nuts. To make bread-fruit grow they use two stones of different sizes representing the unripe and the ripe fruit respectively.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 253 sq.

² Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* p. 472.

³ P. J. de Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la idolatria del Piru* (Lima, 1621), pp.

15, 16, 25

As soon as the fruit begins to form, they bury the small stone at the foot of the tree ; and later on, when the fruit approaches maturity, they replace the small stone by the large one. The yam is the chief crop of the New Caledonians ; hence the number of stones used to foster its growth is correspondingly great. Different families have different kinds of stones which, according to their diverse shapes and colours, are supposed to promote the cultivation of the various species of yams. Before the stones are buried in the yam field they are deposited beside the ancestral skulls, wetted with water, and wiped with the leaves of certain trees. Sacrifices, too, of yams and fish are offered to the dead, with the words, "Here are your offerings, in order that the crop of yams may be good." Again, a stone carved in the shape of a canoe can make a voyage prosperous or the reverse according as it is placed before the ancestral skulls with the opening upwards or downwards, the ceremony being accompanied with prayers and offerings to the dead. Again, fish is a very important article of diet with the New Caledonians, and every kind of fish has its sacred stone, which is enclosed in a large shell and kept in the graveyard. In performing the rite to secure a good catch, the wizard swathes the stone in "bandages of various colours, spits some chewed leaves on it, and, setting it up before the skulls, says, "Help us to be lucky at the fishing."¹ In these and many similar practices of the New Caledonians the magical efficacy of the stones appears to be deemed insufficient of itself to accomplish the end in view ; it has to be reinforced by the spirits of the dead, whose help is sought by prayer and sacrifice. Moreover, the stones are regularly kept in the burial-grounds, as if to saturate them with the powerful influence of the ancestors ; they are brought from the cemetery to be buried in the fields or at the foot of trees for the sake of quickening the fruits of the earth, and they are restored to the cemetery when they

¹ Father Lambert, in *Missions Catholiques*, xii. (1880) pp. 273, 287, xxv. (1893) pp. 104-106, 116-118 ; *id.*, *Mœurs et Superstitions des Néo-Calédoniens* (Nouméa, 1900), pp. 217, 218, 222, 292-304. Compare Glau-

mont, "Usages, mœurs et coutumes des Néo-Calédoniens," *Revue d'Ethnographie*, vii. (1889) pp. 114 sq. (whose account of the stones is borrowed from Father Lambert).

have discharged this duty. Thus in New Caledonia magic is blent with the worship of the dead.

Homoeopathic
magic of
stones in
Melanesia.

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

Homoeopathic
magic
of precious
stones.

The ancients set great store on the magical qualities of precious stones; indeed it has been maintained, with great show of reason, that such stones were used as amulets long before they were worn as mere ornaments.² Thus the Greeks gave the name of tree-agate to a stone which exhibits tree-like markings, and they thought that if two

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

² W. Ridgeway, *The Early Age of Greece* (Cambridge, 1901), i. 330

sq.; *id.*, "The Origin of Jewellery," *Report of the British Association for 1903* (meeting at Southport), pp. 815 sq.

of these gems were tied to the horns or neck of oxen at the plough, the crop would be sure to be plentiful.¹ Again, they recognised a milk-stone which produced an abundant supply of milk in women if only they drank it dissolved in honey-mead.² Milk-stones are used for the same purpose by Greek women in Crete and Melos at the present day;³ in Albania nursing mothers wear the stones in order to ensure an abundant flow of milk.⁴ In Lechain down to modern times German women have attempted to increase their milk by stroking their breasts with a kind of alum which they call a milk-stone.⁵ Again, the Greeks believed in a stone which cured snake-bites, and hence was named the snake-stone; to test its efficacy you had only to grind the stone to powder and sprinkle the powder on the wound.⁶ The wine-coloured amethyst received its name, which means "not drunken," because it was supposed to keep the wearer of it sober;⁷ and two brothers who desired to live at unity were advised to carry magnets about with them, which, by drawing the twain together, would clearly prevent them from falling out.⁸ In Albania people think that if the blood-stone is laid on a wound it will stop the flow of blood.⁹

Amongst the things which homoeopathic magic seeks to turn to account are the great powers of nature, such as the waxing and the waning moon, the rising and the setting sun, the stars, and the sea. Elsewhere I have illustrated the homoeopathic virtues ascribed to the waxing and the waning moon:¹⁰ here I will give an Arab charm of the

Homoeopathic magic of the sun, the moon, the stars, and the sea.

¹ *Orphica: Lithica*, 230 sqq., ed. G. Hermann. Pliny mentions (*Nat. Hist.* xxxvii. 192) a white tree-stone ("dendritis alba") which, if buried under a tree that was being felled, would prevent the woodman's axe from being blunted.

² *Orphica: Lithica*, 189 sqq.; compare Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxvii. 162.

³ W. Ridgeway, *The Early Age of Greece*, i. 330.

⁴ J. G. von Hahn, *Albanesische Studien*, i. 158.

⁵ K. Freiherr von Leoprechting, *Aus dem Lechain* (Munich, 1855), p. 92.

⁶ *Orphica: Lithica*, 335 sqq. This

was perhaps the "dragon-stone" which was supposed to confer extraordinary sharpness of vision on its owner. See Ptolemæus Hephaestionis, *Nov. Hist.* v. p. 150, in Photius, *Bibliotheca*, ed. I. Bekker, p. 192 of A. Westermann's *Mythographi Graeci*.

⁷ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxvii. 124.

⁸ *Orphica: Lithica*, 320 sq.

⁹ J. G. von Hahn, *Albanesische Studien*, i. 158. On the magic of precious stones see also E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, pp. 82 sqq.

¹⁰ *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, Second Edition, pp. 361 sqq., 369 sqq.

Homoeopathic magic of the setting sun.

setting sun. When a husband is far away and his wife would bring him home to her, she procures pepper and coriander seed from a shop that faces the east, and throws them on a lighted brasier at sunset. Then turning to the east she waves a napkin with which she has wiped herself, and says: "Let the setting sun return having found such and such an one, son of such and such a woman, in grief and pain. May the grief that my absence causes him make him weep, may the grief that my absence causes him make him lament, may the grief that my absence causes him make him break the obstacles that part us and bring him back to me." If the charm is unsuccessful, she repeats it one day at sunrise, burning the same perfumes. Clearly she imagines that as the sun goes away in the west and comes back in the east, it should at its return bring the absent one home.¹

Homoeopathic magic of the pole-star.

The ancient books of the Hindoos lay down a rule that after sunset on his marriage night a man should sit silent with his wife till the stars begin to twinkle in the sky. When the pole-star appears, he should point it out to her, and, addressing the star, say, "Firm art thou; I see thee, the firm one. Firm be thou with me, O thriving one!" Then, turning to his wife, he should say, "To me Brihaspati has given thee; obtaining offspring through me, thy husband, live with me a hundred autumns."² The intention of the ceremony is plainly to guard against the fickleness of fortune and the instability of earthly bliss by the steadfast influence of the constant star. It is the wish expressed in Keats's last sonnet:—

*Bright star! would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night.*

Dwellers by the sea cannot fail to be impressed by the sight of its ceaseless ebb and flow, and are apt, on the prin-

¹ E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, pp. 131 sq.

² *The Gṛīhya-Sūtras*, translated by H. Oldenberg, part i. pp. 43, 285 sq., part ii. pp. 47 sq., 193 sqq. (*Sacred Books of the East*, vols. xxix. and xxx.). In the last passage the address to the star is fuller and more explicit. A part of it runs thus:—"He who knows thee (the polar star) as the firm, immovable

Brahman with its children and with its grandchildren, with such a man children and grandchildren will firmly dwell, servants and pupils, garments and woollen blankets, bronze and gold, wives and kings, food, safety, long life, glory, renown, splendour, strength, holy lustre, and the enjoyment of food. May all these things firmly and immovably dwell with me!"

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

Homoö-
pathic
magic of
the tides.

¹ P. Sébillot, *Légendes, croyances et superstitions de la mer* (Paris, 1886), i. 136.

² P. Sébillot, *op. cit.* i. 135.

³ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en*

Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië, xlv. (1895) p. 499.

⁴ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ix. 42.

⁵ *Ibid.* ii. 220.

⁶ Philostratus, *Vit. Apollon.* v. 2.

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

Homoeopathic
magic of
the tides.

a belief is said to prevail that people are born when the tide comes in, and die when it goes out.¹ Dickens attests the existence of the same superstition in England. "People can't die, along the coast," said Mr. Peggotty, "except when the tide's pretty nigh out. They can't be born, unless it's pretty nigh in—not properly born till flood."² The belief that most deaths happen at ebb tide is said to be held along the east coast of England from Northumberland to Kent.³ Shakespeare must have been familiar with it, for he makes Falstaff die "even just between twelve and one, a'en at the turning o' the tide."⁴ We meet the belief again on the Pacific coast of North America among the Haidas of the Queen Charlotte Islands. Whenever a good Haida is about to die he sees a canoe manned by some of his dead friends, who come with the tide to bid him welcome to the spirit land. "Come with us now," they say, "for the tide is about to ebb and we must depart."⁵ At the other extremity of America the same fancy has been noted among the Indians of Southern Chili. A Chilote Indian in the last stage of consumption, after preparing to die like a good Catholic, was heard to ask how the tide was running. When his sister told him that it was still coming in, he smiled and said that he had yet a little while to live. It was his firm conviction that with the ebbing tide his soul would pass to the ocean of eternity.⁶ At Port Stephens, in New South Wales, the natives always buried their dead at flood tide, never at ebb, lest the retiring water should bear the soul of the departed to some distant country.⁷

Homoeopathic
magic of
grave-clothes
in China.

To ensure a long life the Chinese have recourse to certain complicated charms, which concentrate in themselves the magical essence emanating, on homoeopathic principles, from times and seasons, from persons and from things. The vehicles employed to transmit these happy influences

¹ P. Sébillot, *op. cit.* i. 129-132; M. E. James in *Folklore*, ix. (1898) p. 189.

² Dickens, *David Copperfield*, chap. xxx.

³ W. Henderson, *Folklore of the Northern Counties of England* (London, 1879), p. 58.

⁴ *Henry V.* Act ii. Scene 3.

⁵ Rev. C. Harrison, "Religion and Family among the Haidas," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892) pp. 17 sq.

⁶ C. Martin, "Über die Eingeborenen von Chiloe," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, ix. (1877) p. 179.

⁷ A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 465.

are no other than grave-clothes. These are provided by many Chinese in their lifetime, and most people have them cut out and sewn by an unmarried girl or a very young woman, wisely calculating that, since such a person is likely to live a great many years to come, a part of her capacity to live long must surely pass into the clothes, and thus stave off for many years the time when they shall be put to their proper use. Further, the garments are made by preference in a year which has an intercalary month ; for to the Chinese mind it seems plain that grave-clothes made in a year which is unusually long will possess the capacity of prolonging life in an unusually high degree. Amongst the clothes there is one robe in particular on which special pains have been lavished to imbue it with this priceless quality. It is a long silken gown of the deepest blue colour, with the word "longevity" embroidered all over it in thread of gold. To present an aged parent with one of these costly and splendid mantles, known as "longevity garments," is esteemed by the Chinese an act of filial piety and a delicate mark of attention. As the garment purports to prolong the life of its owner, he often wears it, especially on festive occasions, in order to allow the influence of longevity, created by the many golden letters with which it is bespangled, to work their full effect upon his person. On his birthday, above all, he hardly ever fails to don it, for in China common sense bids a man lay in a large stock of vital energy on his birthday, to be expended in the form of health and vigour during the rest of the year. Attired in the gorgeous pall, and absorbing its blessed influence at every pore, the happy owner receives complacently the congratulations of friends and relations, who warmly express their admiration of these magnificent cerements, and of the filial piety which prompted the children to bestow so beautiful and useful a present on the author of their being.¹

Another application of the maxim that like produces

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

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

Homoeopathic magic applied to the sites of cities in China.

like is seen in the Chinese belief that the fortunes of a town are deeply affected by its shape, and that they must vary according to the character of the thing which that shape most nearly resembles. Thus it is related that long ago the town of Tsuen-cheu-fu, the outlines of which are like those of a carp, frequently fell a prey to the depredations of the neighbouring city of Yung-chun, which is shaped like a fishing-net, until the inhabitants of the former town conceived the plan of erecting two tall pagodas in their midst. These pagodas, which still tower above the city of Tsuen-cheu-fu, have ever since exercised the happiest influence over its destiny by intercepting the imaginary net before it could descend and entangle in its meshes the imaginary carp.¹ Some thirty years ago the wise men of Shanghai were much exercised to discover the cause of a local rebellion. On careful enquiry they ascertained that the rebellion was due to the shape of a large new temple which had most unfortunately been built in the shape of a tortoise, an animal of the very worst character. The difficulty was serious, the danger was pressing; for to pull down the temple would have been impious, and to let it stand as it was would be to court a succession of similar or worse disasters. However, the genius of the local professors of geomancy, rising to the occasion, triumphantly surmounted the difficulty and obviated the danger. By filling up two wells, which represented the eyes of the tortoise, they at once blinded that disreputable animal and rendered him incapable of doing further mischief.²

Homoeopathic magic to avert threatened misfortune.

Sometimes homoeopathic or imitative magic is called in to annul an evil omen by accomplishing it in mimicry. The effect is to circumvent destiny by substituting a mock calamity for a real one. At Kampot, a small seaport of Cambodia, a French official saw one morning a troop of armed guards escorting a man who was loaded with chains. They passed his house and went away towards the country, preceded by a man who drew lugubrious sounds from a gong, and followed by a score of idlers. The official thought it must be an execution and was surprised to have heard nothing

¹ J. J. M. de Groot, *op. cit.* iii. 977.
² J. J. M. de Groot, *op. cit.* iii. 1043 sq.

about it. Afterwards he received from his interpreter the following lucid explanation of the affair. "In our country it sometimes happens that a man walking in the fields has nothing but the upper part of his body visible to people at a distance. Such an appearance is a sign that he will certainly die soon, and that is what happened last evening to the man you saw. Going homewards across the plain he carried over his shoulder a bundle of palms with long slender stems ending in fan-like tufts of leaves. His family, returning from their work, followed him at a distance, and soon they saw his head, shoulders, and arms moving along the road and carrying the branches, while his body and legs were invisible. Struck with consternation at the sight, his mother and wife repaired in all haste to the magistrate and implored him to proceed against the man after the fashion customary in such cases. The magistrate replied that the custom was ridiculous, and that he would be still more ridiculous if he complied with it. However, the two women insisted on it so vehemently, saying it was the only way to avert the omen, that he decided to do as they wished, and gave them his word that he would have the man arrested next morning at sunrise. So this morning the guards came to seize the poor man, telling him that he was accused of rebellion against the king, and without listening to his protestations of innocence they dragged him off to court. His family pretended to be surprised and followed him weeping. The judges had him clapped into irons and ordered him to instant execution. His own entreaties and the prayers of his family being all in vain, he begged that the priests of the pagoda might come and bear witness to his innocence and join their supplications to those of his friends. They came in haste, but receiving a hint how the wind lay they advised the condemned man to submit to his fate and departed to pray for his soul at the temple. Then the man was led away to a rice-field, in the middle of which a banana-tree, stripped of its leaves, had been set up as a stake. To this he was tied, and while his friends took their last leave of him, the sword of the executioner flashed through the air and at a single stroke swept off the top of the banana-tree above the head of the

pretended victim. The man had given himself up for dead. His friends, while they knocked off his irons, explained to him the meaning of it all and led him away to thank the magistrates and priests for what they had done to save him from the threatened catastrophe." The writer who reports the case adds that if the magistrates had not good-naturedly lent themselves to the pious fraud, the man's family would have contrived in some other way to impress him with the terror of death in order to save his life.¹

Homoeopathic magic to avert threatened misfortune.

Again, two missionaries were journeying not long ago through Central Celebes, accompanied by some Toradjas. Unfortunately the note of a certain bird called *teka-teka* was heard to the left. This boded ill, and the natives insisted that they must either turn back or pass the night on the spot. When the missionaries refused to do either, an expedient was hit upon which allowed them to continue the journey in safety. A miniature hut was made out of a leafy branch, and in it were deposited a leaf moistened with spittle and a hair from the head of one of the party. Then one of the Toradjas said, "We shall pass the night here," and addressing the hair he spoke thus: "If any misfortune should happen through the cry of that bird, may it fall on you." In this way the evil omen was diverted from the real men and directed against their substitute the hair, and perhaps also the spittle, in the tiny hut.² When a Cherokee has dreamed of being stung by a snake, he is treated just in the same way as if he had really been stung; otherwise the place would swell and ulcerate in the usual manner, though perhaps years might pass before it did so. It is the ghost of a snake that has bitten him in sleep.³ One night a Huron Indian dreamed that he had been taken and burned alive by his hereditary foes the Iroquois. Next morning a council was held on the affair, and the following measures

¹ *Mission Pavie, Indo-Chine, 1879-1895, Géographie et voyages*, i. (Paris, 1901) pp. 35-37. The kind of optical illusion which this mock execution was intended to expiate is probably caused by a mist or exhalation rising from damp ground.

² N. Adriani en A. C. Kruijt, "Van Posso naar Parigi, Sigi en Lindoe,"

Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap, xlii. (1898) p. 524.

³ J. Mooney, "Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees," *Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1891), p. 352; *id.* in *Nineteenth Annual Report, etc.*, part i. (Washington, 1900) p. 295.

were adopted to save the man's life. Twelve or thirteen fires were kindled in the large hut where they usually burned their prisoners to death. Every man seized a flaming brand and applied it to the naked body of the dreamer, who shrieked with pain. Thrice he ran round the hut, escaping from one fire only to fall into another. As each man thrust his blazing torch at the sufferer he said, "Courage, my brother, it is thus that we have pity on you." At last he was allowed to escape. Passing out of the hut he caught up a dog which was held ready for the purpose, and throwing it over his shoulder carried it through the wigwams as a sacred offering to the war-god, praying him to accept the animal instead of himself. Afterwards the dog was killed, roasted, and eaten, exactly as the Indians were wont to roast and eat their captives.¹

In Madagascar this mode of cheating the fates is reduced to a regular system. Here every man's fortune is determined by the day or hour of his birth, and if that happens to be an unlucky one his fate is sealed, unless the mischief can be extracted, as the phrase goes, by means of a substitute. The ways of extracting the mischief are various. For example, if a man is born on the first day of the second month (February), his house will be burnt down when he comes of age. To take time by the forelock and avoid this catastrophe, the friends of the infant will set up a shed in a field or in the cattle-fold and burn it. If the ceremony is to be really effective, the child and his mother should be placed in the shed and only plucked, like brands, from the burning hut before it is too late. Again, dripping November is the month of tears, and he who is born in it is born to sorrow. But in order to disperse the clouds that thus gather over his future, he has nothing to do but to take the lid off a boiling pot and wave it about. The drops that fall from it will accomplish his destiny and so prevent the tears from trickling from his eyes. Again, if fate has decreed that a young girl, still unwed, should see her children, still unborn, descend before her with sorrow to the grave, she can avert the calamity as follows. She kills a grasshopper, wraps it in a rag to represent a shroud, and mourns over it like

Homoeopathic magic to avert misfortune in Madagascar.

¹ *Relations des Jésuites*, 1642, pp. 86 sq. (Canadian reprint).

Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted. Moreover, she takes a dozen or more other grasshoppers, and having removed some of their superfluous legs and wings she lays them about their dead and shrouded fellow. The buzz of the tortured insects and the agitated motions of their mutilated limbs represent the shrieks and contortions of the mourners at a funeral. After burying the deceased grasshopper she leaves the rest to continue their mourning till death releases them from their pain; and having bound up her dishevelled hair she retires from the grave with the step and carriage of a person plunged in grief. Thenceforth she looks cheerfully forward to seeing her children survive her; for it cannot be that she should mourn and bury them twice over. Once more, if fortune has frowned on a man at his birth and penury has marked him for her own, he can easily erase the mark in question by purchasing a couple of cheap pearls, price three halfpence, and burying them. For who but the rich of this world can thus afford to fling pearls away?¹

§ 3. *Contagious Magic*

Contagious
magic
working by
contact,
not re-
semblance.

Thus far we have been considering chiefly that branch of sympathetic magic which may be called homoeopathic or imitative. Its leading principle, as we have seen, is that like produces like, or, in other words, that an effect resembles its cause. The other great branch of sympathetic magic, which I have called Contagious Magic, proceeds upon the notion that things which have once been conjoined must remain ever afterwards, even when quite dissevered from each other, in such a sympathetic relation that whatever is done to the one must similarly affect the other.² Thus the logical basis of Contagious Magic, like that of Homoeopathic Magic, is a mistaken association of ideas; its physical basis, if we may speak of such a thing,

¹ W. Ellis, *History of Madagascar*, i. 454-499; Father Abinal, "Astrologie Malgache," *Missions Catholiques*, xi. (1879), pp. 432-434, 481-483. Compare J. B. Piolet, *Madagascar et les Hovas* (Paris, 1895), pp. 72-87.

² The principles of contagious magic are lucidly stated and copiously illustrated by Mr. E. S. Hartland in the second volume of his *Legend of Perseus* (London, 1895).

like the physical basis of Homoeopathic Magic, is a material medium of some sort which, like the ether of modern physics, is assumed to unite distant objects and to convey impressions from one to the other. The most familiar example of Contagious Magic is the magical sympathy which is supposed to exist between a man and any severed portion of his person, as his hair or nails; so that whoever gets possession of human hair or nails may work his will, at any distance, upon the person from whom they were cut. This superstition is world-wide; instances of it in regard to hair and nails will be noticed later on in this work.¹ While like other superstitions it has had its absurd and mischievous consequences, it has nevertheless indirectly done much good by furnishing savages with strong, though irrational, motives for observing rules of cleanliness which they might never have adopted on rational grounds. How the superstition has produced this salutary effect will appear from a single instance, which I will give in the words of an experienced observer. Amongst the natives of the Gazelle Peninsula in New Britain "it is as a rule necessary for the efficiency of a charm that it should contain a part of the person who is to be enchanted (for example, his hair), or a piece of his clothing, or something that stands in some relation to him, such as his excrements, the refuse of his food, his spittle, his footprints, etc. All such objects can be employed as *papait*, that is, as a medium for a *papait* or charm, consisting of an incantation or murmuring of a certain formula, together with the blowing into the air of some burnt lime which is held in the hand. It need hardly, therefore, be said that the native removes all such objects as well as he can. Thus the cleanliness which is usual in the houses and consists in sweeping the floor carefully every day, is by no means based on a desire for cleanliness and neatness in themselves, but purely on the effort to put out of the way anything that might serve an ill-wisher as a charm."² I will now illustrate the principles of Contagious Magic by examples, beginning with its application to various parts of the human body.

¹ Meantime I may refer the reader to *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, 1. 367 sqq.

² R. Parkinson, *Dreissig Jahre in der Südpazifik* (Stuttgart, 1907), pp. 118 sq.

Contagious
magic of
teeth in
Australia.

Among the Australian tribes it was a common practice to knock out one or more of a boy's front teeth at those ceremonies of initiation to which every male member had to submit before he could enjoy the rights and privileges of a full-grown man.¹ The reason of the practice is obscure; a conjecture on this subject has been hazarded above.² All that concerns us here is the evidence of a belief that a sympathetic relation continued to exist between the lad and his teeth after the latter had been extracted from his gums. Thus among some of the tribes about the river Darling, in New South Wales, the extracted tooth was placed under the bark of a tree near a river or water-hole; if the bark grew over the tooth, or if the tooth fell into the water, all was well; but if it were exposed and the ants ran over it, the natives believed that the boy would suffer from a disease of the mouth.³ Among the Murring and other tribes of New South Wales the extracted tooth was at first taken care of by an old man, and then passed from one headman to another, until it had gone all round the community, when it came back to the lad's father, and finally to the lad himself. But however it was thus conveyed from hand to hand, it might on no account be placed in a bag containing magical substances, for to do so would, they believed, put the owner of the tooth in great danger.⁴ The late Dr. Howitt once acted as custodian of the teeth which had been extracted from some novices at a ceremony of initiation, and the old men earnestly besought him not to carry them in a bag in which they knew that he had some quartz crystals. They declared that if he did so the magic of the crystals would pass into the teeth, and so injure the boys. Nearly a year after Dr. Howitt's return from the ceremony he was visited by one of the principal men of the Murring tribe, who had travelled some two hundred and fifty miles from his home to fetch back the teeth. This man explained that he had been

¹ As to the diffusion of this custom in Australia see above, p. 97.

² See pp. 97-99.

³ F. Bonney, "On some Customs of the Aborigines of the River Darling, New South Wales," *Journal of the*

Anthropological Institute, xiii. (1884) p. 128. For the practice of some Victorian tribes see above, p. 98.

⁴ A. W. Howitt, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884) pp. 456 sq.; *id.*, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 561.

sent for them because one of the boys had fallen into ill health, and it was believed that the teeth had received some injury which had affected him. He was assured that the teeth had been kept in a box apart from any substances, like quartz crystals, which could influence them; and he returned home bearing the teeth with him carefully wrapt up and concealed.¹ In the Dieri tribe of South Australia the teeth knocked out at initiation were bound up in emu feathers, and kept by the boy's father or his next-of-kin until the mouth had healed, and even for long afterwards. Then the father, accompanied by a few old men, performed a ceremony for the purpose of taking all the supposed life out of the teeth. He made a low rumbling noise without uttering any words, blew two or three times with his mouth, and jerked the teeth through his hand to some little distance. After that he buried them about eighteen inches under ground. The jerking movement was meant to shew that he thereby took all the life out of the teeth. Had he failed to do so, the boy would, in the opinion of the natives, have been liable to an ulcerated and wry mouth, impediment in speech, and ultimately a distorted face.² This ceremony is interesting as a rare instance of an attempt to break the sympathetic link between a man and a severed part of himself by rendering the part insensitive.

The Basutos are careful to conceal their extracted teeth, lest these should fall into the hands of certain mythical beings called *baloi*, who haunt graves, and could harm the owner of the tooth by working magic on it.³ In Sussex some forty years ago a maid-servant remonstrated strongly against the throwing away of children's cast teeth, affirming that should they be found and gnawed by any animal, the child's new tooth would be, for all the world, like the teeth of the animal that had bitten the old one. In proof of this she named old Master Simmons, who had a

Contagious
magic of
teeth in
Africa,
Europe,
America,
etc.

¹ A. W. Howitt, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xvi. (1887) p. 55, xx. (1891) p. 81; *id.*, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 561 sq.

Anthropological Institute, xx. (1891) pp. 80 sq.; *id.*, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 655 sq.

³ Father Porte, "Les Reminiscences d'un missionnaire du Basutoland," *Missions Catholiques*, viii. (1896) p. 312.

² A. W. Howitt, in *Journal of the*
VOL. I

Teeth of
mice and
rats.

very large pig's tooth in his upper jaw, a personal defect that he always averred was caused by his mother, who threw away one of his cast teeth by accident into the hog's trough.¹ A similar belief has led to practices intended, on the principles of homoeopathic magic, to replace old teeth by new and better ones. Thus in many parts of the world it is customary to put extracted teeth in some place where they will be found by a mouse or a rat, in the hope that, through the sympathy which continues to subsist between them and their former owner, his other teeth may acquire the same firmness and excellence as the teeth of these rodents. Thus in Germany it is said to be an almost universal maxim among the people that when you have had a tooth taken out you should insert it in a mouse's hole. To do so with a child's milk-tooth which has fallen out will prevent the child from having toothache. Or you should go behind the stove and throw your tooth backwards over your head, saying, "Mouse, give me your iron tooth; I will give you my bone tooth." After that your other teeth will remain good. German children say, "Mouse, mouse, come out and bring me out a new tooth"; or "Mouse, I give you a little bone; give me a little stone"; or "Mouse, there is an old tooth for you; make me a new one." In Bavaria they say that if this ceremony be observed the child's second teeth will be as white as the teeth of mice.² Amongst the South Slavonians, too, the child is taught to throw his tooth into a dark corner and say, "Mouse, mouse, there is a bone tooth; give me an iron tooth instead."³ Jewish children in South Russia throw their cast teeth on the roof with the same request to the mouse to give them an iron tooth for a tooth of bone.⁴ Far away

¹ Charlotte Latham, "West Sussex Superstitions lingering in 1868," *Folklore Record*, i. (1878) p. 44.

² A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 330, § 526; F. Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 307; E. Krause, in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xv. (1883) p. 79; J. Vonbun, *Volksagen aus Vorarlberg*, p. 67; J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 208, §§ 37, 39; G. Lammert, *Volksmedizin und medizinischer Aberglaube in Bayern*, p. 128; H. Prahn, "Glaube und Brauch in der

Mark Brandenburg," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, i. (1891) p. 193; H. Raff, "Aberglaube in Bayern," *ibid.* viii. (1898) p. 400; R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde* (Brunswick, 1896), p. 213. Compare J. V. Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 169, § 1197.

³ F. S. Krauss, *Sitte und Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 546.

⁴ S. Weissenberg, "Kinderfreud und -leid bei den südrussischen Juden," *Globus*, lxxxiii. (1903) p. 317.

from Europe, at Raratonga, in the Pacific, when a child's tooth was extracted, the following prayer used to be recited :—

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

Then the tooth was thrown on the thatch of the house, because rats make their nests in the decayed thatch. The reason assigned for invoking the rats on these occasions was that rats' teeth were the strongest known to the natives.¹ In the Seranglao and Gorong archipelagoes, between New Guinea and Celebes, when a child loses his first tooth, he must throw it on the roof, saying, "Mouse, I give you my tooth; give me yours instead."² In Amboyna the custom is the same, and the form of words is, "Take this tooth, thrown on the roof, as the mouse's share, and give me a better one instead."³ In the Kei Islands, to the south-west of New Guinea, when a child begins to get his second teeth, he is lifted up to the top of the roof in order that he may there deposit, as an offering to the rats, the tooth which has fallen out. At the same time some one cries aloud, "O rats, here you have his tooth; give him a golden one instead."⁴ Among the Ilocans of Luzon, in the Philippines, when children's teeth are loose, they are pulled out with a string and put in a place where rats will be likely to find and drag them away.⁵ In ancient Mexico, when a child was getting a new tooth, the father or mother used to put the old one in a mouse's hole, believing that if this precaution were not taken the new tooth would not issue from the gums.⁶ A different and more barbarous

¹ W. Wyatt Gill, *Jottings from the Pacific*, pp. 222 sq. On the use of roof-thatch in superstitious ceremonies see W. Caland, *Altindisches Zauber-ritual*, pp. 82 n.² 182 sq. In the present case the virtue of the thatch clearly depends on its harbouring rats. Some Dravidian tribes forbid a menstruous woman to touch the house-thatch (W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, Westminster, 1896, i. 269).

² J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluis- en kroes- harige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*,

p. 176.

³ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 75.

⁴ C. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei-Eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893) p. 822.

⁵ F. Blumentritt, "Sitten und Bräuche der Ilocanen," *Globus*, xlviii. No. 12, p. 200.

⁶ B. de Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle Espagne*, pp. 316 sq.

application of the same principle is the Swabian superstition that when a child is teething you should bite off the head of a living mouse, and hang the head round the child's neck by a string, taking care, however, to make no knot in the string; then the child will teethe easily.¹ In Bohemia the treatment prescribed is similar, though there they recommend you to use a red thread and to string three heads of mice on it instead of one.²

Con-
tagious
magic of
teeth :
teeth of
squirrels,
foxes,
beavers,
etc.

But it is not always a mouse or a rat that brings the child a new and stronger tooth. Apparently any strong-toothed animal will serve the purpose. Thus when his or her tooth drops out, a Singhalese will throw it on the roof, saying, "Squirrel, dear squirrel, take this tooth and give me a dainty tooth."³ In Bohemia a child will sometimes throw its cast tooth behind the stove, asking the fox to give him an iron tooth instead of the bone one.⁴ In Berlin the teeth of a fox worn as an amulet round a child's neck make teething easy for him, and ensure that his teeth will be good and lasting.⁵ Similarly, in order to help a child to cut its teeth, the aborigines of Victoria fastened to its wrist the front tooth of a kangaroo, which the child used as a coral to rub its gums with.⁶ Again, the beaver can gnaw through the hardest wood. Hence among the Cherokee Indians, when the loosened milk tooth of a child has been pulled out or has dropped out of itself, the child runs round the house with it, repeating four times, "Beaver, put a new tooth into my jaw," after which he throws the tooth on the roof of the house.⁷ In Macedonia, a child carefully keeps for a time its first drawn tooth, and then throws it on the roof with the following invocation to the crow :—

¹ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 510, § 415.

² J. V. Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 111, § 822.

³ A. A. Perera, "Glimpses of Singhalese Social Life," *Indian Antiquary*, xxxii. (1903) p. 435.

⁴ J. V. Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, pp. 55 at top, p. 111, § 825. Mr. A. P.

Goudy kindly translated the Czech words for me.

⁵ E. Krause, "Abergläubische Kuren und sonstiger Aberglaube in Berlin," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xv. (1883) p. 84.

⁶ J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 39.

⁷ J. Mooney, "Myths of the Cherokee," *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington, 1900), part i. p. 266.

"O dear crow, here is a tooth of bone,
Take it and give me a tooth of iron instead,
That I may be able to chew beans
And to crunch dry biscuits."¹

We can now understand a custom of the Thompson Indians of British Columbia, which the writer who records it is unable to explain. When a child lost its teeth, the father used to take each one as it fell out and to hide it in a piece of raw venison, which he gave to a dog to eat. The animal swallowed the venison and the tooth with it.² Doubtless the custom was intended to ensure that the child's new teeth should be as strong as those of a dog. In Silesia mothers sometimes swallow their children's cast teeth in order to save their offspring from toothache. The intention is perhaps to strengthen the weak teeth of the child by the strong teeth of the grown woman.³ Amongst the Warramunga of Central Australia, when a girl's tooth has been knocked out as a solemn ceremony, it is pounded up and the fragments placed in a piece of flesh, which has to be eaten by the girl's mother. When the same rite has been performed on a man, his pounded tooth must be eaten in a piece of meat by his mother-in-law.⁴ Among the heathen Arabs, when a boy's tooth fell out, he used to take it between his finger and thumb and throw it towards the sun, saying, "Give me a better for it." After that his teeth were sure to grow straight, and close, and strong. "The sun," says Tharafah, "gave the lad from his own nursery-ground a tooth like a hailstone, white and polished."⁵ Thus the reason for throwing the old teeth towards the sun would seem to have been a notion that the sun sends hail, from which it naturally follows that he can send you a tooth as smooth and white and hard as a hailstone. Among the peasants of the Lebanon, when a child loses a milk tooth, he throws it

Teeth
thrown
towards
the sun.

¹ G. F. Abbott, *Macedonian Folklore* (Cambridge, 1903), p. 20.

² J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. i. part iv. (April 1900) p. 308.

³ J. V. Grohmann, *op. cit.* p. 111,

§ 823; A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 330, § 527.

⁴ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 593.

⁵ Rasmussen, *Additamenta ad historiam Arabum ante Islamismum*, p.

64.

towards the sun, saying, "Sun, sun, take the ass's tooth and give me the deer's tooth." They sometimes say jestingly that the child's tooth has been carried off by a mouse.¹ An Armenian generally buries his extracted teeth at the edge of the hearth with the prayer: "Grandfather, take a dog's tooth and give me a golden tooth."² In the light of the preceding examples, we may conjecture that the grandfather here invoked is not so much the soul of a dead ancestor as a mouse or a rat.

Contagious magic of navel-string and afterbirth among the Maoris and the aborigines of Australia.

Other parts which are commonly believed to remain in a sympathetic union with the body, after the physical connexion has been severed, are the navel-string and the afterbirth, including the placenta. So intimate, indeed, is the union conceived to be, that the fortunes of the individual for good or evil throughout life are often supposed to be bound up with one or other of these portions of his person, so that if his navel-string or afterbirth is preserved and properly treated, he will be prosperous; whereas if it be injured or lost, he will suffer accordingly. Thus among the Maoris, when the navel-string dropped off, the child was carried to a priest to be solemnly named by him. But before the ceremony of naming began, the navel-string was buried in a sacred place and a young sapling was planted over it. Ever afterwards that tree, as it grew, was a *tohu orange* or sign of life for the child.³ In the Upper Whakatane valley, in the North Island of New Zealand, there is a famous *hinau* tree, to which the Maoris used to attach the navel-strings of their children; and barren women were in the habit of embracing the tree in the hope of thereby obtaining offspring.⁴ Again, among the Maoris, "the placenta is named *fenua*, which word signifies land. It is applied by the natives to the placenta, from their supposing it to be the residence of the child: on being discharged it is immediately buried with

¹ L'Abbé B. Chémali, "Naissance et premier âge au Liban," *Anthropos*, v. (1910) p. 745.

² M. Abeghian, *Der armenische Volksglaube* (Leipzig, 1899), p. 68.

³ R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Māui, or New*

*Zealand and its Inhabitants*³ (London, 1870), p. 184.

⁴ Elsdon Best, quoted by W. H. Goldie, "Maori Medical Lore," *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, xxxvii. (1904) pp. 94 sq.

great care, as they have the superstitious idea that the priests, if offended, would procure it; and, by praying over it, occasion the death of both mother and child, by 'praying them to death,' to use their own expression."¹ Again, some of the natives of South Australia regarded the placenta as sacred and carefully put it away out of reach of the dogs,² doubtless because they thought that harm would come to the child if this part of himself were eaten by the animals. Certain tribes of Western Australia believe that a man swims well or ill, according as his mother at his birth threw the navel-string into water or not.³ Among the Arunta of Central Australia the navel-string is swathed in fur-string and made into a necklace, which is placed round the child's neck. The necklace is supposed to facilitate the growth of the child, to keep it quiet and contented, and to avert illness generally.⁴ In the Kaitish tribe of Central Australia the practice and belief are similar.⁵ In the Warramunga tribe, after the string has hung round the child's neck for a time, it is given to the wife's brother, who wears it in his armet, and who may not see the child till it can walk. In return for the navel-string, the man makes a present of weapons to the infant's father. When the child can walk, the father gives fur-string to the man, who now comes to the camp, sees the child, and makes another present to the father. After that he keeps the navel-string for some time longer, and finally places it in a hollow tree known only to himself.⁶ Among the natives on the Pennefather river in Queensland it is

¹ George Bennett, *Wanderings in New South Wales, Batavia, Pedir Coast, Singapore and China* (London, 1834), i. 128, note *. As to *fenua* or *whenua* in the sense of "placenta" and "land," see E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary* (Wellington, N.Z., 1891), pp. 620 sq.

² E. J. Eyre, *Journals of Expeditions of Discovery into Central Australia*, ii. 323.

³ G. F. Moore, *Descriptive Vocabulary of the Language in Common Use amongst the Aborigines of Western*

Australia, p. 9 (published along with the author's *Diary of Ten Years' Eventful Life of an Early Settler in Western Australia*, London, 1884, but pagged separately).

⁴ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 467.

⁵ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 607.

⁶ Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* p. 608. The writers add that the child has no special connexion with the tree in after years. We may suspect that such a connexion did exist in former times.

believed that a part of the child's spirit (*cho-i*) stays in the afterbirth. Hence the grandmother takes the afterbirth away and buries it in the sand. She marks the spot by a number of twigs which she sticks in the ground in a circle, tying their tops together so that the structure resembles a cone. When Anjea, the being who causes conception in women by putting mud babies into their wombs, comes along and sees the place, he takes out the spirit and carries it away to one of his haunts, such as a tree, a hole in a rock, or a lagoon, where it may remain for years. But sometime or other he will put the spirit again into a baby, and it will be born once more into the world.¹

Con-
tagious
magic of
navel-
string in
New
Guinea,
Fiji, the
Caroline
Islands,
and the
Gilbert
Islands.

In the Yabim tribe of German New Guinea the mother ties the navel-string to the net in which she carries the child, lest any one should use the string to the child's hurt.² "In some parts of Fiji the navel-string of a male infant is planted together with a cocoanut, or slip of a bread-fruit tree, and the child's life is supposed to be intimately connected with that of the tree. Moreover, the planting is supposed to have the effect of making the boy a good climber. If the child be a girl, the mother or her sister will take the navel-string to the sea-water when she goes out fishing for the first time after the childbirth, and she will throw it into the sea when the nets are stretched in line. Thus the girl will grow up into a skilful fisherwoman. But the queerest use I ever saw the string put to was at Rotuma. There it has become almost obligatory for a young man, who wants the girls to respect him, to make a voyage in a white man's vessel; and mothers come alongside ships anchored in the roadstead and fasten their boy's navel-string to the vessel's chain-plates. This will make sure of a voyage for the child when it has grown up. This, of course, must be a modern development, but it has all the strength of an ancient custom."³ In Ponape, one of the Caroline Islands, the

¹ W. E. Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography*, Bulletin No. 5 (Brisbane, 1903), p. 18. As to the mode of determining where the soul of the child has dwelt since its last incarnation, see above, pp. 99 sq.

² K. Vetter, in *Nachrichten über Kaiser Wilhelms-Land und den Bismarck-Archipel*, 1897, pp. 92; M. Kieger, *New-Guinea*, p. 165.

³ The Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to me dated May 29, 1901.

navel-string is placed in a shell and then disposed of in such a way as shall best adapt the child for the career which the parents have chosen for him. Thus if they wish to make him a good climber, they will hang the navel-string on a tree.¹ In the Gilbert Islands the navel-string is wrapt by the child's father or adoptive father in a pandanus leaf, and then worn by him as a bracelet for several months. After that he keeps it most carefully in the hut, generally hanging under the ridge-beam. The islanders believe that if the navel-string is thus preserved, the child will become a great warrior if it is a boy, or will make a good match if it is a girl. But should the bracelet be lost before the child is grown up, they expect that the boy will prove a coward in war, and that the girl will make an unfortunate marriage. Hence the most anxious search is made for the missing talisman, and if it is not to be found, weeks will pass before the relations resign themselves to its loss. When the boy has grown to be a youth and has distinguished himself for the first time in war, the bracelet containing the navel-string is taken by the villagers, on a day fixed for the purpose, far out to sea; the adoptive father of the lad throws the bracelet overboard, and all the canoes begin to catch as many fish as they can. The first fish caught, whether large or small, is carefully preserved apart from the rest. Meantime the old women at home have been busy preparing a copious banquet for the fishermen. When the little fleet comes to shore, the old woman who helped at the lad's birth goes to meet it; the first fish caught is handed to her, and she carries it to the hut. The fish is laid on a new mat, the youth and his mother take their places beside it, and they and it are covered up with another mat. Then the old woman goes round the mat, striking the ground with a short club and murmuring a prayer to the lad's god to help him henceforth in war, that he may be brave and invulnerable, and that he may turn out a skilful fisherman. The navel-string of a girl, as soon as she is grown up, is thrown into the sea with similar ceremonies; and the ceremony on land is the same except that the old woman's prayer is

¹ Dr. Hahl, "Mittheilungen über Ponape," *Ethnologisches Notisblatt*, Sitten und rechtliche Verhältnisse auf ii. (Berlin, 1901) p. 10.

naturally different; she asks the girl's god to grant that she may have a happy marriage and many children. After the mat has been removed, the fish is cooked and eaten by the two; if it is too large to be eaten by them alone, the remainder is consumed by friends and relations. These ceremonies are only observed for the children of wealthy parents, who can defray the cost. In the case of a child of poorer parents the bracelet containing the navel-string simply hangs up till it disappears in one way or another.¹

Con-
tagious
magic of
navel-
string and
afterbirth
in the
Moluccas.

Among the Galelareese, to the west of New Guinea, the mother sometimes keeps the navel-string till the child is old enough to begin to play. Then she gives it as a plaything to the little one, who may take it away; otherwise the child would be idiotic. But others plant the navel-string with a banana-bush or a coco-nut.² The Kei islanders, to the south-west of New Guinea, regard the navel-string as the brother or sister of the child, according as the infant is a boy or a girl. They put it in a pot with ashes, and set it in the branches of a tree, that it may keep a watchful eye on the fortunes of its comrade.³ In the Babar Archipelago, between New Guinea and Celebes, the placenta is mixed with ashes and put in a small basket, which seven women, each of them armed with a sword, hang up on a tree of a particular kind (*Citrus hystrix*). The women carry swords for the purpose of frightening the evil spirits; otherwise these mischievous beings might get hold of the placenta and make the child sick. The navel-string is kept in a little box in the house.⁴ In the Tenimber and Timorlaut islands the placenta is buried in a basket under a sago or coco-nut palm, which then becomes the property of the child. But sometimes it is hidden in the forest, or deposited in a hole under the house with an offering of betel.⁵ In the

¹ R. Parkinson, "Beiträge zur Ethnologie der Gilbertinsulaner," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, ii. (1889) p. 35. In these islands the children of well-to-do parents are always adopted by other people as soon as they are weaned. See *ib.* p. 33.

² M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-*

Indië, xlv. (1895) p. 461.

³ C. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei-Eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893) pp. 816 *sq.* Compare J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluik-en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 236.

⁴ J. G. F. Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 354.

⁵ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 303.

Watubela islands the placenta is buried under a coco-nut, *mangga*, or great fig-tree along with the shell of the coco-nut, of which the pulp had been used to smear the newborn child.¹ In many of the islands between New Guinea and Celebes the placenta is put in the branches of a tree, often in the top of one of the highest trees in the neighbourhood. Sometimes the navel-string is deposited along with the placenta in the tree, but often it is kept to be used as medicine or an amulet by the child.² Thus in Ceram the child sometimes wears the navel-string round its neck as a charm to avert sickness;³ and in the islands of Leti, Moa, and Lakor he carries it as an amulet in war or on a far journey.⁴ We cannot doubt that the intention of putting the placenta in the top of a tall tree is to keep it, and with it the child, out of harm's way. In the islands of Saparoea, Haroekoe, and Noessa Laut, to the east of Amboyna, the midwife buries the afterbirth and strews flowers over it. Moreover, resin or a lamp is kept burning for seven or three nights over the buried afterbirth, in order that no harm may come to the child. Some people, however, in these islands solemnly cast the afterbirth into the sea. Being placed in a pot and closely covered up with a piece of white cotton, it is taken out to sea in a boat. A hole is knocked in the pot to allow it to sink in the water. The midwife, who is charged with the duty of heaving the pot and its contents overboard, must look straight ahead; if she were to glance to the right or left the child whose afterbirth is in the pot would squint. And the man who rows or steers the boat must make her keep a straight course, otherwise the child would grow up a gad-about. Before the pot is flung into the sea, the midwife disengages the piece of white cotton in which it is wrapt, and this cloth she takes straight back to the house and covers the baby with it. In these islands it is thought that a child born with a caul will enjoy in later years the gift of second sight—that is, that he will be able to see things which are hidden from common eyes, such as devils and evil spirits. But if his parents desire to prevent

¹ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 208.

³ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 135.

² Riedel, *op. cit.* pp. 23, 135, 236, 325, 391, 417, 449, 468.

⁴ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 391

him from exercising this uncanny power, they can do so. In that case the midwife must dry the caul in the sun, steep it in water, and then wash the child with the water thrice; further, when the child is a little older, she must grind the caul to powder, and give the child the powder to eat with its pap. Some people keep the caul; and if the child falls ill, it is given water to drink in which the caul has been steeped.¹ Similarly in the Luang-Sermata islands a child born with a caul is counted lucky, and can perceive and recognise the spirits of his ancestors.² A caul, it may be said, is merely the foetal membrane which usually forms part of the afterbirth; occasionally a child is born with it wrapt like a hood round its head.

Contagious
magic of
the
placenta in
Celebes.

In Parigi, a kingdom on the coast of Central Celebes, the placenta is laid in a cooking-pot, and one of the mother's female relations carries the pot wrapt in white cotton and hidden under a petticoat (*sarong*) to a spot beneath the house or elsewhere, and there she buries it. A coco-nut is planted near the place. Going and coming the woman is led by another, and must keep her eyes fast shut, for if she looked right or left the child would squint, "because she is at this time closely united with a part of the child, to wit its older brother, in other words the placenta." On her return to the house she lies down on her sleeping-mat, still with closed eyes, and draws a petticoat over her head, and another woman sprinkles her with water. After that she may get up and open her eyes. The sprinkling with water is intended to sever her sympathetic connexion with the child and so prevent her from exercising any influence on it.³ Among the Tolalaki of Central Celebes turmeric and other spices are put on the placenta,

¹ Van Schmidt, "Aanteekeningen nopens de zeden, gewoonten en gebruiken, etc., der bevolking van de eilanden Saparoea, Haroekoe, Noessa Laut," etc., *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, Batavia, 1843, dl. ii. pp. 523-526. The customs and beliefs on this subject in the adjoining island of Amboyna seem to be identical. See J. G. F. Riedel, *op. cit.* pp. 73 sq. According to Riedel, if the pot with the after-birth does not sink in the water, it is

a sign that the wife has been unfaithful.

² Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 326.

³ N. Adriani and A. C. Kruijt, "Van Posso naar Parigi, Sigi en Lindoe," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xlii. (1898) pp. 434 sq. In Parigi after a birth the *kindspek* (?) is wrapt in a leaf and hung in a tree at some distance from the house. For the people think that if it were burned, the child would die (*ibid.* p. 434).

which is then enclosed in two coco-nut shells that fit one on the other. These are wrapt in bark-cloth and kept in the house. If the child falls ill, the coco-nut shells are opened and the placenta examined. Should there be worms in it, they are removed and fresh spices added. When the child has grown big and strong, the placenta is thrown away.¹ Among the Toboongkoo of Central Celebes the afterbirth is placed in a rice-pot with various plants, which are intended to preserve it from decay as long as possible; it is then carefully tied up in bark-cloth. A man and a woman of the family carry the placenta away; in doing so they go out and in the house four times, and each time they enter they kiss the child, but they take care not to look to the right or the left, for otherwise the child would squint. Some bury the placenta, others hang it on a tree. If the child is unwell, they dig up the placenta or take it down from the tree, and lay bananas, rice of four sorts, and a lighted taper beside it. Having done so, they hang it up on a tree if it was previously buried; but they bury it if it was formerly hung up.² The Tomori of Central Celebes wash the afterbirth, put it in a rice-pot, and bury it under the house. Great care is taken that no water or spittle falls on the place. For a few days the afterbirth is sometimes fed with rice and eggs, which are laid on the spot where it is buried. Afterwards the people cease to trouble themselves about it.³ In southern Celebes they call the navel-string and afterbirth the two brothers or sisters of the child. When the infant happens to be a prince or princess, the navel-string and afterbirth are placed with salt and tamarind in a new rice-pot, which is then enveloped in a fine robe and tightly corded up to prevent the evil spirits from making off with the pair of brothers or sisters. For the same reason a light is kept burning all night, and twice a day rice is rubbed on the edge of the pot, for the purpose, as the people say, of giving the child's little brothers or sisters something to eat. After a while this feeding, as it is called, takes place at

¹ N. Adriani and A. C. Kruijt, "Van Posso naar Mori," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederl. Zendelinggenootschap*, xlv. (1900) pp. 161 sq.

² A. C. Kruijt, "Eenige ethno-

grafische aanteekeningen omtrent de Toboengkoe en de Tomori," *ibid.* p. 218.

³ *Id., ib.* p. 236.

rarer intervals, and when the mother has been again brought to bed it is discontinued altogether. On the ninth day after the birth a number of coco-nuts are planted, with much ceremony, in a square enclosure, and the water which was used in cleansing the afterbirth and navel-string is poured upon them. These coco-nuts are called the contemporaries of the child and grow up with him. When the planting is done, the rice-pot with the navel-string and afterbirth is carried back and set beside the bed of the young prince or princess, and when his royal highness is carried out to take the air the rice-pot with his two "brothers" goes out with him, swathed in a robe of state and screened from the sun by an umbrella. If the prince or princess should die, the afterbirth and navel-string are buried. Among common people in South Celebes these parts of the infant are generally buried immediately after the birth, or they are sunk in the deep sea, or hung in a rice-pot on a tree.¹

Contagious
magic of
the
placenta
and navel-
string in
Timor,
Savou,
and Rotti

In the island of Timor the placenta is called the child's companion and treated accordingly. The midwife puts it in an earthen pot and covers it with ashes from the hearth. After standing thus three days it is taken away and buried by a person who must observe silence in discharging this duty.² In Savou, a small island to the south-west of Timor, the afterbirth is filled with native herbs, and having been deposited in a new pot, which has never before been used, is buried under the house to keep off evil spirits. Or it is put in a new basket and hung in a high toddy palm to fertilise it, or thrown into the sea to secure a good catch of fish. The person who thus disposes of the afterbirth may not look to the right or the left; he must be joyous and, if possible, go singing on his way. If it is to be hung on a tree, he must climb nimbly up, in order that the child may always be lucky. These islanders ascribe a similar fertilising virtue to a caul. It is dried and carefully kept in a box. When rice-stalks turn black and the ears refuse to set, a man will take the box containing the caul and run several

¹ B. F. Matthes, *Bijdragen tot de Ethnologie van Zuid-Celebes* (The Hague, 1875), pp. 57-60.

² G. Heijmering, "Zeden en ge-

woonten op het eiland Timor," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1845, pp. 279 sq.

times round the rice-field, in order that the wind may waft the genial influence of the caul over the rice.¹ In Rotti, an island to the south of Timor, the navel-string is put in a small satchel made of leaves, and if the father of the child is not himself going on a voyage, he entrusts the bag to one of his seafaring friends and charges him to throw it away in the open sea with the express wish that, when the child grows up and has to sail to other islands, he may escape the perils of the deep. But the business of girls in these islands does not lie in the great waters, and hence their navel-strings receive a different treatment. It is their task to go afishing daily, when the tide is out, on the coral reefs which ring the islands. So when the mother is herself again, she repairs with the little satchel to the reef where she is wont to fish. Acting the part of a priestess she there eats one or two small bagfuls of boiled rice on the spot where she intends to deposit the dried navel-string of her baby daughter, taking care to leave a few grains of rice in the bags. Then she ties the precious satchel and the nearly empty rice-bags to a stick and fastens it among the stones of the reef, generally on its outer edge, within sight and sound of the breaking waves. In doing so she utters a wish that this ceremony may guard her daughter from the perils and dangers that beset her on the reef—for example, that no crocodile may issue from the lagoon and eat her up, and that the sharp corals and broken shells may not wound her feet.²

In the island of Flores the placenta is put in an earthen pot, along with some rice and betel, and buried by the father in the neighbourhood of the house, or else preserved in one of the highest trees.³ The natives of Bali, an island to the east of Java, believe firmly that the afterbirth is the child's brother or sister, and they bury it in the courtyard in the half of a coco-nut from which the kernel has not been

Contagious magic of the placenta in Flores, Bali, and Java.

¹ J. H. Letteboer, "Eenige aantekeningen omtrent de gebruiken bij zwangerschap en geboorte onder de Savanneezen," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xlv. (1902) p. 47.

² G. Heijmering, "Zeden en ge-

woonten op het eiland Rottie," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1843, dl. ii. pp. 637 sq.

³ J. G. F. Riedel, *The Island of Flores*, p. 7 (reprinted from the *Revue Coloniale Internationale*).

removed. For forty days afterwards a light is burned, and food, water, and betel deposited on the spot,¹ doubtless in order to feed the baby's little brother or sister, and to guard him or her from evil spirits. In Java the afterbirth is also called the brother or sister of the infant; it is wrapt in white cotton, put in a new pot or a coco-nut shell, and buried by the father beside the door, outside the house if the child is a boy, but inside the house if the child is a girl. Every evening until the child's navel has healed a lamp is lit over the spot where the afterbirth is buried. If the afterbirth hangs in a rice-pot in the house, as the practice is with some people, the lamp burns under the place where the rice-pot is suspended. The purpose of the light is to ward off demons, to whose machinations the child and its supposed brother or sister are at this season especially exposed.² If the child is a boy, a piece of paper inscribed with the alphabet is deposited in the pot with his placenta, in order that he may be smart at his learning; if the child is a girl, a needle and thread are deposited in the pot, that she may be a good sempstress, and water with flowers in it is poured on the spot where the placenta is buried, in order that the child may always be healthy; for many Javanese think that if the placenta is not properly honoured, the child will never be well.³ Sometimes, however, women in the interior of Java allow the placenta, surrounded with fruits and flowers and illuminated by little lamps, to float down the river in the dusk of the evening as an offering to the crocodiles, or rather to the ancestors whose souls are believed to lodge in these animals.⁴

Contagious
magic of
placenta
and navel-
string in
Sumatra.

In Mandeling, a district on the west coast of Sumatra, the afterbirth is washed and buried under the house or put in an earthenware pot, which is carefully shut up and thrown

¹ Julius Jacobs, *Eenigen tijd onder de Baliers* (Batavia, 1883), p. 9.

² C. F. Winter, "Instellingen, gewoonten en gebruiken der Javanen te Soerakarta," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1843, dl. i. pp. 695 sq.; P. J. Veth, *Java*, i. (Haarlem, 1875) pp. 639 sq.; C. Poensen, "Iets over de kleding der Javanen," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendeling-*

genootschap, xx. (1876) p. 281.

³ D. Louwerier, "Bijgelooivige gebruiken, die door de Javanen worden in acht genomen bij de verzorging en opvoeding hunner kinderen," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xlix. (1905) pp. 254 sq.

⁴ P. J. Veth, *Java*, i. 231.

into the river. This is done to avert the supposed unfavourable influence of the afterbirth on the child, whose hands or feet, for example, might be chilled by it. When the navel-string drops off, it is preserved to be used as a medicine when its former owner is ill.¹ In Mandeling, too, the midwife prefers to cut the navel-string with a piece of a flute on which she has first blown, for then the child will be sure to have a fine voice.² Among the Minangkabau people of Sumatra the placenta is put in a new earthenware pot, which is then carefully closed with a banana leaf to prevent the ants and other insects from coming at it; for if they did, the child would be sickly and given to squalling.³ In Central Sumatra the placenta is wrapt in white cotton, deposited in a basket or a calabash, and buried in the courtyard before the house or under a rice-barn. The hole is dug by a kinsman or kinswoman according as the baby is a boy or a girl. Over the hole is placed a stone from the hearth, and beside it a wooden spoon is stuck in the ground. Both stone and spoon are sprinkled with the juice of a citron. During the ceremony *koemajen* is burned and a shot fired. For three evenings afterwards candles are lighted at the spot,⁴ doubtless to keep off demons. Among the Battas of Sumatra, as among so many other peoples of the Indian Archipelago, the placenta passes for the child's younger brother or sister, the sex being determined by the sex of the child, and it is buried under the house. According to the Battas it is bound up with the child's welfare, and seems, in fact, to be the seat of the transferable soul, of whose wanderings outside of the body we shall hear something later on.⁵ The Karo Battas even affirm

¹ H. Ris, "De onderafdeeling klein Mandailing Oeloe en Pahantan en hare Bevolking met uitzondering van de Oeloes," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkskunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1896) p. 504.

² A. L. Heyting, "Beschrijving der onderafdeeling Groot Mandeling en Bâtang-Natal," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, xiv. (1897), p. 292.

³ J. C. van Eerde, "Een huwelijk

bij de Minangkabausche Maliers," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkskunde*, xlv. (1901) p. 493.

⁴ A. L. van Hasselt, *Volksbeschrijving van Midden-Sumatra* (Leyden, 1882), p. 267.

⁵ M. Joustra, "Het leven, de zeden en gewoonten der Bataks," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xvi. (1902) pp. 407 sq. The transferable soul is in Batta *sendi*, in Malay *sumangas*.

that of a man's two souls it is the true soul that lives with the placenta under the house; that is the soul, they say, which begets children.¹

Contagious
magic of
placenta
and navel-
string in
Borneo,
India, and
Assam.

In Pasir, a district of eastern Borneo, the afterbirth is carefully treated and kept in an earthen pot or basket in the house until the remains of the navel-string have fallen off. All the time it is in the house candles are burned and a little food is placed beside the pot. When the navel-string has fallen off, it is placed with the placenta in the pot, and the two are buried in the ground near the house. The reason why the people take this care of the afterbirth is that they believe it able to cause the child all kinds of sickness and mishaps.² The Malas, a low Telugu caste of Southern India, bury the placenta in a pot with leaves in some convenient place, generally in the back yard, lest dogs or other animals should carry it off; for if that were to happen they fancy that the child would be of a wandering disposition.³ The Khasis of Assam keep the placenta in a pot in the house until the child has been formally named. When that ceremony is over, the father waves the pot containing the placenta thrice over the child's head, and then hangs it to a tree outside of the village.⁴ In some Malayo-Siamese

Contagious
magic of
placenta
and navel-
string in
the Patani
States,
China, and
Japan.

families of the Patani States it is customary to bury the afterbirth under a banana-tree, the condition of which is thenceforth regarded as ominous of the child's fate for good or ill.⁵ A Chinese medical work prescribes that "the placenta should be stored away in a felicitous spot under the salutary influences of the sky or the moon, deep in the ground, and with earth piled up over it carefully, in order that the child may be ensured a long life. If it is devoured by a swine or dog, the child loses its intellect; if insects or ants eat it, the child becomes scrofulous; if crows or magpies swallow it,

Mr. Joustra thinks that the placenta is, in the opinion of the Battas, the original seat of this soul.

¹ J. H. Neumann, "De tēndi in verband met Si Dajang," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xlviii. (1904) p. 102.

² A. H. F. J. Nusslein, "Beschrijving van het landschap Pasir," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volken-*

kunde van Nederlandsch-Indië, lviii. (1905) pp. 537 sq.

³ E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, iv. 370.

⁴ P. R. T. Gurdon, *The Khasis* (London, 1907), pp. 124 sq.

⁵ N. Annandale, "Customs of the Malayo-Siamese," *Fasciculi Malayenses*, Anthropology, part ii. (a) (May 1904) p. 5.

the child will have an abrupt or violent death; if it is cast into the fire, the child incurs running sores."¹ The Japanese preserve the navel-string most carefully and bury it with the dead in the grave.²

Among the Gallas of East Africa the navel-string is carefully kept, sewn up in leather, and serves as an amulet for female camels, which then become the child's property, together with all the young they give birth to. The Baganda believe that every person is born with a double, and this double they identify with the afterbirth, which they regard as a second child. Further, they think that the afterbirth has a ghost, and that the ghost is in that portion of the navel-string which remains attached to the child after birth. This ghost must be preserved if the child is to be healthy. Hence when the navel-string drops off, it is rubbed with butter, swathed in bark-cloth, and kept through life under the name of "the twin" (*mulongo*). The afterbirth is wrapt up in plantain leaves and buried by the child's mother at the root of a plantain tree, where it is protected against wild beasts. If the child be a boy, the tree chosen is of the kind whose fruit is made into beer; if the child be a girl, the tree is of the kind whose fruit is eaten. The plantain tree at whose root the afterbirth is buried becomes sacred until the fruit has ripened and been used. Only the father's mother may come near it and dig about it; all other people are kept from it by a rope of plantain fibre which is tied from tree to tree in a circle round about the sacred plantain. All the child's secretions are thrown by the mother at the root of the tree; when the fruit is ripe, the father's mother cuts it and makes it into beer or cooks it, according to the sex of the child, and the relatives of the father's clan then come and partake of the sacred feast. After the meal the father must go in to his own wife, for should he neglect to do so, and should some other member of the clan have sexual relations with his wife first, the child's spirit would leave it and go into the other woman. Further,

Contagious
magic of
placenta
and navel-
string in
Africa,
especially
among the
Baganda.

¹ J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, iv. (Leyden, 1901) pp. 396 sq.

² H. von Siebold, *Ethnologische Studien über die Aino* (Berlin, 1881),

p. 32.

³ Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost Afrikas: die materielle Cultur der Dandki, Galla und Somäl* (Berlin, 1893), p. 192.

Contagious
magic of
the navel-
string
among the
Baganda.

the navel-string plays a part at the ceremony of naming a child, the object of which among the Baganda is to determine whether the child is legitimate or not. For this purpose the navel-string (the so-called "twin") is dropped into a bowl containing a mixture of beer, milk, and water; if it floats, the child is legitimate and the clan accepts it as a member; if it sinks, the child is disowned by the clan and the mother is punished for adultery. Afterwards the navel-string or "twin" (*mulongo*) is either kept by the clan or buried along with the afterbirth at the root of the plantain tree. Such are the customs observed with regard to the afterbirth and navel-string of Baganda commoners. The king's navel-string or "twin," wrapt in bark-cloths and decorated with beads, is treated like a person and confided to the care of the Kimbugwe, the second officer of the country, who has a special house built for it within his enclosure. Every month, when the new moon first appears in the sky, the Kimbugwe carries the bundle containing the "twin" in procession, with fife and drums playing, to the king, while the royal drum is beating in the royal enclosure. The king examines it and hands it back to him. After that, the minister returns the precious bundle to its own house in his enclosure and places it in the doorway, where it remains all night. Next morning it is taken from its wrappings, smeared with butter, and again set in the doorway until the evening, when it is swathed once more in its bark-cloths and restored to its proper resting-place. After the king's death his "twin" is deposited, along with his jaw-bone, in the huge hut which forms his temple. The spirit of the dead king is supposed to dwell in these two relics; they are placed on the days when he wishes to hold his court and when he is oracularly consulted on special occasions.¹

Contagious
magic of
navel-
string and
afterbirth
in America.

The Incas of Peru preserved the navel-string with the greatest care, and gave it to the child to suck whenever it fell ill.² *In ancient Mexico they used to give a boy's navel-

¹ J. Roscoe, "Further Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 33, 45, 46, 63, 76; *id.* "Kibuka, the War God of the Baganda," *Nat.*, vii. (1907) p. 164 *sq.*

In the former of these two accounts Mr. Roscoe speaks of the placenta, not the navel-string, as the "twin" (*mulongo*).

² Garcilasso de la Vega, *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, bk. ii. ch. 24, vol. i. p. 186, Markham's translation.

string to soldiers, to be buried by them on a field of battle, in order that the boy might thus acquire a passion for war. But the navel-string of a girl was buried beside the domestic hearth, because this was believed to inspire her with a love of home and a taste for cooking and baking.¹ Algonquin women hung the navel-string round the child's neck; if he lost it, they thought the child would be stupid and spiritless.² Among the Thompson Indians of British Columbia the navel-string was sewed up by the mother in a piece of buckskin embroidered with hair, quills, or beads. It was then tied to the broad buckskin band which extended round the head of the cradle on the outside. Many thongs hung from it, each carrying fawn's hoofs and beads that jingled when the cradle was moved. If the navel-string were lost, they looked on it as a calamity, for they believed that in after years the child would become foolish or would be lost in the chase or on a journey.³ Among the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia the afterbirth of girls is buried at high-water mark, in the belief that this will render them expert at digging for clam. The afterbirth of boys is sometimes exposed at places where ravens will eat it, because the boys will thus acquire the raven's prophetic vision. The same Indians are persuaded that the navel-string may be the means of imparting a variety of accomplishments to its original owner. Thus, if it is fastened to a dancing mask, which is then worn by a skilful dancer, the child will dance well. If it is attached to a knife, which is thereafter used by a cunning carver, the child will carve well. Again, if the parents wish their son to sing beautifully, they tie his navel-string to the baton of a singing-master. Then the boy calls on the singing-master every morning while the artist is eating his breakfast. The votary of the Muses thereupon takes his baton and moves it twice down the right side and twice down the left side of the boy's body, after which he gives the lad some of his food to eat. That

¹ B. de Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle Espagne*, p. 310; compare pp. 240, 439, 440 (Jourdanet and Simeon's translation).

(Canadian reprint).

² J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," pp. 304 sq. (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. i. part iv.).

³ *Relations des Jésuites*, 1639, p. 44

is an infallible way of making the boy a beautiful singer.¹ Among the Cherokees the navel-string of an infant girl is buried under the corn mortar, in order that the girl may grow up to be a good baker; but the navel-string of a boy is hung up on a tree in the woods, in order that he may be a hunter. Among the Kiowas the navel-string of a girl is sewn up in a small beaded pouch and worn by her at her belt as she grows to womanhood. If the girl's mother ever sells the belt and pouch, she is careful to extract the navel-string from the pouch before the bargain is struck. Should the child die, the pouch containing her navel-string would be fastened to a stick and set up over her grave.²

Contagious
magic of
navel-
string and
afterbirth
in Europe.

Even in Europe many people still believe that a person's destiny is more or less bound up with that of his navel-string or afterbirth. Thus in Rhenish Bavaria the navel-string is kept for a while wrapt up in a piece of old linen, and then cut or pricked to pieces according as the child is a boy or a girl, in order that he or she may grow up to be a skilful workman or a good sempstress.³ In Berlin the midwife commonly delivers the dried navel-string to the father with a strict injunction to preserve it carefully, for so long as it is kept the child will live and thrive and be free from sickness.⁴ In Beauce and Perche the people are careful to throw the navel-string neither into water nor into fire, believing that if that were done the child would be drowned or burned.⁵ Among the Ruthenians of Bukowina and Galicia, the owner of a cow sometimes endeavours to increase its milk by throwing its afterbirth into a spring, "in order that, just as the water flows from the spring, so milk may flow in abundance from the udders of the cow."⁶ Some German peasants think that the afterbirth of a cow must be hung up in an apple-tree, otherwise the cow would not have

¹ Fr. Boas in *Eleventh Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 5 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1896*).

² J. Mooney, "The Indian Navel Cord," *Journal of American Folk-lore*, xvii. (1904) p. 197.

³ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iv. 2, p. 346.

⁴ E. Krause, "Abergläubische Kuren und sonstiger Aberglaube in Berlin und nächster Umgebung," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xv. (1883) p. 84.

⁵ F. Chapiseau, *Le Folk-lore de la Beauce et du Perche* (Paris, 1902), ii. 16.

⁶ R. F. Kaindl, "Zauberglaube bei den Ruthenen in der Bukowina und Galizien," *Globus*, lxi. (1892) p. 282.

a calf next year.¹ Similarly at Cleveland in Yorkshire, when a mare foals, it is the custom to hang up the placenta in a tree, particularly in a thorn-tree, in order to secure luck with the foal. "Should the birth take place in the fields, this suspension is most carefully attended to, while as for the requirements of such events at the homestead, in not a few instances there is a certain tree not far from the farm-buildings still specially marked out for the reception of these peculiar pendants. In one instance lately, I heard of a larch tree so devoted, but admittedly in default of the thorn; the old thorn-tree long employed for the purpose having died out."² Again, in Europe children born with a caul are considered lucky;³ in Holland, as in the East Indies, they can see ghosts.⁴ The Icelanders also hold that a child born with a caul will afterwards possess the gift of second sight, that he will never be harmed by sorcery, and will be victorious in every contest he undertakes, provided he has the caul dried and carries it with him.⁵ This latter belief explains why both in ancient and modern times advocates have bought cauls with the hope of winning their cases by means of them.⁶ Probably they thought that the spirit in the caul would prove an invincible ally to the person who had purchased its services. In like manner the aborigines of Central Australia believe that their sacred sticks or stones (*churinga*) are intimately associated with the spirits of the dead men to whom they belonged, and that in a fight a man who carries one of these sticks or stones will certainly vanquish an adversary who has no such talisman.⁷ Further, it is an ancient belief in Iceland that the child's guardian spirit or a part of its soul has its seat in the chorion or foetal membrane, which usually forms part of the afterbirth, but is known as the caul when the child

Child's
guardian
spirit
associated
with the
chorion.

¹ A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen* (Berlin, 1843), pp. 379 sq.

² J. C. Atkinson, in *County Folklore*, ii. (London, 1901) p. 68.

³ A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² § 305, p. 203; H. Ploss, *Das Kind*,² i. 12 sqq.

⁴ J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ II. 728, note 2. As to the East Indian belief see above, pp. 187 sq.

⁵ M. Bartels, "Islandischer Brauch und Volksglaube in Bezug auf die Nachkommenschaft," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii. (1900) pp. 70 sq.

⁶ Aelius Lampridius, *Antoninus Diadumenus*, 4; J. Grimm, *loc. cit.*; H. Ploss, *Das Kind*,² i. pp. 13, 14.

⁷ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 135.

happens to be born with it. Hence the chorion was itself known as the *fylgia* or guardian spirit. It might not be thrown away under the open sky, lest demons should get hold of it and work the child harm thereby, or lest wild beasts should eat it up. It might not be burned, for if it were burned the child would have no *fylgia*, which would be as bad as to have no shadow. Formerly it was customary to bury the chorion under the threshold, where the mother stepped over it daily when she rose from bed. If the chorion was thus treated, the man had in after-life a guardian spirit in the shape of a bear, an eagle, a wolf, an ox, or a boar. The guardian spirits of cunning men and wizards had the shape of a fox, while those of beautiful women appeared as swans. In all these forms the guardian spirits formerly announced their coming and presented themselves to the persons to whom they belonged; but nowadays both the belief and the custom have changed in many respects.¹

Afterbirth
or navel-
string a
seat of the
external
soul.

Thus in many parts of the world the navel-string, or more commonly the afterbirth, is regarded as a living being, the brother or sister of the infant, or as the material object in which the guardian spirit of the child or part of its soul resides. This latter belief we have found among the aborigines of Queensland, the Battas of Sumatra, and the Norsemen of Iceland. In accordance with such beliefs it has been customary to preserve these parts of the body, at least for a time, with the utmost care, lest the character, the fate, or even the life of the person to whom they belong should be endangered by their injury or loss. Further, the sympathetic connexion supposed to exist between a person and his afterbirth or navel-string comes out very clearly in the widespread custom of treating the afterbirth or navel-string in ways which are supposed to influence for life the character and career of the person, making him, if it is a man, a swift runner, a nimble climber, a strong swimmer, a skilful hunter, or a brave soldier, and making her, if it is a woman, an expert fisher, a cunning sempstress, a good cook or baker, and so forth. Thus the beliefs and usages

¹ J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ were only the caul which became a *fylgia*. I follow Dr. Bartels, ii. 723 sq., iii. 266 sq.; M. Bartels, *op. cit.* p. 70. Grimm speaks as if it

concerned with the afterbirth or placenta, and to a less extent with the navel-string, present a remarkable parallel to the widespread doctrine of the transferable or external soul and the customs founded on it. Hence it is hardly rash to conjecture that the resemblance is no mere chance coincidence, but that in the afterbirth or placenta we have a physical basis (not necessarily the only one) for the theory and practice of the external soul. The consideration of that subject is reserved for a later part of this work.¹

A curious application of the doctrine of contagious magic is the relation commonly believed to exist between a wounded man and the agent of the wound, so that whatever is subsequently done by or to the agent must correspondingly affect the patient either for good or evil. Thus Pliny tells us that if you have wounded a man and are sorry for it, you have only to spit on the hand that gave the wound, and the pain of the sufferer will be instantly alleviated.² In Melanesia, if a man's friends get possession of the arrow which wounded him, they keep it in a damp place or in cool leaves, for then the inflammation will be trifling and will soon subside. Meantime the enemy who shot the arrow is hard at work to aggravate the wound by all the means in his power. For this purpose he and his friends drink hot and burning juices and chew irritating leaves, for this will clearly inflame and irritate the wound. Further, they keep the bow near the fire to make the wound which it has inflicted hot; and for the same reason they put the arrow-head, if it has been recovered, into the fire. Moreover, they are careful to keep the bow-string taut and to twang it occasionally, for this will cause the wounded man to suffer from tension of the nerves and spasms of tetanus.³ Similarly when a Kwakiutl Indian of British Columbia had bitten a piece out of an enemy's arm, he used to drink hot water afterwards for the purpose of thereby inflaming the wound in his foe's

Contagious magic exemplified in the sympathetic connexion supposed to exist between a wound and the weapon which inflicted it.

¹ Meantime I may refer to *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, iii. 350 sqq. For other superstitions concerning the afterbirth and navel-string see H. Ploss, *Das Kind*,² i. 15 sqq., ii. 198 sq. The connexion of these parts of the body with the idea of the

external soul has already been indicated by Mr. E. Crawley (*The Mystic Rose*, London, 1902, p. 119).

² Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 36.

³ R. H. Codrington, *The Melan-erians* (Oxford, 1891), p. 310.

body.¹ Among the Lkuŋgen Indians of the same region it is a rule that an arrow, or any other weapon that has wounded a man, must be hidden by his friends, who have to be careful not to bring it near the fire till the wound is healed. If a knife or an arrow which is still covered with a man's blood were thrown into the fire, the wounded man would suffer very much.² In the Yerkla-mining tribe of south-eastern Australia it is thought that if any one but the medicine-man touches the flint knife with which a boy has been subincised, the boy will thereby be made very ill. So seriously is this belief held that if the lad chanced thereafter to fall sick and die, the man who had touched the knife would be killed.³ "It is constantly received and avouched," says Bacon, "that the anointing of the weapon that maketh the wound will heal the wound itself. In this experiment, upon the relation of men of credit (though myself, as yet, am not fully inclined to believe it), you shall note the points following: first, the ointment wherewith this is done is made of divers ingredients, whereof the strangest and hardest to come by are the moss upon the skull of a dead man unburied, and the fats of a boar and a bear killed in the act of generation." The precious ointment compounded out of these and other ingredients was applied, as the philosopher explains, not to the wound but to the weapon, and that even though the injured man was at a great distance and knew nothing about it. The experiment, he tells us, had been tried of wiping the ointment off the weapon without the knowledge of the person hurt, with the result that he was presently in a great rage of pain until the weapon was anointed again. Moreover, "it is affirmed that if you cannot get the weapon, yet if you put an instrument of iron or wood resembling the weapon into the wound, whereby it bleedeth, the anointing of that instrument will serve and work the effect."⁴ Remedies of the

Bacon on the custom of anointing the weapon in order to heal the wound.

¹ Fr. Boas, "The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Report of the U.S. National Museum for 1895*, p. 440.

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

³ A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 667.

⁴ Francis Bacon, *Natural History*, cent. x. § 998. Compare J. Brand *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 305, quoting Werenfels. In Dryden's play *The Tempest* (Act v. Scene 1) Ariel directs Prospero to anoint the sword which

sort which Bacon deemed worthy of his attention are still in vogue in the eastern counties of England. Thus in Suffolk if a man cuts himself with a bill-hook or a scythe he always takes care to keep the weapon bright, and oils it to prevent the wound from festering. If he runs a thorn or, as he calls it, a bush into his hand, he oils or greases the extracted thorn. A man came to a doctor with an inflamed hand, having run a thorn into it while he was hedging. On being told that the hand was festering, he remarked, "That didn't ought to, for I greased the bush well arter I pulled it out." If a horse wounds its foot by treading on a nail, a Suffolk groom will invariably preserve the nail, clean it, and grease it every day, to prevent the foot from festering. Arguing in the same way, a Suffolk woman, whose sister had burnt her face with a flat-iron, observed that "the face would never heal till the iron had been put out of the way; and even if it did heal, it would be sure to break out again every time the iron was heated."¹ At Norwich in June 1902 a woman named Matilda Henry accidentally ran a nail into her foot. Without examining the wound, or even removing her stocking, she caused her daughter to grease the nail, saying that if this were done no harm would come of the hurt. A few days afterwards she died of lockjaw.² Similarly Cambridgeshire labourers think that if a horse has run a nail into its foot, it is necessary to grease the nail with lard or oil and put it away in some safe place, or the horse will not recover. A few years ago a veterinary surgeon was sent for to attend a horse which had ripped its side open on the hinge of a farm gatepost. On arriving at the farm he found that nothing had been done to the wounded horse, but that a man was busy trying to pry the hinge out of the gatepost in order that it might be greased and put away, which, in the opinion of the Cambridge wiseacres, would conduce to the recovery of the

East
Anglian
practice of
anoointing
the weapon
instead of
the wound

wounded Hippolito and to wrap it up close from the air. See Dryden's *Works*, ed. Scott, vol. iii. p. 191 (first edition).

¹ W. W. Groome, "Suffolk Leechcraft," *Folklore*, vi. (1895) p. 126. Compare *County Folklore: Suffolk*, edited by Lady E. C. Gurdon, pp. 25 sq.

▲ like belief and practice occur in Sussex (C. Latham, "West Sussex Superstitions," *Folklore Record*, i. 43 sq.). See further E. S. Hartland, *The Legend of Perseus*, ii. 169-172.

² "Death from Lockjaw at Norwich," *The People's Weekly Journal for Norfolk*, July 19, 1902, p. 8.

Anointing
the weapon
instead of
the wound.

animal.¹ Similarly Essex rustics opine that, if a man has been stabbed with a knife, it is essential to his recovery that the knife should be greased and laid across the bed on which the sufferer is lying.² So in Bavaria you are directed to anoint a linen rag with grease and tie it on the edge of the axe that cut you, taking care to keep the sharp edge upwards. As the grease on the axe dries, your wound heals.³ Similarly in the Harz mountains they say that if you cut yourself, you ought to smear the knife or the scissors with fat and put the instrument away in a dry place in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. As the knife dries, the wound heals.⁴ Other people, however, in Germany say that you should stick the knife in some damp place in the ground, and that your hurt will heal as the knife rusts.⁵ Others again, in Bavaria, recommend you to smear the axe or whatever it is with blood and put it under the eaves.⁶

Further
extensions
of this
case of
contagious
magic.

The train of reasoning which thus commends itself to English and German rustics, in common with the savages of Melanesia and America, is carried a step further by the aborigines of Central Australia, who conceive that under certain circumstances the near relations of a wounded man must grease themselves, restrict their diet, and regulate their behaviour in other ways in order to ensure his recovery. Thus when a lad has been circumcised and the wound is not yet healed, his mother may not eat opossum, or a certain kind of lizard, or carpet snake, or any kind of fat, for otherwise she would retard the healing of the boy's wound. Every day she greases her digging-sticks and never lets them out of her sight; at night she sleeps with them close to her head. No one is allowed to touch them. Every day also she rubs her body all over with grease, as in some way this is believed to help her son's recovery.⁷ Another

¹ F. N. Webb, in *Folk-lore*, xvi. (1905) p. 337.

² C. Partridge, *Cross River Natives* (London, 1905), p. 295.

³ F. Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 305, compare 277.

⁴ H. Pröhle, *Harzbilder* (Leipzig, 1855), p. 82.

⁵ J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen*

Mythologie, i. p. 225, § 282.

⁶ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iv. 1, p. 223. A further recommendation is to stroke the wound or the instrument with a twig of an ash-tree and then keep the twig in a dark place.

⁷ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 250.

refinement of the same principle is due to the ingenuity of the German peasant. It is said that when one of his pigs or sheep breaks its leg, a farmer of Rhenish Bavaria or Hesse will bind up the leg of a chair with bandages and splints in due form. For some days thereafter no one may sit on that chair, move it, or knock up against it; for to do so would pain the injured pig or sheep and hinder the cure.¹ In this last case it is clear that we have passed wholly out of the region of contagious magic and into the region of homoeopathic or imitative magic; the chair-leg, which is treated instead of the beast's leg, in no sense belongs to the animal, and the application of bandages to it is a mere simulation of the treatment which a more rational surgery would bestow on the real patient.

The sympathetic connexion supposed to exist between a man and the weapon which has wounded him is probably founded on the notion that the blood on the weapon continues to feel with the blood in his body. For a like reason the Papuans of Tumleo, an island off German New Guinea, are careful to throw into the sea the bloody bandages with which their wounds have been dressed, for they fear that if these rags fell into the hands of an enemy he might injure them magically thereby. Once when a man with a wound in his mouth, which bled constantly, came to the missionaries to be treated, his faithful wife took great pains to collect all the blood and cast it into the sea.² Strained and unnatural as this idea may seem to us, it is perhaps less so than the belief that magic sympathy is maintained between a person and his clothes, so that whatever is done to the clothes will be felt by the man himself, even though he may be far away at the time. That is why these same Papuans of Tumleo search most anxiously for the smallest scrap which they may have lost of their scanty garments,³ and why other Papuans, travelling through the thick forest, will stop and carefully scrape from a bough any clot of red pomade which

Sympa-
thetic con-
nexion
between a
wounded
person and
his spilt
blood.

A sympa-
thetic
connexion
is supposed
to exist
between a
person and
his clothes,
so that any
injury done
to the
clothes is
felt by the
man.

¹ F. Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 302; W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche im Lichte der heidnischen Vorzeit* (Marburg, 1888), p. 87.

² M. J. Erdweg, "Die Bewohner

der Insel Tumleo, Berlinhafen, Deutsch-Neu-Guinea," *Mittheilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, xxxii. (1902) p. 287.

³ M. J. Erdweg, *loc. cit.*

Contagious
magic of
clothes.

may have adhered to it from their greasy heads.¹ In the Wotjobaluk tribe of Victoria a wizard would sometimes get hold of a man's opossum rug and tie it up with some small spindle-shaped pieces of casuarina wood, on which he had made certain marks, such as likenesses of his victim and of a poisonous snake. This bundle he would then roast slowly in the fire, and as he did so the man who had owned the opossum rug would fall sick. Should the patient suspect what was happening, he would send to the wizard and beg him to let him have the rug back. If the wizard consented, "he would give the thing back, telling the sick man's friends to put it in water, so as to wash the fire out." In such cases, we are told, the sick man would feel cooled and would most likely recover.² In Tanna, one of the New Hebrides, a man who had a grudge at another and desired his death would try to get possession of a cloth which had touched the sweat of his enemy's body. If he succeeded, he rubbed the cloth carefully over with the leaves and twigs of a certain tree, rolled and bound cloth, twigs, and leaves into a long sausage-shaped bundle, and burned it slowly in the fire. As the bundle was consumed, the victim fell ill, and when it was reduced to ashes, he died.³ In this last form of enchantment, however, the magical sympathy may be supposed to exist not so much between the man and the cloth as between the man and the sweat which issued from his body. But in other cases of the same sort it seems that the garment by itself is enough to give the sorcerer a hold upon his victim. The witch in Theocritus, while she melted an image or lump of wax in order that her faithless lover might melt with love of her, did not forget to throw into the fire a shred of his cloak which he had dropped in her house.⁴ In Prussia they say that if you cannot catch a thief, the next best thing you can do is to get hold of a garment which he may have shed in his flight; for it

Prussian
custom of
beating the
garments

¹ B. Hagen, *Unter den Papua's* (Wiesbaden, 1899), p. 269.

² A. W. Howitt, "On Australian Medicine Men," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xvi. (1887) pp. 28 sq.; *id.*, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 363-365.

³ B. T. Somerville, "Notes on some

Islands of the New Hebrides," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxiii. (1894) p. 19.

⁴ Theocritus, *Id.* ii. 53 sq. Similarly the witch in Virgil (*Ecl.* viii. 92 sqq.) buries under her threshold certain personal relics (*exuviae*) which her lover had left behind.

you beat it soundly, the thief will fall sick. This belief is firmly rooted in the popular mind. Some seventy or eighty years ago, in the neighbourhood of Berend, a man was detected trying to steal honey, and fled, leaving his coat behind him. When he heard that the enraged owner of the honey was mauling his lost coat, he was so alarmed that he took to his bed and died.¹ But in Germany it is not every stick that is good enough to beat an absent man with. It should be a hazel rod cut before sunrise on Good Friday. Some say it should be a one-year-old hazel-sapling, and that you should cut it with three strokes, looking to the east, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Others think the best time for cutting the rod is at the new moon on a Tuesday morning before sunrise. Once you have got this valuable instrument, you have only to spread a garment on a mole-hill or on the threshold, and to lay on with hearty goodwill, mentioning the name of the person whom you desire to injure. Though he may be miles off, he will feel every whack as if it descended on his body.²

Again, magic may be wrought on a man sympathetically, not only through his clothes and severed parts of himself, but also through the impressions left by his body in sand or earth. In particular, it is a world-wide superstition that by injuring footprints you injure the feet that made them. Thus the natives of south-eastern Australia think that they can lame a man by placing sharp pieces of quartz, glass, bone, or charcoal in his footprints. Rheumatic pains are often attributed by them to this cause. Seeing a Tatungolung man very lame, Mr. Howitt asked him what was the matter. He said, "Some fellow has put *bottle* in my foot." He was suffering from rheumatism, but believed that an enemy had found his foot-track and had buried in it a piece of broken bottle, the magical influence of which

which a
thief has
dropped.

Contagious
magic may
be wrought
on a man
through
the impres-
sions left
by his
body in
sand or
earth, par-
ticularly
through his
footprints.

¹ Tettau und Temme, *Volkssagen Ostpreussens, Litthauens und Westpreussens* (Berlin, 1837), pp. 283 sq. For more evidence of the same sort see E. S. Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, ii. 86 sqq.

² E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, pp. 245

sq.; A. Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, ii. 192; *id.*, *Die Herabkunft des Feuers*,² pp. 200 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Die Götterwelt der deutschen und nordischen Völker*, i. 203 note. Compare Montanus, *Die deutsche Volksfeste, Volksbräuche und deutscher Volksglaube*, p. 117.

Contagious
magic of
footprints.

had entered his foot. On another occasion Mr. Howitt's party was followed by a number of strange natives who looked with great interest at the footprints of the horses and camels. A black fellow with Mr. Howitt was much alarmed, and declared that the strangers were putting poison in his footsteps.¹ The Wyingurri, a tribe on the border of western Australia, have a magical instrument made of resin and rats' teeth which they call a sun, because it is supposed to contain the solar heat. By placing it on a man's tracks they think they can throw him into a violent fever, which will soon burn him up.² In the Unmatjera tribe of Central Australia, when a boy has been circumcised he must hide in the bush, and if he should see a woman's tracks he must be very careful to jump over them. For if his foot were to touch them, the spirit of the louse which lives in the woman's hair would go to him, and his head would be full of lice.³ In New Britain it is thought that you can cause the sickness or death of a man by pricking his footprints with the sting of a sting-ray.⁴ The Maoris imagine that they can work grievous harm to an enemy by taking up earth from his footprints, depositing it in a sacred place, and performing a ceremony over it.⁵ In Savage Island a common form of witchcraft was to take up the soil on which an enemy had set his foot, and to carry it to a sacred place, where it was solemnly cursed, in order that the man might be afflicted with lameness.⁶ The Galelareese think that if anybody sticks something sharp into your footprints while you are walking, you will be wounded in your feet.⁷ In Japan, if a house has been robbed by night

¹ Fison and Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, p. 250; A. W. Howitt, "On Australian Medicine Men," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xvi. (1887) pp. 26 sq.; *id.*, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 366 sq. According to one account a cross should be made in the footprint with a piece of quartz, and round the footprint thus marked the bones of kangaroos should be stuck in the ground. See R. Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 476 sq. These and many of the following examples were cited by me in *Folklore*, i. (1890) pp. 157

sqq. For more instances of the same sort see E. S. Hartland, *The Legend of Perseus*, ii. (London, 1895) 78-83.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 541.

³ *Id.*, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 340 sq.

⁴ R. Parkinson, *Dreissig Jahre in der Süddei* (Stuttgart, 1907), p. 605.

⁵ Elsdon Best, "Spiritual Concepts of the Maori," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, ix. (1900) p. 196.

⁶ Basil C. Thomson, *Savage Island* (London, 1902), p. 97.

⁷ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen. Ver-

and the burglar's footprints are visible in the morning, the householder will burn mugwort on them, hoping thereby to hurt the robber's feet so that he cannot run far, and the police may easily overtake him.¹ Among the Karens of Burma some people are said to keep poison fangs for the purpose of killing their enemies. These they thrust into the footprints of the person whom they wish to destroy, and soon he finds himself with a sore foot, as if a dog had bitten it. The sore rapidly grows worse till death follows.² Peasants of northern India commonly attribute all sorts of pains and sores to the machinations of a witch or sorcerer who has meddled with their footprints.³ For example, with the Chero, a Dravidian race of labourers in the hill country of Mirzapur, a favourite mode of harming an enemy is to measure his footprints in the dust with a straw and then mutter a spell over them; that brings on wounds and sores in his feet.⁴ Such magical operations have been familiar to the Hindoos from of old. In the *Kausika Sutra*, a book of sorcery, it is directed that, while your foe is walking southward, you should make cuts in his footprint with the leaf of a certain tree or with the blade of an axe (it is not quite clear which is to be used); then you must tie dust from the footprint in the leaf of a certain tree (*Butea frondosa*) and throw it into a frying-pan; if it crackles in the pan, your enemy is undone.⁵ Another old Hindoo charm was to obtain earth from the footprint of a beleaguered king and scatter it in the wind.⁶ The Herero of South Africa take earth from the footprints of a lion and throw it on the track of an enemy, with the wish, "May the lion kill you."⁷ The Ovambo of the same region believe that they can be bewitched by an enemy through the dust or sand

Contagious
magic of
footprints.

halen en Overleveringen der Galelar-
eezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land-
en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-
Indië*, xlv. (1895) p. 512.

¹ L. Hearn, *Glimpses of unfamiliar
Japan* (London, 1894), ii. 604.

² F. Mason, "On Dwellings, Works
of Art, Laws, etc., of the Karens,"
Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,
xxxvii. (1868) part ii. p. 149.

³ W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and
Folklore of Northern India* (West-

minster, 1896), ii. 280.

⁴ *Id.*, *Tribes and Castes of the
North-Western Provinces and Oudh*,
ii. 221.

⁵ M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the
Atharva-Veda*, p. 295; W. Caland,
Altindisches Zauberitual, pp. 162 sq.

⁶ A. Hillebrandt, *Vedische Opfer
und Zauber* (Strasburg, 1897), p. 173.

⁷ Josaphat Hahn, "Die Ovaherero,"
*Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erd-
kunde zu Berlin*, iv. (1869) p. 503.

of their footprints. Hence a man who has special reason to dread the spite of a foe will carefully efface his footprints with a branch as fast as he makes them.¹ The Ewe-speaking people of West Africa fancy they can drive an enemy mad by throwing a magic powder on his footprints.² Among the Shuswap and Carrier Indians of North-west America shamans used to bewitch a man by taking earth from the spot on which he had stood and placing it in their medicine-bags; then their victim fell sick or died.³ In North Africa the magic of the footprints is sometimes used for more amiable purposes. A woman who wishes to attach her husband or lover to herself will take earth from the print of his right foot, tie it up with some of his hairs in a packet, and wear the packet next her skin.⁴

Contagious
magic of
footprints
in Europe.

Similar practices prevail in various parts of Europe. Thus in Mecklenburg it is thought that if you drive a nail into a man's footprint he will fall lame; sometimes it is required that the nail should be taken from a coffin.⁵ A like mode of injuring an enemy is resorted to in some parts of France.⁶ It is said that there was an old woman who used to frequent Stow in Suffolk, and she was a witch. If, while she walked, any one went after her and stuck a nail or a knife into her footprint in the dust, the dame could not stir a step till it was withdrawn.⁷ More commonly, it would seem, in Germany earth from the footprint is tied up in a cloth and hung in the chimney smoke; as it dries up, so the man withers away or his foot shrivels up.⁸ The same practice and the same belief are said to be common in Matogrosso, a province of Brazil.⁹ A Bohemian

¹ H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, pp. 313 sq.

² A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 94.

³ J. Teit, "The Shuswap" (Leyden and New York, 1909) p. 613 (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. ii. part vii.).

⁴ E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, p. 59.

⁵ K. Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Mecklenburg*, ii. 329 sq., §§ 1597, 1598, 1601^a.

⁶ J. L. M. Noguès, *Les Maurs*

d'autrefois en Saintonge et en Aunis (Saintes, 1891), pp. 169 sq.; C. de Mensignac, *Recherches ethnographiques sur la salive et le crachot* (Bordeaux, 1892), p. 45 note.

⁷ *County Folklore: Suffolk*, edited by Lady E. C. Gurdon, p. 201.

⁸ Josaphat Hahn, *loc. cit.*; K. Bartsch, *op. cit.* ii. 330, 334, §§ 1599, 1611^{abc}, compare p. 332, § 1607; R. Andree, *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, Neue Folge (Leipzig, 1889), pp. 8, 11.

⁹ K. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens*, p. 558

variation of the charm is to put the earth from the footprint in a pot with nails, needles, broken glass, and so forth, then set the pot on the fire and let it boil till it bursts. After that the man whose footprint has been boiled will have a lame leg for the rest of his life.¹ Among the Lithuanians the proceeding is somewhat different. They dig up the earth from the person's footprint and bury it, with various incantations, in a graveyard. That causes the person to sicken and die.² A similar practice is reported from Mecklenburg.³ The Esthonians of the island of Oesel measure the footprint with a stick and bury the stick, thereby undermining the health of the man or woman whose foot made the mark.⁴ Among the South Slavs a girl will dig up the earth from the footprints of the man she loves and put it in a flower-pot. Then she plants in the pot a marigold, a flower that is thought to be fadeless. And as its golden blossom grows and blooms and never fades, so shall her sweetheart's love grow and bloom, and never, never fade.⁵ Thus the love-spell acts on the man through the earth he trod on. An old Danish mode of concluding a treaty was based on the same idea of the sympathetic connexion between a man and his footprints: the covenanting parties sprinkled each other's footprints with their own blood, thus giving a pledge of fidelity.⁶ In ancient Greece superstitions of the same sort seem to have been current, for it was thought that if a horse stepped on the track of a wolf he was seized with numbness;⁷ and a maxim ascribed to Pythagoras forbade people to pierce a man's footprints with a nail or a knife.⁸

The same superstition is turned to account by hunters in many parts of the world for the purpose of running down the game. Thus a German huntsman will stick a nail taken from a coffin into the fresh spoor of the quarry,

The contagious magic of footprints is used by hunters for

¹ J. V. Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 200, § 1402.

² Tettau and Temme, *Die Völkernamen Ostpreussens, Litthauens und Westpreussens*, p. 267; A. Bezzenberger, *Litauische Forschungen* (Göttingen, 1882), p. 69.

³ K. Bartsch, *op. cit.* ii. 330, § 1599.

⁴ Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhand-*

lungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat, vii. (1872) p. 79.

⁵ F. S. Krauss, *Sitte und Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 165.

⁶ Saxo Grammaticus, *Historia Danica*, i. p. 40, ed. P. E. Müller (pp. 28 sq., O. Elton's English translation).

⁷ Aelian, *De natura animalium*, i. 36.

⁸ *Fragmenta Philosophorum Graecorum*, ed. F. G. A. Mullach, i. 510.

the purpose of running down the game.

believing that this will hinder the animal from escaping.¹ The aborigines of Victoria put hot embers in the tracks of the animals they were pursuing.² Hottentot hunters throw into the air a handful of sand taken from the footprints of the game, believing that this will bring the animal down.³ Thompson Indians used to lay charms on the tracks of wounded deer; after that they deemed it superfluous to pursue the animal any further that day, for being thus charmed it could not travel far and would soon die.⁴ Similarly, Ojebway Indians placed "medicine" on the track of the first deer or bear they met with, supposing that this would soon bring the animal into sight, even if it were two or three days' journey off; for this charm had power to compress a journey of several days into a few hours.⁵ Ewe hunters of West Africa stab the footprints of game with a sharp-pointed stick in order to maim the quarry and allow them to come up with it.⁶ If Esthonian peasants find a wolf's dung on a beast's tracks, they burn it and scatter the ashes to the wind. This gives the wolf a pain in his stomach and makes him lose his way.⁷ The Aino think that hares bewitch people. Hence if one of them sees the track of a hare in the snow near his hut, he should carefully scoop it up with a water-ladle and then turn it upside down, saying as he does so that he buries the soul of the hare under the snow, and expressing a wish that the animal may sicken and die.⁸ In order to recover strayed cattle, the Zulus take the animals' dung and earth from their footprints and place both in the chief's vessel, round which a magic circle is drawn. Then the chief says: "I have now conquered them. Those cattle are now here; I am now sitting upon them. I do not know in what way they will escape."⁹

¹ A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 127, § 186.

² J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 54.

³ Theophilus Hahn, *Tsun-i. Goam* (London, 1881), pp. 84 sq.

⁴ J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," p. 371 (*The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. i. part iv.).

⁵ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojeb-*

way Indians, p. 154.

⁶ J. Spieth, *Die Ewe-Stämme* (Berlin, 1906), p. 389.

⁷ Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehesten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, pp. 121 sq.

⁸ J. Batchelor, *The Aino and their Folklore* (London, 1901), p. 516.

⁹ H. Callaway, *The Religious System of the Amaxulu*, part iii. pp. 345 sq.

But though the footprint is the most obvious, it is not the only impression made by the body through which magic may be wrought on a man. The aborigines of south-eastern Australia believe that a man may be injured by burying sharp fragments of quartz, glass, and so forth in the mark made by his reclining body; the magical virtue of these sharp things enters his body and causes those acute pains which the ignorant European puts down to rheumatism.¹ Sometimes they beat the place where the man sat with a pointed stick of the he-oak (*Casuarina leptoclada*), chanting an appropriate song at the same time; the stick will enter his person and kill him, provided the place operated on is still warm with the heat of his body.² At Delena, in British New Guinea, a man will sometimes revenge himself on a girl who has rejected his love by thrusting the spine of a sting-ray into the spot where she has been sitting; afterwards he puts it in the sun for a day or two and finally heats it over a fire. In a couple of days the girl dies.³ The natives of Tumleo, an island off German New Guinea, efface the marks they have left on the ground where they sat, lest magic should be wrought on them thereby.⁴ Before they leave a camping-place some of the natives of German New Guinea are careful to stab the ground thoroughly with spears, in order to prevent a sorcerer from making any use of a drop of sweat or any other personal remains which they may chance to leave behind.⁵ We can now understand why it was a maxim with the Pythagoreans that in rising from bed you should smooth away the impression left by your body on the bed-clothes.⁶ The rule was simply an old precaution against magic, forming part of a whole code of superstitious maxims which

Contagious magic wrought through the impressions of other parts of the body.

¹ A. W. Howitt, "On Australian Medicine Men," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xvi. (1887) pp. 26 sq.; id., *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 366.

² R. Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, I. 475.

³ A. C. Haddon, *Head-hunters* (London, 1901), p. 202.

⁴ M. J. Erdweg, "Die Bewohner der Insel Tumleo, Berlinhafen, Deutsch-Neu-Guinea," *Mitteilungen der an-*

thropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien, xxxii. (1902) p. 287.

⁵ K. Vetter, *Komm herüber und hilf uns! oder die Arbeit der Neuen Dettelsauer Mission*, Heft iii. (Barmen, 1898) p. 10.

⁶ Jamblichus, *Adhortatio ad philosophiam*, §1; Plutarch, *Quaest. conviv.* viii. 7; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* v. §, p. 661, ed. Potter. Compare Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. philos.* viii. 1. 17; Suidas, s.v. "Pythagoras."

Contagious
magic of
imprints.

antiquity fathered on Pythagoras, though doubtless they were familiar to the barbarous forefathers of the Greeks long before the time of that philosopher.¹ To ensure the good behaviour of an ally with whom they have just had a conference, the Basutos will cut and preserve the grass on which the ally sat during the interview.² Probably they regard the grass as a hostage for the observance of the treaty, since through it they could punish the man who sat on the grass if he should break faith. Moors who write on the sand are superstitiously careful to obliterate all the marks they made, never leaving a stroke or a dot in the sand when they have done writing.³ Another of the so-called maxims of Pythagoras bade people in lifting a pot always to smooth away the imprint it left on the ashes.⁴ So in Cambodia they say that when you lift a pot from the fire you should not set it down on the ashes; but that, if you must do so, you should be careful, in lifting the pot from the ashes, to efface the impression it has made. Otherwise they think that want will knock at your door.⁵ But this seems to be an afterthought, devised to explain a rule of which the original meaning was forgotten. The old notion probably was that a magician could sympathetically injure any person who ate out of a pot by means of the impression which the pot had left on the ashes; or, to be more explicit, contagious magic was supposed to work through the impression of the pot to the pot itself, through the pot to the meat contained in it, and finally through the meat to the eater.

§ 4. *The Magician's Progress*

Public and
private
magic.
The public
magician

We have now concluded our examination of the general principles of sympathetic magic. The examples by which I have illustrated them have been drawn for the most part from what may be called private magic, that is from magical

¹ For detailed proof of this I may refer to my article, "Some popular Superstitions of the Ancients," *Folklore*, i. (1890) pp. 147-199.

² E. Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 273.

³ J. Richardson, *Travels in the Great Desert of Sahara* (London, 1848), ii. 65.

⁴ Jamblichus, Plutarch, Clement of Alexandria, Diogenes Laertius, Suidas, *ll. cc.*

⁵ E. Aymonier, "Notes sur les coutumes et croyances superstitieuses des Cambodgiens," *Cochinchine Française: excursions et reconnaissances*, No. 16 (Saigon, 1883), p. 163.

rites and incantations practised for the benefit or the injury of individuals. But in savage society there is commonly to be found in addition what we may call public magic, that is, sorcery practised for the benefit of the whole community. Wherever ceremonies of this sort are observed for the common good, it is obvious that the magician ceases to be merely a private practitioner and becomes to some extent a public functionary. The development of such a class of functionaries is of great importance for the political as well as the religious evolution of society. For when the welfare of the tribe is supposed to depend on the performance of these magical rites, the magician rises into a position of much influence and repute, and may readily acquire the rank and authority of a chief or king. The profession accordingly draws into its ranks some of the ablest and most ambitious men of the tribe, because it holds out to them a prospect of honour, wealth, and power such as hardly any other career could offer. The acuter minds perceive how easy it is to dupe their weaker brother and to play on his superstition for their own advantage. Not that the sorcerer is always a knave and impostor; he is often sincerely convinced that he really possesses those wonderful powers which the credulity of his fellows ascribes to him. But the more sagacious he is, the more likely he is to see through the fallacies which impose on duller wits. Thus the ablest members of the profession must tend to be more or less conscious deceivers; and it is just these men who in virtue of their superior ability will generally come to the top and win for themselves positions of the highest dignity and the most commanding authority. The pitfalls which beset the path of the professional sorcerer are many, and as a rule only the man of coolest head and sharpest wit will be able to steer his way through them safely. For it must always be remembered that every single profession and claim put forward by the magician as such is false; not one of them can be maintained without deception, conscious or unconscious. Accordingly the sorcerer who sincerely believes in his own extravagant pretensions is in far greater peril and is much more likely to be cut short in his career than the deliberate impostor. The honest wizard always expects that his charms and incanta-

who practises his art for the good of the whole community, enjoys great influence and may rise to be a chief or king.

tions will produce their supposed effect ; and when they fail, not only really, as they always do, but conspicuously and disastrously, as they often do, he is taken aback : he is not, like his knavish colleague, ready with a plausible excuse to account for the failure, and before he can find one he may be knocked on the head by his disappointed and angry employers.

Tendency of supreme power to fall into the hands of the ablest and most unscrupulous men.

The general result is that at this stage of social evolution the supreme power tends to fall into the hands of men of the keenest intelligence and the most unscrupulous character. If we could balance the harm they do by their knavery against the benefits they confer by their superior sagacity, it might well be found that the good greatly outweighed the evil. For more mischief has probably been wrought in the world by honest fools in high places than by intelligent rascals. Once your shrewd rogue has attained the height of his ambition, and has no longer any selfish end to further, he may, and often does, turn his talents, his experience, his resources, to the service of the public. Many men who have been least scrupulous in the acquisition of power have been most beneficent in the use of it, whether the power they aimed at and won was that of wealth, political authority, or what not. In the field of politics the wily intriguer, the ruthless victor, may end by being a wise and magnanimous ruler, blessed in his lifetime, lamented at his death, admired and applauded by posterity. Such men, to take two of the most conspicuous instances, were Julius Caesar and Augustus. But once a fool always a fool, and the greater the power in his hands the more disastrous is likely to be the use he makes of it. The heaviest calamity in English history, the breach with America, might never have occurred if George the Third had not been an honest dullard.

The elevation of magicians to power tends to substitute a monarchy for that primitive democracy,

Thus, so far as the public profession of magic affected the constitution of savage society, it tended to place the control of affairs in the hands of the ablest man : it shifted the balance of power from the many to the one : it substituted a monarchy for a democracy, or rather for an oligarchy of old men ; for in general the savage community is ruled, not by the whole body of adult males, but by a council of

elders. The change, by whatever causes produced, and whatever the character of the early rulers, was on the whole very beneficial. For the rise of monarchy appears to be an essential condition of the emergence of mankind from savagery. No human being is so hidebound by custom and tradition as your democratic savage; in no state of society consequently is progress so slow and difficult. The old notion that the savage is the freest of mankind is the reverse of the truth. He is a slave, not indeed to a visible master, but to the past, to the spirits of his dead forefathers, who haunt his steps from birth to death, and rule him with a rod of iron. What they did is the pattern of right, the unwritten law to which he yields a blind unquestioning obedience. The least possible scope is thus afforded to superior talent to change old customs for the better. The ablest man is dragged down by the weakest and dullest, who necessarily sets the standard, since he cannot rise, while the other can fall. The surface of such a society presents a uniform dead level, so far as it is humanly possible to reduce the natural inequalities, the immeasurable real differences of inborn capacity and temper, to a false superficial appearance of equality. From this low and stagnant condition of affairs, which demagogues and dreamers in later times have lauded as the ideal state, the Golden Age, of humanity, everything that helps to raise society by opening a career to talent and proportioning the degrees of authority to men's natural abilities, deserves to be welcomed by all who have the real good of their fellows at heart. Once these elevating influences have begun to operate—and they cannot be for ever suppressed—the progress of civilisation becomes comparatively rapid. The rise of one man to supreme power enables him to carry through changes in a single lifetime which previously many generations might not have sufficed to effect; and if, as will often happen, he is a man of intellect and energy above the common, he will readily avail himself of the opportunity. Even the whims and caprices of a tyrant may be of service in breaking the chain of custom which lies so heavy on the savage. And as soon as the tribe ceases to be swayed by the timid and divided counsels of the elders, and yields to the direction of a single strong and resolute mind, it

or rather oligarchy of old men which is characteristic of savage society; and the rise of monarchy seems to be an essential condition of the emergence of mankind from savagery.

becomes formidable to its neighbours and enters on a career of aggrandisement, which at an early stage of history is often highly favourable to social, industrial, and intellectual progress. For extending its sway, partly by force of arms, partly by the voluntary submission of weaker tribes, the community soon acquires wealth and slaves, both of which, by relieving some classes from the perpetual struggle for a bare subsistence, afford them an opportunity of devoting themselves to that disinterested pursuit of knowledge which is the noblest and most powerful instrument to ameliorate the lot of man.

Intellectual
progress
dependent
on
economic
progress,
which is
often
furthered
by con-
quest and
empire.

Intellectual progress, which reveals itself in the growth of art and science and the spread of more liberal views, cannot be dissociated from industrial or economic progress, and that in its turn receives an immense impulse from conquest and empire. It is no mere accident that the most vehement outbursts of activity of the human mind have followed close on the heels of victory, and that the great conquering races of the world have commonly done most to advance and spread civilisation, thus healing in peace the wounds they inflicted in war. The Babylonians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Arabs are our witnesses in the past: we may yet live to see a similar outburst in Japan. Nor, to remount the stream of history to its sources, is it an accident that all the first great strides towards civilisation have been made under despotic and theocratic governments, like those of Egypt, Babylon, and Peru, where the supreme ruler claimed and received the servile allegiance of his subjects in the double character of a king and a god. It is hardly too much to say that at this early epoch despotism is the best friend of humanity and, paradoxical as it may sound, of liberty. For after all there is more liberty in the best sense—liberty to think our own thoughts and to fashion our own destinies—under the most absolute despotism, the most grinding tyranny, than under the apparent freedom of savage life, where the individual's lot is cast from the cradle to the grave in the iron mould of hereditary custom.

Benefits
rendered to
civilisation
by magic.

So far, therefore, as the public profession of magic has been one of the roads by which the ablest men have passed to supreme power, it has contributed to emancipate mankind

from the thralldom of tradition and to elevate them into a larger, freer life, with a broader outlook on the world. This is no small service rendered to humanity. And when we remember further that in another direction magic has paved the way for science, we are forced to admit that if the black art has done much evil, it has also been the source of much good ; that if it is the child of error, it has yet been the mother of freedom and truth.

CHAPTER IV

MAGIC AND RELIGION

• Magic like science postulates the order and uniformity of nature; hence the attraction both of magic and of science, which open up a boundless vista to those who can penetrate to the secret springs of nature.

THE examples collected in the last chapter may suffice to illustrate the general principles of sympathetic magic in its two branches, to which we have given the names of Homoeopathic and Contagious respectively. In some cases of magic which have come before us we have seen that the operation of spirits is assumed, and that an attempt is made to win their favour by prayer and sacrifice. But these cases are on the whole exceptional; they exhibit magic tinged and alloyed with religion.¹ Wherever sympathetic magic occurs in its pure unadulterated form, it assumes that in nature one event follows another necessarily and invariably without the intervention of any spiritual or personal agency. Thus its fundamental conception is identical with that of modern science; underlying the whole system is a faith, implicit but real and firm, in the order and uniformity of nature. The magician does not doubt that the same causes will always produce the same effects, that the performance of the proper ceremony, accompanied by the appropriate spell, will inevitably be attended by the desired results, unless, indeed, his incantations should chance to be thwarted and foiled by the more potent charms of another sorcerer. He supplicates no higher power: he sues the favour of no fickle and wayward

¹ Malay magic in particular is deeply tinctured with a belief in spirits, to whom the magician appeals by kindly words and small gifts of food, drink, and even money. See R. J. Wilkinson, *Malay Beliefs* (London and Leyden,

1906), pp. 67 *seq.* Here, therefore, religion is encroaching on magic, as it might naturally be expected to do in a race so comparatively advanced as the Malays.

being: he abases himself before no awful deity. Yet his power, great as he believes it to be, is by no means arbitrary and unlimited. He can wield it only so long as he strictly conforms to the rules of his art, or to what may be called the laws of nature as conceived by him. To neglect these rules, to break these laws in the smallest particular is to incur failure, and may even expose the unskilful practitioner himself to the utmost peril. If he claims a sovereignty over nature, it is a constitutional sovereignty rigorously limited in its scope and exercised in exact conformity with ancient usage. Thus the analogy between the magical and the scientific conceptions of the world is close. In both of them the succession of events is perfectly regular and certain, being determined by immutable laws, the operation of which can be foreseen and calculated precisely; the elements of caprice, of chance, and of accident are banished from the course of nature. Both of them open up a seemingly boundless vista of possibilities to him who knows the causes of things and can touch the secret springs that set in motion the vast and intricate mechanism of the world. Hence the strong attraction which magic and science alike have exercised on the human mind; hence the powerful stimulus that both have given to the pursuit of knowledge. They lure the weary enquirer, the footsore seeker, on through the wilderness of disappointment in the present by their endless promises of the future: they take him up to the top of an exceeding high mountain and shew him, beyond the dark clouds and rolling mists at his feet, a vision of the celestial city, far off, it may be, but radiant with unearthly splendour, bathed in the light of dreams.

The fatal flaw of magic lies not in its general assumption of a sequence of events determined by law, but in its total misconception of the nature of the particular laws which govern that sequence. If we analyse the various cases of sympathetic magic which have been passed in review in the preceding pages, and which may be taken as samples of the bulk, we shall find, as I have already indicated, that they are all mistaken applications or other of two great fundamental laws of thought the association of ideas by similarity and t

The fatal flaw of magic lies not in its general assumption

sequence
of natural
events.

tion of ideas by contiguity in space or time. A mistaken association of similar ideas produces homoeopathic or imitative magic: a mistaken association of contiguous ideas produces contagious magic. The principles of association are excellent in themselves, and indeed absolutely essential to the working of the human mind. Legitimately applied they yield science; illegitimately applied they yield magic, the bastard sister of science. It is therefore a truism, almost a tautology, to say that all magic is necessarily false and barren; for were it ever to become true and fruitful, it would no longer be magic but science. From the earliest times man has been engaged in a search for general rules whereby to turn the order of natural phenomena to his own advantage, and in the long search he has scraped together a great hoard of such maxims, some of them golden and some of them mere dross. The true or golden rules constitute the body of applied science which we call the arts; the false are magic.

Relation
of magic
to religion.

If magic is thus next of kin to science, we have still to enquire how it stands related to religion. But the view we take of that relation will necessarily be coloured by the idea which we have formed of the nature of religion itself; hence a writer may reasonably be expected to define his conception of religion before he proceeds to investigate its relation to magic. There is probably no subject in the world about which opinions differ so much as the nature of religion, and to frame a definition of it which would satisfy every one must obviously be impossible. All that a writer can do is, first, to say clearly what he means by religion, and afterwards to employ the word consistently in that sense throughout his work. ✓ By religion, then, I understand a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life.¹

Religion
defined:
it is a pro-
pitiation or
concilia-
tion of
super-
human
powers

Thus defined, religion consists of two elements, a theoretical
¹ a practical, namely, a belief in powers higher than man
 an attempt to propitiate or please them. Of the two,
 clearly comes first, since we must believe in the
 of a divine being before we can attempt to please

¹, *quae superioris cuius- curam caerimoniamque adfert*," Cicero,
in divinam vocant, De inventione, ii. 161.

him. But unless the belief leads to a corresponding practice, it is not a religion but merely a theology; in the language of St. James, "faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."¹ In other words, no man is religious who does not govern his conduct in some measure by the fear or love of God.² On the other hand, mere practice, divested of all religious belief, is also not religion. Two men may behave in exactly the same way, and yet one of them may be religious and the other not. If the one acts from the love or fear of God, he is religious; if the other acts from the love or fear of man, he is moral or immoral according as his behaviour comports or conflicts with the general good. Hence belief and practice or, in theological language, faith and works are equally essential to religion, which cannot exist without both of them. But it is not necessary that religious practice should always take the form of a ritual; that is, it need not consist in the offering of sacrifice, the recitation of prayers, and other outward ceremonies. Its aim is to please the deity, and if the deity is one who delights in charity and mercy and purity more than in oblations of blood, the chanting of hymns, and the fumes of incense, his worshippers will best please him, not by prostrating themselves before him, by intoning his praises, and by filling his temples with costly gifts, but by being pure and merciful and charitable towards men, for in so doing they will imitate, so far as human infirmity allows, the perfections of the divine nature. It was this ethical side of religion which the Hebrew prophets, inspired with a noble ideal of God's goodness and holiness, were never weary of inculcating. Thus Micah says:³ "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" And at a later time much of the force by which

¹ James ii. 17.

² "Piety is not a religion, though it is the soul of all religions. A man has not a religion simply by having pious inclinations, any more than he has a country simply by having philanthropy. A man has not a country until he is a citizen in a state, until he undertakes to follow and uphold certain laws, to

obey certain magistrates, and to adopt certain ways of living and acting. Religion is neither a theology nor a theosophy; it is more than all this; it is a discipline, a law, a yoke, an indissoluble engagement" (Joubert, quoted by Matthew Arnold, *Essays in Criticism*, First Series, London, 1898, p. 288).

³ Micah vi. 8.

Christianity conquered the world was drawn from the same high conception of God's moral nature and the duty laid on men of conforming themselves to it. "Pure religion and undefiled," says St. James, "before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."¹

By assuming the order of nature to be elastic or variable religion is opposed in principle alike to magic and to science, both of which assume the order of nature to be rigid and invariable.

But if religion involves, first, a belief in superhuman beings who rule the world, and, second, an attempt to win their favour, it clearly assumes that the course of nature is to some extent elastic or variable, and that we can persuade or induce the mighty beings who control it to deflect, for our benefit, the current of events from the channel in which they would otherwise flow. Now this implied elasticity or variability of nature is directly opposed to the principles of magic as well as of science, both of which assume that the processes of nature are rigid and invariable in their operation, and that they can as little be turned from their course by persuasion and entreaty as by threats and intimidation. The distinction between the two conflicting views of the universe turns on their answer to the crucial question, Are the forces which govern the world conscious and personal, or unconscious and impersonal? Religion, as a conciliation of the superhuman powers, assumes the former member of the alternative. For all conciliation implies that the being conciliated is a conscious or personal agent, that his conduct is in some measure uncertain, and that he can be prevailed upon to vary it in the desired direction by a judicious appeal to his interests, his appetites, or his emotions. Conciliation is never employed towards things which are regarded as inanimate, nor towards persons whose behaviour in the particular circumstances is known to be determined with absolute certainty. Thus in so far as religion assumes the world to be directed by conscious agents who may be turned from their purpose by persuasion, it stands in fundamental antagonism to magic as well as to science, both of which take for granted that the course of nature is determined, not by the passions or caprice of personal beings, but by the operation of immutable laws acting mechanically.² In

¹ James i. 27.

² The opposition of principle be-

tween magic and religion is well brought out by Sir A. C. Lyall in his

magic, indeed, the assumption is only implicit, but in science it is explicit. It is true that magic often deals with spirits, which are personal agents of the kind assumed by religion; but whenever it does so in its proper form, it treats them exactly in the same fashion as it treats inanimate agents, that is, it constrains or coerces instead of conciliating or propitiating them as religion would do. Thus it assumes that all personal beings, whether human or divine, are in the last resort, subject to those impersonal forces which control all things, but which nevertheless can be turned to account by any one who knows how to manipulate them by the appropriate ceremonies and spells. In ancient Egypt, for example, the magicians claimed the power of compelling even the highest gods to do their bidding, and actually threatened them with destruction in case of disobedience.¹ Sometimes, without going quite so far as that, the wizard declared that he would scatter the bones of Osiris or reveal his sacred legend, if the god proved contumacious.² Similarly in India at the present day the great Hindoo trinity itself of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva is subject to the sorcerers, who, by means of their spells, exercise such an ascendancy over the mightiest deities, that these are bound submissively to execute on earth below, or in heaven above, whatever commands their masters the magicians may please to issue.³ There is a saying everywhere current in

Claim of
Egyptian
and Indian
magicians
to control
the gods.

Asiatic Studies, First Series (London, 1899), i. 99 sqq. It is also insisted on by Mr. F. B. Jevons in his *Introduction to the History of Religion* (London, 1896). The distinction is clearly apprehended and sharply maintained by Professor H. Oldenberg in his notable book *Die Religion des Veda* (Berlin, 1894); see especially pp. 58 sq., 311 sqq., 476 sqq. Lord Avebury has courteously pointed out to me that the fundamental difference between magic and religion was dwelt on by him many years ago. See his *Origin of Civilisation* (London, 1870), pp. 116, 164 sq., and the Preface to the sixth edition of that work (London, 1902), p. vi. I am glad to find myself in agreement with Lord Avebury on this subject, and only regret that in preparing my second

edition I was unaware that the view here taken has the support of his high authority. When I wrote this book originally I failed to realise the extent of the opposition between magic and religion, because I had not formed a clear general conception of the nature of religion, and was disposed to class magic loosely under it.

¹ A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Ägypter* (Münster i. W., 1890), pp. 142-145, 148; G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines* (Paris, 1895), pp. 212 sq.

² Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, x. 11, quoting Porphyry.

³ J. A. Dubois, *Mœurs, institutions et cérémonies des peuples de l'Inde* (Paris, 1825), ii. 66 sqq.

India : "The whole universe is subject to the gods*, the gods are subject to the spells (*mantras*); the spells to the Brahmins; therefore the Brahmins are our gods."¹

Hostility of religion to magic in history.

This radical conflict of principle between magic and religion sufficiently explains the relentless hostility with which in history the priest has often pursued the magician. The haughty self-sufficiency of the magician, his arrogant demeanour towards the higher powers, and his unabashed claim to exercise a sway like theirs could not but revolt the priest, to whom, with his awful sense of the divine majesty, and his humble prostration in presence of it, such claims and such a demeanour must have appeared an impious and blasphemous usurpation of prerogatives that belong to God alone. And sometimes, we may suspect, lower motives concurred to whet the edge of the priest's hostility. He professed to be the proper medium, the true intercessor between God and man, and no doubt his interests as well as his feelings were often injured by a rival practitioner, who preached a surer and smoother road to fortune than the rugged and slippery path of divine favour.

This hostility comparatively late: at an earlier time magic co-operated, and was partly confused, with religion.

Yet this antagonism, familiar as it is to us, seems to have made its appearance comparatively late in the history of religion. At an earlier stage² the functions of priest and sorcerer were often combined or, to speak perhaps more correctly, were not yet differentiated from each other. To serve his purpose man wooed the good-will of gods or spirits by prayer and sacrifice, while at the same time he had recourse to ceremonies and forms of words which he hoped would of themselves bring about the desired result without the help of god or devil. In short, he performed religious and magical rites simultaneously; he uttered prayers and incantations almost in the same breath, knowing or

¹ Monier Williams, *Religious Thought and Life in India* (London, 1883), pp. 201 sq.

² To prevent misconception I would ask the reader to observe that the earlier stage here spoken of, in which magic is confused with religion, is not, in my opinion, the earliest of all, having been preceded by a still earlier stage in which magic existed alone. See below, pp. 233 sqq. On

my view, the evolution of thought on this subject has passed through three stages: first, a stage in which magic existed without religion; second, a stage in which religion, having arisen, co-operated, and was to some extent confused, with magic;³ and third, a stage in which, the radical difference of principle between the two having been recognised, their relation was that of open hostility.

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

Confusion
of magic
and
religion in
Melanesia.

¹ See above, pp. 72, 77 sq., 130, 153 sq.

to son, from uncle to sister's son, in the same way as is the knowledge of the rites and methods of sacrifice and prayer; and very often the same man who knows the sacrifice knows also the making of the weather, and of charms for many purposes besides. But as there is no order of priests, there is also no order of magicians or medicine-men. Almost every man of consideration knows how to approach some ghost or spirit, and has some secret of occult practices."¹

Confusion
of magic
and
religion in
ancient
India.

The same confusion of magic and religion has survived among peoples that have risen to higher levels of culture. It was rife in ancient India and ancient Egypt; it is by no means extinct among European peasantry at the present day. With regard to ancient India we are told by an eminent Sanscrit scholar that "the sacrificial ritual at the earliest period of which we have detailed information is pervaded with practices that breathe the spirit of the most primitive magic."² Again, the same writer observes that "the ritual of the very sacrifices for which the metrical prayers were composed is described in the other Vedic texts as saturated from beginning to end with magical practices which were to be carried out by the sacrificial priests." In particular he tells us that the rites celebrated on special occasions, such as marriage, initiation, and the anointment of a king, "are complete models of magic of every kind, and in every case the forms of magic employed bear the stamp of the highest antiquity."³ Speaking of the sacrifices prescribed in the *Brâhmanas*, Professor Sylvain Lévi says: "The sacrifice has thus all the characteristics of a magical operation, independent of the divinities, effective by its own energy, and capable of producing evil as well as good. It is hardly distinguished from magic strictly so called, except by being regular and obligatory; it can easily be adapted

¹ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, pp. 191 sq. The word *mana* is Polynesian as well as Melanesian. In the Maori language it means "authority," especially "supernatural power," "divine authority," "having qualities which ordinary persons or things do not possess." See E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary* (Wellington, N.Z., 1891), p. 203. Compare R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Māui*,

or *New Zealand and its Inhabitants*,³ p. 184, "the *mana*, virtue of the god."

² H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 59.

³ H. Oldenberg, *op. cit.* p. 477. For particular examples of the blending of magical with religious ritual in ancient India see pp. 311 sqq., 369 sq., 476 sqq., 522 sq. of the same work.

to different objects, but it exists of necessity, independently of circumstances. That is the sole fairly clear line of distinction which can be drawn between the two domains ; in point of fact they are so intimately interfused with each other that the same class of works treats of both matters. The *Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa* is a real handbook of incantations and sorcery ; the *Adbhūta Brāhmaṇa*, which forms a section of the *Śaḍvimṣa Brāhmaṇa*, has the same character.”¹ Similarly Professor M. Bloomfield writes : “ Even witchcraft is part of the religion ; it has penetrated and has become intimately blended with the holiest Vedic rites ; the broad current of popular religion and superstition has infiltrated itself through numberless channels into the higher religion that is presented by the Brahman priests, and it may be presumed that the priests were neither able to cleanse their own religious beliefs from the mass of folk-belief with which it was surrounded, nor is it at all likely that they found it in their interest to do so.”² Again, in the introduction to his translation of the *Kausika Sūtra*, Dr. W. Caland observes : “ He who has been wont to regard the ancient Hindoos as a highly civilised people, famed for their philosophical systems, their dramatic poetry, their epic lays, will be surprised when he makes the acquaintance of their magical ritual, and will perceive that hitherto he has known the old Hindoo people from one side only. He will find that he here stumbles on the lowest strata of Vedic culture, and will be astonished at the agreement between the magic ritual of the old Vedas and the shamanism of the so-called savage. If we drop the peculiar Hindoo expressions and technical terms, and imagine a shaman instead of a Brahman, we could almost fancy that we have before us a magical book belonging to one of the tribes of North American redskins.”³ Some good authorities hold that the very name of Brahman is derived from *brahman*, “ a magical spell ” ; so that, if they are right, the Brahman would seem to have ✓ been a magician before he was a priest.⁴

¹ S. Lévi, *La Doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brāhmaṇas* (Paris, 1898), p. 129.

² M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda*, pp. xlv. sq. (*Sacred*

Books of the East, vol. xlii.).

³ W. Caland, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p. ix.

⁴ O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Altertumskunde* (Stra-

Confusion
of magic
and
religion in
ancient
Egypt.

Speaking of the importance of magic in the East, and especially in Egypt, Professor Maspero remarks that "we ought not to attach to the word magic the degrading idea which it almost inevitably calls up in the mind of a modern. Ancient magic was the very foundation of religion. The faithful who desired to obtain some favour from a god had no chance of succeeding except by laying hands on the deity, and this arrest could only be effected by means of a certain number of rites, sacrifices, prayers, and chants, which the god himself had revealed, and which obliged him to do what was demanded of him."¹ According to another distinguished Egyptologist "the belief that there are words and actions by which man can influence all the powers of nature and all living things, from animals up to gods, was inextricably interwoven with everything the Egyptians did and everything they left undone. Above all, the whole system of burial and of the worship of the dead is completely dominated by it. The wooden puppets which relieved the dead man from toil, the figures of the maid-servants who baked bread for him, the sacrificial formulas by the recitation of which food was procured for him, what are these and all the similar practices but magic? And as men cannot help themselves without magic, so neither can the gods; the gods also wear amulets to protect themselves, and use magic spells to constrain each other."² "The whole doctrine of magic," says Professor Wiedemann, "formed in the valley of the Nile, not a part of superstition, but an essential constituent of religious faith, which to a

burg, 1901), pp. 637 sq. In ancient Arabia the *kāhin* (etymologically equivalent to the Hebrew *kōhen*, "priest") seems to have been rather a sooth-sayer than a priest. See J. Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums*³ (Berlin, 1897), pp. 134, 143. The confusion of magic with religion, of spell with prayer, may also be detected in the incantations employed by Toda sorcerers at the present day. See W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas*, pp. 272 q. : "The formulae of magic and of the dairy ritual are of the same nature, though the differentiation between the sorcerer and the priest who

use them is even clearer than that between the sorcerer and the medicine-man. It is probable that the names of the gods with the characteristic formulae of the prayer are later additions to the magical incantation; that at some time the sorcerer has added the names of the most important of his deities to the spells and charms which at one time were thought to be sufficient for his purpose."

¹ G. Maspero, *Études de mythologie et d'archéologie égyptienne* (Paris, 1893), i. 101.

² A. Erman, *Ägypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, p. 471.

great extent rested directly on magic, and always remained most closely bound up with it."¹ But though we can perceive the union of discrepant elements in the faith and practice of the ancient Egyptians, it would be rash to assume that the people themselves did so. "Egyptian religion," says the same scholar, "was not one and homogeneous; it was compounded of the most heterogeneous elements, which seemed to the Egyptian to be all equally justified. He did not care whether a doctrine or a myth belonged to what, in modern scholastic phraseology, we should call faith or superstition; it was indifferent to him whether we should rank it as religion or magic, as worship or sorcery. All such classifications were foreign to the Egyptian. To him no one doctrine seemed more or less justified than another. Nay, he went so far as to allow the most flagrant contradictions to stand peaceably side by side."²

Among the ignorant classes of modern Europe the same confusion of ideas, the same mixture of religion and magic, crops up in various forms. Thus we are told that in France "the majority of the peasants still believe that the priest possesses a secret and irresistible power over the elements. By reciting certain prayers which he alone knows and has the right to utter, yet for the utterance of which he must afterwards demand absolution, he can, on an occasion of pressing danger, arrest or reverse for a moment the action of the eternal laws of the physical world. The winds, the storms, the hail, and the rain are at his command and obey his will. The fire also is subject to him, and the flames of a conflagration are extinguished at his word."³ For example, French peasants used to be, perhaps are still, persuaded that the priests could celebrate, with certain special rites, a "Mass of the Holy Spirit," of which the efficacy was so miraculous that it never met with any opposition from the divine will;

Confusion
of magic
and
religion in
modern
Europe.

Mass of
the Holy
Spirit.

¹ A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Ägypten* (Münster i. W., 1890), p. 154.

² A. Wiedemann, "Ein altägyptischer Welterschöpfungsmythus," *Am Urquell*, N.F. II. (1898) pp. 95 sq.

³ J. Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand* (Condé-sur-Noireau, 1883-

1887), II. 78. In Beauce and Perche it was especially conflagrations caused by lightning which the priest was supposed to extinguish by the recitation of certain secret formulas. There was a regular expression for this procedure, namely, "barring the fire." See F. Chapuisseau, *Le Folk-lore de la Beauce et du Perche*, I. 216. 1883).

God was forced to grant whatever was asked of Him in this form, however rash and importunate might be the petition. No idea of impiety or irreverence attached to the rite in the minds of those who, in some of the great extremities of life, sought by this singular means to take the kingdom of heaven by storm. The secular priests generally refused to say the "Mass of the Holy Spirit"; but the monks, especially the Capuchin friars, had the reputation of yielding with less scruple to the entreaties of the anxious and distressed.¹ In the constraint thus supposed by Catholic peasantry to be laid by the priest upon the deity we seem to have an exact counterpart of the power which, as we saw, the ancient Egyptians ascribed to their magicians.² Again, to take another example, in many villages of Provence the priest is still reputed to possess the faculty of averting storms. It is not every priest who enjoys this reputation; and in some villages, when a change of pastors takes place, the parishioners are eager to learn whether the new incumbent has the power (*pouder*), as they call it. At the first sign of a heavy storm they put him to the proof by inviting him to exorcise the threatening clouds; and if the result answers to their hopes, the new shepherd is assured of the sympathy and respect of his flock. In some parishes, where the reputation of the curate in this respect stood higher than that of his rector, the relations between the two have been so strained in consequence that the bishop has had to translate the rector to another benefice.³ Again, Gascon peasants believe that to revenge themselves on their enemies bad men will sometimes induce a priest to say a mass called the Mass of Saint Sécaire. Very few priests know this mass, and three-fourths of those who do know it would not say it for love or money. None but wicked priests dare to perform the gruesome ceremony, and you may be quite sure that they will have a very heavy account to render for it at the last day. No curate or bishop, not even the archbishop of

Mass of
Saint
Sécaire.

¹ Amélie Bosquet, *La Normandie romanesque et merveilleuse* (Paris and Rouen, 1845), p. 308.

² See above, p. 225.

³ J. B. Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances* (Paris, 1896),

i. 455 sq., iii. 217 sq., 222 sqq. Compare *id.*, *Reminiscences populaires de la Provence* (Paris, 1885), pp. 288 sqq.; D. Monnier, *Traditions populaires comparées* (Paris, 1854), pp. 31 sqq.

Auch, can pardon them ; that right belongs to the pope of Rome alone. The Mass of Saint Sécaire may be said only in a ruined or deserted church, where owls mope and hoot, where bats flit in the gloaming, where gypsies lodge of nights, and where toads squat under the desecrated altar. Thither the bad priest comes by night with his light o' love, and at the first stroke of eleven he begins to mumble the mass backwards, and ends just as the clocks are knelling the midnight hour. His leman acts as clerk. The host he blesses is black and has three points ; he consecrates no wine, but instead he drinks the water of a well into which the body of an unbaptized infant has been flung. He makes the sign of the cross, but it is on the ground and with his left foot. And many other things he does which no good Christian could look upon without being struck blind and deaf and dumb for the rest of his life. But the man for whom the mass is said withers away little by little, and nobody can say what is the matter with him ; even the doctors can make nothing of it. They do not know that he is slowly dying of the Mass of Saint Sécaire.¹

Yet though magic is thus found to fuse and amalgamate with religion in many ages and in many lands, there are some grounds for thinking that this fusion is not primitive, and that there was a time when man trusted to magic alone for the satisfaction of such wants as transcended his immediate animal cravings. In the first place a consideration of the fundamental notions of magic and religion may incline us to surmise that magic is older than religion in the history of humanity. We have seen that on the one hand magic is nothing but a mistaken application of the very simplest and most elementary processes of the mind, namely the association of ideas by virtue of resemblance or contiguity ; and that on the other hand religion assumes the operation of conscious or personal agents, superior to man, behind the visible screen of nature. Obviously the conception of personal agents is more complex than a simple recognition of the similarity or contiguity of ideas ; and a theory which assumes that the course of nature is determined by conscious

The early confusion of magic with religion was probably preceded by a still earlier phase of thought, when magic existed without religion.

¹ J. F. Bladé, *Quatorze superstitions populaires de la Gascogne* (Agen, 1883), pp. 16 sq.

agents is more abstruse and recondite, and requires for its apprehension a far higher degree of intelligence and reflection, than the view that things succeed each other simply by reason of their contiguity or resemblance. The very beasts associate the ideas of things that are like each other or that have been found together in their experience; and they could hardly survive for a day if they ceased to do so. But who attributes to the animals a belief that the phenomena of nature are worked by a multitude of invisible animals or by one enormous and prodigiously strong animal behind the scenes? It is probably no injustice to the brutes to assume that the honour of devising a theory of this latter sort must be reserved for human reason. Thus, if magic be deduced immediately from elementary processes of reasoning, and be, in fact, an error into which the mind falls almost spontaneously, while religion rests on conceptions which the merely animal intelligence can hardly be supposed to have yet attained to, it becomes probable that magic arose before religion in the evolution of our race, and that man essayed to bend nature to his wishes by the sheer force of spells and enchantments before he strove to coax and mollify a coy, capricious, or irascible deity by the soft insinuation of prayer and sacrifice.

Among the Australian aborigines magic is universal, but religion almost unknown.

The conclusion which we have thus reached deductively from a consideration of the fundamental ideas of religion and magic is confirmed inductively by the observation that among the aborigines of Australia, the rudest savages as to whom we possess accurate information, magic is universally practised, whereas religion in the sense of a propitiation or conciliation of the higher powers seems to be nearly unknown. Roughly speaking, all men in Australia are magicians, but not one is a priest; everybody fancies he can influence his fellows or the course of nature by sympathetic magic, but nobody dreams of propitiating gods by prayer and sacrifice.¹

Magic is probably older than religion, and faith in it is still universal

But if in the most backward state of human society now known to us we find magic thus conspicuously present and religion conspicuously absent, may we not reasonably conjecture that the civilised races of the world have also at some period of their history passed through a similar in-

¹ For the evidence see my *Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. i. pp. 341-399.

tellectual phase, that they attempted to force the great powers of nature to do their pleasure before they thought of courting their favour by offerings and prayer—in short that, just as on the material side of human culture there has everywhere been an Age of Stone, so on the intellectual side there has everywhere been an Age of Magic?¹ There are reasons for answering this question in the affirmative. When we survey the existing races of mankind from Greenland to Tierra del Fuego, or from Scotland to Singapore, we observe that they are distinguished one from the other by a great variety of religions, and that these distinctions are not, so to speak, merely coterminous with the broad distinctions of race, but descend into the minuter subdivisions of states and commonwealths, nay, that they honeycomb the town, the village, and even the family, so that the surface of society all over the world is cracked and seamed, sapped and mined with rents and fissures and yawning crevasses opened up by the disintegrating influence of religious dissension. Yet when we have penetrated through these differences, which affect mainly the intelligent and thoughtful part of the community, we shall find underlying them all a solid stratum of intellectual agreement among the dull, the weak, the ignorant, and the superstitious, who constitute, unfortunately, the vast majority of mankind. One of the great achievements of the nineteenth century was to run shafts down into this low mental stratum in many parts of the world, and thus to discover its substantial identity everywhere. It is beneath our feet—and not very far beneath them—here in Europe at the present day, and it crops up on the surface in the heart of the Australian wilderness and wherever the advent of a higher civilisation has not crushed it under ground. This universal faith, this truly Catholic creed, is a belief in the

¹ The suggestion has been made by Prof. H. Oldenberg (*Die Religion des Veda*, p. 59), who seems, however, to regard a belief in spirits as part of the raw material of magic. If the view which I have put forward tentatively is correct, faith in magic is probably older than a belief in spirits. The same view as to the priority of magic

to religion, and apparently also as to the absence of spirits from primitive magic, was held by Hegel. It was not until long after the discussion in the text had been written that I became aware that my conclusions had been to a large extent anticipated by the German philosopher. See Appendix at the end of this volume.

efficacy of magic. While religious systems differ not only in different countries, but in the same country in different ages, the system of sympathetic magic remains everywhere and at all times substantially alike in its principles and practice. Among the ignorant and superstitious classes of modern Europe it is very much what it was thousands of years ago in Egypt and India, and what it now is among the lowest savages surviving in the remotest corners of the world. If the test of truth lay in a show of hands or a counting of heads, the system of magic might appeal, with far more reason than the Catholic Church, to the proud motto, "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*," as the sure and certain credential of its own infallibility.

Latent
superstition
a danger to
civilisation.

It is not our business here to consider what bearing the permanent existence of such a solid layer of savagery beneath the surface of society, and unaffected by the superficial changes of religion and culture, has upon the future of humanity. The dispassionate observer, whose studies have led him to plumb its depths, can hardly regard it otherwise than as a standing menace to civilisation.¹ We seem to move on a thin crust which may at any moment be rent by the subterranean forces slumbering below. From time to time a hollow murmur underground or a sudden spurt of flame into the air tells of what is going on beneath our feet. Now and then the polite world is startled by a paragraph in a newspaper which tells how in Scotland an image has been found stuck full of pins for the purpose of killing an obnoxious laird or minister, how a woman has been slowly roasted to death as a witch in Ireland, or how a girl has been murdered and chopped up in Russia to make those candles of human tallow by whose light thieves hope to pursue their midnight trade unseen.² But whether the influences that make for further progress, or those that threaten to undo what has already been accomplished, will

¹ After a visit to the ruined Greek temples of Paestum, whose beauty and splendour impressed him all the more by contrast with the savagery of the surrounding peasantry, Renan wrote: "*J'ai tremblé pour la civilisation, en la voyant si limitée, assise sur une faible assiette, reposant sur si peu d'individus*

dans le pays même où elle est régnante." See E. Renan et M. Berthelot, *Correspondance* (Paris, 1898), pp. 75 sq.

² See above, pp. 68 sq.; "The Witch-burning at Clonmel," *Folklore*, vi, (1895) pp. 373-384; F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Slawen*, pp. 144 sqq.

ultimately prevail; whether the impulsive energy of the minority or the dead weight of the majority of mankind will prove the stronger force to carry us up to higher heights or to sink us into lower depths, are questions rather for the sage, the moralist, and the statesman, whose eagle vision scans the future, than for the humble student of the present and the past. Here we are only concerned to ask how far the uniformity, the universality, and the permanence of a belief in magic, compared with the endless variety and the shifting character of religious creeds, raises a presumption that the former represents a ruder and earlier phase of the human mind, through which all the races of mankind have passed or are passing on their way to religion and science.

If an Age of Religion has thus everywhere, as I venture to surmise, been preceded by an Age of Magic, it is natural that we should enquire what causes have led mankind, or rather a portion of them, to abandon magic as a principle of faith and practice and to betake themselves to religion instead. When we reflect upon the multitude, the variety, and the complexity of the facts to be explained, and the scantiness of our information regarding them, we shall be ready to acknowledge that a full and satisfactory solution of so profound a problem is hardly to be hoped for, and that the most we can do in the present state of our knowledge is to hazard a more or less plausible conjecture. With all due diffidence, then, I would suggest that a tardy recognition of the inherent falsehood and barrenness of magic set the more thoughtful part of mankind to cast about for a truer theory of nature and a more fruitful method of turning her resources to account. The shrewder intelligences must in time have come to perceive that magical ceremonies and incantations did not really effect the results which they were designed to produce, and which the majority of their simpler fellows still believed that they did actually produce. This great discovery of the inefficacy of magic must have wrought a radical though probably slow revolution in the minds of those who had the sagacity to make it. The discovery amounted to this, that men for the first time recognised their inability to manipulate at pleasure certain natural forces which hitherto they had believed to be completely within

The change from magic to religion may have been brought about by the discovery of the inefficacy of magic.

their control. It was a confession of human ignorance and weakness. Man saw that he had taken for causes what were no causes, and that all his efforts to work by means of these imaginary causes had been vain. His painful toil had been wasted, his curious ingenuity had been squandered to no purpose. He had been pulling at strings to which nothing was attached ; he had been marching, as he thought, straight to the goal, while in reality he had only been treading in a narrow circle. Not that the effects which he had striven so hard to produce did not continue to manifest themselves. They were still produced, but not by him. The rain still fell on the thirsty ground : the sun still pursued his daily, and the moon her nightly journey across the sky : the silent procession of the seasons still moved in light and shadow, in cloud and sunshine across the earth : men were still born to labour and sorrow, and still, after a brief sojourn here, were gathered to their fathers in the long home hereafter. All things indeed went on as before, yet all seemed different to him from whose eyes the old scales had fallen. For he could no longer cherish the pleasing illusion that it was he who guided the earth and the heaven in their courses, and that they would cease to perform their great revolutions were he to take his feeble hand from the wheel. In the death of his enemies and his friends he no longer saw a proof of the resistless potency of his own or of hostile enchantments ; he now knew that friends and foes alike had succumbed to a force stronger than any that he could wield, and in obedience to a destiny which he was powerless to control.

Recognising their own inability to control nature, men came to think that it was controlled by supernatural beings.

Thus cut adrift from his ancient moorings and left to toss on a troubled sea of doubt and uncertainty, his old happy confidence in himself and his powers rudely shaken, our primitive philosopher must have been sadly perplexed and agitated till he came to rest, as in a quiet haven after a tempestuous voyage, in a new system of faith and practice, which seemed to offer a solution of his harassing doubts and a substitute, however precarious, for that sovereignty over nature which he had reluctantly abdicated. If the great world went on its way without the help of him or his fellows, it must surely be because there were other beings, like him-

self, but far stronger, who, unseen themselves, directed its course and brought about all the varied series of events which he had hitherto believed to be dependent on his own magic. It was they, as he now believed, and not he himself, who made the stormy wind to blow, the lightning to flash, and the thunder to roll; who had laid the foundations of the solid earth and set bounds to the restless sea that it might not pass; who caused all the glorious lights of heaven to shine; who gave the fowls of the air their meat and the wild beasts of the desert their prey; who bade the fruitful land to bring forth in abundance, the high hills to be clothed with forests, the bubbling springs to rise under the rocks in the valleys, and green pastures to grow by still waters; who breathed into man's nostrils and made him live, or turned him to destruction by famine and pestilence and war. To these mighty beings, whose handiwork he traced in all the gorgeous and varied pageantry of nature, man now addressed himself, humbly confessing his dependence on their invisible power, and beseeching them of their mercy to furnish him with all good things, to defend him from the perils and dangers by which our mortal life is compassed about on every hand, and finally to bring his immortal spirit, freed from the burden of the body, to some happier world, beyond the reach of pain and sorrow, where he might rest with them and with the spirits of good men in joy and felicity for ever.

In this, or some such way as this, the deeper minds may be conceived to have made the great transition from magic to religion. But even in them the change can hardly ever have been sudden; probably it proceeded very slowly, and required long ages for its more or less perfect accomplishment. For the recognition of man's powerlessness to influence the course of nature on a grand scale must have been gradual; he cannot have been shorn of the whole of his fancied dominion at a blow. Step by step he must have been driven back from his proud position; foot by foot he must have yielded, with a sigh, the ground which he had once viewed as his own. Now it would be the wind, now the rain, now the sunshine, now the thunder, that he confessed himself unable to wield at will; and as province after province of

The change
from magic
to religion
must have
been
gradual.

nature thus fell from his grasp, till what had once seemed a kingdom threatened to shrink into a prison, man must have been more and more profoundly impressed with a sense of his own helplessness and the might of the invisible beings by whom he believed himself to be surrounded. Thus religion, beginning as a slight and partial acknowledgment of powers superior to man, tends with the growth of knowledge to deepen into a confession of man's entire and absolute dependence on the divine; his old free bearing is exchanged for an attitude of lowliest prostration before the mysterious powers of the unseen, and his highest virtue is to submit his will to theirs: *In la sua volontade è nostra pace*. But this deepening sense of religion, this more perfect submission to the divine will in all things, affects only those higher intelligences who have breadth of view enough to comprehend the vastness of the universe and the littleness of man. Small minds cannot grasp great ideas; to their narrow comprehension, their purblind vision, nothing seems really great and important but themselves. Such minds hardly rise into religion at all. They are, indeed, drilled by their betters into an outward conformity with its precepts and a verbal profession of its tenets; but at heart they cling to their old magical superstitions, which may be discountenanced and forbidden, but cannot be eradicated by religion, so long as they have their roots deep down in the mental framework and constitution of the great majority of mankind.

The belief that the gods are magicians may mark the transition from magic to religion.

A vestige of the transition from magic to religion may perhaps be discerned in the belief, shared by many peoples, that the gods themselves are adepts in magic, guarding their persons by talismans and working their will by spells and incantations. Thus the Egyptian gods, we are told, could as little dispense with the help of magic as could men; like men they wore amulets to protect themselves, and used spells to overcome each other. Above all the rest Isis was skilled in sorcery and famous for her incantations.¹ In Babylonia the great god Ea was reputed to be the inventor of magic, and his son Marduk, the chief deity of Babylon, inherited the art from his father. Marduk is described as "the master of exorcism, the magician of the gods."

¹ A. Erman, *Ägypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, p. 471.

Another text declares that "the incantation is the incantation of Marduk, the exorcist is the image of Marduk."¹ In the legend of the creation it is related that when Marduk was preparing to fight the monster Tiamat he gave a proof of his magical powers to the assembled gods by causing a garment to disappear and reappear again at the word of his mouth. And the other Babylonian deities had in like manner recourse to magic, especially to magical words or spells. "The word is above all the instrument of the gods; it seems to suit the high conception of their power better than mere muscular effort; the hymns celebrate the irresistible might of their word; it is by their word that they compel both animate and inanimate beings to answer their purposes; in short, they employ almost exclusively the oral rites of magic." And like men they made use of amulets and talismans.² In the Vedic religion the gods are often represented as attaining their ends by magical means; in particular the god Bṛhaspati, "the creator of all prayers," is regarded as "the heavenly embodiment of the priesthood, in so far as the priesthood is invested with the power, and charged with the task, of influencing the course of things by prayers and spells"; in short, he is "the possessor of the magical power of the holy word."³ So too in Norse mythology Odin is said to have owed his supremacy and his dominion over nature to his knowledge of the runes or magical names of all things in earth and heaven. This mystical lore he acquired as follows. The runic names of all things were scratched on the things themselves, then scraped off and mixed in a magical potion, which was compounded of honey and the blood of the slain Kvasir, the wisest of beings. A draught of this wonderful mead imparted to Odin not only the wisdom of Kvasir, but also a knowledge of all things, since he had swallowed their runic or mystical names along with the blood of the sage.⁴

¹ C. Fossey, *La Magie Assyrienne* (Paris, 1902), pp. 123, 125.

² C. Fossey, *op. cit.* pp. 137-139. For the incident of the magical disappearance and reappearance of the garment, see P. Jensen, *Assyrisch-Babylonische Mythen und Epen* (Berlin, 1900), p. 23; R. F. Harper,

Assyrian and Babylonian Literature (New York, 1901), p. 291.

³ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, pp. 66-68, 514-517.

⁴ Fr. Kauffmann, *Balder, Mythos und Sage* (Strasburg, 1902), pp. 177-203. Compare J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 1024-1026.

Hence by the utterance of his spells he could heal sickness, deaden the swords of his enemies, loose himself from bonds, stop the flight of an arrow in mid-air, stay the raging of the flames, still the winds and lull the sea ; and by graving and painting certain runes he could make the corpse of a hanged man come down from the gallows-tree and talk with him.¹ It is easy to conceive how this ascription of magical powers to the gods may have originated. When a savage sorcerer fails to effect his purpose, he generally explains his want of success by saying that he has been foiled by the spells of some more potent magician. Now if it began to be perceived that certain natural effects, such as the making of rain or wind or sunshine, were beyond the power of any human magician to accomplish, the first thought would naturally be that they were wrought by the more powerful magic of some great invisible beings, and these superhuman magicians might readily develop into gods of the type of Odin, Isis, and Marduk. In short, many gods may at first have been merely deified sorcerers.

The fallacy of magic is not easy to detect, because nature herself generally produces, sooner or later, the effects which the magician fancies he produces by his art.

The reader may well be tempted to ask, How was it that intelligent men did not sooner detect the fallacy of magic? How could they continue to cherish expectations that were invariably doomed to disappointment? With what heart persist in playing venerable antics that led to nothing, and mumbling solemn balderdash that remained without effect? Why cling to beliefs which were so flatly contradicted by experience? How dare to repeat experiments that had failed so often? The answer seems to be that the fallacy was far from easy to detect, the failure by no means obvious, since in many, perhaps in most cases, the desired event did actually follow, at a longer or shorter interval, the performance of the rite which was designed to bring it about ; and a mind of more than common acuteness was needed to perceive that, even in these cases, the rite was not necessarily the cause of the event. A ceremony intended to make the wind blow or the rain fall, or to work the death of an enemy, will always be followed, sooner or later, by the occurrence it is meant to bring to pass ; and primitive man may be excused for regarding the occurrence as a direct result of the ceremony, and

¹ G. Vigfusson and F. York Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, i. 24 sqq.

the best possible proof of its efficacy. Similarly, rites observed in the morning to help the sun to rise, and in spring to wake the dreaming earth from her winter sleep, will invariably appear to be crowned with success, at least within the temperate zones; for in these regions the sun lights his golden lamp in the east every morning, and year by year the vernal earth decks herself afresh with a rich mantle of green. Hence the practical savage, with his conservative instincts, might well turn a deaf ear to the subtleties of the theoretical doubter, the philosophic radical, who presumed to hint that sunrise and spring might not, after all, be direct consequences of the punctual performance of certain daily or yearly ceremonies, and that the sun might perhaps continue to rise and trees to blossom though the ceremonies were occasionally intermitted, or even discontinued altogether. These sceptical doubts would naturally be repelled by the other with scorn and indignation as airy reveries subversive of the faith and manifestly contradicted by experience. "Can anything be plainer," he might say, "than that I light my twopenny candle on earth and that the sun then kindles his great fire in heaven? I should be glad to know whether, when I have put on my green robe in spring, the trees do not afterwards do the same? These are facts patent to everybody, and on them I take my stand. I am a plain practical man, not one of your theorists and splitters of hairs and choppers of logic. Theories and speculation and all that may be very well in their way, and I have not the least objection to your indulging in them, provided, of course, you do not put them in practice. But give me leave to stick to facts; then I know where I am." The fallacy of this reasoning is obvious to us, because it happens to deal with facts about which we have long made up our minds. But let an argument of precisely the same calibre be applied to matters which are still under debate, and it may be questioned whether a British audience would not applaud it as sound, and esteem the speaker who used it a safe man—not brilliant or showy, perhaps, but thoroughly sensible and hard-headed. If such reasonings could pass muster among ourselves, need we wonder that they long escaped detection by the savage?

CHAPTER V

THE MAGICAL CONTROL OF THE WEATHER

§ 1. *The Public Magician*

THE patient reader may remember that we were led to plunge into the labyrinth of magic, in which we have wandered for so many pages, by a consideration of two different types of man-god. This is the clue which has guided our devious steps through the maze, and brought us out at last on higher ground, whence, resting a little by the way, we can look back over the path we have already traversed and forward to the longer and steeper road we have still to climb.

Two types
of man-
god, the
religious
and the
magical.

As a result of the foregoing discussion, the two types of human gods may conveniently be distinguished as the religious and the magical man-god respectively. In the former, a being of an order different from and superior to man is supposed to become incarnate, for a longer or a shorter time, in a human body, manifesting his superhuman power and knowledge by miracles wrought and prophecies uttered through the medium of the fleshly tabernacle in which he has deigned to take up his abode. This may also appropriately be called the inspired or incarnate type of man-god. 'In it the human body is merely a frail earthly vessel filled with a divine and immortal spirit. On the other hand, a man-god of the magical sort is nothing but a man who possesses in an unusually high degree powers which most of his fellows arrogate to themselves on a smaller scale; for in rude society there is hardly a person who does not dabble in magic. Thus, whereas a man-god of the former or inspired type derives his divinity from a deity who has stooped to hide his heavenly radiance behind a dull mask of earthly mould, a

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

We have seen that in practice the magic art may be employed for the benefit either of individuals or of the whole community, and that according as it is directed to one or other of these two objects it may be called private or public magic.¹ Further, I pointed out that the public magician occupies a position of great influence, from which, if he is a prudent and able man, he may advance step by step to the rank of a chief or king. Thus an examination of public magic conduces to an understanding of the early kingship, since in savage and barbarous society many chiefs and kings appear to owe their authority in great measure to their reputation as magicians.

Among the objects of public utility which magic may be employed to secure, the most essential is an adequate supply of food. The examples cited in preceding pages prove that the purveyors of food—the hunter, the fisher, the farmer—all resort to magical practices in the pursuit of their various callings; but they do so as private individuals for the benefit of themselves and their families, rather than as public functionaries acting in the interest of the whole people. It is otherwise when the rites are performed, not by the hunters, the fishers, the farmers themselves, but by professional magicians on their behalf. In primitive society, where uniformity of occupation is the rule, and the distribution of the community into various classes of workers has hardly begun, every man is more or less his own magician; he practises charms and

Public and private magic: the public magician often a king.

The rise of a class of public or professional magicians is a great step in social and intellectual progress.

¹ See above, pp. 214 sq.

incantations for his own good and the injury of his enemies. But a great step in advance has been taken when a special class of magicians has been instituted ; when, in other words, a number of men have been set apart for the express purpose of benefiting the whole community by their skill, whether that skill be directed to the healing of diseases, the forecasting of the future, the regulation of the weather, or any other object of general utility. The impotence of the means adopted by most of these practitioners to accomplish their ends ought not to blind us to the immense importance of the institution itself. Here is a body of men relieved, at least in the higher stages of savagery, from the need of earning their livelihood by hard manual toil, and allowed, nay, expected and encouraged, to prosecute researches into the secret ways of nature. It was at once their duty and their interest to know more than their fellows, to acquaint themselves with everything that could aid man in his arduous struggle with nature, everything that could mitigate his sufferings and prolong his life. The properties of drugs and minerals, the causes of rain and drought, of thunder and lightning, the changes of the seasons, the phases of the moon, the daily and yearly journeys of the sun, the motions of the stars, the mystery of life, and the mystery of death, all these things must have excited the wonder of these early philosophers, and stimulated them to find solutions of problems that were doubtless often thrust on their attention in the most practical form by the importunate demands of their clients, who expected them not merely to understand but to regulate the great processes of nature for the good of man. That their first shots fell very far wide of the mark could hardly be helped. The slow, the never-ending approach to truth consists in perpetually forming and testing hypotheses, accepting those which at the time seem to fit the facts and rejecting the others. The views of natural causation embraced by the savage magician no doubt appear to us manifestly false and absurd ; yet in their day they were legitimate hypotheses, though they have not stood the test of experience. Ridicule and blame are the just meed, not of those who devised these crude theories, but of those who obstinately adhered to them after better had been propounded.

Certainly no men ever had stronger incentives in the pursuit of truth than these savage sorcerers. To maintain at least a show of knowledge was absolutely necessary ; a single mistake detected might cost them their life. This no doubt led them to practise imposture for the purpose of concealing their ignorance ; but it also supplied them with the most powerful motive for substituting a real for a sham knowledge, since, if you would appear to know anything, by far the best way is actually to know it. Thus, however justly we may reject the extravagant pretensions of magicians and condemn the deceptions which they have practised on mankind, the original institution of this class of men has, take it all in all, been productive of incalculable good to humanity. They were the direct predecessors, not merely of our physicians and surgeons, but of our investigators and discoverers in every branch of natural science. They began the work which has since been carried to such glorious and beneficent issues by their successors in after ages ; and if the beginning was poor and feeble, this is to be imputed to the inevitable difficulties which beset the path of knowledge rather than to the natural incapacity or wilful fraud of the men themselves.

§ 2. *The Magical Control of Rain*

Of the things which the public magician sets himself to do for the good of the tribe, one of the chief is to control the weather and especially to ensure an adequate fall of rain. Water is the first essential of life, and in most countries the supply of it depends upon showers. Without rain vegetation withers, animals and men languish and die. Hence in savage communities the rain-maker is a very important personage ; and often a special class of magicians exists for the purpose of regulating the heavenly water-supply. The methods by which they attempt to discharge the duties of their office are commonly, though not always, based on the principle of homoeopathic or imitative magic. If they wish to make rain they simulate it by sprinkling water or mimicking clouds : if their object is to stop rain and cause drought, they avoid water and resort to warmth and fire for the sake of drying up the too abundant moisture. Such attempts are by no means confined, as the cultivated reader might

One of the chief tasks which the public magician has to perform is to control the weather, and especially to ensure an adequate supply of rain. The method adopted by the rain-maker is commonly based on homoeopathic or imitative magic: he

seeks to
produce
rain by
imitating
it.

imagine, to the naked inhabitants of those sultry lands like Central Australia and some parts of Eastern and Southern Africa, where often for months together the pitiless sun beats down out of a blue and cloudless sky on the parched and gaping earth. They are, or used to be, common enough among outwardly civilised folk in the moister climate of Europe. I will now illustrate them by instances drawn from the practice both of public and private magic.

Examples
of making
rain by
homoeo-
pathic or
imitative
magic.

Thus, for example, in a village near Dorpat, in Russia, when rain was much wanted, three men used to climb up the fir-trees of an old sacred grove. One of them drummed with a hammer on a kettle or small cask to imitate thunder; the second knocked two fire-brands together and made the sparks fly, to imitate lightning; and the third, who was called "the rain-maker," had a bunch of twigs with which he sprinkled water from a vessel on all sides.¹ To put an end to drought and bring down rain, women and girls of the village of Ploska are wont to go naked by night to the boundaries of the village and there pour water on the ground.² In Halmahera, or Gilolo, a large island to the west of New Guinea, a wizard makes rain by dipping a branch of a particular kind of tree in water and then scattering the moisture from the dripping bough over the ground.³ In Ceram it is enough to dedicate the bark of a certain tree to the spirits, and lay it in water.⁴ A Javanese mode of making rain is to imitate the pattering sound of rain-drops by brushing a coco-nut leaf over the sheath of a betel-nut in a mortar.⁵ In New Britain the rain-maker wraps some leaves of a red and green striped creeper

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 342, note. The heathen Swedes appear to have mimicked thunder, perhaps as a rain-charm, by means of large bronze hammers, which they called Thor's hammers. See Saxo Grammaticus, *Historia Danica*, lib. xiii. p. 630, ed. P. E. Müller; Olaus Magnus, *Historia*, iii. 8.

² K. v. Bruchhausen, in *Globus*, lxxvi. (1899) p. 253. There seem to be two villages in Wallachia that bear the name of Ploska. The reference may be to one of them.

³ C. F. H. Campen, "De Godsdienstbegrippen der Halmaherasche Alfoeren," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxvii. (1882) p. 447.

⁴ J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 114.

⁵ G. A. J. Hazeu, "Kleine bijdragen tot de ethnografie en folklore van Java," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xlv. (1903) p. 298.

in a banana-leaf, moistens the bundle with water, and buries it in the ground; then he imitates with his mouth the plashing of rain.¹ Amongst the Omaha Indians of North America, when the corn is withering for want of rain, the members of the sacred Buffalo Society fill a large vessel with water and dance four times round it. One of them drinks some of the water and spirts it into the air, making a fine spray in imitation of a mist or drizzling rain. Then he upsets the vessel, spilling the water on the ground; whereupon the dancers fall down and drink up the water, getting mud all over their faces. Lastly, they squirt the water into the air, making a fine mist. This saves the corn.² In spring-time the Natchez of North America used to club together to purchase favourable weather for their crops from the wizards. If rain was needed, the wizards fasted and danced with pipes full of water in their mouths. The pipes were perforated like the nozzle of a watering-can, and through the holes the rain-maker blew the water towards that part of the sky where the clouds hung heaviest. But if fine weather was wanted, he mounted the roof of his hut, and with extended arms, blowing with all his might, he beckoned to the clouds to pass by.³ In time of drought the Tarahumares Indians of Mexico will sometimes throw water towards the sky in order that God may replenish his supply. And in the month of May they always burn the grass, so that the whole country is then wrapt in smoke and travelling becomes very difficult. They think that this is necessary to produce rain, clouds of smoke being, in their opinion, equivalent to rain-clouds.⁴ Among the Swazies and Hlubies of South-Eastern Africa the rain-doctor draws water from a river with various mystic ceremonies, and carries it into a cultivated field. Here he throws it in jets from his vessel high into the air, and the falling spray is believed to draw down the clouds and to make rain by sympathy.⁵ To squirt water

¹ R. Parkinson, *Im Bismarck Archipel*, p. 143. Compare Joachim Graf Pfeil, *Studien und Beobachtungen aus der Südde* (Brunswick, 1899), pp. 139 sq.

² J. Owen Dorsey, "Omaha Sociology," *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1884), p. 347. Compare Charlevoix,

Voyage dans l'Amérique septentrionale, ii. 187.

³ *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, Nouvelle Edition, vii. 29 sq.

⁴ C. Lamholtz, *Unknown Mexico* (London, 1903), i. 180, 330.

⁵ J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth* (London, 1893), p. 10.

Making
rain by
homoeo-
pathic or
imitative
magic.

from the mouth is a West African mode of making rain,¹ and it is practised also by the Wajaggas of Kilimanjaro.² Among the Wahuma, on the Albert Nyanza Lake, the rain-maker pours water into a vessel in which he has first placed a dark stone as large as the hand. Pounded plants and the blood of a black goat are added to the water, and with a bunch of magic herbs the sorcerer sprinkles the mixture towards the sky.³ In this charm special efficacy is no doubt attributed to the dark stone and the black goat, their colour being chosen from its resemblance to that of the rain-clouds, as we shall see presently. When the rains do not come in due season the people of Central Angoniland repair to what is called the rain-temple. Here they clear away the grass, and the leader pours beer into a pot which is buried in the ground, while he says, "Master *Chauta*, you have hardened your heart towards us, what would you have us do? We must perish indeed. Give your children the rains, there is the beer we have given you." Then they all partake of the beer that is left over, even the children being made to sip it. Next they take branches of trees and dance and sing for rain. When they return to the village they find a vessel of water set at the doorway by an old woman; so they dip their branches in it and wave them aloft, so as to scatter the drops. After that the rain is sure to come driving up in heavy clouds.⁴ In these practices we see a combination of religion with magic; for while the scattering of the water-drops by means of branches is a purely magical ceremony, the prayer for rain and the offering of beer are purely religious rites. At Takitount in Algeria, when the drought is severe, the people prepare a sacrificial banquet (*zerda*), in the course of which they dance, and filling their mouths with water spirt it into the air crying, "The rain and abundance!" Elsewhere in the course of these banquets it is customary for the same purpose to sprinkle water on children. At Tlemcen in time of drought water is thrown from terraces and windows on

¹ J. B. Labat, *Relation historique de l'Éthiopie occidentale*, ii. 180.

² M. Merker, *Rechtsverhältnisse und Sitten der Wadschagga* (Gotha, 1902), p. 34 (*Petermanns Mittheilungen*, Ergänzungsheft, No. 138).

³ Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), p. 588.

⁴ R. Sutherland Rattray, *Some Folklore Stories and Songs in Chinyanja* (London, 1907), pp. 118 sq.

small girls, who pass singing.¹ During the summer months frequent droughts occur among the Japanese alps. To procure rain a party of hunters armed with guns climb to the top of Mount Jonendake, one of the most imposing peaks in the range. By kindling a bonfire, discharging their guns, and rolling great masses of rocks down the cliffs, they represent the wished-for storm; and rain is supposed always to follow within a few days.² To make rain a party of Ainos will scatter water by means of sieves, while others will take a porringer, fit it up with sails and oars as if it were a boat, and then push or draw it about the village and gardens.³ In Laos the festival of the New Year takes place about the middle of April and lasts three days. The people assemble in the pagodas, which are decorated with flowers and illuminated. The Buddhist monks perform the ceremonies, and when they come to the prayers for the fertility of the earth the worshippers pour water into little holes in the floor of the pagoda as a symbol of the rain which they hope Buddha will send down on the rice-fields in due time.⁴ In the Mara tribe of Northern Australia the rain-maker goes to a pool and sings over it his magic song. Then he takes some of the water in his hands, drinks it, and spits it out in various directions. After that he throws water all over himself, scatters it about, and returns quietly to the camp. Rain is supposed to follow.⁵ In the Wotjobaluk tribe of Victoria the rain-maker dipped a bunch of his own hair in water, sucked out the water and squirted it westward, or he twirled

Making
rain by
homoeo-
pathic or
imitative
magic.

Use of
human
hair in
rain-

¹ E. Douité, *Magie et Religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, p. 583.

² W. Weston, in *The Geographical Journal*, vii. (1896) p. 143; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvi. (1897) p. 30; *id.*, *Mountaineering and Exploration in the Japanese Alps*, p. 161. The ceremony is not purely magical, for it is intended to attract the attention of the powerful spirit who has a small shrine on the top of the mountain.

³ J. Batchelor, *The Ainus and their Folklore* (London, 1901), p. 333. Some of the ancient processions with ships may perhaps have been rain-charms. See J. Grimm, *Deutsche*

Mythologie,⁴ i. 213-220; Pausanias, i. 29. 1, with my note.

⁴ Tournier, *Notice sur le Laos Français* (Hanoi, 1900), p. 80. In the temple of the Syrian goddess at Hierapolis on the Euphrates there was a chasm into which water was poured twice a year by people who assembled for the purpose from the whole of Syria and Arabia. See Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 12 sq. The ceremony was perhaps a rain-charm. Compare Pausanias, i. 18. 7, with my notes.

⁵ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 313 sq.

charms
among the
Australian
aborigines.

the ball round his head, making a spray like rain.¹ Other Australian tribes employ human hair as a rain-charm in other ways. In Western Australia the natives pluck hair from their arm-pits and thighs and blow them in the direction from which they wish the rain to come. But if they wish to prevent rain, they light a piece of sandal wood, and beat the ground with the burning brand.² When the rivers were low and water scarce in Victoria, the wizard used to place human hair in the stream, accompanying the act with chants and gesticulation. But if he wished to make rain, he dropped some human hair in the fire. Hair was never burnt at other times for fear of causing a great fall of rain.³ The Arab historian Makrizi describes a method of stopping rain which is said to have been resorted to by a tribe of nomads called Alqamar in Hadramaut. They cut a branch from a certain tree in the desert, set it on fire, and then sprinkled the burning brand with water. After that the vehemence of the rain abated,⁴ just as the water vanished when it fell on the glowing brand. Some of the Eastern Angamis of Manipur are said to perform a somewhat similar ceremony for the opposite purpose, in order, namely, to produce rain. The head of the village puts a burning brand on the grave of a man who has died of burns, and quenches the brand with water, while he prays that rain may fall.⁵ Here the putting out the fire with water, which is an imitation of rain, is reinforced by the influence of the dead man, who, having been burnt to death, will naturally be anxious for the descent of rain to cool his scorched body and assuage his pangs.

Use of fire
to stop
rain.

Other people besides the Arabs have used fire as a means of stopping rain. Thus the Sulka of New Britain heat stones red hot in the fire and then put them out in the

¹ A. W. Howitt, "On Australian Medicine-Men," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xvi. (1887) p. 35; *id.*, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 398.

² R. Salvado, *Mémoires historiques sur l'Australie* (Paris, 1854), p. 262.

³ W. Stanbridge, "On the Aborigines of Victoria," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S., i. (1861) p. 300. This use of fire to

make rain is peculiar. By analogy we should expect it rather to be resorted to as a mode of stopping rain. See below.

⁴ P. B. Noskowjy, *Magrisii de valle Hadramaut libellus arabice editus et illustratus* (Bonn, 1866), pp. 25 sq.

⁵ T. C. Hodson, "The Native Tribes of Manipur," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1901) p. 308.

rain, or they throw hot ashes in the air. They think that the rain will soon cease to fall, for it does not like to be burned by the hot stones or ashes.¹ The Telugus send a little girl out naked into the rain with a burning piece of wood in her hand, which she has to shew to the rain. That is supposed to stop the downpour.² At Port Stevens in New South Wales the medicine-men used to drive away rain by throwing fire-sticks into the air, while at the same time they puffed and shouted.³ Any man of the Anula tribe in Northern Australia can stop rain by simply warming a green stick in the fire, and then striking it against the wind.⁴ When a Thompson Indian of British Columbia wished to put an end to a spell of heavy rain, he held a stick in the fire, then described a circle with it, beginning at the east and following the sun's course till it reached the east again, towards which quarter he held the stick and addressed the rain as follows: "Now then, you must stop raining; the people are miserable. Ye mountains, become clear." The ceremony was repeated for all the other quarters of the sky.⁵ To bring on rain the Ainos of Japan wash their tobacco-boxes and pipes in a stream,⁶ and the Toradjas of Central Celebes dip rice-spoons in water.⁷ On the contrary, during heavy rain the Indians of Guiana are careful not to wash the inside of their pots, lest by so doing they should cause the rain to fall still more heavily.⁸ In Bilaspore it is believed that the grain-dealer, who has stored large quantities of grain and wishes to sell it dear, resorts to nefarious means of preventing the rain from falling, lest the abundance of rice which would follow a copious rainfall should cheapen his wares. To do this he collects rain-drops from the eaves of his house in an earthen vessel and buries the vessel under the grinding-mill.

Various
ways of
making
and stop-
ping rain.

¹ Rascher, "Die Sulka," *Archiv für Anthropologie*, xxix. (1904) p. 225; R. Parkinson, *Dreissig Jahre in der Südsee*, pp. 196 sq.

² *Indian Antiquary*, xxiv. (1895) p. 359.

³ A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 398.

⁴ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 315.

⁵ J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," p. 345 (*Memoirs*

of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition, vol. i. part iv.).

⁶ J. Batchelor, *The Ainu and their Folklore*, p. 333.

⁷ A. C. Kruijt, "Regen lokken en regen verdrijven bij de Toradja's van Midden Celebes," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xlv. (1901) p. 2.

⁸ J. Crevaux, *Voyages dans l'Amérique du Sud* (Paris, 1883), p. 276.

After that you shall hear thunder rumbling in the distance like the humming sound of the mill at work, but no rain will fall, for the wicked dealer has shut it up and it cannot get out.¹

Rain-
making in
Queens-
land.

In the torrid climate of Queensland the ceremonies necessary for wringing showers from the cloudless heaven are naturally somewhat elaborate. A prominent part in them is played by a "rain-stick." This is a thin piece of wood about twenty inches long, to which three "rain-stones" and hair cut from the beard have been fastened. The "rain-stones" are pieces of white quartz-crystal. Three or four such sticks may be used in the ceremony. About noon the men who are to take part in it repair to a lonely pool, into which one of them dives and fixes a hollow log vertically in the mud. Then they all go into the water, and, forming a rough circle round the man in the middle, who holds the rain-stick aloft, they begin stamping with their feet as well as they can, and splashing the water with their hands from all sides on the rain-stick. The stamping, which is accompanied by singing, is sometimes a matter of difficulty, since the water may be four feet deep or more. When the singing is over, the man in the middle dives out of sight and attaches the rain-stick to the hollow log under water. Then coming to the surface, he quickly climbs on to the bank and spits out on dry land the water which he imbibed in diving. Should more than one of these rain-sticks have been prepared, the ceremony is repeated with each in turn. While the men are returning to camp they scratch the tops of their heads and the inside of their shins from time to time with twigs; if they were to scratch themselves with their fingers alone, they believe that the whole effect of the ceremony would be spoiled. On reaching the camp they paint their faces, arms, and chests with broad bands of gypsum. During the rest of the day the process of scratching, accompanied by the song, is repeated at intervals, and thus the performance comes to a close. No woman may set eyes on the rain-stick or witness the ceremony of its submergence; but the wife of the chief rain-maker is privileged to take part in the subse-

¹ E. M. Gordon, *Indian Folk Tales and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, (London, 1908), p. 20; *id.* in *Journal Bengal*, New Series, i. (1905) p. 183.

quent rite of scratching herself with a twig. When the rain does come, the rain-stick is taken out of the water: it has done its work.¹ At Roxburgh, in Queensland, the ceremony is somewhat different. A white quartz-crystal which is to serve as the rain-stone is obtained in the mountains and crushed to powder. Next a tree is chosen of which the stem runs up straight for a long way without any branches. Against its trunk saplings from fifteen to twenty feet long are then propped in a circle, so as to form a sort of shed like a bell-tent, and in front of the shed an artificial pond is made in the ground. The men, who have collected within the shed, now come forth and, dancing and singing round the pond, mimic the cries and antics of various aquatic birds and animals, such as ducks and frogs. Meanwhile the women are stationed some twenty yards or so away. When the men have done pretending to be ducks, frogs, and so forth, they march round the women in single file, throwing the pulverised quartz-crystals over them. On their side the women hold up wooden troughs, shields, pieces of bark, and so on over their heads, making believe that they are sheltering themselves from a heavy shower of rain.² Both these ceremonies are cases of mimetic magic; the splashing of the water over the rain-stick is as clearly an imitation of a shower as the throwing of the powdered quartz-crystal over the women.

The Dieri of Central Australia enact a somewhat similar pantomime for the same purpose. In a dry season their lot is a hard one. No fresh herbs or roots are to be had, and as the parched earth yields no grass, the emus, reptiles, and other creatures which generally furnish the natives with food grow so lean and wizened as to be hardly worth eating. At such a time of severe drought the Dieri, loudly lamenting the impoverished state of the country and their own half-starved condition, call upon the spirits of their remote predecessors, whom they call Mura-muras, to grant them power to make a heavy rainfall. For they believe that the clouds are bodies in which rain is generated by their own ceremonies or those

Rain-
making
among the
Dieri of
Central
Australia.

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

² W. E. Roth, *op. cit.* p. 168; *id.*, *North Queensland Ethnography, Bulletin No. 5* (Brisbane, 1903), p. 10.

Rain-
making
among
the
Dieri.

of neighbouring tribes, through the influence of the Mura-muras. The way in which they set about drawing rain from the clouds is this. A hole is dug about twelve feet long and eight or ten broad, and over this hole a conical hut of logs and branches is made. Two wizards, supposed to have received a special inspiration from the Mura-muras, are bled by an old and influential man with a sharp flint ; and the blood, drawn from their arms below the elbow, is made to flow on the other men of the tribe, who sit huddled together in the hut. At the same time the two bleeding men throw handfuls of down about, some of which adheres to the blood-stained bodies of their comrades, while the rest floats in the air. The blood is thought to represent the rain, and the down the clouds. During the ceremony two large stones are placed in the middle of the hut ; they stand for gathering clouds and presage rain. Then the wizards who were bled carry away the two stones for about ten or fifteen miles, and place them as high as they can in the tallest tree. Meanwhile the other men gather gypsum, pound it fine, and throw it into a water-hole. This the Mura-muras see, and at once they cause clouds to appear in the sky. Lastly, the men, young and old, surround the hut, and, stooping down, butt at it with their heads, like so many rams. Thus they force their way through it and reappear on the other side, repeating the process till the hut is wrecked. In doing this they are forbidden to use their hands or arms ; but when the heavy logs alone remain, they are allowed to pull them out with their hands. "The piercing of the hut with their heads symbolises the piercing of the clouds ; the fall of the hut, the fall of the rain."¹ Obviously, too, the act of placing high up in trees the two stones, which stand for clouds, is a way of making the real clouds to mount up in the sky. The Dieri also imagine that the foreskins taken from lads at circumcision have a great power of producing rain. Hence the Great Council of the tribe always keeps a small stock of fore-

Use of
foreskins
in rain-
making.

¹ S. Gason, "The Dieyerie Tribe," *Native Tribes of South Australia*, pp. 276 sqq. ; A. W. Howitt, "The Dieri and other Kindred Tribes of Central Australia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891) pp. 91 sq. ;

id., *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 394-396. As to the Mura-muras, see A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 475 sqq., 779 sqq.

skins ready for use. They are carefully concealed, being wrapt up in feathers with the fat of the wild dog and of the carpet snake. A woman may not see such a parcel opened on any account. When the ceremony is over, the foreskin is buried, its virtue being exhausted. After the rains have fallen, some of the tribe always undergo a surgical operation, which consists in cutting the skin of their chest and arms with a sharp flint. The wound is then tapped with a flat stick to increase the flow of blood, and red ochre is rubbed into it. Raised scars are thus produced. The reason alleged by the natives for this practice is that they are pleased with the rain, and that there is a connexion between the rain and the scars. Apparently the operation is not very painful, for the patient laughs and jokes while it is going on. Indeed, little children have been seen to crowd round the operator and patiently take their turn; then after being operated on, they ran away, expanding their little chests and singing for the rain to beat upon them. However, they were not so well pleased next day, when they felt their wounds stiff and sore.¹ The tribes of the Karamundi nation, on the River Darling, universally believe that rain can be produced as follows. A vein in the arm of one of the men is opened, and the blood allowed to flow into a piece of hollow bark till it forms a little pool. Powdered gypsum and hair from the man's beard are then added to the blood, and the whole is stirred into a thick paste. Afterwards the mixture is placed between two pieces of bark and put under water in a river or lagoon, pointed stakes being driven into the ground to keep it down. When it has all dissolved away, the natives think that a great cloud will come bringing rain. From the time the ceremony is performed until rain falls, the men must abstain from intercourse with their wives, or the charm would be spoiled.² In this custom the bloody paste seems to be an imitation of a rain-cloud. In Java, when rain is wanted, two men will sometimes thrash each other with supple rods

Use of
human
blood in
rain-
making
cere-
monies.

¹ A. W. Howitt, "The Dieri and other Kindred Tribes of Central Australia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891) pp. 92 sq.; *id.*,

Native Tribes of South-East Australia, pp. 396, 744.

² A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 396 sq.

Sanguinary
conflicts as
means of
making
rain.

till the blood flows down their backs; the streaming blood represents the rain, and no doubt is supposed to make it fall on the ground.¹ The people of Egghiou, a district of Abyssinia, used to engage in sanguinary conflicts with each other, village against village, for a week together every January for the purpose of procuring rain. A few years ago the emperor Menelik forbade the custom. However, the following year the rain was deficient, and the popular outcry so great that the emperor yielded to it, and allowed the murderous fights to be resumed, but for two days a year only.² The writer who mentions the custom regards the blood shed on these occasions as a propitiatory sacrifice offered to spirits who control the showers; but perhaps, as in the Australian and Javanese ceremonies, it is an imitation of rain. The prophets of Baal, who sought to procure rain by cutting themselves with knives till the blood gushed out,³ may have acted on the same principle.

Rain-
making
among the
Kaitish.

The Kaitish tribe of Central Australia believe that the rainbow is the son of the rain, and with filial regard is always anxious to prevent his father from falling down. Hence if it appears in the sky at a time when rain is wanted, they "sing" or enchant it in order to send it away. When the head man of the rain totem in this tribe desires to make rain he goes to the sacred storehouse of his local group. There he paints the holy stones with red ochre and sings over them, and as he sings he pours water from a vessel on them and on himself. Moreover, he paints three rainbows in red ochre, one on the ground, one on his own body, and one on a shield, which he also decorates with zigzag lines of white clay to represent lightning. This shield may only be seen by men of the

¹ J. Kreemer, "Regenmaken, Oed-joeng, Tooverij onder de Javanen," *Mededelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xxx. (1886) p. 113.

² Coulbeaux, "Au pays de Menelik : à travers l'Abyssinie," *Missions Catholiques*, xxx. (1898) p. 455.

³ 1 Kings xviii. 28. From the whole tenour of the narrative it appears that the real contest between Elijah

and the prophets of Baal was as to which of them should make rain in a time of drought. The prophets of Baal wrought magic by cutting themselves with knives; Elijah wrought magic by pouring water on the altar. Both ceremonies alike were rain-charms. Compare my note on the passage in *Passages of the Bible chosen for their Literary Beauty and Interest*, Second Edition (London, 1909), pp. 476 sq.

same exogamous half of the tribe as himself; if men of the other half of the tribe were to see it, the charm would be spoilt. Hence after bringing the shield away from the sacred place, he hides it in his own camp until the rain has fallen, after which he destroys the rainbow drawings. The intention seems to be to keep the rainbow in custody, and prevent it from appearing in the sky until the clouds have burst and moistened the thirsty ground. To ensure that event the rain-maker, on his return from the sacred storehouse, keeps a vessel of water by his side in camp, and from time to time scatters white down about, which is thought to hasten the rain. Meantime the men who accompanied him to the holy place go away and camp by themselves, for neither they nor he may have any intercourse with the women. The leader may not even speak to his wife, who absents herself from the camp at the time of his return to it. When later on she comes back, he imitates the call of the plover, a bird whose cry is always associated with the rainy season in these parts. Early next morning he returns to the sacred storehouse and covers the stones with bushes. After another night passed in silence, he and the other men and women go out in separate directions to search for food. When they meet on their return to camp, they all mimic the cry of the plover. Then the leader's mouth is touched with some of the food that has been brought in, and thus the ban of silence is removed. If rain follows, they attribute it to the magical virtue of the ceremony; if it does not, they fall back on their standing excuse, that some one else has kept off the rain by stronger magic.¹

Among the Arunta tribe of Central Australia a celebrated rain-maker resides at the present day in what is called by the natives the Rain Country (*Kartwia quatcha*), a district about fifty miles to the east of Alice Springs. He is the head of a group of people who have water for their totem, and when he is about to engage in a ceremony for the making of rain he summons other men of the water totem from neighbouring groups to come and help him.

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 294-296, 630 sq.

Rain-
making
among the
Arunta.

When all are assembled, they march into camp, painted with red and yellow ochre and pipeclay, and wearing bunches of eagle-hawk feathers on the crown and sides of the head. At a signal from the rain-maker they all sit down in a line and, folding their arms across their breasts, chant certain words for a time. Then at another signal from the master of the ceremonies they jump up and march in single file to a spot some miles off, where they camp for the night. At break of day they scatter in all directions to look for game, which is then cooked and eaten; but on no account may any water be drunk, or the ceremony would fail. When they have eaten, they adorn themselves again in a different style, broad bands of white bird's down being glued by means of human blood to their stomach, legs, arms, and forehead. Meanwhile a special hut of boughs has been made by some older men not far from the main camp. Its floor is strewn with a thick layer of gum leaves to make it soft, for a good deal of time has to be spent lying down here. Close to the entrance of the hut a shallow trench, some thirty yards long, is excavated in the ground. At sunset the performers, arrayed in all the finery of white down, march to the hut. On reaching it the young men go in first and lie face downwards at the inner end, where they have to stay till the ceremony is over; none of them is allowed to quit it on any pretext. Meanwhile, outside the hut the older men are busy decorating the rain-maker. Hair girdles, covered with white down, are placed all over his head, while his cheeks and forehead are painted with pipeclay; and two broad bands of white down pass across the face, one over the eyebrows and the other over the nose. The front of his body is adorned with a broad band of pipeclay fringed with white down, and rings of white down encircle his arms. Thus decorated, with patches of bird's down adhering by means of human blood to his hair and the whole of his body, the disguised man is said to present a spectacle which, once seen, can never be forgotten. He now takes up a position close to the opening of the hut. Then the old men sing a song, and when it is finished, the rain-maker comes out of the hut and stalks slowly twice up and down the shallow trench, quivering his body and legs in a

most extraordinary way, every nerve and fibre seeming to tremble. While he is thus engaged the young men, who had been lying flat on their faces, get up and join the old men in chanting a song with which the movements of the rain-maker seem to accord. But as soon as he re-enters the hut, the young men at once prostrate themselves again; for they must always be lying down when he is in the hut. The performance is repeated at intervals during the night, and the singing goes on with little intermission until, just when the day is breaking, the rain-maker executes a final quiver, which lasts longer than any of the others, and seems to exhaust his remaining strength completely. Then he declares the ceremony to be over, and at once the young men jump to their feet and rush out of the hut, screaming in imitation of the spur-winged plover. The cry is heard by the men and women who have been left at the main camp, and they take it up with weird effect.¹

Although we cannot, perhaps, divine the meaning of all the details of this curious ceremony, the analogy of the Queensland and the Dieri ceremonies, described above, suggests that we have here a rude attempt to represent the gathering of rain-clouds and the other accompaniments of a rising storm. The hut of branches, like the structure of logs among the Dieri, and perhaps the conical shed in Queensland, may possibly stand for the vault of heaven, from which the rain-clouds, represented by the chief actor in his quaint costume of white down, come forth to move in ever-shifting shapes across the sky, just as he struts quivering up and down the trench. The other performers, also adorned with bird's down, who burst from the tent with the cries of plovers, probably imitate birds that are supposed to harbinger or accompany rain.² This interpretation is confirmed by other ceremonies in which the performers definitely assimilate

Rain-making by imitation of clouds and storm.

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

² As to the connexion of the plover with rain in Central Australia, see

above, p. 259. It is curious that the same association has procured for the bird its name in English, French (*pluvier*, from the Latin *pluvia*), and German (*Regenpfeifer*). Ornithologists are not agreed as to the reason for this association in the popular mind. See Alfred Newton, *Dictionary of Birds* (London, 1893-1896), pp. 730 sq.

themselves to the celestial or atmospheric phenomena which they seek to produce. Thus in Mabuiag, a small island in Torres Straits, when a wizard desired to make rain, he took some bush or plant and painted himself black and white, "All along same as clouds, black behind, white he go first." He further put on a large woman's petticoat to signify raining clouds. On the other hand, when he wished to stop the rain, he put red paint on the crown of his head, "to represent the shining sun," and he inserted a small ball of red paint in another part of his person. By and by he expelled this ball, "Like breaking a cloud so that sun he may shine." He then took some bushes and leaves of the pandanus, mixed them together, and placed the compound in the sea. Afterwards he removed them from the water, dried them, and burnt them so that the smoke went up, thereby typifying, as Dr. Haddon was informed, the evaporation and dispersal of the clouds.¹ Again, it is said that if a Malay woman puts upon her head an inverted earthenware pan, and then, setting it upon the ground, fills it with water and washes the cat in it till the animal is nearly drowned, heavy rain will certainly follow. In this performance the inverted pan is intended, as Mr. Skeat was told, to symbolise the vault of heaven.²

Belief that
twins can
control the
weather.

There is a widespread belief that twin children possess magical powers over nature, especially over rain and the weather. This curious superstition prevails among some of the Indian tribes of British Columbia, and has led them often to impose certain singular restrictions or taboos on the parents of twins, though the exact meaning of these restrictions is generally obscure. Thus the Tsimshian Indians of British Columbia believe that twins control the weather; therefore they pray to wind and rain, "Calm down, breath of the twins." Further, they think that the wishes of twins are always fulfilled; hence twins are feared, because they can harm the man they hate. They can also call the salmon and the olachen or candle-fish, and so they are

Supersti-
tions as to
twins
among the
Indians of
British
Columbia.

¹ A. C. Haddon, "The Ethnography of the Western Tribe of Torres Straits," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890) p. 401; *Reports of the*

Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits, v. 350.

² W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 108.

known by a name which means "making plentiful."¹ In the opinion of the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia twins are transformed salmon; hence they may not go near water, lest they should be changed back again into the fish. In their childhood they can summon any wind by motions of their hands, and they can make fair or foul weather, and also cure diseases by swinging a large wooden rattle. Their parents must live secluded in the woods for sixteen months after the birth, doing no work, borrowing nobody's canoes, paddles, or dishes, and keeping their faces painted red all the time. If the father were to catch salmon, or the mother were to dig clams, the salmon and the clams would disappear. Moreover the parents separate from each other, and must pretend to be married to a log, with which they lie down every night. They are forbidden to touch each other, and even their own hair. A year after the birth they drive wedges into a tree in the woods, asking it to let them work again when four more months have passed.² The Nootka Indians of British Columbia also believe that twins are somehow related to salmon. Hence among them twins may not catch salmon, and they may not eat or even handle the fresh fish. They can make fair or foul weather, and can cause rain to fall by painting their faces black and then washing them, which may represent the rain dripping from the dark clouds.³ Conversely, among the Angoni of Central Africa there is a woman who stops rain by tying a strip of white calico round her black head,⁴ probably in imitation of the sky clearing after a heavy storm. The parents of twins among the Nootkas must build a small hut in the woods on the bank of a river, far from the village, and there they must live for two years, avoiding other people; they may not eat or even touch fresh food, particularly salmon.

¹ Fr. Boas, in *Fifth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 51 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1889*).

² Fr. Boas, *loc. cit.*; *id.* in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, pp. 58, 62 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*); *id.* in *Eleventh Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*,

p. 5 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1896*).

³ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, pp. 39 sq. (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

⁴ *British Central Africa Gazette*, No. 86 (vol. v. no. 6), 30th April 1898, p. 3.

Superstitions as to twins among the Indians of British Columbia.

Wooden images and masks of birds and fish are placed round the hut, and others, representing fish, are set near the river for the purpose of inviting all birds and fish to come and see the twins, and be friendly to them. Moreover the father sings a special song praising the salmon, and asking them to come. And the fish do come in great numbers to see the twins. Therefore the birth of twins is believed to prognosticate a good year for salmon.¹ But though a Nootka father of twins has thus to live in seclusion for two years, abstaining from fresh meat, and attending none of the ordinary feasts, he is, by a singular exception, invited to banquets which consist wholly of dried provisions, and at them he is treated with great respect and seated among the chiefs, even though he be himself a mere commoner. The birth of twins among the Nootkas is said to be very rare, but one occurred while Jewitt lived with the tribe. He reports that the father always appeared very thoughtful and gloomy, and never associated with other people. "His dress was very plain, and he wore around his head the red fillet of bark, the symbol of mourning and devotion. It was his daily practice to repair to the mountain, with a chief's rattle in his hand, to sing and pray, as Maquina informed me, for the fish to come into their waters. When not thus employed, he kept continually at home, except when sent for to sing and perform his ceremonies over the sick, being considered as a sacred character, and one much in favour with their gods."² Among the Thompson Indians of British Columbia twins were called "grizzly-bear children" or "hairy feet," because they were thought to be under the protection of the grizzly bear, and to be endowed by him with special powers, such as that of making fair or foul weather. After their birth the parents moved away from other people, and lived in a lodge made of fir-boughs and bark till the children were about four years old. During all this time great care was taken of the twins. They might not come into contact with other people, and were washed with fir-twigs dipped in water. While they were being

¹ Fr. Boas, *loc. cit.*

Sufferings of John R. Jewitt (Middletown, 1820), pp. 173 sq. (p. 198, Edinburgh, 1824).

² *Narrative of the Adventures and*

washed, the father described circles round them with fir-boughs, singing the song of the grizzly bear.¹ With these American beliefs we may compare an African "one." The negroes of Porto Novo, on the Bight of Benin, hold that twins have for their companions certain spirits or genii like those which animate a kind of small ape, which abounds in the forests of Guinea. When the twins grow up, they will not be allowed to eat the flesh of apes, and meantime the mother carries offerings of bananas and other dainties to the apes in the forest.² Precisely similar beliefs and customs as to twins prevail in the Ho tribe of German Togoland. There the twins are called "children of apes"; neither they nor their parents may eat the flesh of the particular species of apes with which they are associated; and if a hunter kills one of these animals, the parents must beat him with a stick.³ But to return to America. The Shuswap Indians of British Columbia, like the Thompson Indians, associate twins with the grizzly bear, for they call them "young grizzly bears." According to them, twins remain throughout life endowed with supernatural powers. In particular they can make good or bad weather. They produce rain by spilling water from a basket in the air; they make fine weather by shaking a small flat piece of wood attached to a stick by a string; they raise storms by strewing down on the ends of spruce branches.⁴

Superstitions as to twins in West Africa.

The Indians of Peru entertained similar notions as to

¹ J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," pp. 310 sq. (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. i. part iv.). The Lilloet Indians of British Columbia also believed that twins were the real offspring of grizzly bears. Many of them said that twins were grizzly bears in human form, and that when a twin died his soul went back to the grizzly bears and became one of them. See J. Teit, "The Lilloet Indians," (Leyden and New York, 1906), p. 263 (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. ii. part v.).

² Father Baudin, "Le Fétichisme ou la religion des Nègres de la Guinée,"

Missions Catholiques, xvi. (1884) p. 250.

³ J. Spieth, *Die Ewe Stämme* (Berlin, 1906), pp. 204, 206.

⁴ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 92 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*). The instrument by which the twins make fine weather appears to be a bull-roarer. Compare J. Teit, "The Shuswap" (Leyden and New York, 1909), pp. 586 sq. (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. ii. part vii.); "Twins were believed to be endowed with powers over the elements, especially over rain and snow. If a twin bathed in a lake or stream, it would rain."

Superstitions as to twins among the Indians of Peru.

the special relation in which twins stand to the rain and the weather. For they said that one of each pair of twins was a son of the lightning; and they called the lightning the lord and creator of rain, and prayed to him to send showers. The parents of twins had to fast for many days after the birth, abstaining from salt and pepper, and they might not have intercourse with each other. In some parts of Peru this period of fasting and abstinence lasted six months. In other parts both the father and mother had to lie down on one side, with one leg drawn up, and a bean placed in the hollow of the ham. In this position they had to lie without moving for five days, till with the heat and sweat of their bodies the beans began to sprout. Then they changed over to the other side, and lay on it in like manner for other five days, fasting in the way described. When the ten days were up, their relations went out to hunt, and having killed and skinned a deer they made a robe of its hide, under which they caused the parents of the twins to pass, with cords about their necks which they afterwards wore for many days. If the twins died young, their bodies, enclosed in pots, were kept in the house as sacred things. But if they lived, and it happened that a frost set in, the priests sent for them, together with all persons who had hare-lips or had been born feet foremost, and rated them soundly for being the cause of the frost, in that they had not fasted from salt and pepper. Wherefore they were ordered to fast for ten days in the usual manner, and to abstain from their wives, and to wash themselves, and to acknowledge and confess their sins. After their nominal conversion to Christianity, the Peruvian Indians retained their belief that one of twins was always the son of the lightning, and oddly enough they regularly gave him the name of St. James (Santiago). The Spanish Jesuit, who reports the custom, was at a loss to account for it. It could not, he thought, have originated in the name of Boanerges, or "sons of thunder," which Christ applied to the two brothers James and John.¹ He suggests two explanations.

¹ Mark iii. 17. If James and John had been twins, we might have suspected that their name of Boanerges

had its origin in a superstition like that of the Peruvian Indians. Was it in the character of "sons of thunder"

The Indians may have adopted the name because they had heard a phrase used by Spanish children when it thunders, "The horse of Santiago is running." Or it may have been because they saw that the Spanish infantry in battle, before they fired their arquebuses, always cried out "Santiago! Santiago!" For the Indians called an arquebuse *illapa*, that is, "lightning," and they might easily imagine that the name which they heard shouted just before the flash and roar of the guns was that of the Spanish god of thunder and lightning. However they came by the name, they made such frequent and superstitious use of it that the church forbade any Indian to bear the name of Santiago.¹

The same power of influencing the weather is attributed to twins by the Baronga, a tribe of Bantu negroes who inhabit the shores of Delagoa Bay in south-eastern Africa. They bestow the name of *Tilo*—that is, the sky—on a woman who has given birth to twins, and the infants themselves are called the children of the sky. Now when the storms which generally burst in the months of September and October have been looked for in vain, when a drought with its prospect of famine is threatening, and all nature, scorched and burnt up by a sun that has shone for six months from a cloudless sky, is panting for the beneficent showers of the South African spring, the women perform ceremonies to bring down the longed-for rain on the parched earth. Stripping themselves of all their garments, they assume in their stead girdles and head-dresses of grass, or short petticoats made of the leaves of a particular sort of creeper. Thus attired, uttering peculiar cries and singing ribald songs, they go about from well to well, cleansing them of the mud and impurities which have accumulated in them. The wells, it may be said, are merely holes in the sand where a little turbid unwholesome water stagnates. Further, the women must repair to the house of one of their gossips who has given birth to twins, and must drench her with water, which they carry in little pitchers. Having done so they go on their way, shrieking

Supersti-
tions as to
twins in
Africa.

that the brothers proposed to call down fire from heaven on a Samaritan village (Luke ix. 54)?

¹ P. J. de Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la idolatria del Piru* (Lima, 1621), pp. 16 sq., 32, 33, 119, 130, 132.

Superstitions as to twins in Africa.

out their loose songs and dancing immodest dances. No man may see these leaf-clad women going their rounds. If they meet a man, they maul him and thrust him aside. When they have cleansed the wells, they must go and pour water on the graves of their ancestors in the sacred grove. It often happens, too, that at the bidding of the wizard they go and pour water on the graves of twins. For they think that the grave of a twin ought always to be moist, for which reason twins are regularly buried near a lake. If all their efforts to procure rain prove abortive, they will remember that such and such a twin was buried in a dry place on the side of a hill. "No wonder," says the wizard in such a case, "that the sky is fiery. Take up his body and dig him a grave on the shore of the lake." His orders are at once obeyed, for this is supposed to be the only means of bringing down the rain. The Swiss missionary who reports this strange superstition has also suggested what appears to be its true explanation. He points out that as the mother of twins is called by the Baronga "the sky," they probably think that to pour water on her is equivalent to pouring water on the sky itself; and if water be poured on the sky, it will of course drip through it, as through the nozzle of a gigantic watering-pot, and fall on the earth beneath. A slight extension of the same train of reasoning explains why the desired result is believed to be expedited by drenching the graves of twins, who are the Children of the Sky.¹ Among the Zulus twins are supposed to be able to foretell the weather, and people who want rain will go to a twin and say, "Tell me, do you feel ill to-day?" If he says he feels quite well, they know it will not rain.² The Wanyamwesi, a large tribe of Central Africa, to the south of the Victoria Nyanza, also believe in the special association of twins with water. For amongst them, when a twin is about to cross a river, stream, or lake, he must fill his mouth full of water and spirt it out over the surface of the river or lake, adding, "I am a twin" (*nänä mpassa*).

¹ H. A. Junod, *Les Ba-ronga* (Neuchâtel, 1898), pp. 412, 416 *sqq.* The reason for calling twins "Children of the Sky" is obscure. Are they supposed

in some mysterious way to stand for the sun and moon?

² Dudley Kidd, *Savage Childhood* (London, 1906), p. 47.

And he must do the same if a storm arises on a lake over which he is sailing. Were he to omit the ceremony, some harm might befall him or his companions. In this tribe the birth of twins is comparatively common and is attended by a number of ceremonies. Old women march about the village collecting gifts for the infants, while they drum with a "hoe on a piece of ox-hide and sing an obscene song in praise of the father. Further, two little fetish huts are built for the twins before their mother's house, and here people sacrifice for them in season and out of season, especially when somebody is sick or about to go on a journey or to the wars. If one or both twins die, two aloes are planted beside the little fetish hut.¹ Lastly, the Hindoos of the Central Provinces in India believe that a twin can save the crops from the ravages of hail and heavy rain if he will only paint his right buttock black and his left buttock some other colour, and thus adorned go and stand in the direction of the wind.²

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

The rain-maker assimilates himself to rain.

¹ P. Reichard, "Die Wanjamuesi," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Ethnologie zu Berlin*, xxiv. (1889), pp. 256 sq. Another African superstition as to twins may here be mentioned. On the Slave Coast when a woman has brought forth stillborn twins, she has a statue made with two faces and sets it up in a corner of her house. There she offers it fowls, bananas, and palm-oil in order to obtain the accomplishment

of her wishes, and especially a knowledge of the future. See *Missions Catholiques*, vii. (1875) p. 592. This suggests that elsewhere two-faced images, like those of Janus, may have been intended to represent twins.

² M. N. Venkateswami, "Superstitions among Hindus in the Central Provinces," *Indian Antiquary*, xxviii. (1899) p. 311.

The rain-maker assimilates himself to rain.

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

On the contrary, the maker of dry weather must himself be dry.

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

¹ *The Gṛhya-Sūtras*, translated by H. Oldenberg, part ii. (Oxford, 1892) pp. 72 sq. (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol.

xxx.) ; H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, pp. 420 sq.

weather-doctor and asks him to "prop up the clouds, that may be lowering." If the doctor consents to exert his professional powers, he begins to regulate his behaviour by certain rules as soon as his customer has departed. He must observe a fast, and may neither drink nor bathe; what little he eats must be eaten dry, and in no case may he touch water. The host, on his side, and his servants, both male and female, must neither wash clothes nor bathe so long as the feast lasts, and they have all during its continuance to observe strict chastity. The doctor seats himself on a new mat in his bedroom, and before a small oil-lamp he murmurs, shortly before the feast takes place, the following prayer or incantation: "Grandfather and Grandmother Sroekoe!" (the name seems to be taken at random; others are sometimes used), "return to your country. Akkemat is your country. Put down your water-cask, close it properly, that not a drop may fall out." While he utters this prayer the sorcerer looks upwards, burning incense the while.¹ So among the Toradjas of Central Celebes the rain-doctor (*sando*), whose special business it is to drive away rain, takes care not to touch water before, during, or after the discharge of his professional duties. He does not bathe, he eats with unwashed hands, he drinks nothing but palm wine, and if he has to cross a stream he is careful not to step in the water. Having thus prepared himself for his task he has a small hut built for himself outside of the village in a rice-field, and in this hut he keeps up a little fire, which on no account may be suffered to go out. In the fire he burns various kinds of wood, which are supposed to possess the property of driving off rain; and he puffs in the direction from which the rain threatens to come, holding in his hand a packet of leaves and bark which derive a similar cloud-compelling virtue, not from their chemical composition, but from their names, which happen to signify something dry or volatile. If clouds should appear in the sky while he is at work, he takes lime in the hollow of his hand and blows it towards them. The lime, being so very dry, is obviously well adapted to disperse the damp clouds. Should rain afterwards be wanted, he

¹ G. G. Batten, *Glimpses of the Eastern Archipelago* (Singapore, 1894), pp. 68 sq.

has only to pour water on his fire, and immediately the rain will descend in sheets.¹ So in Santa Cruz and Reef islands, when the man who has power over rain wishes to prevent it from falling, he will abstain from washing his face for a long time and will do no work, lest he should sweat and his body be wet; "for they think that if his body be wet it will rain." On the other hand when he desires to bring on rain, he goes into the house where the spirit or ghost of the rain is believed to reside, and there he sprinkles water at the head of the ghost-post (*duka*) in order that showers may fall.²

To make
wet weather
you must
be wet; to
make dry
weather
you must
be dry.

The reader will observe how exactly the Javanese and Toradja observances, which are intended to prevent rain, form the antithesis of the Indian observances, which aim at producing it. The Indian sage is commanded to touch water thrice a day regularly as well as on various special occasions; the Javanese and Toradja wizards may not touch it at all. The Indian lives out in the forest, and even when it rains he may not take shelter; the Javanese and the Toradja sit in a house or a hut. The one signifies his sympathy with water by receiving the rain on his person and speaking of it respectfully; the others light a lamp or a fire and do their best to drive the rain away. Yet the principle on which all three act is the same; each of them, by a sort of childish make-believe, identifies himself with the phenomenon which he desires to produce. It is the old fallacy that the effect resembles its cause: if you would make wet weather, you must be wet; if you would make dry weather, you must be dry.

Rain-
making in
south-
eastern
Europe by
drenching
with water
a leaf-clad
girl or boy
who repre-
sents vege-
tation.

In south-eastern Europe at the present day ceremonies are observed for the purpose of making rain which not only rest on the same general train of thought as the preceding, but even in their details resemble the ceremonies practised with the same intention by the Baronga of Delagoa Bay. Among the Greeks of Thessaly and Macedonia, when a drought has lasted a long time, it is customary to send a

¹ A. C. Kruijt, "Regen lokken en regen verdrijven bij de Toradja's van Midden Celebes," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xliv. (1901) pp. 8-10.

² Rev. W. O'Ferrall, "Native Stories from Santa Cruz and Reef Islands," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxiv. (1904), p. 225.

procession of children round to all the wells and springs of the neighbourhood. At the head of the procession walks a girl adorned with flowers, whom her companions drench with water at every halting-place, while they sing an invocation, of which the following is part :—

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

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

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

A similar custom is observed in Greece and Roumania.² In Roumania the rain-maker is called Papparuda or Babaruda. She is a gypsy girl, who goes naked except for a short skirt of dwarf elder (*Sambucus ebulus*) or of corn and vines. Thus scantily attired the girls go in procession from house to house, singing for rain, and are drenched by

Rain-
making in
Servia.

Rain-
making in
Roumania.

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

² W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 329 sqq. ; J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 493 sq. ; W. R. S. Ralston,

Songs of the Russian People, pp. 227 sqq. ; W. Schmidt, *Das Jahr und seine Tage in Meinung und Brauch der Rumänen Siebenbürgens*, p. 17 ; E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, ii. 13 ; *Folk-lore*, i. (1890) p. 520.

Rain-
making in
Bulgaria.

the people with buckets of water. The ceremony regularly takes place all over Roumania on the third Tuesday after Easter, but it may be repeated at any time of drought during the summer. But the Roumanians have another way of procuring rain. They make a clay figure to represent Drought, cover it with a pall, and place it in an open coffin. Girls crouch round the coffin and lament, saying, "Drought (*Scalozi*) is dead! Lord, give us rain!" Then the coffin is carried by children in funeral procession, with a burning wax candle before it, while lamentations fill the air. Finally, they throw the coffin and the candle into a stream or a well.¹ When rain is wanted in Bulgaria the people dress up a girl in branches of nut-trees, flowers, and the green stuff of beans, potatoes, and onions. She carries a nosegay of flowers in her hand, and is called Djuldjul or Peperuga. Attended by a train of followers she goes from house to house, and is received by the goodman with a kettleful of water, on which flowers are swimming. With this water he drenches her, while a song is sung:—

*The Peperuga flew;
God give rain,
That the corn, the millet, and the wheat may thrive.*

Rain-
making in
Macedonia
and Dal-
matia.

Sometimes the girl is dressed in flax to the girdle.² At Melenik, a Greek town in Macedonia, a poor orphan boy parades the streets in time of drought, decked with ferns and flowers, and attended by other boys of about the same age. The women shower water and money on him from the windows. He is called Dudulé, and as they march along the boys sing a song, which begins: "Hail, hail, Dudulé, (bring us) both maize and wheat."³ In Dalmatia also the custom is observed. The performer is a young unmarried man, who is dressed up, dances, and has water poured over him. He goes by the name of Prpats, and is attended by companions called Prporushe, who are young bachelors like himself.⁴ In such customs the leaf-clad person appears to

¹ *The Graphic*, September 9, 1905, p. 324; Dr. Emil Fischer, "Paparuda und Scaloian," *Globus*, xciii. (1908) pp. 14 sq.

² W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 329.

³ G. F. Abbott, *Macedonian Folklore* (Cambridge, 1903), pp. 118 sq.

⁴ W. R. S. Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 228; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 329 sq.

personify vegetation, and the drenching of him or her with water is certainly an imitation of rain. The words of the Servian song, however, taken in connexion with the constant movement which the chief actress in the performance seems expected to keep up, points to some comparison of the girl or her companions to clouds moving through the sky. This again reminds us of the odd quivering movement kept up by the Australian rain-maker, who, in his disguise of white down, may perhaps represent a cloud.¹ At Poona in India, when rain is needed, the boys dress up one of their number in nothing but leaves and call him King of Rain (*Mriij raja*). Then they go round to every house in the village, where the householder or his wife sprinkles the Rain King with water, and gives the party food of various kinds. When they have thus visited all the houses, they strip the Rain King of his leafy robes and feast upon what they have gathered.²

The King
of Rain in
India.

Similar rain-charms are practised in Armenia, except that there the representative of vegetation is an effigy or doll, not a person. The children dress up a broomstick as a girl and carry it from house to house. Before every house they sing a song, of which the following is one version:—

Rain-
making in
Armenia

*Nurin, Nurin is come,
The wondrous maiden is come.
A shirt of red stuff has she put on,
With a red girdle is she girded.
Bring water to pour on her head,
Bring butter to smear on her hair.
Let the blessed rain fall,
Let the fields of your fathers grow green.
Give our Nurin her share,
And we will eat and drink and be merry.*

The children are asked, "Will you have it from the door or from the garret-window?" If they choose the door, the water is poured on Nurin from the window; and if they choose the window, it is poured on her from the door. At each house they receive presents of butter, eggs, rice, and so

¹ See above, pp. 260 *sq.* This perpetual turning or whirling movement is required of the actors in other European ceremonies of a superstitious character. See below, vol. ii. pp. 74, 80, 81, 87. I am far from feeling sure that

the explanation of it suggested in the text is the true one. But I do not remember to have met with any other.

² Father H. S. Moore, in *The Cowley Evangelist*, May 1908, pp. 111 *sq.*

forth. Afterwards they take Nurin to a river and throw her into the water. Sometimes the figure has the head of a pig or a goat, and is covered with boughs.¹ At Egin in Armenia, when rain is wanted, boys carry about an effigy which they call Chi-chi Mama or "the drenched Mother," as they interpret the phrase. As they go about they ask, "What does Chi-chi Mother want?" The answer is, "She wants wheat in her bins, she wants bread on her bread-hooks, and she wants rain from God!" The people pour water on her from the roofs, and rich people make presents to the children.² At Ourfa in Armenia the children in time of drought make a rain-bride, which they call Chimché-gelin. They say this means in Turkish "shovel-bride." While they carry it about they say, "What does Chimché-gelin want? She wishes mercy from God: she wants offerings of lambs and rams." And the crowd responds, "Give, my God, give rain, give a flood." The rain-bride is then thrown into the water.³ At Kerak in Palestine, whenever there is a drought, the Greek Christians dress up a winnowing-fork in women's clothes. They call it "the bride of God." The girls and women carry it from house to house, singing doggerel songs.⁴ We are not told that "the bride of God" is drenched with water or thrown into a stream, but the charm would hardly be complete without this feature. Similarly, when rain is much wanted, the Arabs of Moab attire a dummy in the robes and ornaments of a woman and call it "the Mother of the Rain." A woman carries it in procession past the houses of the village or the tents of the camp, singing:—

Rain-
making in
Palestine
and Moab.

*O Mother of the Rain, O Immortal, moisten our sleeping seeds.
Moisten the sleeping seeds of the sheikh, who is ever generous.
She is gone, the Mother of the Rain, to bring the storm; when she
comes back, the crops are as high as the walls.
She is gone, the Mother of the Rain, to bring the winds; when she
comes back, the plantations have attained the height of lances.
She is gone, the Mother of the Rain, to bring the thunders; when
she comes back, the crops are as high as camels.*

And so on.⁵

¹ M. Abeghian, *Der armenische Volksglaube* (Leipzig, 1899), pp. 93 sq.

² J. Rendel Harris, MS. notes of folklore collected in the East.

³ Rendel Harris, *op. cit.*

⁴ S. I. Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion To-day*, p. 114.

⁵ A. Jaussen, *Coutumes des Arabes au pays de Moab* (Paris, 1908), pp. 326, 328.

Bathing is practised as a rain-charm in some parts of southern and western Russia. Sometimes after service in church the priest in his robes has been thrown down on the ground and drenched with water by his parishioners. Sometimes it is the women who, without stripping off their clothes, bathe in crowds on the day of St. John the Baptist, while they dip in the water a figure made of branches, grass, and herbs, which is supposed to represent the saint.¹ In Kursk, a province of southern Russia, when rain is much wanted, the women seize a passing stranger and throw him into the river, or souse him from head to foot.² Later on we shall see that a passing stranger is often taken for a deity or the personification of some natural power. It is recorded in official documents that during a drought in 1790 the peasants of Scheroutz and Werboutz collected all the women and compelled them to bathe, in order that rain might fall.³ An Armenian rain-charm is to throw the wife of a priest into the water and drench her.⁴ The Arabs of North Africa fling a holy man, willy-nilly, into a spring as a remedy for drought.⁵ In Minahassa, a province of North Celebes, the priest bathes as a rain-charm.⁶ In Central Celebes when there has been no rain for a long time and the rice-stalks begin to shrivel up, many of the villagers, especially the young folk, go to a neighbouring brook and splash each other with water, shouting noisily, or squirt water on one another through bamboo tubes. Sometimes they imitate the plump of rain by smacking the surface of the water with their hands, or by placing an inverted gourd on it and drumming on the gourd with their fingers.⁷ The Karo-Bataks of Sumatra have a rain-making ceremony which lasts a week. The men go about with bamboo squirts and the women with

Rain-making by bathing and sprinkling of water.

¹ J. Polek, "Regenzauber in Ost-europa," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, iii. (1893) p. 85. For the bathing of the priest compare W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 331, note 2.

² W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 331.

³ R. F. Kaindl, "Zauberglaube bei den Rutenen in der Bukowina und Galizien," *Globus*, lxi. (1892) p. 281.

⁴ M. Abeghian, *Des arménische*

Volksgebräue (Leipzig, 1899), p. 93.

⁵ E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, p. 584.

⁶ J. G. F. Riedel, "De Minahassa in 1825," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xviii. 524.

⁷ A. C. Kruijt, "Regen lokken en regen verdrijven bij de Toradja's van Midden Celebes," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xlv. (1901) pp. 1 sq.

Rain-making by bathing and sprinkling of water.

bowls of water, and they drench each other or throw the water into the air and cry, "The rain has come," when it drips down on them.¹ In Kumaon, a district of north-west India, when rain fails they sink a Brahman up to his lips in a tank or pond, where he repeats the name of a god of rain for a day or two. When this rite is duly performed, rain is sure to fall.² For the same purpose village girls in the Punjab will pour a solution of cow-dung in water upon an old woman who happens to pass; or they will make her sit down under the roof-spout of a house and get a wetting when it rains.³ In the Solok district of Sumatra, when a drought has lasted a long time, a number of half-naked women take a half-witted man to a river; and there besprinkle him with water as a means of compelling the rain to fall.⁴ In some parts of Bengal, when drought threatens the country, troops of children of all ages go from house to house and roll and tumble in puddles which have been prepared for the purpose by pouring water into the courtyards. This is supposed to bring down rain. Again, in Dubrajpur, a village in the Birbhum district of Bengal, when rain has been looked for in vain, people will throw dirt or filth on the houses of their neighbours, who abuse them for doing so. Or they drench the lame, the halt, the blind, and other infirm persons, and are reviled for their pains by the victims. This vituperation is believed to bring about the desired result by drawing down showers on the parched earth.⁵ Similarly, in the Shahpur district of the Punjab it is said to be customary in time of drought to spill a pot of filth on the threshold of a notorious old shrew, in order that the fluent stream of foul language in which she vents her feelings may accelerate the lingering rain.⁶

Curses supposed to cause rain.

¹ M. Joustra, "De Zending onder de Karo-Batak's," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zending-genootschap*, xli. (1897) p. 158.

² *North Indian Notes and Queries*, iii. p. 134, § 285.

³ W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 73 sq.

⁴ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der

Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xxxix. (1890) p. 93.

⁵ Sarat Chandra Mitra, "On some Ceremonies for producing Rain," *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, iii. (1893) pp. 25, 27; *id.*, in *North Indian Notes and Queries*, v. p. 136, § 373.

⁶ *Punjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 102, § 791.

In these latter customs the means adopted for bringing about the desired result appear to be not so much imitative magic as the beneficent effect which, curiously enough, is often attributed to curses and maledictions.¹ Thus in the Indian district of Behar much virtue is ascribed to abuse, which is supposed in some cases to bring good luck. People, for example, who accompany a marriage procession to the bride's house are often foully abused by the women of the bride's family in the belief that this contributes to the good fortune of the newly-married pair. So in Behar on Jamad-witiya Day, which falls on the second day of the bright period of the moon next to that during which the Dussera festival takes place, brothers are reviled by sisters to their heart's content because it is thought that this will prolong the lives of the brothers and bring them good luck.² Further, in Behar and Bengal it is deemed very unlucky to look at the new moon of Bhadon (August); whoever does so is sure to meet with some mishap, or to be falsely accused of something. To avert these evils people are commonly advised to throw stones or brickbats into their neighbours' houses; for if they do so, and are reviled for their pains, they will escape the threatened evils, and their neighbours who abused them will suffer in their stead. Hence the day of the new moon in this month is called the Day of Stones. At Benares a regular festival is held for this purpose on the fourth day of Bhadon, which is known as "the clod festival of the fourth."³ On the Khurda estate in Orissa gardens and fruit-trees are conspicuously absent. The peasants explain their absence by saying that from time immemorial they have held it lucky to be annoyed and abused by their neighbours at a certain festival, which answers to the Nashti-Chandra in Bengal. Hence in order to give ample ground of offence they mutilate the fruit-trees and trample down the gardens of their neighbours, and so court fortune by drawing down on themselves

Beneficial
effect of
curses and
abuse.

¹ W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 74 sq.

² Sarat Chandra Mitra, "On Vestiges of Moon-worship in Behar and Bengal," *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, ii. 598 sq.

³ *Punjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p.

42, § 256; W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 16 sq.; Sarat Chandra Mitra, in *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, ii. 597 sq.; *id.*, in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, N.S. xxix. (1897) p. 482.

Beneficial
effect of
curses and
abuse.

the wrath of the injured owners.¹ At Cranganore, in the Native State of Cochin, there is a shrine of the goddess Bhagavati, which is much frequented by pilgrims in the month of Minam (March–April). From all parts of Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore crowds flock to attend the festival and the highroads ring with their shouts of *Nada nada*, “March! march!” They desecrate the shrine of the goddess in every conceivable way, discharge volleys of stones and filth, and level the most opprobrious language at the goddess herself. These proceedings are supposed to be acceptable to her. The intention of the pilgrimage is to secure immunity from disease during the succeeding year.² In some cases a curse may, like rags and dirt, be supposed to benefit a man by making him appear vile and contemptible, and thus diverting from him the evil eye and other malignant influences, which are attracted by beauty and prosperity but repelled by their opposites. Among the Huzuls of the Carpathians, if a herdsman or cattle-owner suspects himself of having the evil eye, he will charge one of his household to call him a devil or a robber every time he goes near the cattle; for he thinks that this will undo the effect of the evil eye.³ Among the Chams of Cambodia and Annam, while a corpse is being burned on the pyre, a man who bears the title of the Master of Sorrows remains in the house of the deceased and loads it with curses, after which he beseeches the ghost not to come back and torment his family.⁴ These last curses are clearly intended to make his old home unattractive to the spirit of the dead. Esthonian fishermen believe that they never have such good luck as when some one is angry with them and curses them. Hence before a fisherman goes out to fish, he will play a rough practical joke on a comrade in order to be abused and execrated by him. The more his friend storms and curses, the better he is pleased; every curse brings at least three

¹ W. W. Hunter, *Orissa* (London, 1872), ii. 140 sq.; W. Crooke, *op. cit.* i. 17.

² W. Logan, *Malabar* (Madras, 1887), i. 161 sq.; E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, vii. 287;

L. K. Anantha Krishna Iyer, *The Cochin Tribes and Castes*, i. (Madras,

1909) p. 238.

³ R. F. Kaindl, *Die Huzulen* (Vienna, 1894), p. 63; *id.*, “Vieh-zucht und Viehzauber in den Ostkar-paten,” *Globus*, lxi. (1896) p. 386.

⁴ A. Cabaton, *Nouvelles Recherches sur les Chams* (Paris, 1901), p. 48.

fish into his net.¹ There is a popular belief in Berlin and the neighbourhood that if you wish a huntsman good luck when he is going out to shoot deer he will be certain never to get a shot at all. To avert the ill luck caused by such a wish the hunter must throw a broomstick at the head of his well-wisher. If he is really to have luck, you must wish that he may break his neck, or both his neck and his legs. The wish is expressed with pregnant brevity in the phrase, "Now then, neck and leg!"² The intention of such curses may be to put the fish or the deer off their guard; for, as we shall see later on, animals are commonly supposed to understand human speech, and even to overhear what is said of them many miles off. Accordingly if they hear a fisherman or a hunter flouted and vituperated, they will think too meanly of him to go out of his way, and so will fall an easy prey to his net or his gun. When a Greek sower sowed cummin he had to curse and swear, or the crop would not turn out well.³ Roman writers mention a similar custom observed by the sowers of rue and basil;⁴ and hedge doctors in ancient Greece laid it down as a rule that in cutting black hellebore you should face eastward and curse.⁵ Perhaps the bitter language was supposed to strengthen the bitter taste, and hence the medicinal virtue, of these plants. At Lindus in the island of Rhodes it was customary to sacrifice one or two plough oxen to Hercules with curses and imprecations; indeed we are told that the sacrifice was deemed invalid if a good word fell from any one's lips during the rite. The custom was explained by a legend that Hercules had laid hands on the oxen of a ploughman and cooked and devoured them, while their owner, unable to defend his beasts, stood afar off and vented his anger in a torrent of abuse and execration. Hercules received his maledictions with a roar of laughter, appointed him his priest, and bade him always sacrifice with the very same execrations, for he had never

Beneficial
effect of
curses and
abuse.

¹ Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, pp. 90 sq.

² E. Krause, "Abergläubische Kuren und sonstiger Aberglaube in Berlin und nächster Umgebung," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xv. (1883) p. 87.

³ Theophrastus, *Historia plantarum*,

vii. 3. 3, ix. 8. 8; Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.*, vii. 2. 3; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xix. 120.

⁴ Palladius, *De re rustica*, iv. 9; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xix. 120.

⁵ Theophrastus, *Historia plantarum* ix. 8. 8.

dined better in his life.¹ The legend is plainly a fiction devised to explain the ritual. We may conjecture that the curses were intended to palliate the slaughter of a sacred animal. The subject will be touched on in a later part of this work. Here we must return to rain-making.

Rain-
making by
ploughing.

Women are sometimes supposed to be able to make rain by ploughing, or pretending to plough. Thus the Pshaws and Chewsurs of the Caucasus have a ceremony called "ploughing the rain," which they observe in time of drought. Girls yoke themselves to a plough and drag it into a river, wading in the water up to their girdles.² In the same circumstances Armenian girls and women do the same. The oldest woman, or the priest's wife, wears the priest's dress, while the others, dressed as men, drag the plough through the water against the stream.³ In the Caucasian province of Georgia, when a drought has lasted long, marriageable girls are yoked in couples with an ox-yoke on their shoulders, a priest holds the reins, and thus harnessed they wade through rivers, puddles, and marshes, praying, screaming, weeping, and laughing.⁴ In a district of Transylvania, when the ground is parched with drought, some girls strip themselves naked, and, led by an older woman, who is also naked, they steal a harrow and carry it across the fields to a brook, where they set it afloat. Next they sit on the harrow and keep a tiny flame burning on each corner of it for an hour. Then they leave the harrow in the water and go home.⁵ A similar rain-charm is resorted to in some parts of India; naked women drag a plough across a field by night, while the men keep carefully out of the way, for their presence would break the spell.⁶ As performed at

¹ Lactantius, *Divin. Institut.* i. 21; Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, ii. 5. 11. 8; Philostratus, *Imagines*, ii. 24; Conon, in Photius, *Bibliotheca*, p. 132, ed. Bekker. Lactantius speaks of the sacrifice of a pair of oxen, Philostratus of the sacrifice of a single ox.

² "Die Pschawen und Chewsurier im Kaukasus," *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, N.F. ii. (1857) p. 75.

³ M. Abeghian, *Der armenische Volksglaube* (Leipzig, 1899), p. 93.

⁴ J. Reinegg, *Beschreibung des Kau-*

kasus, ii. (Hildesheim and St. Petersburg, 1797), p. 114. Among the Abchases of the Western Caucasus girls make rain by driving an ass into a river, placing a puppet dressed as a woman on a raft, and letting the raft float down stream. See N. von Seidlitz, "Die Abchassen," *Globus*, lxi. (1894) pp. 75 sq.

⁵ W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 553; E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, ii. 40.

⁶ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, iii. pp. 41, 115, §§ 173, 513.

Chunar in Bengal on the twenty-fourth of July 1891 the ceremony was this. Between nine and ten in the evening a barber's wife went from door to door and invited the women to engage in ploughing. They all assembled in a field from which men were excluded. Three women of a husbandman's family then stripped themselves naked; two of them were yoked like oxen to the plough, while the third held the handle. They next began to imitate the operation of ploughing. The one who held the plough cried out, "O mother earth! bring parched grain, water, and chaff. Our stomachs are breaking to pieces from hunger and thirst." Then the landlord and accountant approached them and laid down some grain, water, and chaff in the field. After that the women dressed and returned home. "By the grace of God," adds the gentleman who reports the ceremony, "the weather changed almost immediately, and we had a good shower."¹ Sometimes as they draw the plough the women sing a hymn to Vishnu, in which they seek to enlist his sympathy by enumerating the ills which the people are suffering from the want of rain. In some cases they discharge volleys of abuse at the village officials, and even at the landlord, whom they compel to drag the plough.² These ceremonies are all the more remarkable because in ordinary circumstances Hindoo women never engage in agricultural operations like ploughing and harrowing. Yet in drought it seems to be women of the highest or Brahman caste who are chosen to perform what at other times would be regarded as a menial and degrading task. Occasionally, when hesitation is felt at subjecting Brahman ladies to this indignity, they are allowed to get off by merely touching the plough early in the morning, before people are astir; the real work is afterwards done by the ploughmen.³ In Manipur the prosperity of all classes

Rain-making by ploughing.

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

² Sarat Chandra Mitra, "On the Har Parauri, or the Behari Women's Ceremony for producing Rain," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, N.S. xxix. (1897) pp. 471-484; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, iv.

No. 7 (1898), pp. 384-388.

³ Sarat Chandra Mitra, "On some Ceremonies for producing Rain," *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, iii. 25. On these Indian rain-charms compare W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 68 sqq. Mr. E. S. Hartland suggests that such

depends on the abundance and regularity of the rainfall; hence the people have many rites and ceremonies for the making of rain. Thus in time of drought one hundred and eight girls milk one hundred and eight cows in the temple of Govindji, the most popular incarnation of Krishna in the country. If this fails, the women throw their *dhan*-pounders into the nearest pool, and at the dead of night strip themselves naked and plough.¹ There is a Burmese superstition that if a harrow has a flaw in it no rain will fall till the faulty harrow has been decked with flowers, broken, and thrown into the river. Further, the owner should have his hair cropped, and being adorned with flowers should dance and carry the harrow to the water. Otherwise the country is sure to suffer from drought.² The Tarahumare Indians of Mexico dip the plough in water before they use it, that it may draw rain.³

Making
rain by
means of
the dead.

Sometimes the rain-charm operates through the dead. Thus in New Caledonia the rain-makers blackened themselves all over, dug up a dead body, took the bones to a cave, jointed them, and hung the skeleton over some taro leaves. Water was poured over the skeleton to run down on the leaves. They believed that the soul of the deceased took up the water, converted it into rain, and showered it down again.⁴ In some parts of New Caledonia the cere-

customs furnish the key to the legend of Lady Godiva (*Folklore*, i. (1890) pp. 223 *sqg.*). Some of the features of the ceremonies, though not the ploughing, reappear in a rain-charm practised by the Rajbansis of Bengal. The women make two images of Hudum Deo out of mud or cow-dung, and carry them away into the fields by night. There they strip themselves naked, and dance round the images singing obscene songs. See (Sir) H. H. Risley, *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal: Ethnographic Glossary* (Calcutta, 1891-92), i. 498. Again, in time of drought the Kapu women of Southern India mould a small figure of a naked human being to represent Jokumara, the rain-god. This they place in a mock palanquin and go about for several days from door to

door, singing indecent songs and collecting alms. Then they abandon the figure in a field, where the Malas find it and go about with it in their turn for three or four days, singing ribald songs and collecting alms. See E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, iii. 244 *sq.* We have seen (pp. 267 *sq.*) that lewd songs form part of an African rain-charm. The link between ribaldry and rain is not obvious to the European mind.

¹ T. C. Hodson, "The Native Tribes of Manipur," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxi. (1901) pp. 302 *sq.*

² B. Houghton, in *Indian Antiquary*, xxv. (1896) p. 112.

³ C. Lumholtz, *Unknown Mexico* (London, 1903), i. 330.

⁴ G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 345 *sq.*

mony is somewhat different. A great quantity of provisions is offered to the ancestors, being laid down before their skulls in the sacred place. In front of the skulls a number of pots full of water are set in a row, and in each pot there is deposited a sacred stone which has more or less the shape of a skull. The rain-maker then prays to the ancestors to send rain. After that he climbs a tree with a branch in his hand, which he waves about to hasten the approach of the rain-clouds.¹ The ceremony is a mixture of magic and religion; the prayers and offerings to the ancestors are purely religious, while the placing of the skull-like stones in water and the waving of the branch are magical. In Russia, if common report may be believed, it is not long since the peasants of any district that chanced to be afflicted with drought used to dig up the corpse of some one who had drunk himself to death and sink it in the nearest swamp or lake, fully persuaded that this would ensure the fall of the needed rain. In 1868 the prospect of a bad harvest, caused by a prolonged drought, induced the inhabitants of a village in the Tarashchansk district to dig up the body of a Raskolnik, or Dissenter, who had died in the preceding December. Some of the party beat the corpse, or what was left of it, about the head, exclaiming, "Give us rain!" while others poured water on it through a sieve.² Here the pouring of water through a sieve seems plainly an imitation of a shower, and reminds us of the manner in which Strepsiades in Aristophanes imagined that rain was made by Zeus.³ An Armenian rain-charm is to dig up a skull and throw it into running water.⁴ At Ourfa for this purpose they prefer the skull of a Jew, which they cast into the Pool of Abraham.⁵ In Mysore people think that if a leper is buried, instead of being burnt, as he ought to be, rain will not fall. Hence they have been known to disinter buried lepers in time of drought.⁶ In Halmahera there is a practice of

¹ Father Lambert, in *Missions Catholiques*, xxv. (1893) p. 116; *id.*, *Mœurs et superstitions des Néo-Calédoniens* (Nouméa, 1900), pp. 297 sq.

² W. R. S. Ralston, *The Songs of the Russian People*, pp. 425 sq.; P. v. Stenin, "Ueber den Geisterglauben in Russland," *Globus*, lvii. (1890) p.

285.

³ Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 373.

⁴ M. Abeghian, *Der armenische Volksglaube*, p. 93.

⁵ J. Rendel Harris, MS. notes.

⁶ R. H. Elliot, *Experiences of a Planter in the Jungles of Mysore* (London, 1871), i. 76 sq.

Making
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throwing stones on a grave, in order that the ghost may fall into a passion and avenge the disturbance, as he imagines, by sending heavy rain.¹ This may explain a rain-charm which seems to have been practised by the Mauretanians in antiquity. A mound in the shape of a man lying on his back was pointed out as the grave of the giant Antaeus; and if any earth were dug up and removed from it, rain fell till the soil was replaced.² Perhaps the rain was the revenge the surly giant took for being wakened from his long sleep. Sometimes, in order to procure rain, the Toradjas of Central Celebes make an appeal to the pity of the dead. Thus, in the village of Kalingooa, in Kadombookoo, there is the grave of a famous chief, the grandfather of the present ruler. When the land suffers from unseasonable drought, the people go to this grave, pour water on it, and say, "O grandfather, have pity on us; if it is your will that this year we should eat, then give rain." After that they hang a bamboo full of water over the grave; there is a small hole in the lower end of the bamboo, so that the water drips from it continually. The bamboo is always refilled with water until rain drenches the ground.³ Here, as in New Caledonia, we find religion blent with magic, for the prayer to the dead chief, which is purely religious, is eked out with a magical imitation of rain at his grave. We have seen that the Baronga of Delagoa Bay drench the tombs of their ancestors, especially the tombs of twins, as a rain-charm.⁴ In Zululand the native girls form a procession and carry large pots of water to a certain tree which chances to be on a mission station. When the girls were asked why they did this, they said that an old ancestor of theirs had been buried under the tree, and as he was a great rain-maker in his life, they always came and poured water on his grave in time of drought, in order that he might send them rain.⁵ This ceremony partakes of the nature of religion, since it implies an appeal for help to a deceased ancestor. Purely religious, on the other hand, are

¹ A. C. Kruijt, "Regen lokken en regen verdrijving bij de Toradja's van Central Celebes," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xlv. (1901) p. 6, citing v. Baarda.

² Mela, *Chorographia*, iii. 106.

³ A. C. Kruijt, *op. cit.* pp. 3 sq.

⁴ Above, p. 268.

⁵ Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir* (London, 1904), p. 115.

some means adopted by the Herero of south-western Africa to procure rain. If a drought has lasted long, the whole tribe goes with its cattle to the grave of some eminent man ; it may be the father or grandfather of the chief. They lay offerings of milk and flesh on the grave and utter their plaint : " Look, O Father, upon your beloved cattle and children ; they suffer distress, they are so lean, they are dying of hunger. Give us rain." The ears of the spectator are deafened by the lowing and bleating of herds and flocks, the shouts of herdsmen, the barking of dogs, and the screams of women.¹ Among some of the Indian tribes in the region of the Orinoco it was customary for the relations of a deceased person to disinter his bones a year after burial, burn them, and scatter the ashes to the winds, because they believed that the ashes were changed into rain, which the dead man sent in return for his obsequies.² The Chinese are convinced that when human bodies remain unburied, the souls of their late owners feel the discomfort of rain, just as living men would do if they were exposed without shelter to the inclemency of the weather. These wretched souls, therefore, do all in their power to prevent the rain from falling, and often their efforts are only too successful. Then drought ensues, the most dreaded of all calamities in China, because bad harvests, dearth, and famine follow in its train. Hence it has been a common practice of the Chinese authorities in time of drought to inter the dry bones of the unburied dead for the purpose of putting an end to the scourge and conjuring down the rain.³

Animals, again, often play an important part in these weather-charms. The Anula tribe of northern Australia associate the dollar-bird with rain, and call it the rain-bird. A man who has the bird for his totem can make rain at a certain pool. He catches a snake, puts it alive into the pool, and after holding it under water for a time takes it

Making
rain by
means of
animals.

¹ Missionar P. H. Brincker, " Beobachtungen über die Deisdamonie der Eingeborenen Deutsch-Südwest-Afrikas," *Globus*, lviii. (1890) p. 323 ; *id.*, in *Mitteilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, iii. (1900) Dritte Abteilung, p. 89.

² A. Caullin, *Historia corographica natural y evangelica dela Nueva Andaluia, Provincias de Cumana, Guayana y Vertientes del Rio Orinoco*, p. 92.

³ J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, iii. 918 sqq.

Making
rain by
means of
animals.

out, kills it, and lays it down by the side of the creek. Then he makes an arched bundle of grass stalks in imitation of a rainbow, and sets it up over the snake. After that all he does is to sing over the snake and the mimic rainbow; sooner or later the rain will fall. They explain this procedure by saying that long ago the dollar-bird had as a mate at this spot a snake, who lived in the pool and used to make rain by spitting up into the sky till a rainbow and clouds appeared and rain fell.¹ The Tjingilli of northern Australia make rain in an odd way. One of them will catch a fat bandicoot and carry it about, singing over it till the animal grows very thin and weak. Then he lets it go, and rain will follow.² When some of the Blackfoot Indians were at war in summer and wished to bring on a tempest, they would take a kit-fox skin and rub it with dirt and water, which never failed to be followed by a storm of rain.³ The Thompson Indians of British Columbia think that when the loon calls loud and often, it will soon rain, and that to mimic the cry of the bird may bring the rain down.⁴ The fish called the small sculpin, which abounds along the rocky shore of Norton Sound, is called by the Esquimaux the rain-maker; they say that if a person takes one of these fish in his hand heavy rain will follow.⁵ If Aino fishermen desire to bring on rain and wind, they pray to the skulls of racoons and then throw water over each other. Should they wish the storm to increase they put on gloves and caps of racoon-skin and dance. Then it blows great guns.⁶ In Ma-hlaing, a district of Upper Burma, when rain is scarce, the people pray to a certain fish called *nga-yan* to send it. They also catch some fish and put them in a tub, while offerings of plantains and other food are made to the monks in the name of the fish. After that the fish are let loose in

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 314

² Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* p. 311.

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

⁴ J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians," p. 374 (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup*

North Pacific Expedition, vol. i. part iv.).

⁵ E. W. Nelson, "The Eskimo about Bering Strait," *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, part i. (Washington, 1899) p. 446.

⁶ J. Batchelor, *The Ainu and their Folklore* (London, 1901), p. 334.

a stream or pond, with gold-leaf stuck on their heads. If live fish are not to be had, wooden ones are used and answer the purpose just as well.¹ When the Chirus of Manipur wish to make rain they catch a crab and put it in a pot of water. Then the headman goes to the gate of the village and keeps lifting the crab out of the water and putting it back into it till he is tired.² An ancient Indian mode of making rain was to throw an otter into the water.³ If the sky refuses rain and the cattle are perishing, an Arab sheikh will sometimes stand in the middle of the camp and cry, "Redeem yourselves, O people, redeem yourselves!" At these words every family sacrifices a sheep, divides it in two, and hanging the pieces on two poles passes between them. Children too young to walk are carried by their mother.⁴ But this custom has rather the appearance of a sacrifice than of a charm. In southern Celebes people try to make rain by carrying a cat tied in a sedan chair thrice round the parched fields, while they drench it with water from bamboo squirts. When the cat begins to miaul, they say, "O lord, let rain fall on us."⁵ A common way of making rain in many parts of Java is to bathe a cat or two cats, a male and a female; sometimes the animals are carried in procession with music. Even in Batavia you may from time to time see children going about with a cat for this purpose; when they have ducked it in a pool, they let it go.⁶

¹ (Sir) J. G. Scott, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, part ii. vol. ii. (Rangoon, 1901) p. 280.

² T. C. Hodson, "The Native Tribes of Manipur," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxi. (1901) p. 308.

³ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 507.

⁴ Fr. A. Jaussen, "Coutumes arabes," *Revue Biblique*, April 1903, p. 248. Elsewhere the same writer describes this ceremony as a mode of putting a stop to cholera. See his *Coutumes des Arabes au pays de Moab* (Paris, 1908), p. 362. To pass between the pieces of a sacrificial victim is a form of oath (Genesis xv. 9 *sqq.*; Jeremiah xxxiv. 18; Dictys Cretensis, *Bell. Trojan.* i. 15; R. Moffat, *Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern*

Africa, p. 278) or of purification (Plutarch, *Quaestiones Romanae*, 111; Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, iii. 13. 7; Livy, xl. 6; E. Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 256; S. Krascheninnikow, *Beschreibung des Landes Kamtschatka*, pp. 277 *sq.*). Compare my note on Pausanias, iii. 20. 9.

⁵ B. F. Matthes, "Over de *adats* of gewoonten der Makassaren en Boegineezen," *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Afdeling Letterkunde, Derde Reeks, ii. (Amsterdam, 1885) p. 169.

⁶ G. A. J. Hazeu, "Kleine bijdragen tot de ethnografie en folklore van Java," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- en Volkskunde*, xli. (1903) p. 298.

Making
rain by
means of
black
animals.

Often in order to give effect to the rain-charm the animal must be black. Thus an ancient Indian way of bringing on rain was to set a black horse with his face to the west and rub him with a black cloth till he neighed.¹ In the Beni-Chougran tribe of North Africa women lead a black cow in procession, while other women sprinkle the whole group with water as a means of wringing a shower from the sky.² To procure rain the Peruvian Indians used to set a black sheep in a field, poured *chica* over it, and gave the animal nothing to eat until rain fell.³ Once when a drought lasting five months had burnt up their pastures and withered the corn, the Caffres of Natal had recourse to a famous witch, who promised to procure rain without delay. A black sheep having been produced, an incision was made in the animal near the shoulder and the gall taken out. Part of this the witch rubbed over her own person, part she drank, part was mixed with medicine. Some of the medicine was then rubbed on her body; the rest of it, attached to a stick, was fixed in the fence of a calves' pen. The woman next harangued the clouds. When the sheep was to be cooked, a new fire was procured by the friction of fire-sticks; in ordinary circumstances a brand would have been taken from one of the huts.⁴ Among the Wambugwe, a Bantu people of eastern Africa, when the sorcerer desires to make rain he takes a black sheep and a black calf in bright sunshine, and has them placed upon the roof of the large common hut in which the people live together. Then he slits open the stomachs of the animals and scatters their contents in all directions. After that he pours water and medicine into a vessel; if the charm has succeeded, the water boils up and rain follows. On the other hand, if the sorcerer wishes to prevent rain from falling, he withdraws into the interior of the hut, and there heats a rock-crystal in a calabash.⁵ In order to procure rain the Wagogo of German East Africa sacrifice black fowls, black sheep, and black cattle at the

¹ A. Hillebrandt, *Vedische Opfer und Zauberei* (Strasburg, 1897), p. 120.

² E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, p. 583.

³ Acosta, *History of the Indies*, bk. v. ch. xxviii. (vol. ii. p. 376, Hakluyt

Society).

⁴ J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal and the Zulu Country* (London, 1857), pp. 212 sqq.

⁵ O. Baumann, *Durch Massailana zur Nilquelle* (Berlin, 1894), p. 188.

graves of dead ancestors, and the rain-maker wears black clothes during the rainy season.¹ Among the Matabele the rain-charm employed by sorcerers was made from the blood and gall of a black ox.² In a district of Sumatra, in order to procure rain, all the women of the village, scantily clad, go to the river, wade into it, and splash each other with the water. A black cat is thrown into the stream and made to swim about for a while, then allowed to escape to the bank, pursued by the splashing of the women.³ The Garos of Assam offer a black goat on the top of a very high mountain in time of drought.⁴ In all these cases the colour of the animal is part of the charm; being black, it will darken the sky with rain-clouds. So the Bechuanas burn the stomach of an ox at evening, because they say, "The black smoke will gather the clouds and cause the rain to come."⁵ The Timorese sacrifice a black pig to the Earth-goddess for rain, a white or red one to the Sun-god for sunshine.⁶ The Angoni, a tribe of Zulu descent to the north of the Zambesi, sacrifice a black ox for rain and a white one for fine weather.⁷ Among the high mountains of Japan there is a district in which, if rain has not fallen for a long time, a party of villagers goes in procession to the bed of a mountain torrent, headed by a priest, who leads a black dog. At the chosen spot they tether the beast to a stone, and make it a target for their bullets and arrows. When its life-blood bespatters the rocks, the peasants throw down their weapons and lift up their voices in supplication to the dragon divinity of the

Making rain by means of black animals.

* ¹ H. Cole, "Notes on the Wagogo of German East Africa," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 325.

² L. Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa* (London, 1898), p. 154.

³ A. L. van Hasselt, *Volksbeschrijving van Midden-Sumatra*, pp. 320 sq.; J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xxxix. (1890) p. 93.

⁴ E. T. Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 88.

⁵ *Folklore Journal*, edited by the Working Committee of the South African

Folklore Society, i. (1879) p. 34.

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

⁷ C. Wiese, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Zulu im Norden des Zambesi, namentlich der Angoni," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxii. (1900) p. 198.

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

Frogs and
toads in
relation to
rain.

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

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

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

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

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

reed beds swollen to an enormous size, saying, "Bluk! bluk!" in a deep gurgling voice. All the other animals wandered about gaping and gasping for a drop of moisture, but finding none, they agreed that they must all die of thirst unless they could contrive to make the frog laugh. So they tried one after the other, but for a long time in vain. At last the conger eel and his relations, hung round with lake grass and gay sea-weed, reared themselves on their tails and pranced round the fire. This was too much for the frog. He opened his mouth and laughed till the water ran out and the lakes and streams were full once more.¹ We have seen that some of the Queensland aborigines imitate the movements and cries of frogs as part of a rain-charm.² The Thompson River Indians of British Columbia and some people in Europe think that to kill a frog brings on rain.³ In order to procure rain people of low caste in the Central Provinces of India will tie a frog to a rod covered with green leaves and branches of the *nīm* tree (*Azadirachta Indica*) and carry it from door to door singing—

Frogs used
in rain-
charms.

*Send soon, O frog, the jewel of water!
And ripen the wheat and millet in the field.*⁴

In Kumaon, a district of north-western India, one way of bringing on rain when it is needed is to hang a frog with its mouth up on a tall bamboo or on a tree for a day or two. The notion is that the god of rain, seeing the creature in trouble, will take pity on it and send the rain.⁵ In the district of Muzaffarpur in India the vulgar believe that the cry of a frog is most readily heard by the God of

¹ Mary E. B. Howitt, *Folklore and Legends of some Victorian Tribes* (in manuscript). The story is told in an abridged form by Dr. A. W. Howitt (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xviii. (1889) pp. 54 sq.).

² Above, p. 255.

³ J. Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. i. part iv. (April 1900) p. 346; A. Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, ii. p. 80,

§ 244; E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, ii. 13.

⁴ M. N. Venketswami, "Superstitions among Hindus in the Central Provinces," *Indian Antiquary*, xxviii. (1899) p. 111. Compare E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, iv. 387.

⁵ *North Indian Notes and Queries*, iii. p. 134, § 285; W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 73.

Frogs used
in rain-
charms.

Rain. Hence in a year of drought the low-caste females of a village assemble at evening and put a frog in a small earthen pot together with water taken from five different houses. The pot with the frog is then placed in the hollow wooden cup into which the lever used for pounding rice falls. Being raised with the foot and then allowed to drop, the lever crushes the frog to death; and while the creature emits his dying croak the women sing songs in a loud voice about the dearth of water.¹ The Kapus or Reddis are a large and prosperous caste of cultivators and landowners in the Madras Presidency. When rain fails, women of the caste will catch a frog and tie it alive to a new winnowing fan made of bamboo. On this fan they spread a few margosa leaves and go from door to door singing, "Lady frog must have her bath. Oh! rain-god, give a little water for her at least." While the Kapu women sing this song, the woman of the house pours water over the frog and gives an alms, convinced that by so doing she will soon bring rain down in torrents.² Again, in order to procure rain the Malas, who are the pariahs of the Telugu country in Southern India, tie a live frog to a mortar and put a mud figure of Gontiyalamma over it. Then they carry the mortar, frog, and all in procession, singing, "Mother frog, playing in water, pour rain by pots full," while the villagers of other castes pour water over them.³ Beliefs like these might easily develop into a worship of frogs regarded as personifying the powers of water and rain. In the Rig Veda there is a hymn about frogs which appears to be substantially a rain-charm.⁴ The Newars, the aboriginal inhabitants of Nepaul, worship the frog as a creature associated with the demi-god Nagas in the production and control of rain and the water-supply, on which the welfare of the crops depends. A sacred character is attributed to the little animal, and every care is taken not to molest or injure it. The worship of the frog is performed on the seventh day of the month Kartik, (October), usually at a

¹ *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, lxxii., part 3, Anthropology (Calcutta, 1904), p. 39.

² E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, iii. 245.

³ E. Thurston *op. cit.* iv. 387.

⁴ M. Bloomfield, "On the 'Frog-hymn,' Rig Veda, vii. 103," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, xvii. (1896) pp. 173-179.

pool which is known to be frequented by frogs, although it is not essential to the efficacy of the rite that a frog should be actually seen at the time. After carefully washing his face and hands, the priest takes five brazen bowls and places in them five separate offerings, namely, rice, flowers, milk and vermilion, ghee and incense, and water. Lighting the pile of ghee and incense, the priest says, "Hail, Paremēsvara Bhūmīnātha! I pray you receive these offerings and send us timely rain, and bless our crops!"¹

Some of these customs and beliefs may be, at least in part, based on the frog's habit of storing up water in its body against seasons of drought; when it is caught at such times, it squirts the water out in a jet.² On seeing a frog emit a gush of water when all around was dry and parched, savages might easily infer that the creature had caused the drought by swallowing all the water, and that in order to restore its moisture to the thirsty ground they had only to make the frog disgorge its secret store of the precious liquid.

Suggested
explanation
of
connexion
of frog
with rain.

Among some tribes of South Africa, when too much rain falls, the wizard, accompanied by a large crowd, repairs to the house of a family where there has been no death for a very long time, and there he burns the skin of a coney. As it burns he shouts, "The rabbit is burning," and the cry is taken up by the whole crowd, who continue shouting till they are exhausted.³ This no doubt is supposed to stop the rain. Equally effective is a method adopted by gypsies in Austria. When the rain has continued to pour steadily for a long time, to the great discomfort of these homeless vagrants, the men of the band assemble at a river and divide themselves into two parties. Some of them cut branches with which to make a raft, while the others collect hazel leaves and cover the raft with them. A witch thereupon lays a dried serpent, wrapt

Stopping
rain by
means of
rabbits and
serpents.

¹ A. L. Waddell, "Frog-Worship among the Newars," *The Indian Antiquary*, xxii. (1893) pp. 292-294. The title Bhūmīnātha, "Lord or Protector of the Soil," is specially reserved for the frog. The title Paremēsvara is given to all the Newar divinities.

² *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th edition, s.v. "Frog," ix. 796. For an

instance of a frog thus caught in a drought and made to disgorge its hoard of water, see E. Aymonier, *Voyage dans le Laos* (Paris, 1895-1897), ii. 284 sq.

³ J. Macdonald, "Manners, Customs, Superstitions, and Religions of South African Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890) p. 295.

in white rags, on the raft, which is then carried by several men to the river. Women are not allowed to be present at this part of the ceremony. While the procession moves towards the river, the witch marches behind the raft singing a song, of which the burden is a statement that gypsies do not like water, and have no urgent need of serpents' milk, coupled with the expression of a hope that the serpent may see his way to swallow the water, that he may run to his mother and drink milk from her breasts, and that the sun may shine out, bringing back mirth and jollity to gypsy hearts. Transylvanian gypsies will sometimes expose the dried carcase of a serpent to the pouring rain, "in order that the serpent may convince himself of the inclemency of the weather, and so grant the people's wish."¹

Doing
violence to
the being
who con-
trols the
weather.

This last custom is an example of an entirely different mode of procuring rain, to which people sometimes have recourse in extreme cases, when the drought is long and their temper short. At such times they will drop the usual hocus-pocus of imitative magic altogether, and being far too angry to waste their breath in prayer they seek by threats and curses or even downright physical force to extort the waters of heaven from the supernatural being who has, so to say, cut them off at the main. Thus, in Muzaffarnagar, a town of the Punjab, when the rains are excessive, the people draw a figure of a certain Muni or Rishi Agastya on a loin-cloth and put it out in the rain, or they paint his figure on the outside of the house and let the rain wash it off. This Muni or Rishi Agastya is a great personage in the native folklore, and enjoys the reputation of being able to stop the rain. It is supposed that he will exercise his power as soon as he is thus made to feel in effigy the misery of wet weather.² On the other hand, when rain is wanted at Chhatarpur, a native state in Bundelcund, they paint two figures with their legs up and their heads down on a wall that faces east; one of the figures represents Indra, the other Megha Raja, the lord of rain. They think that in this uncomfortable position these powerful beings will soon be glad to send

¹ H. von Wilslocki, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Zigeuner* (Münster i. W., 1891), pp. 64 *sq.*

² W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 76.

the much-needed showers.¹ In a Japanese village, when the guardian divinity had long been deaf to the peasants' prayers for rain, they at last threw down his image and, with curses loud and long, hurled it head foremost into a stinking rice-field. "There," they said, "you may stay yourself for a while, to see how *you* will feel after a few days' scorching in this broiling sun that is burning the life from our, cracking fields."² In the like circumstances the Feloupes of Senegambia cast down their fetishes and drag them about the fields, cursing them till rain falls.³ In Okunomura, a Japanese village not far from Tokio, when rain is wanted, an artificial dragon is made out of straw, reeds, bamboos, and magnolia leaves. Preceded by a Shinto priest, attended by men carrying paper flags, and followed by others beating a big drum, the dragon is carried in procession from the Buddhist temple and finally thrown into a waterfall.⁴ When the spirits withhold rain or sunshine, the Comanches whip a slave; if the gods prove obstinate, the victim is almost flayed alive.⁵

The Chinese are adepts in the art of taking the kingdom of heaven by storm. Thus, when rain is wanted they make a huge dragon of paper or wood to represent the rain-god, and carry it about in procession; but if no rain follows, the mock-dragon is execrated and torn to pieces.⁶ At other times they threaten and beat the god if he does not give rain; sometimes they publicly depose him from the rank of deity. On the other hand, if the wished-for rain falls, the god is promoted to a higher rank by an imperial decree.⁷ It is said that in the reign of Kia-King, fifth emperor of the

Chinese
modes of
compelling
the gods to
give rain.

¹ W. Croke, *op. cit.* i. 74.

² W. Weston, *Mountaineering and Exploration in the Japanese Alps* (London, 1896), p. 162.

³ L. J. B. Béranger-Féraud, *Les Peuplades de la Sénégambie* (Paris, 1879), p. 291.

⁴ R. Lange, "Bitten um Regen in Japan," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, iii. (1893) pp. 334 sq. Compare W. G. Aston, *Shinto* (London, 1905), p. 153. However, the throwing of the dragon into the waterfall may be a homoeopathic charm

rather than a punishment.

⁵ H. H. Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, i. 520.

⁶ Huc, *L'Empire chinois* (Paris, 1862), i. 241.

⁷ Mgr Rizzolati, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xvi. (1844) p. 350; Mgr Retord, *ib.* xxviii. (1856) p. 102. In Tonquin also a mandarin has been known to whip an image of Buddha for not sending rain. See *Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, iv. (1830) p. 330.

Chinese
modes of
compelling
the gods to
give rain.

Manchu dynasty, a long drought desolated several provinces of northern China. Processions were of no avail; the rain-dragon hardened his heart and would not let a drop fall. At last the emperor lost patience and condemned the recalcitrant deity to perpetual exile on the banks of the river Illi in the province of Torgot. The decree was in process of execution; the divine criminal, with a touching resignation, was already traversing the deserts of Tartary to work out his sentence on the borders of Turkestan, when the judges of the High Court of Peking, moved with compassion, flung themselves at the feet of the emperor and implored his pardon for the poor devil.⁴ The emperor consented to revoke his doom, and a messenger set off at full gallop to bear the tidings to the executors of the imperial justice. The dragon was reinstated in his office on condition of performing his duties a little better in future.¹ About the year 1710 the island of Tsong-ming, which belongs to the province of Nanking, was afflicted with a drought. The viceroy of the province, after the usual attempts to soften the heart of the local deity by burning incense-sticks had been made in vain, sent word to the idol that if rain did not fall by such and such a day, he would have him turned out of the city and his temple razed to the ground. The threat had no effect on the obdurate divinity; the day of grace came and went, and yet no rain fell. Then the indignant viceroy forbade the people to make any more offerings at the shrine of this unfeeling deity, and commanded that the temple should be shut up and seals placed on the doors. This soon produced the desired effect. Cut off from his base of supplies, the idol had no choice but to surrender at discretion. Rain fell in a few days, and thus the god was restored to the affections of the faithful.² In some parts of China the mandarins procure rain or fine weather by shutting the southern or the northern gates of the city. For the south wind brings drought and the north wind brings showers. Hence by closing the southern and opening the northern gates you clearly exclude drought and admit rain; whereas contrariwise by shutting the northern and opening the

¹ Huc, *L'Empire chinois*,⁴ i. 241 sq.

² *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, Nouvelle Édition, xviii. 210.

southern gates you bar out the clouds and the wet and let in sunshine and genial warmth.¹ In April 1888 the mandarins of Canton prayed to the god Lung-wong to stop the incessant downpour of rain; and when he turned a deaf ear to their petitions they put him in a lock-up for five days. This had a salutary effect. The rain ceased and the god was restored to liberty. Some years before, in time of drought, the same deity had been chained and exposed to the sun for days in the courtyard of his temple in order that he might feel for himself the urgent need of rain.² So when the Siamese need rain, they set out their idols in the blazing sun; but if they want dry weather, they unroof the temples and let the rain pour down on the idols. They think that the inconvenience to which the gods are thus subjected will induce them to grant the wishes of their worshippers.³ When the rice-crop is endangered by long drought, the governor of Battambang, a province of Siam, goes in great state to a certain pagoda and prays to Buddha for rain. Then, accompanied by his suite and followed by an enormous crowd, he adjourns to a plain behind the pagoda. Here a dummy figure has been made up, dressed in bright colours, and placed in the middle of the plain. A wild music begins to play; maddened by the din of drums and cymbals and crackers, and goaded on by their drivers, the elephants charge down on the dummy and trample it to pieces. After this, Buddha will soon give rain.⁴

Siamese
modes of
constrain-
ing the
gods to
give rain.

The reader may smile at the meteorology of the Far East; but precisely similar modes of procuring rain have been resorted to in Christian Europe within our own lifetime. By the end of April 1893 there was great distress in Sicily for lack of water. The drought had lasted six months. Every day the sun rose and set in a sky of cloudless blue. The gardens of the Conca d'Oro, which surround Palermo with a magnificent belt of verdure, were

Compel-
ling the
saints to
give rain
in Sicily.

¹ J. Bertrand, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xxii. (1850) pp. 351-355; W. W. Rockhill, *The Land of the Lamas* (London, 1891), p. 311.

² Rey. E. Z. Simmons, "Idols and Spirits," *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, xix. (1888) p. 502.

³ Mgr Bruguière, in *Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, v. (1831), p. 131.

⁴ Brien, "Aperçu sur la province de Battambang," *Cochinchine Française: excursions et reconnaissances*, No. 25 (Saigon, 1886), pp. 6 sq.

Compelling
the saints
to give rain
in Sicily.

withering. Food was becoming scarce. The people were in great alarm. All the most approved methods of procuring rain had been tried without effect. Processions had traversed the streets and the fields. Men, women, and children, telling their beads, had lain whole nights before the holy images. Consecrated candles had burned day and night in the churches. Palm branches, blessed on Palm Sunday, had been hung on the trees. At Solaparuta, in accordance with a very old custom, the dust swept from the churches on Palm Sunday had been spread on the fields. In ordinary years these holy sweepings preserve the crops; but that year, if you will believe me, they had no effect whatever. At Nicosia the inhabitants, bare-headed and bare-foot, carried the crucifixes through all the wards of the town and scourged each other with iron whips. It was all in vain. Even the great St. Francis of Paola himself, who annually performs the miracle of rain and is carried every spring through the market-gardens, either could not or would not help. Masses, vespers, concerts, illuminations, fire-works—nothing could move him. At last the peasants began to lose patience. Most of the saints were banished. At Palermo they dumped St. Joseph in a garden to see the state of things for himself, and they swore to leave him there in the sun till rain fell. Other saints were turned, like naughty children, with their faces to the wall. Others again, stripped of their beautiful robes, were exiled far from their parishes, threatened, grossly insulted, ducked in horse-ponds. At Caltanissetta the golden wings of St. Michael the Archangel were torn from his shoulders and replaced with wings of pasteboard; his purple mantle was taken away and a clout wrapt about him instead. At Licata the patron saint, St. Angelo, fared even worse, for he was left without any garments at all; he was reviled, he was put in irons, he was threatened with drowning or hanging. "Rain or the rope!" roared the angry people at him, as they shook their fists in his face.¹

¹ G. Vuillier, "La Sicile, impressions du présent et du passé," *Tour du monde*, lxvii. (1894) pp. 54 sq. Com-

pare G. Pitre, *Usi e costumi, credenze e pregiudizi del popolo siciliano*, iii. (Palermo, 1889) pp. 142-144. As to

Another way of constraining the rain-god is to disturb him in his haunts. This seems to be the reason why rain is supposed to follow the troubling of a sacred spring. The Dards believe that if a cow-skin or anything impure is placed in certain springs, storms will follow.¹ In the mountains of Farghana there was a place where rain began to fall as soon as anything dirty was thrown into a certain famous well.² Again, in Tabaristan there was said to be a cave in the mountain of Tak which had only to be defiled by filth or milk for the rain to begin to fall, and to continue falling till the cave was cleansed.³ Gervasius mentions a spring, into which if a stone or a stick were thrown, rain would at once issue from it and drench the thrower.⁴ There was a fountain in Munster such that if it were touched or even looked at by a human being, it would at once flood the whole province with rain.⁵ In Normandy a wizard will sometimes repair to a spring, sprinkle flour on it, and strike the water with a hazel rod, while he chants his spell. A mist then rises from the spring and condenses in the shape of heavy clouds, which discharge volleys of hail on the orchards and corn-fields.⁶ When rain was long of coming in the Canary Islands, the priestesses used to beat the sea with rods to punish the water-spirit for his niggardliness.⁷ Among the natural curiosities of Annam are the caves of Chua-hang

Disturbing
the rain-
god in his
haunts.

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St. Francis of Paola, who died in 1507 and was canonised by Leo X. in 1519, see P. Ribadeneira, *Flos Sanctorum, cioè Vite de' Santi* (Venice, 1763), i. 252 sq.; Th. Trede, *Das Heidentum in der römischen Kirche*, iii. 45-47; G. Pittè, *Feste patronali in Sicilia* (Turin and Palermo, 1900), pp. 49 sqq. He was sent for by Louis XI. of France, and his fame as a worker of miracles is still spread over all the south of Italy. With the entertainments given in honour of St Francis of Paola to wheedle rain out of him we may compare the shadow-plays or puppet-shows given by the Javanese and the comedies played by the Chinese for the same purpose. See T. S. Raffles, *History of Java* (London, 1817), i. 477; G. A. J. Hazen, "Kleine bijdragen tot de ethnografie en de folklore van Java," *Tijdschrift voor Indische*

Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde, xlv. (1903) pp. 299 sq.; Huc, *L'Empire chinois*⁴ (Paris, 1862), i. 241.

¹ J. Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh* (Calcutta, 1880), p. 95.

² Albrfrñt, *The Chronology of Ancient Nations*, translated and edited by C. E. Sachau (London, 1879), p. 235. This and the following passage were pointed out to me by my late friend, W. Robertson Smith.

³ Albrfrñt, *loc. cit.*

⁴ Gervasius von Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia*, ed. F. Liebrecht, pp. 41 sq.

⁵ Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topography of Ireland*, ch. 7. Compare W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 341 note.

⁶ J. Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 79.

⁷ L. J. B. Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances*, i. 473.

or Troc. You may sail into them in a boat underground for a distance of half a mile, and a little way further in you come to the remains of an ancient altar among magnificent stalactite columns. The Annamites worship the spirit of the cave and offer sacrifices at its mouth in time of drought. From all the villages in the neighbourhood come boats, the boatmen singing, "Let it rain! let it rain!" in time to the measured dip of their oars in the water. Arrived at the mouth of the cave, they offer rice and wine to the spirit, prostrating themselves four times before him. Then the master of the ceremonies recites a prayer, ties a written copy of it to the neck of a dog, and flings the animal into the stream which flows from the grotto. This is done in order to provoke the spirit of the cave to anger by defiling his pure water; for he will then send abundant rains to sweep far away the carcase of the dead dog which pollutes the sacred grotto.¹

Putting
compulsion
on the
rain-god.

Two hundred miles to the east of the land of the Huichol Indians in Mexico there is a sacred spring, and away to the west of their country stretches the Pacific Ocean. To ensure the fall of rain these Indians carry water from the spring to the sea, and an equal quantity of sea-water from the sea to the spring. The two waters thus transferred will, they think, feel strange in their new surroundings and will seek to return to their old homes. Hence they will pass in the shape of clouds across the Huichol country and meeting there will descend as rain.² Sometimes an appeal is made to the pity of the gods. When their corn is being burnt up by the sun, the Zulus look out for a "heaven bird," kill it, and throw it into a pool. Then the heaven melts with tenderness for the death of the bird; "it wails for it by raining, wailing a funeral wail."³ In Zululand women sometimes bury their children up to the neck in the ground, and then retiring to a distance keep up a dismal howl for a long time. The sky is supposed to melt with pity at the sight. Then the women dig the children out and feel sure

Exciting
the pity of
the beings
who control
the
rain.

¹ Le R. P. Cadière, "Croyances et dictons populaires de la Vallée du Ngoun-son, Province de Quang-binh (Annam)," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, i. (Hanoi, 1901)

pp. 204 sq.

² C. Lumholtz, *Unknown Mexico*, ii. 194.

³ H. Callaway, *Religious System of the Amasulu*, part. iv. (1870), pp. 407 sq.

that rain will soon follow. They say that they call to "the lord above" and ask him to send rain. If it comes they declare that "Usondo rains."¹ In times of drought the Guanches of Teneriffe led their sheep to sacred ground, and there they separated the lambs from their dams, that their plaintive bleating might touch the heart of the god.² In Kumaon a way of stopping rain is to pour hot oil in the left ear of a dog. The animal howls with pain, his howls are heard by Indra, and out of pity for the beast's sufferings the god stops the rain.³ Sometimes the Toradjas of Central Celebes attempt to procure rain as follows. They place the stalks of certain plants in water, saying, "Go and ask for rain, and so long as no rain falls I will not plant you again, but there shall you die." Also they string some fresh-water snails on a cord, and hang the cord on a tree, and say to the snails, "Go and ask for rain, and so long as no rain comes, I will not take you back to the water." Then the snails go and weep and the gods take pity and send rain.⁴ However, the foregoing ceremonies are religious rather than magical, since they involve an appeal to the compassion of higher powers. A peculiar mode of making rain was adopted by some of the heathen Arabs. They tied two sorts of bushes to the tails and hind legs of their cattle, and, setting fire to the bushes, drove the cattle to the top of a mountain, praying for rain.⁵ This may be, as Wellhausen suggests, an imitation of lightning on the horizon;⁶ but it may also be a way of threatening the sky, as some West African rain-makers put a pot of inflammable materials on the fire and blow up the flames, threatening that if heaven does not soon give rain they will send up a blaze which will set the sky on fire.⁷ In time of drought the priests of the Muyscas in New Granada ascended a mountain and there burned billets

¹ Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, pp. 117 sq.

² E. Reclus, *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle*, xii. 100.

³ *North Indian Notes and Queries*, iii. p. 135, § 285; W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 77.

⁴ A. C. Kruijt, "Regen lokken en regen verdrijven bij de Toradja's van Midden Celebes," *Tijdschrift voor*

Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde, xlv. (1901) p. 2.

⁵ Rasmussen, *Addimenta ad historiam Arabum ante Islamismum*, pp. 67 sq.; I. Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien* (Halle a. S., 1888-1890), i. 34 sq.

⁶ J. Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums*, p. 157 (first edition).

⁷ J. B. Labat, *Relation historique de l'Éthiopie occidentale*, ii. 180.

of wood smeared with resin. The ashes they scattered in the air, thinking thus to condense the clouds and bring rain.¹

Making
rain by
means of
stones.

Stones are often supposed to possess the property of bringing on rain, provided they be dipped in water or sprinkled with it, or treated in some other appropriate manner. In a Samoan village a certain stone was carefully housed as the representative of the rain-making god, and in time of drought his priests carried the stone in procession and dipped it in a stream.² Among the Ta-ta-thi tribe of New South Wales, the rain-maker breaks off a piece of quartz-crystal and spits it towards the sky; the rest of the crystal he wraps in emu feathers, soaks both crystal and feathers in water, and carefully hides them.³ In the Keramin tribe of New South Wales the wizard retires to the bed of a creek, drops water on a round flat stone, then covers up and conceals it.⁴ Among some tribes of north-western Australia the rain-maker repairs to a piece of ground which is set apart for the purpose of rain-making. There he builds a heap of stones or sand, places on the top of it his magic stone, and walks or dances round the pile chanting his incantations for hours, till sheer exhaustion obliges him to desist, when his place is taken by his assistant. Water is sprinkled on the stone and huge fires are kindled. No layman may approach the sacred spot while the mystic ceremony is being performed.⁵ When the Sulka of New Britain wish to procure rain they blacken stones with the ashes of certain fruits and set them out, along with certain other plants and buds, in the sun. Then a handful of twigs is dipped in water and weighted with stones, while a spell is chanted. After that rain should follow.⁶ In Manipur, on a lofty hill to the east of the capital, there is a stone which the popular imagination likens to an umbrella.

¹ H. Ternaux-Compan, *Essai sur l'ancien Cundinamarca* (Paris, n.d.), p. 42.

² G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 145.

³ A. L. P. Cameron, "Notes on some Tribes of New South Wales," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiv. (1885) p. 362. For other uses of quartz-crystal in ceremonies for the making of rain, see above, pp. 254, 255.

⁴ A. L. P. Cameron, *loc. cit.* Com-

pare E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, ii. 377.

⁵ E. Clement, "Ethnographical Notes on the Western Australian Aborigines," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, xvi. (1904) pp. 5 sq.

⁶ Rascher, "Die Sulka," *Archiv für Anthropologie*, xxix. (1904) p. 225. Compare R. Parkinson, *Dreissig Jahre in der Südsee*, p. 196.

When rain is wanted, the rajah fetches water from a spring below and sprinkles it on the stone.¹ At Sagami in Japan there is a stone which draws down rain whenever water is poured on it.² When the Wakondyo, a tribe of Central Africa, desire rain, they send to the Wawamba, who dwell at the foot of snowy mountains, and are the happy possessors of a "rain-stone." In consideration of a proper payment, the Wawamba wash the precious stone, anoint it with oil, and put it in a pot full of water. "After that the rain cannot fail to come."³ In Behar people think to put an end to drought by keeping a holy stone named Náráyan-chakra in a vessel of water.⁴ The Turks of Armenia make rain by throwing pebbles into the water. At Egin the pebbles are hung in two bags in the Euphrates; there should be seventy thousand and one of them.⁵ At Myndus in Asia Minor the number of the stones used for this purpose is seventy-seven thousand, and each of them should be licked before it is cast into the sea.⁶ In some parts of Mongolia, when the people desire rain, they fasten a bezoar stone to a willow twig, and place it in pure water, uttering incantations or prayers at the same time.⁷ At Yakutsk all classes used firmly to believe they could make rain by means of one of these bezoar stones, provided it had really been found in the stomach of an animal, and the fiercer the beast the more powerful the charm. The rain-maker had to dip the stone in spring water just as the sun rose, and then holding it between the thumb and fore-finger of the right hand to present it to the luminary, after which he made three turns contrary to the direction of the sun. The virtue of a bezoar stone lasted only nine days.⁸ Conversely, when Dr. Radloff's Mongolian guide wished to stop the rain, he tied a rock-crystal by a short string to a stick, held the stone over the fire, and then swung the stick

Bezoar stones as instruments of rain.

¹ T. C. Hodson, "The genna amongst the Tribes of Assam," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxvi. (1906) p. 96.

² W. G. Aston, *Shinto* (London, 1905), p. 330.

³ Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), p. 654.

⁴ *Indian Notes and Queries*, iv. p. 218, § 776; W. Crooke, *Popular Religion*

and *Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 75 sq.

⁵ J. Rendel Harris, MS. notes.

⁶ W. R. Paton, in *Folklore*, xii. (1901) p. 216.

⁷ G. Timkowski, *Travels of the Russian Mission through Mongolia to China* (London, 1827), i. 402 sq.

⁸ C. H. Cottrell, *Recollections of Siberia* (London, 1842), p. 140.

about in all directions, while he chanted an incantation.¹ Water is scarce with the fierce Apaches, who roam the arid wastes of Arizona and New Mexico ; for springs are few and far between in these torrid wildernesses, where the intense heat would be unendurable were it not for the great dryness of the air. The stony beds of the streams are waterless in the plains ; but if you ascend for some miles the profound cañons that worm their way into the heart of the wild and rugged mountains, you come in time to a current trickling over the sand, and a mile or two more will bring you to a stream of a tolerable size flowing over boulders and screened from the fierce sun by walls of rock that tower on either hand a thousand feet into the air, their parched sides matted with the fantastic forms of the prickly cactus, and their summits crested far overhead with pine woods, like a black fringe against the burning blue of the sky. In such a land we need not wonder that the thirsty Indians seek to procure rain by magic. They take water from a certain spring and throw it on a particular point high up on a rock ; the welcome clouds then soon gather, and rain begins to fall.² In the district of Varanda, in Armenia, there is a rock with a hole in it near a sacred place. Women light candles on the rock and pour water into the hole in order to bring on rain. And in the same district there is another rock on which water is poured and milk boiled as an offering in time of drought.³

Making
rain by
means of
stones in
Europe.

But customs of this sort are not confined to the wilds of Africa and Asia or the torrid deserts of Australia and the New World. They have been practised in the cool air and under the grey skies of Europe. There is a fountain called Barenton, of romantic fame, in those "wild woods of Broceliande," where, if legend be true, the wizard Merlin still sleeps his magic slumber in the hawthorn shade. Thither the Breton peasants used to resort when they

¹ W. Radloff, *Aus Sibirien* (Leipsic, 1884), ii. 179 sq.

² *The American Antiquarian*, viii. 339. Vivid descriptions of the scenery and climate of Arizona and New Mexico will be found in Captain J. G. Bourke's *On the Border with Crook* (New York, 1891) ; see, for example,

pp. 1 sq., 12 sq., 23 sq., 30 sq., 34 sq., 41 sqq., 185, 190 sq. See also C. Mindeleff, in *Seventeenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, part 2 (Washington, 1898), pp. 477-481.

³ M. Abeghian, *Der armenische Volksglaube*, p. 94.

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

Dipping
images of
saints in
water as
a rain-
charm.

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

² J. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, pp. 185 sq., quoting an earlier authority.

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

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

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

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

pleaded with as much truth as piety that a simple caution or admonition administered to the image would produce an equally good effect. After this the rain was sure to fall within twenty-four hours.¹ Catholic countries do not enjoy a monopoly of making rain by ducking holy images in water. In Mingrelia, when the crops are suffering from want of rain, they take a particularly holy image and dip it in water every day till a shower falls;² and in the Far East the Shans drench the images of Buddha with water when the rice is perishing of drought.³ In all such cases the practice is probably at bottom a sympathetic charm, however it may be disguised under the appearance of a punishment or a threat.

Various
rain-
charms by
means of
stones.

The application of water to a miraculous stone is not the only way of securing its good offices in the making of rain. In the island of Uist, one of the Outer Hebrides, there is a stone cross opposite to St. Mary's church, which the natives used to call the Water-cross. When they needed rain, they set the cross up; and when enough rain had fallen, they laid it flat on the ground.⁴ In Aurora, one of the New Hebrides islands, the rain-maker puts a tuft of leaves of a certain plant in the hollow of a stone; over it he lays some branches of a pepper-tree pounded and crushed, and to these he adds a stone which is believed to possess the property of drawing down showers from the sky. All this he accompanies with incantations, and finally covers the whole mass up. In time it ferments, and steam, charged with magical virtue, goes up and makes clouds and rain. The wizard must be careful, however, not to pound the pepper too hard, as otherwise the wind might blow too strong.⁵ Sometimes the stone derives its magical virtue from its likeness to a real or imaginary animal. Thus, at Kota Gadang in Sumatra, there is a stone which, with the help of a powerful imagination, may perhaps be conceived to bear a faint and distant resemblance to a cat.

¹ Le Brun, *Historie critique des pratiques superstitieuses* (Amsterdam, 1733), i. 245 sq.; L. J. B. Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances*, i. 477. For more examples of such customs in France see P. Sébillot, *Le Folk-lore de France*, ii. 376-378.

² Lamberti, "Relation de la Colchide ou Mingrelie," *Voyages au Nord*,

vii. 174 (Amsterdam, 1725).

³ H. S. Hallett, *A Thousand Miles on an Elephant in the Shan States* (Edinburgh and London, 1890), p. 264.

⁴ Martin, "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 594.

⁵ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 201.

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

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

Rain-
charms in
classical
antiquity.

¹ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890) p. 86. As to the cat in rain-making ceremonies, see above, pp. 289, 291.

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

³ As to such prayers, see Pausanias, ii. 25. 10; Marcus Antoninus, v. 7; Petronius, 44; Tertullian, *Apolog.* 40, compare 22 and 23; P. Cauer, *Delectus Inscriptionum Graecarum*,³ No. 162; H. Collitz und F. Bechtel, *Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften*, No. 3718; Ch. Michel, *Recueil d'inscriptions grecques*, No. 1004; O. Luders, *Die dionysischen Künstler*

(Berlin, 1873), pp. 26 sq.

⁴ Pausanias, viii. 38. 4.

⁵ See above, p. 248.

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

Rain-
charms in
classical
antiquity.

Japan.¹ The legendary Salmoneus, King of Elis, made mock thunder by dragging bronze kettles behind his chariot, or by driving over a bronze bridge, while he hurled blazing torches in imitation of lightning. It was his impious wish to mimic the thundering car of Zeus as it rolled across the vault of heaven. Indeed he declared that he was actually Zeus, and caused sacrifices to be offered to himself as such.² Near a temple of Mars, outside the walls of Rome, there was kept a certain stone known as the *lapis manalis*. In time of drought the stone was dragged into Rome, and this was supposed to bring down rain immediately.³ There were Etruscan wizards who made rain or discovered springs of water, it is not certain which. They were thought to bring the rain or the water out of their bellies.⁴ The legendary Telchines in Rhodes are described as magicians who could change their shape and bring clouds, rain, and snow.⁵ The Athenians sacrificed boiled, not roast meat to the Seasons, begging them to avert drought and dry heat and to send due warmth and timely rain.⁶ This is an interesting example of the admixture of religion with sorcery, of sacrifice with magic. The Athenians dimly conceived that in some way the water in the pot would be transmitted through the boiled meat to the deities, and then sent down again by them in the form of rain.⁷ In a similar spirit

¹ Above, pp. 248, 251.

² Apollodorus, i. 9. 7; Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 585 sqq.; Servius on Virgil, *l.c.*

³ Festus, s.v. *aqualicium* and *manalem lapidem*, pp. 2, 128, ed. C. O. Müller; Nonius Marcellus, s.v. *trullum*, p. 637, ed. Quicherat; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* iii. 175; Fulgentius, "Expos. serm. antiq." s.v. *manales lapides*, *Mythogr. Lat.* ed. Staveren, pp. 769 sq. It has been suggested that the stone derived its name and its virtue from the *manes* or spirits of the dead (E. Hoffmann, in *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, N.F. 1. (1895), pp. 484-486). Mr. O. Gilbert supposes that the stone was hollow and filled with water which was poured out in imitation of rain. See O. Gilbert, *Geschichte und Topographie der Stadt Rom im Altertum*, ii. (Leipzig, 1885) p. 154 note. His suggestion

is thus exactly parallel to that of Furtwangler as to the pitcher at Crannon (above, p. 309 note 6). Compare W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic* (London, 1899), pp. 232 sq.

⁴ Nonius Marcellus, s.v. *aquilex*, p. 69, ed. Quicherat. In favour of taking *aquilex* as rain-maker is the use of *aqualicium* in the sense of rain-making. Compare K. O. Müller, *Die Etrusker*, ed. W. Deecke, ii. 318 sq.

⁵ Diodorus Siculus, v. 55.

⁶ Philochorus, cited by Athenaeus, xiv. 72, p. 656 A.

⁷ Among the Barotse, on the upper Zambesi, "the sorcerers or witch-doctors go from village to village with remedies which they cook in great cauldrons to make rain" (A. Bertrand, *The Kingdom of the Barotsi*, London, 1899, p. 277).

the prudent Greeks made it a rule always to pour honey, but never wine, on the altars of the sun-god, pointing out, with great show of reason, how expedient it was that a god on whom so much depended should keep strictly sober.¹

§ 3. *The Magical Control of the Sun*

The rule of total abstinence which Greek prudence and piety imposed on the sun-god introduces us to a second class of natural phenomena which primitive man commonly supposes to be in some degree under his control and dependent on his exertions. As the magician thinks he can make rain, so he fancies he can cause the sun to shine, and can hasten or stay its going down. At an eclipse the Ojebways used to imagine that the sun was being extinguished. So they shot fire-tipped arrows in the air, hoping thus to rekindle his expiring light.² The Sencis of eastern Peru also shot burning arrows at the sun during an eclipse, but apparently they did this not so much to relight his lamp as to drive away a savage beast with which they supposed him to be struggling.³ Conversely during an eclipse of the moon some Indian tribes of the Orinoco used to bury lighted brands in the ground; because, said they, if the moon were to be extinguished, all fire on earth would be extinguished

Making
the sun
to shine.

Magical
control of
the sun.
Attempts
to help
the sun
at an
eclipse.

¹ Phylarchus, cited by Athenaeus, xv. 48, p. 693 E F. If the conjectural reading τοῖς Ἐμεσηνοῖς were adopted in place of the manuscript reading τοῖς Ἐλλήνων, we should have to suppose that the custom was not observed by the Greeks, but by the people of Emesa in Syria, where there was a famous worship of the sun. But Polemo, the highest authority in such matters, tells us that the Athenians offered "sober" sacrifices to the sun and to other deities (Schol. on Sophocles, *Oed. Colon.*, 100); and in a Greek inscription found at Piræus we read of offerings to the sun and of three "sober altars," by which no doubt are meant altars on which wine was not poured. See Ch. Michel, *Recueil d'inscriptions grecques*, No. 672; Dittenberger, *Sylloge inscriptionum Graecorum*,² No. 631; E. S. Roberts, *Introduction to Greek Epi-*

graphy, ii. No. 133; *Leges Graecorum sacrae*, ed. J. de Prott et L. Ziehen, ii. No. 18. In the passage of Athenaeus, accordingly, the reading τοῖς Ἐμεσηνοῖς, which has been rashly adopted by the latest editor of Athenaeus (G. Kaibel), may be safely rejected in favour of the manuscript reading.

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

³ W. Smyth and F. Lowe, *Narrative of a Journey from Lima to Para* (London, 1836), p. 230. An eclipse either of the sun or the moon is commonly supposed by savages to be caused by a monster who is trying to devour the luminary, and accordingly they discharge missiles and raise a clamour in order to drive him away. See E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*,² i. 328 seq.

with her, except such as was hidden from her sight.¹ During an eclipse of the sun the Kamtchatkans were wont to bring out fire from their huts and pray the great luminary to shine as before.² But the prayer addressed to the sun shews that this ceremony was religious rather than magical. Purely magical, on the other hand, was the ceremony observed on similar occasions by the Chilcotin Indians of north-western America. Men and women tucked up their robes, as they do in travelling, and then leaning on staves, as if they were heavy laden, they continued to walk in a circle till the eclipse was over.³ Apparently they thought thus to support the failing steps of the sun as he trod his weary round in the sky. Similarly in ancient Egypt the king, as the representative of the sun, walked solemnly round the walls of a temple in order to ensure that the sun should perform his daily journey round the sky without the interruption of an eclipse or other mishap.⁴ And after the autumnal equinox the ancient Egyptians held a festival called "the nativity of the sun's walking-stick," because, as the luminary declined daily in the sky, and his light and heat diminished, he was supposed to need a staff on which to lean.⁵ In New Caledonia when a wizard desires to make sunshine, he takes some plants and corals to the burial-ground, and fashions them into a bundle, adding two locks of hair cut from a living child of his family, also two teeth or an entire jawbone from the skeleton of an ancestor. He then climbs a mountain whose top catches the first rays of the morning sun. Here he deposits three sorts of plants on a flat stone, places a branch of dry coral beside them, and hangs the bundle of charms over the stone. Next morning he returns to the spot and sets fire to the bundle at the moment when

Various charms to cause the sun to shine.

¹ J. Gumilla, *Histoire de l'Orénoque* (Avignon, 1758), iii. 243 sq.

² S. Krascheninnikow, *Beschreibung des Landes Kamtschatka* (Lemgo, 1766), p. 217.

³ A. G. Morice, "The Western Dénés, their Manners and Customs," *Proceedings of the Canadian Institute*, Toronto, Third Series, vii. (1888-89) p. 154.

⁴ A. Moret, *Le Rituel du culte divin journalier en Égypte* (Paris, 1902),

pp. 90 sq.; *id.*, *Du caractère religieux de la royauté pharaonique* (Paris, 1902), p. 98.

⁵ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 52. The Esquimaux of Bering Strait give the name of "the sun's walking-stick" to the vertical bar in a perihelion. See E. W. Nelson, "The Eskimo about Bering Strait," *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, part i. (Washington, 1899) p. 449.

the sun rises from the sea. As the smoke curls up, he rubs the stone with the dry coral, invokes his ancestors and says: "Sun! I do this that you may be burning hot, and eat up all the clouds in the sky." The same ceremony is repeated at sunset.¹ The New Caledonians also make a drought by means of a disc-shaped stone with a hole in it. At the moment when the sun rises, the wizard holds the stone in his hand and passes a burning brand repeatedly into the hole, while he says: "I kindle the sun, in order that he may eat up the clouds and dry up our land, so that it may produce nothing."² When the sun rises behind clouds—a rare event in the bright sky of southern Africa—the Sun clan of the Bechuana say that he is grieving their heart. All work stands still, and all the food of the previous day is given to matrons or old women. They may eat it and may share it with the children they are nursing, but no one else may taste it. The people go down to the river and wash themselves all over. Each man throws into the river a stone taken from his domestic hearth, and replaces it with one picked up in the bed of the river. On their return to the village the chief kindles a fire in his hut, and all his subjects come and get a light from it. A general dance follows.³ In these cases it seems that the lighting of the flame on earth is supposed to rekindle the solar fire. Such a belief comes naturally to people who, like the Sun clan of the Bechuana, deem themselves the veritable kinsmen of the sun. When the sun is obscured by clouds, the Lengua Indians of the Gran Chaco hold burning sticks towards him to encourage the luminary,⁴ or rather perhaps to

¹ Father Lambert, in *Missions Catholiques*, xii. (1880) p. 216; *id.*, *Mœurs et superstitions des Néo-Calédoniens* (Nouméa, 1900), pp. 193 sq.; Glaumont, "Usages, mœurs et coutumes des Néo-Calédoniens," *Revue d'ethnographie*, vii. (1889) p. 116.

² Father Lambert, in *Missions Catholiques*, xxv. (1893) p. 116; *id.*, *Mœurs et superstitions des Néo-Calédoniens* (Nouméa, 1900), pp. 296 sq. The magic formula differs slightly in the two passages; in the text I have followed the second.

³ T. Arbousset et F. Daumas,

Voyage d'exploration au nord-est de la Colonie du Cap de Bonne-Espérance (Paris, 1842), pp. 350 sq. For the kinship with the sacred object (tqtem) from which the clan takes its name, see *ibid.* pp. 350, 422, 424. Other people have claimed kindred with the sun, as the Natchez of North America (*Voyages au nord*, v. 24) and the Incas of Peru.

⁴ G. Kurze, "Sitten und Gebräuche der Lengua-Indianer," *Mitteilungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft zu Jena*, xliii. (1905) p. 17.

rekindle his seemingly expiring light. The Banks Islanders make sunshine by means of a mock sun. They take a very round stone, called a *vat loa* or sunstone, wind red braid about it, and stick it with owls' feathers to represent rays, singing the proper spell in a low voice. Then they hang it on some high tree, such as a banyan or a casuarina, in a sacred place. Or the stone is laid on the ground with white rods radiating from it to imitate sunbeams.¹ Sometimes the mode of making sunshine is the converse of that of making rain. Thus we have seen that a white or red victim is sacrificed for sunshine, while a black one is sacrificed for rain.² Some of the New Caledonians drench a skeleton to make rain, but burn it to make sunshine.³

Sun-
charms
among the
American
Indians.

When the mists lay thick on the Sierras of Peru, the Indian women used to rattle the silver and copper ornaments which they wore on their breasts, and they blew against the fog, hoping thus to disperse it and make the sun shine through. Another way of producing the same effect was to burn salt or scatter ashes in the air.⁴ The Guarayo Indians also threw ashes in the air for the sake of clearing up the clouded evening sky.⁵ In Car Nicobar, when it has rained for several days without stopping, the natives roll long bamboos in leaves of various kinds and set them up in the middle of the village. They call these bamboos "rods inviting the sun to shine."⁶ The offering made by the Brahman in the morning is supposed to produce the sun, and we are told that "assuredly it would not rise, were he not to make that offering."⁷ The ancient Mexicans conceived the sun as the source of all vital force; hence they named him *Ipalmohuani*, "He by whom men live." But if he bestowed life on the world, he needed also to receive

Human
sacrifices
offered to
the sun by
the Mexi-
cans.

¹ R. H. Codrington, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, x. (1881) p. 278; *id.*, *The Melanesians* (Oxford, 1891), p. 184.

² Above, pp. 291 *sq.*

³ G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 346. See above, p. 284.

⁴ P. J. Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la idolatria del Piru* (Lima, 1621), p. 37.

⁵ A. d'Orbigny, *Voyage dans l'Amé-*

rique Méridionale, iii. (Paris and Strasbourg, 1844) p. 24.

⁶ V. Solomon, "Extracts from Diaries kept in Car Nicobar," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*; xxxii. (1902) p. 213.

⁷ *Śatapatha-Brahmana*, translated by J. Eggeling, part i. p. 328 (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xii.).

life from it. And as the heart is the seat and symbol of life, bleeding hearts of men and animals were presented to the sun to maintain him in vigour and enable him to run his course across the sky. Thus the Mexican sacrifices to the sun were magical rather than religious, being designed, not so much to please and propitiate him, as physically to renew his energies of heat, light, and motion. The constant demand for human victims to feed the solar fire was met by waging war every year on the neighbouring tribes and bringing back troops of captives to be sacrificed on the altar. Thus the ceaseless wars of the Mexicans and their cruel system of human sacrifices, the most monstrous on record, sprang in great measure from a mistaken theory of the solar system. No more striking illustration could be given of the disastrous consequences that may flow in practice from a purely speculative error.¹ The ancient Greeks believed that the sun drove in a chariot across the sky; hence the Rhodians, who worshipped the sun as their chief deity, annually dedicated a chariot and four horses to him, and flung them into the sea for his use. Doubtless they thought that after a year's work his old horses and chariot would be worn out.² From a like motive, probably, the idolatrous kings of Judah dedicated chariots and horses to the sun,³ and the Spartans,⁴ Persians,⁵ and Massagetae⁶ sacrificed horses to him. The Spartans performed the sacrifice on the

Greek
sacrifices
of horses
to the sun

¹ E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. (Oxford, 1892) pp. 520-523; K. Th. Preuss, in *Verhandlungen der Berliner anthropologischen Gesellschaft*, November 15, 1902, pp. (449) sq., (457) sq.; *id.*, "Die Feuergötter als Ausgangspunkt zum Verständnis der mexikanischen Religion," *Mitteilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, xxxiii. (1903) pp. 157 sq., 163. A Mexican legend relates how in the beginning the gods sacrificed themselves by fire in order to set the sun in motion. See B. de Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle Espagne*, bk. vii. ch. 2, pp. 478 sqq. (French trans. by Jourdanet and Simeon).

² Festus, s.v. "October equus," p. 181, ed. C. O. Müller.

³ 2 Kings xxiii. 11. Compare H. Zimmern, in E. Schrader's *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*³ (Berlin, 1902), pp. 369 sq.

⁴ Pausanias, iii. 20. 4.

⁵ Xenophon, *Cyropaed.* viii. 3. 24; Philostratus, *Vit. Apollon.* i. 31. 2; Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 385 sq.; Pausanias, iii. 20. 4. Compare Xenophon, *Anabasis*, iv. 5. 35; Trogu Pompeius, i. 10. 5.

⁶ Herodotus, i. 216; Strabo, xi. 8. 6. On the sacrifice of horses see further S. Bochart, *Hierozoicon*, i. coll. 175 sqq.; Negelein, in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxxiii. (1901), pp. 62-66. Many Asiatics held that the sun rode a horse, not a chariot. See Dittenberger, *Syllab. inscriptionum Graecarum*,² No. 754, with note⁴.

top of Mount Taygetus, the beautiful range behind which they saw the great luminary set every night. * It was as natural for the inhabitants of the valley of Sparta to do this as it was for the islanders of Rhodes to throw the chariot and horses into the sea, into which the sun seemed to them to sink at evening. For thus, whether on the mountain or in the sea, the fresh horses stood ready for the weary god where they would be most welcome, at the end of his day's journey.

Staying
the sun
by means
of a net or
string.

As some people think they can light up the sun or speed him on his way, so others fancy they can retard or stop him. In a pass of the Peruvian Andes stand two ruined towers on opposite hills. Iron hooks are clamped into their walls for the purpose of stretching a net from one tower to the other. The net is intended to catch the sun.¹ On a small hill in Fiji grew a patch of reeds, and travellers who feared to be belated used to tie the tops of a handful of reeds together to prevent the sun from going down.² As to this my late friend the Rev. Lorimer Fison wrote to me: "I have often seen the reeds tied together to keep the sun from going down. The place is on a hill in Lakomba, one of the eastern islands of the Fijian group. It is on the side—not on the top—of the hill. The reeds grow on the right side of the path. I asked an old man the meaning of the practice, and he said, 'We used to think the sun would see us, and know we wanted him not to go down till we got past on our way home again.'"³ But perhaps the original intention was to entangle the sun in the reeds, just as the Peruvians try to catch him in the net. Stories of men who have caught the sun in a noose are widely spread.⁴ When the sun is going southward in the autumn, and sinking lower and lower in the Arctic sky, the Esquimaux of Iglulik play the game of cat's cradle in order to catch him in the meshes of the string and so prevent his

¹ A. Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iv. 174. The name of the place is Andahuayllas.

² Th. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*², i. 250.

³ Mr. Fison's letter is dated August 26, 1898.

⁴ H. R. Schoolcraft, *The American Indians* (Buffalo, 1851), pp. 97 sqq.; *id.*, *Ojibwa* (New York and London, 1845), pp. 75 sqq.; W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs of the South Pacific*, pp. 61 sq.; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 200 sq.

disappearance. On the contrary, when the sun is moving northward in the spring, they play the game of cup-and-ball to hasten his return.¹ Means like those which the Esquimaux take to stop the departing sun are adopted by the Ewe negroes of the Slave Coast to catch a runaway slave. They take two sticks, unite them by a string, and then wind the string round one of them, while at the same time they pronounce the name of the fugitive. When the string is quite wound about the stick, the runaway will be bound fast and unable to stir.² In New Guinea, when a Motu man is hunting or travelling late in the afternoon and fears to be overtaken by darkness, he will sometimes take a piece of twine, loop it, and look through the loop at the sun. Then he pulls the loop into a knot and says, "Wait until we get home, and we will give you the fat of a pig." After that he passes the string to the man behind him, and then it is thrown away. In a similar case a Motumotu man of New Guinea says, "Sun, do not be in a hurry; just wait until I get to the end." And the sun waits. The Motumotu do not like to eat in the dark; so if the food is not yet ready, and the sun is sinking, they say, "Sun, stop; my food is not ready, and I want to eat by you."³ Here the looking at the sinking sun through a loop and then drawing the loop into a knot appears to be a purely magical ceremony designed to catch the sun in the mesh; but the request that the luminary would kindly stand still till home is reached or the dinner cooked, coupled with the offer of a slice of fat bacon as an inducement to him to comply with the request, is thoroughly religious. Jerome of Prague, travelling among the heathen Lithuanians early in the fifteenth century, found a tribe who worshipped the sun and venerated a large iron hammer. The priests told him that once the sun had been invisible for several months, because a powerful king had shut it^a up in a strong tower; but the signs of the zodiac

¹ Fr. Boas, "The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay," *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, xv. (1901) p. 151.

² G. Zündel, "Land und Volk der Eweer auf der Sklavenküste in Westafrika," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für*

Erdkunde zu Berlin, xii. (1877) p. 411. We have met with a somewhat similar charm in North Africa to bring back a runaway slave. See above, p. 152.

³ J. Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea* (London, 1887), p. 172.

Staying
the sun
by putting
a stone or a
clod in the
fork of a
tree.

had broken open the tower with this very hammer and released the sun. Therefore they adored the hammer.¹ When an Australian blackfellow wishes to stay the sun from going down till he gets home, he puts a sod in the fork of a tree, exactly facing the setting sun.² For the same purpose an Indian of Yucatan, journeying westward, places a stone in a tree or pulls out some of his eyelashes and blows them towards the sun.³ When the Golos, a tribe of the Bahr-el-Ghazal, are on the march, they will sometimes take a stone or a small ant-heap, about the size of a man's head, and place it in the fork of a tree in order to retard the sunset.⁴ South African natives, in travelling, will put a stone in a fork of a tree or place some grass on the path with a stone over it, believing that this will cause their friends to keep the meal waiting till their arrival.⁵ In this, as in previous examples, the purpose apparently is to retard the sun. But why should the act of putting a stone or a sod in a tree be supposed to effect this? A partial explanation is suggested by another Australian custom. In their journeys the natives are accustomed to place stones in trees at different heights from the ground in order to indicate the height of the sun in the sky at the moment when they passed the particular tree. Those who follow are thus made aware of the time of day when their friends in advance passed the spot.⁶ Possibly the natives, thus accustomed to mark the sun's progress, may have slipped into the confusion of imagining that to mark the sun's progress was to arrest it at the point marked. On the other hand, to make it go

¹ Aeneas Sylvius, *Opera* (Bâle, 1571), p. 418 [wrongly numbered 420]; A. Thevet, *Cosmographie universelle* (Paris, 1575), ii. 851.

² R. Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, ii. 334; E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, i. 50.

³ Fancourt, *History of Yucatan*, p. 118; Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, ii. 51.

⁴ S. L. Cummins, "Sub-tribes of the Bahr-el-Ghazal Dinkas," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxiv. (1904) p. 164.

⁵ (*South African*) *Folklore Journal*,

vol. i. part i. (Capetown, 1879) p. 34; Dudley Kidd, *Savage Childhood* (London, 1906), pp. 147 sq.; Rev. E. Gottschling, "The Bawenda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxv. (1905) p. 381.

⁶ E. J. Eyre, *Journals of Expeditions of Discovery into Central Australia* (London, 1845), ii. 365. The Ovakumbi of Angola place a stone in the fork of a tree as a memorial at any place where they have learned something which they wish to remember. See Ch. Wunenberger, "La Mission et le royaume de Humbé," *Missions Catholiques*, xx. (1888) p. 270.

down faster, the Australians throw sand into the air and blow with their mouths towards the sun,¹ perhaps to waft the lingering orb westward and bury it under the sands into which it appears to sink at night.

As some people imagine they can hasten the sun, so others fancy they can jog the tardy moon. The natives of German New Guinea reckon months by the moon, and some of them have been known to throw stones and spears at the moon, in order to accelerate its progress and so to hasten the return of their friends, who were away from home for twelve months working on a tobacco plantation.² The Malays think that a bright glow at sunset may throw a weak person into a fever. Hence they attempt to extinguish the glow by spitting out water and throwing ashes at it.³ The Shuswap Indians of British Columbia believe that they can bring on cold weather by burning the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning. The belief may be based on the observation that in their country cold follows a thunder-storm. Hence in spring, when these Indians are travelling over the snow on high ground, they burn splinters of such wood in the fire in order that the crust of the snow may not melt.⁴

Accelerating the moon.

§ 4. *The Magical Control of the Wind*

Once more, the savage thinks he can make the wind blow or to be still. When the day is hot and a Yakut has a long way to go, he takes a stone which he has chanced to find in an animal or fish, winds a horse-hair several times round it, and ties it to a stick. He then waves the stick about, uttering a spell. Soon a cool breeze begins to blow.⁵ In order to procure a cool wind for nine days the stone should first be dipped in the blood of a bird or beast and

Making the wind to blow or be still.

¹ E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, 92 sq. iii. 145.

² K. Vetter, *Komm herüber und hilf uns! oder die Arbeit der Neuen-Dettelsauer Mission in Deutsch Neu-Guinea*, ii. (Barmen, 1898) p. 29; *id.*, in B. Hagen's *Unter den Papua's* (Wiesbaden, 1899), p. 287.

³ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp.

⁴ G. M. Dawson, "Notes on the Shuswap People of British Columbia," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, ix. (1901, pub. 1902) section ii. p. 38.

⁵ J. G. Gmelin, *Reise durch Sibirien* (Göttingen, 1751-52), ii. 510.

Making
the wind
to blow or
be still.

then presented to the sun, while the sorcerer makes three turns contrary to the course of the luminary.¹ The Wind clan of the Omahas flap their blankets to start a breeze which will drive away the mosquitoes.² When a Haida Indian wishes to obtain a fair wind, he fasts, shoots a raven, singes it in the fire, and then going to the edge of the sea sweeps it over the surface of the water four times in the direction in which he wishes the wind to blow. He then throws the raven behind him, but afterwards picks it up and sets it in a sitting posture at the foot of a spruce-tree, facing towards the required wind. Propping its beak open with a stick, he requests a fair wind for a certain number of days; then going away he lies covered up in his mantle till another Indian asks him for how many days he has desired the wind, which question he answers.³ When a sorcerer in New Britain wishes to make a wind blow in a certain direction, he throws burnt lime in the air, chanting a song all the time. Then he waves sprigs of ginger and other plants about, throws them up and catches them. Next he makes a small fire with these sprigs on the spot where the lime has fallen thickest, and walks round the fire chanting. Lastly, he takes the ashes and throws them on the water.⁴ If a Hottentot desires the wind to drop, he takes one of his fattest skins and hangs it on the end of a pole, in the belief that by blowing the skin down the wind will lose all its force and must itself fall.⁵ Fuegian wizards throw shells against the wind to make it drop.⁶ On the other hand, when a Persian peasant desires a strong wind to winnow his corn, he rubs a kind of bastard saffron and throws it up into the air; after that the breeze soon begins to blow.⁷ Some of the Indians of Canada believed that the winds were caused by a fish like a lizard. When one of

¹ C. H. Cottrell, *Recollections of Siberia* (London, 1842), p. 140.

² J. Owen Dorsey, "Omaha Sociology," *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1884), p. 241; *id.*, "A Study of Siouan Cults," *Eleventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1894), p. 410.

³ G. M. Dawson, "On the Haida Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands,"

Geological Survey of Canada, Report of Progress for 1878-1879, p. 124 B.

⁴ W. Powell, *Wanderings in a Wild Country* (London, 1883), p. 169.

⁵ O. Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique* (Amsterdam, 1686), p. 389.

⁶ *Mission scientifique du Cap Horn*, vii. (Paris, 1891) p. 257.

⁷ J. Richardson, *A Dictionary of Persian, Arabic, and English*, New Edition (London, 1829), pp. liii. sq.

these fish had been caught, the Indians advised the Jesuit missionaries to put it back into the river as fast as possible in order to calm the wind, which was contrary.¹ If a Cherokee wizard desires to turn aside an approaching storm, he faces it and recites a spell with outstretched hand. Then he gently blows towards the quarter to which he wishes it to go, waving his hand in the same direction as if he were pushing away the storm.² The Ottawa Indians fancied they could calm a tempest³ by relating the dreams they had dreamed during their fast, or by throwing tobacco on the troubled water.⁴ When the Kei Islanders wish to obtain a favourable wind for their friends at sea, they dance in a ring, both men and women, swaying their bodies to and fro, while the men hold handkerchiefs in their hands.⁵ In Melanesia there are everywhere weather-doctors who can control the powers of the air and are willing to supply wind or calm in return for a proper remuneration. For instance, in Santa Cruz the wizard makes wind by waving the branch of a tree and chanting the appropriate charm.⁶ In another Melanesian island a missionary observed a large shell filled with earth, in which an oblong stone, covered with red ochre, was set up, while the whole was surrounded by a fence of sticks strengthened by a creeper which was twined in and out the uprights. On asking a native what these things meant, he learned that the wind was here fenced or bound round, lest it should blow hard; the imprisoned wind would not be able to blow again until the fence that kept it in should have rotted away.⁶ In South Africa, when the Caffres wish to stop a high wind, they call in a "wind-doctor," who takes a pot with a spout and points the spout towards the quarter from which the wind is blowing. He then places medicines

Making the
wind to
blow or be
still.

¹ *Relations des Jésuites*, 1636, p. 38 (Canadian reprint). On the other hand, some of the New South Wales aborigines thought that a wished-for wind would not rise if shell-fish were roasted at night (D. Collins, *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, London, 1804, p. 382).

² J. Mooney, "Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees," *Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1891), pp. 387 sq.

³ *Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, iv. (1830) p. 482.

⁴ G. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei Eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893) p. 827.

⁵ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, pp. 200, 201.

⁶ J. Palmer, quoted by R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 201, note.

and some of the dust blown by the wind in the vessel, and seals up every opening of the pot with damp clay. Thereupon the doctor declares, "The head of the wind is now in my pot, and the wind will cease to blow."¹ The natives of the island of Bibili, off German New Guinea, are reputed to make wind by blowing with their mouths. In stormy weather the Bogadjim people say, "The Bibili folk are at it again, blowing away."² Another way of making wind which is practised in New Guinea is to strike a "wind-stone" lightly with a stick; to strike it hard would bring on a hurricane.³ So in Scotland witches used to raise the wind by dipping a rag in water and beating it thrice on a stone, saying:

*"I knok this rag upone this stane
To raise the wind in the divellis name,
It sall not lye till I please againe."*⁴

Raising
the wind.

At Victoria, the capital of Vancouver's Island, there are a number of large stones not far from what is called the Battery. Each of them represents a certain wind. When an Indian wants any particular wind, he goes and moves the corresponding stone a little; were he to move it too much, the wind would blow very hard.⁵ The natives of Murray Island in Torres Straits used to make a great wind blow from the south-east by pointing coco-nut leaves and other plants at two granitic boulders on the shore. So long, as the leaves remained there the wind sat in that quarter. But, significantly enough, the ceremony was only performed during the prevalence of the south-east monsoon. The natives knew better than to try to raise a south-east wind while the north-west monsoon was blowing.⁶ On the altar of Fladda's chapel, in the island of Fladdahuan (one of the Hebrides), lay a round bluish stone which was always moist. Windbound fishermen walked sunwise round the chapel and

¹ Dudley Kidd, *Savage Childhood* (London, 1906), p. 151.

² B. Hagen, *Unter den Papua's* (Wiesbaden, 1899), p. 269.

³ W. Monckton, "Some Recollections of New Guinea Customs," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, v. (1896) p. 186.

⁴ J. G. Dalyell, *The Darker Super-*

stitions of Scotland, p. 248.

⁵ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 26 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

⁶ A. C. Haddon, *Head-hunters*, p. 60; *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, vi. (Cambridge, 1908) pp. 201 sq.

then poured water on the stone, whereupon a favourable breeze was sure to spring up.¹ In Gigha, an island off the western coast of Argyleshire, there is a well named Tobar-rath Bhuathaig or "The lucky well of Beathag," which used to be famous for its power of raising the wind. It lies at the foot of a hill facing north-east near an isthmus called Tarbat. Six feet above where the water gushes out there is a heap of stones which forms a cover to the sacred spring. When a person wished for a fair wind, either to leave the island or to bring home his absent friends, this part was opened with great solemnity, the stones were carefully removed, and the well cleaned with a wooden dish or a clam shell. This being done, the water was thrown several times in the direction from which the wished-for wind was to blow, and this action was accompanied by a certain form of words which the person repeated every time he threw the water. When the ceremony was over, the well was again carefully shut up to prevent fatal consequences, it being firmly believed that, were the place left open, a storm would arise which would overwhelm the whole island.² The Esthonians have various odd ways of raising a wind. They scratch their finger, or hang up a serpent, or strike an axe into a house-beam in the direction from which they wish the wind to blow, while at the same time they whistle. The notion is that the gentle wind will not let an innocent being or even a beam suffer without coming and breathing softly to assuage the pain.³

In Mabuiag, an island between New Guinea and Australia, there were men whose business was to make wind for such as wanted it. When engaged in his professional duties the wizard painted himself black behind and red on his face and chest. The red in front typified the red cloud of morning, the black represented the dark blue sky of night. Thus arrayed he took some bushes, and, when the tide was low, fastened them at the edge of the reef so that the flowing

Winds
raised by
wizards
and
witches.

¹ Martin, "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 627; Miss C. F. Gordon Cumming, *In the Hebrides*, pp. 166 sq.

² W. Fraser, in Sir John Sinclair's

Statistical Account of Scotland, viii. (Edinburgh, 1793) p. 52, note.

³ Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebrauche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten* (St. Petersburg, 1854), pp. 105 sq.

Winds
raised by
wizards and
witches.

tide made them sway backwards and forwards. But if only a gentle breeze was needed, he fastened them nearer to the shore. To stop the wind he again painted himself red and black, the latter in imitation of the clear blue sky, and then removing the bushes from the reef he dried and burnt them. The smoke as it curled up was believed to stop the wind: "Smoke he go up and him clear up on top."¹ In some islands of Torres Straits the wizard made wind by whirling a bull-roarer; ² the booming sound of the instrument probably seemed to him like the roar or the whistling of the wind. Amongst the Kurnai tribe of Gippsland in Victoria there used to be a noted raiser of storms who went by the name of Bunjil Kraura or "Great West Wind." This wind makes the tall slender trees of the Gippsland forests to rock and sway so that the natives could not climb them in search of opossums. Hence the people were forced to propitiate Bunjil Kraura by liberal offerings of weapons and rugs whenever the tree-tops bent before a gale. Having received their gifts, Bunjil Kraura would bind his head with swathes of stringy bark, and lull the storm to rest with a song which consisted of the words "Wear—string—Westwind," repeated again and again.³ Apparently the wizard identified himself with the wind, and fancied that he could bind it by tying string round his own head. The Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia, as we have seen, believe that twins can summon any wind by merely moving their hands.⁴ In Greenland a woman in child-bed and for some time after delivery is supposed to possess the power of laying a storm. She has only to go out of doors, fill her mouth with air, and coming back into the house blow it out again.⁵ In antiquity there was a family at Corinth which enjoyed the reputation of being able to still the raging wind; but we do not know in what manner its members exercised a useful function.

¹ A. C. Haddon, "The Ethnography of the Western Tribe of Torres Straits," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), pp. 401 sq.; *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, v. (Cambridge, 1904), pp. 351 sq.

² *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*,

v. 352.

³ Mary E. B. Howitt, *Folklore and Legends of some Victorian Tribes* (in manuscript).

⁴ See above, p. 263.

⁵ H. Egede, *Description of Greenland*, second edition (London, 1818), p. 196, note.

which probably earned for them a more solid recompense than mere repute among the seafaring population of the isthmus.¹ Even in Christian times, under the reign of Constantine, a certain Sopater suffered death at Constantinople on a charge of binding the winds by magic, because it happened that the corn-ships of Egypt and Syria were detained afar off by calms or head-winds, to the rage and disappointment of the hungry Byzantine rabble.² An ancient charm to keep storms from damaging the crops was to bury a toad in a new earthen vessel in the middle of the field.³ Finnish wizards used to sell wind to storm-stayed mariners. The wind was enclosed in three knots; if they undid the first knot, a moderate wind sprang up; if the second, it blew half a gale; if the third, a hurricane.⁴ Indeed the Esthonians, whose country is divided from Finland only by an arm of the sea, still believe in the magical powers of their northern neighbours. The bitter winds that blow in spring from the north and north-east, bringing ague and rheumatic inflammations in their train, are set down by the simple Esthonian peasantry to the machinations of the Finnish wizards and witches. In particular they regard with special dread three days in spring to which they give the name of Days of the Cross; one of them falls on the Eve of Ascension Day. The people in the neighbourhood of Fellin fear to go out on these days lest the cruel winds from Lapp-land should smite them dead. A popular Esthonian song runs:

*"Wind of the Cross! rushing and mighty!
Heavy the blow of thy wings sweeping past!
Wild wailing wind of misfortune and sorrow,
Wizards of Finland ride by on the blast."*⁵

It is said, too, that sailors, beating up against the wind in the Gulf of Finland, sometimes see a strange sail heave in sight astern and overhaul them hand over hand. On she

¹ Hesychius and Suidas, s.v. ἀνεμοκοῖται; Eustathius, on Homer, *Od.* x. 22, p. 1645. Compare J. Töpffer, *Attische Genealogie*, p. 112, who conjectures that the Eudæmæi or Heudæmæi at Athens may also have claimed the power of lulling the winds.

² Eunapius, *Vitæ sophistarum*:

Aedesius, p. 463, Didot edition.

³ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xviii. 294.

Compare *Geoponica*, ii. 18.

⁴ Olaus Magnus, *Gentium septentr. hist.* iii. 15.

⁵ Boecker-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, pp. 107 sq.

comes with a cloud of canvas—all her studding-sails out—right in the teeth of the wind, forging her way through the foaming billows, dashing back the spray in sheets from her cutwater, every sail swollen to bursting, every rope strained to cracking. Then the sailors know that she hails from Finland.¹

Enclosing
the winds
in knots,
bags, and
pots.

The art of tying up the wind in three knots, so that the more knots are loosed the stronger will blow the wind, has been attributed to wizards in Lapland and to witches in Shetland, Lewis, and the Isle of Man. Shetland seamen still buy winds in the shape of knotted handkerchiefs or threads from old women who claim to rule the storms. There are said to be ancient crones in Lerwick now who live by selling wind.² In the early part of the nineteenth century Sir Walter Scott visited one of these witches at Stromness in the Orkneys. He says: "We clomb, by steep and dirty lanes, an eminence rising above the town, and commanding a fine view. An old hag lives in a wretched cabin on this height, and subsists by selling winds. Each captain of a merchantman, between jest and earnest, gives the old woman sixpence, and she boils her kettle to procure a favourable gale. She was a miserable figure; upwards of ninety, she told us, and dried up like a mummy. A sort of clay-coloured cloak, folded over her head, corresponded in colour to her corpse-like complexion. Fine light-blue eyes, and nose and chin that almost met, and a ghastly expression of cunning, gave her quite the effect of Hecate."³ A Norwegian witch has boasted of sinking a ship by opening a bag in which she had shut up a wind.⁴ Ulysses received the winds in a leathern bag from Aeolus, King of the Winds.⁵ The

¹ Dana, *Two Years before the Mast*, ch. vi.

² J. Scheffer, *Lapponia* (Frankfort, 1673), p. 144; J. Train, *Account of the Isle of Man*, ii. 166; Miss C. F. Gordon Cumming, *In the Hebrides*, pp. 254 sq.; Ch. Rogers, *Social Life in Scotland*, iii. 220; Sir W. Scott, *Pirate*, note to ch. vii.; Miss M. Cameron, in *Folklore*, xiv. (1903) pp. 301 sq. Compare Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act i. Sc. 3, line 11. "But, my loving master, if any wind will not

serve, then I wish I were in Lapland, to buy a good wind of one of the honest witches, that sell so many winds there and so cheap" (Izaak Walton, *Compleat Angler*, ch. v.).

³ J. G. Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott*, iii. 203 (first edition).

⁴ C. Leemius, *De Lapponibus Finmarchiae, etc., commentatio* (Copenhagen, 1767), p. 454.

⁵ Homer, *Odyssey*, x. 19 sqq. It is said that Perdoytus, the Lithuanian

Motumotu in New Guinea think that storms are sent by an Oiabu sorcerer; for each wind he has a bamboo which he opens at pleasure.¹ On the top of Mount Agu in Togo, a district of German West Africa, resides a fetish called Bagba, who is supposed to control the wind and the rain. His priest is said to keep the winds shut up in great pots.²

Often the stormy wind is regarded as an evil being who may be intimidated, driven away, or killed. When the darkening of the sky indicates the approach of a tornado, a South African magician will repair to a height whither he collects as many people as can be hastily summoned to his assistance. Directed by him, they shout and bellow in imitation of the gust as it swirls roaring about the huts and among the trees of the forest. Then at a signal they mimic the crash of the thunder, after which there is a dead silence for a few seconds; then follows a screech more piercing and prolonged than any that preceded, dying away in a tremulous wail. The magician fills his mouth with a foul liquid which he squirts in defiant jets against the approaching storm as a kind of menace or challenge to the spirit of the wind; and the shouting and wailing of his assistants are meant to frighten the spirit away. The performance lasts until the tornado either bursts or passes away in another direction. If it bursts, the reason is that the magician who sent the storm was more powerful than he who endeavoured to avert it.³ When storms and bad weather have lasted long and food is scarce with the Central Esquimaux, they endeavour to conjure the tempest by making a long whip of seaweed, armed with which they go down to the beach and strike out in the direction of the wind, crying, "*Taba* (it is enough)!"⁴ Once when north-westerly winds had kept the ice long on the coast and food was becoming scarce, the Esquimaux

Frightening, driving away, and killing the spirit of the wind.

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

¹ J. Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, p. 177.

² Lieut. Herold, in *Mitteilungen*

aus den deutschen Schutzgebieten, v. (1892) pp. 144 sq.; H. Klose, *Togo unter deutscher Flagge* (Berlin, 1899), p. 189.

³ Rev. J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth* (London, 1893), p. 7.

⁴ Fr. Boas, "The Central Eskimo," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1888), p. 593.

performed a ceremony to make a calm. A fire was kindled on the shore, and the men gathered round it and chanted. An old man then stepped up to the fire and in a coaxing voice invited the demon of the wind to come under the fire and warm himself. When he was supposed to have arrived, a vessel of water, to which each man present had contributed, was thrown on the flames by an old man, and immediately a flight of arrows sped towards the spot where the fire had been. They thought that the demon would not stay where he had been so badly treated. To complete the effect, guns were discharged in various directions, and the captain of a European vessel was invited to fire on the wind with cannon.¹ On the twenty-first of February 1883 a similar ceremony was performed by the Esquimaux of Point Barrow, Alaska, with the intention of killing the spirit of the wind. Women drove the demon from their houses with clubs and knives, with which they made passes in the air; and the men, gathering round a fire, shot him with their rifles and crushed him under a heavy stone the moment that steam rose in a cloud from the smouldering embers, on which a tub of water had just been thrown.²

Confront-
ing the
storm with
swords and
drums.

In ancient India the priest was directed to confront a storm, armed to the teeth with a bludgeon, a sword, and a firebrand, while he chanted a magical lay.³ During a tremendous hurricane the drums of Kadouma, near the Victoria Nyanza, were heard to beat all night. When next morning a missionary enquired the cause, he was told that the sound of the drums is a charm against storms.⁴ The Sea Dyaks and Kayans of Borneo beat gongs when a tempest is raging; but the Dyaks, and perhaps the Kayans also, do this, not so much to frighten away the spirit of the storm, as to apprise him of their whereabouts, lest he should inadvertently knock their houses down. Heard at night above the howling of the storm, the distant boom of the

¹ *Arctic Papers for the Expedition of 1875* (Royal Geographical Society), p. 274.

² J. Murdoch, "Ethnological Results of the Point Barrow Expedition," *Ninth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1892), pp. 432 sq.

³ M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda*, p. 249 (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xlii.); W. Caland, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p. 128.

⁴ Father Livinhac, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, liii. (1881) p. 209.

gongs has a weird effect; and sometimes, before the notes can be distinguished for the wind and rain, they strike fear into a neighbouring village; lights are extinguished, the women are put in a place of safety, and the men stand to their arms to resist an attack. Then with a lull in the wind the true nature of the gong-beating is recognised, and the alarm subsides.¹

On calm summer days in the Highlands of Scotland eddies of wind sometimes go past, whirling about dust and straws, though not another breath of air is stirring. The Highlanders think that the fairies are in these eddies carrying away men, women, children, or animals, and they will fling their left shoe, or their bonnet, or a knife, or earth from a mole-hill at the eddy to make the fairies drop their booty.² When a gust lifts the hay in the meadow, the Breton peasant throws a knife or a fork at it to prevent the devil from carrying off the hay.³ Similarly in the Esthonian island of Oesel, when the reapers are busy among the corn and the wind blows about the ears that have not yet been tied into sheaves, the reapers slash at it with their sickles.⁴ The custom of flinging a knife or a hat at a whirlwind is observed alike by German, Slavonian, and Esthonian rustics; they think that a witch or wizard is riding on the blast, and that the knife, if it hits the witch, will be reddened by her blood or will disappear altogether, sticking in the wound it has inflicted.⁵

Attacking
the whirl-
wind with
weapons.

¹ J. Perham, "Sea Dyak Religion," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 10 (December 1882), pp. 241 sq; H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i, 201; A. W. Nieuwenhuis, *In Centraal Borneo* (Leyden, 1900), ii, 180 sq. The people of Samarang used to beat drums and dance in the eleventh month to demand cold weather, and they threw water on one another. See E. Chavannes, *Les Tou-Kiue (Turcs) Occidentaux* (St. Petersburg, 1903), p. 135.

² J. G. Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1900), pp. 24 sq.

³ P. Sébillot, *Coutumes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne*, pp. 302 sq.

⁴ Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhand-*

lungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat, vii, 2, p. 54.

⁵ A. Kuhn und W. Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 454, § 406; Von Alpengburg, *Mythen und Sagen Tirols*, pp. 262, 365 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Die Götter der deutschen und nordischen Völker* (Berlin, 1860), p. 99; id., *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 85; Boeckler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehesten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, p. 109; F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Sudslaven*, p. 117. In some parts of Austria and Germany, when a storm is raging, the people open a window and throw out a handful of meal, saying to the wind, "There, that's for you, stop!" See A. Peter, *Volksthümliches aus öster-*

Attacking
the whirl-
wind with
weapons.

Sometimes Esthonian peasants run shrieking and shouting behind a whirlwind, hurling sticks and stones into the flying dust.¹ The Lengua Indians of the Gran Chaco ascribe the rush of a whirlwind to the passage of a spirit and they fling sticks at it to frighten it away.² When the wind blows down their huts, the Payaguas of South America snatch up firebrands and run against the wind, menacing it with the blazing brands, while others beat the air with their fists to frighten the storm.³ When the Guaycurus are threatened by a severe storm, the men go out armed, and the women and children scream their loudest to intimidate the demon.⁴ During a tempest the inhabitants of a Batta village in Sumatra have been seen to rush from their houses armed with sword and lance. The rajah placed himself at their head, and with shouts and yells they hewed and hacked at the invisible foe. An old woman was observed to be specially active in the defence of her house, slashing the air right and left with a long sabre.⁵ In a violent thunderstorm, the peals sounding very near, the Kayans of Borneo have been seen to draw their swords threateningly half out of their scabbards, as if to frighten away the demons of the storm.⁶ In Australia the huge columns of red sand that move rapidly across a desert tract are thought by the natives to be spirits passing along. Once

reichisch-Schlesien, ii. 259; J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ p. 529; Zingerle, *Sitten Brauche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,³ p. 118, § 1046. Similarly an old Irishwoman has been seen to fling handfuls of grass into a cloud of dust blown along a road, and she explained her behaviour by saying that she wished to give something to the fairies who were playing in the dust. (*Folklore*, iv. (1893) p. 352). But these are sacrifices to appease, not ceremonies to constrain the spirits of the air; thus they belong to the domain of religion rather than to that of magic. The ancient Greeks sacrificed to the winds. See P. Stengel, "Die Opfer der Hellenen an die Winde," *Hermes*, xvi. (1881) pp. 346-350; and my note on Pausanias, ii. 12. 1.

¹ J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 278.

² G. Kurze, "Sitten und Gebräuche der Lengua-Indianer," *Mitteilungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft zu Jena*, xxiii. (1905) p. 17.

³ F. de Azara, *Voyage dans l'Amérique Méridionale*, ii. 137.

⁴ P. Lozano, *Descripcion chorographica del Gran Chaco* (Cordova, 1733), p. 71; Charlevoix, *Histoire du Paraguay*, ii. 74; Guevara, *Historia del Paraguay*, p. 23 (in P. de Angelis's *Coleccion de obras y documentos*, etc., ii., Buenos Ayres, 1836); D. de Alvear, *Relacion geografica e historica de la provincia de Misiones*, p. 14 (P. de Angelis, *op. cit.* iv.).

⁵ W. A. Henry, "Bijdrage tot de Kennis der Bataklanden," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xvii. 23 sq.

⁶ A. W. Nieuwenhuis, *Quer durch Borneo*, i. (Leyden, 1904) p. 97.

an athletic young black ran after one of these moving columns to kill it with boomerangs. He was away two or three hours, and came back very weary, saying he had killed Koochee (the demon), but that Koochee had growled at him and he must die.¹ Of the Bedouins of eastern Africa it is said that "no whirlwind ever sweeps across the path without being pursued by a dozen savages with drawn creeses, who stab into the centre of the dusty column in order to drive away the evil spirit that is believed to be riding on the blast."²

In the light of these examples a story told by Herodotus, which his modern critics have treated as a fable, is perfectly credible. He says, without however vouching for the truth of the tale, that once in the land of the Psylli, the modern Tripoli, the wind blowing from the Sahara had dried up all the water-tanks. So the people took counsel and marched in a body to make war on the south wind. But when they entered the desert the simoom swept down on them and buried them to a man.³ The story may well have been told by one who watched them disappearing, in battle array, with drums and cymbals beating, into the red cloud of whirling sand.

¹ R. Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 457 sq.; compare *id.*, ii. 270; A. W. Howitt, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884) p. 194, note; Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 632.

² W. Cornwallis Harris, *The Highlands of Ethiopia* (London, 1844), i. 352. Compare Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nord-ost-Afrikas: die geistige Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Somali* (Berlin, 1896), p. 28. Even where these columns or whirlwinds of dust are not attacked they are still regarded with awe. The Ainos believe them to be filled with demons; hence they will hide behind a tree and spit profusely if they see one coming (J. Batchelor, *The Ainu and their Folklore*, p. 385). In some parts of India they are supposed to be *bhuts* going to bathe in the Ganges (Denzil C. J. Ibbetson, *Settlement Report of the Panipat, Tahsil, and Karnal Parganah of the Kar-*

nal District, p. 154). The Chevas and Tumbucas of South Africa fancy them to be the wandering souls of sorcerers (*Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, vi. (Berlin, 1856) pp. 301 sq.). The Baganda and the Pawnees believe them to be ghosts (J. Roscoe in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 73; G. B. Grinnell, *Pawnee Hero-Stories and Folk-tales*, p. 357). Californian Indians think that they are happy souls ascending to the heavenly land (Stephen Powers, *Tribes of California*, p. 328). Once when a great Fijian chief died, a whirlwind swept across the lagoon. An old man who saw it covered his mouth with his hand and said in an awestruck whisper, "There goes his spirit!" (Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to the author, dated August 26, 1898).

³ Herodotus, iv. 173; Aulus Gellius, xvi. 11. The Cimbrians are said to have taken arms against the tide (Strabo, vii. 2. 1).

CHAPTER VI

MAGICIANS AS KINGS

Social importance of magicians and their rise to the position of chiefs or kings.

But magic is not the only road by which men have travelled to a throne.

Complexity of the social phenomena and the danger of simplifying them unduly by our hypotheses.

THE foregoing evidence may satisfy us that in many lands and many races magic has claimed to control the great forces of nature for the good of man. If that has been so, the practitioners of the art must necessarily be personages of importance and influence in any society which puts faith in their extravagant pretensions, and it would be no matter for surprise if, by virtue of the reputation which they enjoy and of the awe which they inspire, some of them should attain to the highest position of authority over their credulous fellows. In point of fact magicians appear to have often developed into chiefs and kings. Not that magic is the only or perhaps even the main road by which men have travelled to a throne. The lust of power, the desire to domineer over our fellows, is among the commonest and the strongest of human passions, and no doubt men of a masterful character have sought to satisfy it in many different ways and have attained by many different means to the goal of their ambition. The sword, for example, in a strong hand has unquestionably done for many what the magician's wand in a deft hand appears to have done for some. He who investigates the history of institutions should constantly bear in mind the extreme complexity of the causes which have built up the fabric of human society, and should be on his guard against a subtle danger incidental to all science, the tendency to simplify unduly the infinite variety of the phenomena by fixing our attention on a few of them to the exclusion of the rest. The propensity to excessive simplification is indeed natural to the mind of man, since it is only

by abstraction and generalisation, which necessarily imply the neglect of a multitude of particulars, that he can stretch his puny faculties so as to embrace a minute portion of the illimitable vastness of the universe. But if the propensity is natural and even inevitable, it is nevertheless fraught with peril, since it is apt to narrow and falsify our conception of any subject under investigation. To correct it partially—for to correct it wholly would require an infinite intelligence—we must endeavour to broaden our views by taking account of a wide range of facts and possibilities; and when we have done so to the utmost of our power, we must still remember that from the very nature of things our ideas fall immeasurably short of the reality.

In no branch of learning, perhaps, has this proneness to an attractive but fallacious simplicity wrought more havoc than in the investigation of the early history of mankind; in particular, the excesses to which it has been carried have done much to discredit the study of primitive mythology and religion. Students of these subjects have been far too ready to pounce on any theory which adequately explains some of the facts, and forthwith to stretch it so as to cover them all; and when the theory, thus unduly strained, has broken, as was to be expected, in their unskilful hands, they have pettishly thrown it aside in disgust instead of restricting it, as they should have done from the outset, to the particular class of facts to which it is really applicable. So it fared in our youth with the solar myth theory, which after being unreasonably exaggerated by its friends has long been quite as unreasonably rejected altogether by its adversaries; and in more recent times the theories of totemism, magic, and taboo, to take only a few conspicuous examples, have similarly suffered from the excessive zeal of injudicious advocates. This instability of judgment, this tendency of anthropological opinion to swing to and fro from one extreme to another with every breath of new discovery, is perhaps the principal reason why the whole study is still viewed askance by men of sober and cautious temper, who naturally look with suspicion on idols that are set up and worshipped one day only to be knocked down and trampled under foot the next. To these cool observers Max

This propensity to excessive simplification has done much to discredit the study of primitive mythology and religion.

Müller and the rosy Dawn in the nineteenth century stand on the same dusty shelf with Jacob Bryant and Noah's ark in the eighteenth, and they expect with a sarcastic smile the time when the fashionable anthropological topics of the present day will in their turn be consigned to the same peaceful limbo of forgotten absurdities. It is not for the anthropologist himself to anticipate the verdict of posterity on his labours; still it is his humble hope that the facts which he has patiently amassed will be found sufficiently numerous and solid to bear the weight of some at least of the conclusions which he rests upon them, so that these can never again be lightly tossed aside as the fantastic dreams of a mere bookish student. At the same time, if he is wise, he will be forward to acknowledge and proclaim that our hypotheses at best are but partial, not universal, solutions of the manifold problems which confront us, and that in science as in daily life it is vain to look for one key to open all locks.

The
practice
of magic
explains
the rise of
kings in
some com-
munities,
but not in
all.

Therefore, to revert to our immediate subject, in putting forward the practice of magic as an explanation of the rise of monarchy in some communities, I am far from thinking or suggesting that it can explain the rise of it in all, or, in other words, that kings are universally the descendants or successors of magicians; and if any one should hereafter, as is likely enough, either enunciate such a theory or attribute it to me, I desire to enter my caveat against it in advance. To enumerate and describe all the modes in which men have pushed, or fought, or wormed their way by force or by fraud, by their own courage and wisdom or by the cowardice and folly of others, to supreme power, might furnish the theme of a political treatise such as I have no pretension to write; for my present purpose it suffices if I can trace the magician's progress in some savage and barbarous tribes from the rank of a sorcerer to the dignity of a king. The facts which I am about to lay before the reader seem to exhibit various steps of this development from simple conjuring up to conjuring compounded with despotism.

Social im-
portance of
magicians
among the
aborigines
of Central
Australia.

Let us begin by looking at the lowest race of men as to whom we possess comparatively full and accurate information, the aborigines of Australia. These savages are ruled neither by chiefs nor kings. So far as their tribes can be

said to have a political constitution, it is a democracy or rather an oligarchy of old and influential men, who meet in council and decide on all measures of importance to the practical exclusion of the younger men. Their deliberative assembly answers to the senate of later times: if we had to coin a word for such a government of elders we might call it a *gerontocracy*.¹ The elders who in aboriginal Australia thus meet and direct the affairs of their tribe appear to be for the most part the headmen of their respective totem clans. Now in Central Australia, where the desert nature of the country and the almost complete isolation from foreign influences have retarded progress and preserved the natives on the whole in their most primitive state, the headmen of the various totem clans are charged with the important task of performing magical ceremonies for the multiplication of the totems, and as the great majority of the totems are edible animals or plants, it follows that these men are commonly expected to provide the people with food by means of magic. Others have to make the rain to fall or to render other services to the community. In short, among the tribes of Central Australia the headmen are public magicians. Further, their most important function is to take charge of the sacred storehouse, usually a cleft in the rocks or a hole in the ground, where are kept the holy stones and sticks (*churinga*) with which the souls of all the people, both living and dead, are apparently supposed to be in a manner bound up. Thus while the headmen have certainly to perform what we should call civil duties, such as to inflict punishment for breaches of tribal custom, their principal functions are sacred or magical.²

Again, in the tribes of South-Eastern Australia the headman was often, sometimes invariably, a magician. Thus in the southern Wiradjuri tribe the headman was always a wizard or a medicine-man. There was one for each local

Social importance of magicians among the aborigines of South-Eastern Australia.

¹ The government of the western islanders of Torres Straits is similar. See A. C. Haddon, in *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, v. 263 sq. So, too, the Bantoc Igorot of the Philippines have no chiefs and are ruled by councils of old men. See A. E. Jenks, *The Bantoc Igorot* (Manila, 1905), pp. 32

sq., 167 sq.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 9-15, 154, 159-205; *id.*, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 20-27, 285-297, 309 sq., 316; A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 320-326.

Social importance of magicians among the tribes of South-Eastern Australia.

division. He called the people together for the initiation ceremonies or to discuss matters of public importance.¹ In the Yerkla-mining tribe the medicine-men are the headmen; they are called *Mobung-bai*, from *mobung*, "magic." They decide disputes, arrange marriages, conduct the ceremonies of initiation, and in certain circumstances settle the formalities to be observed in ordeals of battle. "In fact, they wield authority in the tribe, and give orders where others only make requests."² Again, in the Yuin tribe there was a headman for each local division, and in order to be fitted for his office he had, among other qualifications, to be a medicine-man; above all he must be able to perform magical feats at the initiation ceremonies. The greatest headman of all was he who on these occasions could bring up the largest number of things out of his inside.³ In fact the budding statesman and king must be first and foremost a conjuror in the most literal sense of the word. Some forty or fifty years ago the principal headman of the Dieri tribe was a certain Jalina piramurana, who was known among the colonists as the Frenchman on account of his polished manners. He was not only a brave and skilful warrior, but also a powerful medicine-man, greatly feared by the neighbouring tribes, who sent him presents even from a distance of a hundred miles. He boasted of being the "tree of life," for he was the head of a totem consisting of a particular sort of seed which forms at certain times the chief vegetable food of these tribes. His people spoke of him as the plant itself (*manyura*) which yields the edible seed.⁴ Again, an early writer on the tribes of South-Western Australia, near King George's Sound, tells us that "the individuals who possess most influence are the *mulgarradocks*, or doctors. . . . A *mulgarradock* is considered to possess the power of driving away wind or rain, as well as bringing down lightning or disease upon any object of their or others' hatred," and they also attempted to heal the sick.⁵ On the

¹ A. W. Howitt, *op. cit.* p. 303.

² A. W. Howitt, *op. cit.* p. 313.

³ A. W. Howitt, *op. cit.* p. 314.

⁴ A. W. Howitt, *op. cit.* pp. 297-299. For more examples of headmen

who are also magicians see *ib.* pp. 301 *sq.*, 302, 317.

⁵ Scott Nind, "Description of the Natives of King George's Sound (Swan River Colony)," *Journal of the R. Geographical Society*, i. (1832) p. 41.

whole, then, it is highly significant that in the most primitive society about which we are accurately informed it is especially the magicians or medicine-men who appear to have been in process of developing into chiefs.

When we pass from Australia to New Guinea we find that, though the natives stand at a far higher level of culture than the Australian aborigines, the constitution of society among them is still essentially democratic or oligarchic, and chieftainship exists only in embryo. Thus Sir William MacGregor tells us that in British New Guinea no one has ever arisen wise enough, bold enough, and strong enough to become the despot even of a single district. "The nearest approach to this has been the very distant one of some person becoming a renowned wizard; but that has only resulted in levying a certain amount of blackmail."¹ To the same effect a Catholic missionary observes that in New Guinea the *nepu* or sorcerers "are everywhere. They boast of their misdeeds; everybody fears them, everybody accuses them, and, after all, nothing positive is known of their secret practices. This cursed brood is as it were the soul of the Papuan life. Nothing happens without the sorcerer's intervention: wars, marriages, diseases, deaths, expeditions, fishing, hunting, always and everywhere the sorcerer. . . . One thing is certain for them, and they do not regard it as an article of faith, but as a fact patent and indisputable, and that is the extraordinary power of the *nepu*; he is the master of life and of death. Hence it is only natural that they should fear him and obey him in everything and give him all that he asks for. The *nepu* is not a chief, but he dominates over the chiefs, and we may say that the true authority, the only effective influence in New Guinea, is that of the *nepu*. Nothing can resist him."² We are told that in the Toaripi or Motumotu tribe of British New Guinea chiefs have not necessarily supernatural powers, but that a sorcerer is looked upon as a chief. Some years ago, for example, one man of the tribe was a chief because he was supposed to rule the sea, calming it or rousing it to fury at his pleasure.

Social importance of magicians in New Guinea.

¹ Sir W. MacGregor, *British New Guinea* (London, 1897), p. 41.

² Le R. P. Guis, "Les Papous,"

Les Missions Catholiques, xxxvi. (1904) p. 334.

Another owed his power to his skill in making the rain to fall, the sun to shine, and the plantations to bear fruit.¹ It is believed that the chief of Mowat in British New Guinea, can affect the growth of crops for good or ill, and coax the turtle and dugong to come from all parts of the sea and allow themselves to be caught.² At Bartle Bay in British New Guinea there are magicians (*taniwaga*) who are expected to manage certain departments of nature for the good of the community by means of charms (*pari*) which are known only to them. One of these men, for example, works magic for rain, another for taro, another for wallaby, and another for fish. A magician who is believed to control an important department of nature may be the chief of his community. Thus the present chief of Wedau is a sorcerer who can make rain and raise or calm the winds. He is greatly respected by all and receives many presents.³ A chief of Kolem, on Finsch Harbour, in German New Guinea, enjoyed a great reputation as a magician; it was supposed that he could make wind and storm, rain and sunshine, and visit his enemies with sickness and death.⁴

Supposed
magical or
super-
natural
powers of
chiefs in
Melanesia.

Turning now to the natives of the Melanesian islands, which stretch in an immense quadrant of a circle round New Guinea and Australia on the east, we are told by Dr. Codrington that among these savages "as a matter of fact the power of chiefs has hitherto rested upon the belief in their supernatural power derived from the spirits or ghosts with which they had intercourse. As this belief has failed, in the Banks' Islands for example some time ago, the position of a chief has tended to become obscure; and as this belief is now being generally undermined a new kind of chief must needs arise, unless a time of anarchy is to begin."⁵ According to a native Melanesian account, the origin of the power of chiefs lies entirely in the belief that they have communication with mighty ghosts (*tindalo*), and wield that

¹ J. Chalmers, "Toaripi," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvii. (1898) p. 334.

² E. Beardmore, "The Natives of Mowat Daudai, New Guinea," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890) p. 464.

³ C. G. Seligmann, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea* (Cambridge, 1910), pp. 455 sq.

⁴ M. Krieger, *Neu-Guinea* (Berlin, n.d.), p. 334.

⁵ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians* (Oxford, 1891), p. 46.

supernatural power (*mana*) whereby they can bring the influence of the ghosts to bear. If a chief imposed a fine, it was paid because the people universally dreaded his ghostly power, and firmly believed that he could inflict calamity and sickness upon such as resisted him. As soon as any considerable number of his people began to disbelieve in his influence with the ghosts, his power to levy fines was shaken.¹ In Malo, one of the New Hebrides, the highest nobility consists of those persons who have sacrificed a thousand little pigs to the souls of their ancestors. No one ever resists a man of that exalted rank, because in him are supposed to dwell all the souls of the ancient chiefs and all the spirits who preside over the tribe.² In the Northern New Hebrides the son does not inherit the chieftainship, but he inherits, if his father can manage it, what gives him the chieftainship, namely, his father's supernatural power, his charms, magical songs, stones and apparatus, and his knowledge of the way to approach spiritual beings.³ A chief in the island of Paramatta informed a European that he had the power of making rain, wind, storm, thunder and lightning, and dry weather. He exhibited as his magical instrument a piece of bamboo with some parti-coloured rags attached to it. In this bamboo, he said, were kept the devils of rain and wind, and when he commanded them to discharge their office or to lie still, they were obliged to obey, being his subjects and prisoners. When he had given his orders to these captive devils, the bamboo had to be fastened to the highest point of his house.⁴ In the Marshall Bennet Islands to the east of New Guinea it was the duty of each chief of a clan to charm the gardens of his clan so as to make them productive. The charm consisted of turning up part of the soil with a long stick and muttering an appropriate spell. Each special crop, such as yams, bananas,

¹ R. H. Codrington, *op. cit.* p. 52. As to the *mana* or supernatural power of chiefs and others, see *ibid.* pp. 118 *sqq.*; above, pp. 227 *sq.* I have pointed out (p. 111, note 2) that this supernatural power supplies, as it were, the physical basis of magic.

² Father A. Deniau, "Croyances religieuses et mœurs des indigènes de

l'île Malo (Nouvelles-Hébrides)," *Les Missions Catholiques*, xxxiii. (1901) p. 347.

³ R. H. Codrington, *op. cit.* p. 56.

⁴ C. Ribbe, *Zwei Jahren unter den Kammbalen der Salomo-Inseln* (Dresden: Blasewitz, 1903), pp. 173 *sq.*

sugar-cane, and coco-nuts, had its special kind of stick and its special spell.¹

Magicians
as chiefs
in New
Britain.

With regard to government among the Melanesians of New Britain or the Bismarck Archipelago, I may cite the evidence of an experienced missionary, the Rev. Dr. George Brown, who settled in the islands at a time when no other white man was living in the group, and who resided among the savage islanders for some five or six years. He says: "There was no government so called in New Britain except that form of jurisdiction or power represented by the secret societies and that exercised by chiefs, who were supposed to possess exceptional powers of sorcery and witchcraft. These powers were very real, owing, I think, principally to two reasons—one of which was that the men themselves thoroughly believed that they were the possessors of the powers which they claimed, and the other was that the people themselves believed that the men really possessed them. There was indeed the title of chief (*todaru*) claimed and also given to them by the people; but this was not the result of any election or necessarily by inheritance, it was simply that a certain man claimed to be the possessor of these powers and succeeded in convincing the people that he really possessed them."² Again, Dr. Brown tells us that in New Britain "a ruling chief was always supposed to exercise priestly functions, that is, he professed to be in constant communication with the *tebarans* (spirits), and through their influence he was enabled to bring rain or sunshine, fair winds or foul ones, sickness or health, success or disaster in war, and generally to procure any blessing or curse for which the applicant was willing to pay a sufficient price. If his spells did not produce the desired effect he always had a plausible explanation ready, which was generally accepted as a sufficient excuse. I think much of the success which these men undoubtedly had was due to their keen observations of natural phenomena, and to the effects of fear upon the people."³

¹ C. G. Seligmann, *The Melanesians of New Guinea* (Cambridge, 1910), p. 702.

² G. Brown, D.D., *Melanesians and Polynesians* (London, 1910), p. 270.

³ Rev. G. Brown, *op. cit.* p. 429.

According to Dr. Turner, "The real gods at Tana may be said to be the disease-makers. It is surprising how these men are dreaded, and how firm the belief is that they have in their hands the power of life and death. There are rain-makers and thunder-makers, and fly and mosquito-makers, and a host of other 'sacred men,' but the disease-makers are the most dreaded. It is believed that these men can create disease and death by burning what is called *nahak*. **Nahak*, means rubbish, but principally refuse of food. Everything of the kind they bury or throw into the sea, lest the disease-makers should get hold of it. These fellows are always about, and consider it their special business to pick up and burn, with certain formalities, anything in the *nahak* line which comes in their way. If a disease-maker sees the skin of a banana, for instance, he picks it up, wraps it in a leaf, and wears it all day hanging round his neck. The people stare as they see him go along, and say to each other, 'He has got something; he will do for somebody by-and-by at night.' In the evening he scrapes some bark off a tree, mixes it up with the banana skin, rolls all up tightly in a leaf in the form of a cigar, and then puts the one end close enough to the fire to cause it to singe, and smoulder, and burn away very gradually. Presently he hears a shell blowing. 'There,' he says to his friends, 'there it is; that is the man whose rubbish I am now burning, he is ill; let us stop burning, and see what they bring in the morning.' When a person is taken ill he believes that it is occasioned by some one burning his rubbish. Instead of thinking about medicine, he calls some one to blow a shell, a large conch or other shell, which, when perforated and blown, can be heard two or three miles off. The meaning of it is to implore the person who is supposed to be burning the sick man's rubbish and causing all the pain to stop burning; and it is a promise as well that a present will be taken in the morning. The greater the pain the more they blow the shell, and when the pain abates they cease, supposing that the disease-maker has been kind enough to stop burning." Night after night the silence is broken by the dismal too-too-tooing of these shells; and in the morning the friends of the sufferer repair to the disease-maker with presents of pigs, mats, hatchets, beads.

Dr. Turner
on the
power of
the magical
disease-
makers in
Tana.

whales' teeth, or such like things.¹ Thus these sorcerers attain to a position of immense power and influence and acquire wealth by purely maleficent magic; it is not by the imaginary benefits which they confer on the community, but by the imaginary evils which they inflict on individuals, that they climb the steps of a throne or the ladder that leads to heaven; for according to Dr. Turner these rascals are on the highroad to divinity. The process which they employ to accomplish their ends is a simple application of the principles of contagious magic: whatever has once been in contact with a person remains in sympathetic connexion with him always, and harm done to it is therefore harm done to him. Side by side with the evil which this superstition produces, on the one hand by inspiring men with baseless terrors, and on the other by leading them to neglect effectual remedies for real evils, we must recognise the benefit which it incidentally confers on society by causing people to clear away and destroy the refuse of their food and other rubbish, which if suffered to accumulate about their dwellings might, by polluting the atmosphere, prove a real, not an imaginary source of disease. In practice, cleanliness based on motives of superstition may be just as effective for the preservation of health as if it were founded on the best-ascertained principles of sanitary science.²

Evolution of chiefs or kings out of magicians, especially out of rain-makers, in Africa.

Power of magicians among the Wambugwe, Wataturu, and Wagogo of East Africa.

Still rising in the scale of culture we come to Africa, where both the chieftainship and the kingship are fully developed; and here the evidence for the evolution of the chief out of the magician, and especially out of the rain-maker, is comparatively plentiful. Thus among the Wambugwe, a Bantu people of East Africa, the original form of government was a family republic, but the enormous power of the sorcerers, transmitted by inheritance, soon raised them to the rank of petty lords or chiefs. Of the three chiefs living in the country in 1894 two were much dreaded as magicians, and the wealth of cattle they possessed came to them almost wholly in the shape of presents bestowed for their services in that capacity. Their principal art was that of rain-making.³ The chiefs of the Wataturu, another

¹ G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 320-322.

² O. Baumann, *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 187 sq.

³ See above, p. 175.

people of East Africa, are said to be nothing but sorcerers destitute of any direct political influence.¹ Again, among the Wagogo of German East Africa the main power of the chiefs, we are told, is derived from their art of rain-making. If a chief cannot make rain himself, he must procure it from some one who can.² Again, in the powerful Masai nation of the same region the medicine-men are not uncommonly the chiefs, and the supreme chief of the race is almost invariably a powerful medicine-man. These *Laibon*, as they are called, are priests as well as doctors, skilled in interpreting omens and dreams, in averting ill-luck, and in making rain.³ The head chief or medicine-man, who has been called the Masai pope,⁴ is expected not only to make rain, but to repel and destroy the enemies of the Masai in war by his magic art.⁵ The following is Captain Merker's account of the Masai pope: "The most prominent clan of the whole Masai people is the *En gidon*, because to it belong not only the family of the chief (*ol oiboni*), but also the family of the magicians. The designation chief is, strictly speaking, not quite correct, since the chief (*ol oiboni*) does not govern directly and exercises no real administrative function. He rules only indirectly; the firm belief of his subjects in his prophetic gifts and in his supernatural power of sorcery gives him an influence on the destinies of the people. Despotism and cruelty, such as we find among all negro rulers, are alien to him. He is not so much a ruler as a national saint or patriarch. The people speak of his sacred person with shy awe, and no man dares to appear before this mighty personage without being summoned. The aim of his policy is to unite and strengthen the Masai. While he allows free play to the predatory instincts of the warriors in raids on other tribes, he guards his own people from the scourge of civil war, to which the ceaseless quarrels of the various districts with each other would otherwise continually give occasion. This influence of his is rendered possible by the belief that

Among the Masai the supreme chief is always a powerful medicine-man.

¹ O. Baumann, *op. cit.* p. 173.

² H. Cole, "Notes on the Wagogo of German East Africa," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 321.

³ Sir Harry Johnston, *The Uganda*

Protectorate (London, 1902), ii. 830.

⁴ O. Baumann, *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle*, p. 164.

⁵ Baron C. C. von der Decken, *Reisen in Ost-Afrika*, ii. (Leipzig and Heidelberg, 1871) p. 24.

victory can only be achieved through the secret power of the war-medicine which none but he can compound, and that defeat would infallibly follow if he were to predict it. Neither he nor his nearest relatives march with the army to war. He supplies remedies, generally in the shape of magical medicines, for plagues and sicknesses, and he appoints festivals of prayer in honour of the Masai god 'Ng ai. He delivers his predictions by means of an oracular game like the telling of beads."¹ And just as Samson's miraculous strength went from him when his hair was shorn, so it is believed that the head chief of the Masai would lose his supernatural powers if his chin were shaved.² According to one writer, the Masai pope has never more than one eye: the father knocks out his son's eye in order to qualify him for the holy office.³

Among the Nandi of British East Africa the principal medicine-man is the supreme chief.

Among the Nandi of British East Africa "the *Orkoivot*, or principal medicine man, holds precisely the same position as the Masai *Ol-oiboni*, that is to say, he is supreme chief of the whole race." He is a diviner, and foretells the future by casting stones, inspecting entrails, interpreting dreams, and prophesying when he is drunk. The Nandi believe implicitly in his powers. He tells them when to begin planting their crops: in time of drought he procures rain for them either directly or by means of the rainmakers: he makes women and cattle fruitful; and no war-party can expect to be successful if he has not approved of the foray. His office is hereditary and his person is usually regarded as absolutely sacred. Nobody may approach him with weapons in his hand or speak in his presence unless the great man addresses him; and it is most important that nobody should touch his head, else it is feared that his powers of divination and so forth would depart from him. However, one of these sacred pontiffs was clubbed to death, being held responsible for several public calamities, to wit, famine, sickness, and defeat in war.⁴ The Suk and Turkana,

¹ M. Merker, *Die Masai* (Berlin, 1904), pp. 18 sq. I have slightly abridged the writer's account.

² M. Merker, *Die Masai*, p. 21. As to the medicine-men of the Masai, see further A. C. Hollis, *The Masai*

(Oxford, 1905), pp. 324-330.

³ O. Baumann, *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle*, p. 164.

⁴ A. C. Hollis, *The Nandi* (Oxford, 1909), pp. 49 sq.

two other peoples of British East Africa, distinguish between their chiefs and their medicine-men, who wield great power ; but very often the medicine-man is a chief by virtue of his skill in medicine or the occult arts.¹

Again, among the tribes of the Upper Nile the medicine-men are generally the chiefs.² Their authority rests above all upon their supposed power of making rain, for "rain is the one thing which matters to the people in those districts, as if it does not come down at the right time it means untold hardships for the community. It is therefore small wonder that men more cunning than their fellows should arrogate to themselves the power of producing it, or that having gained such a reputation, they should trade on the credulity of their simpler neighbours." Hence "most of the chiefs of these tribes are rainmakers, and enjoy a popularity in proportion to their powers to give rain to their people at the proper season. . . . Rain-making chiefs always build their villages on the slopes of a fairly high hill, as they no doubt know that the hills attract the clouds, and that they are, therefore, fairly safe in their weather forecasts." Each of these rainmakers has a number of rain-stones, such as rock-crystal, aventurine, and amethyst, which he keeps in a pot. When he wishes to produce rain he plunges the stones in water, and taking in his hand a peeled cane, which is split at the top, he beckons with it to the clouds to come or waves them away in the way they should go, muttering an incantation the while. Or he pours water and the entrails of a sheep or goat into a hollow in a stone and then sprinkles the water towards the sky. Though the chief acquires wealth by the exercise of his supposed magical powers, he often, perhaps generally, comes to a violent end ; for in time of drought the angry people assemble and kill him, believing that it is he who prevents the rain from falling. Yet the office is usually hereditary and passes from father to son. Among the tribes which cherish these beliefs and observe these customs are the Latuka, Bari, Laluba, and Lokoïya.³ Thus,

Rain-makers as chiefs among the tribes of the Upper Nile.

¹ Sir H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, ii. 851.

² Sir H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, ii. 779.

³ W. E. R. Cole, "African Rain-

making Chiefs, the Gondokoro District, White Nile," *Man*, x. (1910) pp. 90-92 ; Fuzbashi, "Tribes on the Upper Nile," *Journal of the African Society*, No. 14 (January, 1905), pp. 228 sq. ;

Rain-makers as chiefs among the Latuka.

for example, with regard to the Latuka we are told that "amongst the most important but also the most dangerous occupations of the greater chiefs is the procuring of rain for their country. Almost all the greater chiefs enjoy the reputation of being rainmakers, and the requisite knowledge usually passes by inheritance from father to son. However, there are also here and there among the natives persons who, without being chiefs, busy themselves with rain-making. If there has been no rain in a district for a long time and the people wish to attract it for the sake of the sowing, they apply to their chief, bringing him a present of sheep, goats, or, in urgent cases, cattle or a girl, and if the present seems to him sufficient he promises to furnish rain; but if it appears to him too little he asks for more. If some days pass without rain, it gives the magician an opportunity for claiming fresh presents, on the ground that the smallness of the offered gifts hinders the coming of the rain." When the cupidity of the rain-maker is satisfied, he goes to work in the usual way, pouring water over two flat stones, one called the male and the other the female, till they are covered to a depth of three inches. The "male" stone is a common white quartz; the "female" is brownish. If still no rain falls, he makes a smoky fire in the open with certain herbs, and if the smoke mounts straight up, rain is near. Although an unsuccessful rain-maker is often banished or killed, his son always succeeds him in the dignity.¹ Amongst the Bari the procedure of the rain-making chief to draw down the water of heaven is somewhat elaborate. He has many rain-stones, consisting of rock crystal and pink and green granite. These are deposited in the hollows of some twenty slabs of gneiss, and across the hollows are laid numerous iron rods of various shapes and sizes. When rain is to be made, these iron rods are set up in a perpendicular position, and water is poured on the crystals and stones. Then the rain-maker takes up the stones one by one and oils them, praying to his dead father to send the rain. One of the iron rods is

Brun-Rollet, *Le Nil Blanc et le Soudan* (Paris, 1855), pp. 227 sq.; F. Spire, "Rain-making in Equatorial Africa," *Journal of the African Society*, No. 17

(October, 1905), pp. 15-21.

¹ Emin Pasha, quoted by Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 778-780.

provided with a hook, and another is a two-headed spear. With the hook the rain-maker hooks and attracts the rain-clouds; with the two-headed spear he attacks and drives them away. In this procedure the prayer to the dead ancestor is religious, while the rest of the ceremony is magical. Thus, as so often happens, the savage seeks to compass his object by combining magic with religion. The logical inconsistency does not trouble him, provided he attains his end.¹ Further, the rain-maker chief of the Bari is supposed to be able to make women fruitful. For this purpose he takes an iron rod with a hollow bulb at each end, in which are small stones. Grasping the rod by the middle he shakes it over the would-be mother, rattling the stones and muttering an incantation.¹

Again, among the Bongo, a tribe of the same region, the influence of the chiefs is said to rest in great part on a belief in their magical powers; for the chief is credited with the knowledge of certain roots, which are the only means of communicating with the dangerous spirits of whose mischievous pranks the Bongo stand in great fear.² In the Dinka or Denka nation, to the north-east of the Bongo, men who are supposed to be in close communication with spirits pass for omnipotent; it is believed that they make rain, conjure away all calamities, foresee the future, exorcise evil spirits, know all that goes on even at a distance, have the wild beasts in their service, and can call down every kind of disaster on their enemies. One of these men became the richest and most esteemed chief of the Kič tribe through his skill in ventriloquism. He kept a cage from which the roars of imaginary lions and the howls of imaginary hyaenas were heard to proceed; and he gave out that these beasts guarded his house and were ready at his bidding to rush forth on his enemies. The dread which he infused into the tribe and its neighbours was incredible; from all sides oxen were sent to him as presents, so that his herds were the most numerous in the country. Another of these conjurers in the Tuič tribe had a real tame

Magical
powers of
chiefs
among the
Bongo and
Dinkas.

¹ F. Spire, "Rain-making in Equatorial Africa," *Journal of the African Society*, No. 17 (October, 1905), pp.

16-18, 21.

² G. Schweinfurth, *The Heart of Africa* (London, 1878), i. 144 sq.

lion and four real fat snakes, which slept in front of his door, to the great awe of the natives, who could only attribute the pacific demeanour of these ferocious animals to sorcery.¹ But it does not appear that the real lion inspired nearly so much terror as the imaginary one; from which we may perhaps infer that among these people ventriloquism is a more solid basis of political power even than lion-taming.

Chiefs and
kings
as rain-
makers in
Central
Africa.

In Central Africa, again, the Lendu tribe,² to the west of Lake Albert, firmly believe that certain people possess the power of making rain. Among them the rain-maker either is a chief or almost invariably becomes one.³ The Banyoro also have a great respect for the dispensers of rain, whom they load with a profusion of gifts. The great dispenser, he who has absolute and uncontrollable power over the rain, is the king; but he can depute his power to other persons, so that the benefit may be distributed and the heavenly water laid on over the various parts of the kingdom.⁴ A Catholic missionary observes that "a superstition common to the different peoples of equatorial Africa attributes to the petty kings of the country the exclusive power of making the rain to fall; in extreme cases the power is ascribed to certain kings more privileged than the rest, such as those of Huilla, Humbé, Varé, Libebé, and others. These kings profit by the superstition in order to draw to themselves many presents of cattle; for the rain must fall after the sacrifice of an ox, and if it tarries, the king, who is never at a loss for excuses to extricate himself from the scrape, will ascribe the failure to the defects of the victim, and will seize the pretext to claim more cattle."⁵ Among the Ba-Yaka, a tribe of the Kasai district in the Congo Free State, magicians are exempt from justice, and the chief is the principal magician;⁶ and among the Ba-Yanzi, another

¹ E. D. Pruyssenaere, "Reisen und Forschungen im Gebiete des Weissen und Blauen Nil," *Petermanns Mittheilungen, Ergänzungsheft*, No. 50 (Gotha, 1877), pp. 27 sq.

² Sir H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, ii. 555.

³ G. Casati, *Ten Years in Equatoria* (London and New York, 1891), ii. 57,

compare i. 134.

⁴ Ch. Wunenberger, "La Mission et le royaume de Humbé, sur les bords du Cunène," *Les Missions Catholiques*, xx. (1888) p. 262.

⁵ E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, "Notes on the Ethnography of the Ba-Yaka," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxvi. (1906) pp. 48, 51.

tribe of the same district, there is, or was a few years ago, a chief who passed for the greatest magician in the country.¹

In Western as well as in Eastern and Central Africa we meet with the same union of chiefly with magical functions. Thus in the Fan tribe the strict distinction between chief and medicine-man does not exist. The chief is also a medicine-man and a smith to boot; for the Fans esteem the smith's craft sacred, and none but chiefs may meddle with it.² The chiefs of the Ossidinge district in the Cameroons have as such very little influence over their subjects; but if the chief happens to be also the fetish-priest, as he generally is among the Ekois, he has not only powerful influence in all fetish matters (and most of the vital interests of the people are bound up with fetish worship), but he also enjoys great authority in general.³ A few years ago the head chief of Etatin on the Cross River, in Southern Nigeria, was an old man whom the people had compelled to take office in order that he should look after the fetishes or jujus and work magic for the benefit of the community. In accordance with an old custom, which is binding on the head chief, he was never allowed to leave his compound, that is, the enclosure in which his house stands. He gave the following account of himself to an English official, who paid him a visit: "I have been shut up ten years, but, being an old man, I don't miss my freedom. I am the oldest man of the town, and they keep me here to look after the jujus, and to conduct the rites celebrated when women are about to give birth to children, and other ceremonies of the same kind. By the observance and performance of these ceremonies, I bring game to the hunter, cause the yam crop to be good, bring fish to the fisherman, and make rain to fall. So they bring me meat, yams, fish, etc.. To make rain, I drink water, and squirt it out, and pray to our big deities. If I were to go outside this compound, I should fall down dead on returning to this hut.

Medicine-men as chiefs in Western Africa. *

¹ E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, "On the Ethnology of the South-Western Congo Free State," *Journal of the R. Anthropological Institute*, xxxvii. (1907) p. 140.

² O. Lenz, *Skizzen aus Westafrika* (Berlin, 1878), p. 87.

³ A. Mansfeld, *Urwald-Dokumente, Vier Jahre unter den Crossflussegern Kameruns* (Berlin, 1908), p. 161.

My wives cut my hair and nails, and take great care of the parings."¹

Chiefs
as rain-
makers in
Southern
Africa.

As to the relation between the offices of chief and rain-maker in South Africa a well-informed writer observes: "In very old days the chief was the great Rain-maker of the tribe. Some chiefs allowed no one else to compete with them, lest a successful Rain-maker should be chosen as chief. There was also another reason: the Rain-maker was sure to become a rich man if he gained a great reputation, and it would manifestly never do for the chief to allow any one to be too rich. The Rain-maker exerts tremendous control over the people, and so it would be most important to keep this function connected with royalty. Tradition always places the power of making rain as the fundamental glory of ancient chiefs and heroes, and it seems probable that it may have been the origin of chieftainship. The man who made the rain would naturally become the chief. In the same way Chaka [the famous Zulu despot] used to declare that he was the only diviner in the country, for if he allowed rivals his life would be insecure."² These South African rain-makers smear themselves with mud and sacrifice oxen as an essential part of the charm; almost everything is thought to turn on the colour of the beasts. Thus Umbandine, the old king of the Swazies, had huge herds of cattle of a peculiar colour, which was particularly well adapted for the production of rain. Hence deputations came to him from distant tribes praying and bribing him to make rain by the sacrifice of his cattle; and he used to threaten to "bind up the sky" if they did not satisfy his demands. The power

¹ Ch. Partridge, *Cross River Natives* (London, 1905), pp. 201 sq. The care taken of the chief's cut hair and nails is a precaution against the magical use that might be made of them by his enemies. See *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, i. 375 sqq.

² Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir* (London, 1904), p. 114. "The chief collects to himself all medicines of known power; each doctor has his own special medicine or medicines, and treats some special form of disease, and

the knowledge of such medicines is transmitted as a portion of the inheritance to the eldest son. When a chief hears that any doctor has proved successful in treating some case where others have failed, he calls him and demands the medicine, which is given up to him. Thus the chief becomes the great medicine-man of his tribe, and the ultimate reference is to him. If he fail, the case is given up as incurable" (H. Callaway, *Religious System of the Amasulu*, part iv. pp. 419 sq., note). The medicines here referred

which by this means he wielded was enormous.¹ Similarly Mabilaan, a chief of the Bawenda, in the north-eastern corner of the Transvaal, enjoyed a wide reputation and was revered beyond the limits of his own tribe because he was credited with the power of rain-making, "a greater power in the eyes of natives than that of the assegai." Hence he was constantly importuned by other chiefs to exercise his power and received valuable presents of girls, oxen, and red and green beads as inducements to turn on the heavenly water-tap.²

Among the Matabeles of South Africa the witch-doctors are supposed to be on speaking terms with spirits, and their influence is described as tremendous; in the time of King Lo Bengula some years ago "their power was as great as, if not greater than, the king's."³ Similarly speaking of the South African tribes in general, Dr. Moffat says that "the rain-maker is in the estimation of the people no mean personage, possessing an influence over the minds of the people superior even to that of the king, who is likewise compelled to yield to the dictates of this arch-official."⁴ In Matabeleland the rainy season falls in November, December, January, and February. For several weeks before the rain sets in, the clouds gather in heavy banks, dark and lowering. Then the king is busy with his magicians' compounding potions of wondrous strength to make the labouring clouds discharge their pent-up burden on the thirsty earth. He may be seen gazing at every black cloud, for his people flock from all parts to beg rain from him, "their rain-maker," for their parched fields; and they thank and praise him when a heavy rain has fallen.⁵ A letter dated from Bulawayo, the twentieth of November 1880, records that Lo Bengula, king of the Matabeles, "arrived yesterday evening at his kraal of 'the White Rocks.' He brought with him the rain to his people." For according to the ideas of the Matabeles, it is the king who ought to 'make the rain

Power
of rain-
makers
among the
Matabeles.

The king
of the
Matabeles
as rain-
maker.

to are probably for the most part magical rather than medicinal in our sense of the term.

¹ Dudley Kidd, *op. cit.* p. 115.

² W. Grant, "Magato and his Tribe," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxv. (1905) p. 267.

³ L. Decle, *Three Years in Savage*

Africa (London, 1898), p. 154.

⁴ R. Moffat, *Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa* (London, 1842), p. 306.

⁵ E. A. Maund, "Zambesia, the new British Possession in Central South Africa," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1890, p. 651.

The king of the Matabeles as rain-maker.

and the good season' in all senses of the word. Now Lo Bengula had chosen well the day and the hour, for it was in the midst of a tremendous storm that the king made his solemn entrance into his capital." "You must know that the arrival of the king and of the rain gives rise every year to a little festival. For the rain is the great benefit conferred by the king, the pledge of future harvests and of plenty, after eight months of desolating drought." To bring down the needed showers the king of the Matabeles boils a magic hell-broth in a cauldron, which sends up volumes of steam to the blue sky. But to make assurance doubly sure, he has recourse to religion as well as to magic; for he sacrifices twelve black oxen to the spirits of his fathers, and prays to them: "O great spirits of my father and grandfather, I thank you for having granted last year to my people more wheat than to our enemies the Mashonas. This year also, in gratitude for the twelve black oxen which I am about to dedicate to you, make us to be the best-fed and the strongest people in the world!"¹ Thus the king of the Matabeles acts not only as a magician but as a priest, for he prays and sacrifices to the spirits of his forefathers.

Thus in Africa kings have probably often been developed out of magicians, and especially out of rain-makers.

The foregoing evidence renders it probable that in Africa the king has often been developed out of the public magician, and especially out of the rain-maker. The unbounded fear which the magician inspires and the wealth which he amasses in the exercise of his profession may both be supposed to have contributed to his promotion. But if the career of a magician and especially of a rain-maker offers great rewards to the successful practitioner of the art, it is beset with many pitfalls into which the unskilful or unlucky artist may fall. The position of the public sorcerer is indeed a very precarious one; for where the people firmly believe that he has it in his power to make the rain to fall, the sun to shine, and the fruits of the earth to grow, they naturally impute drought and dearth to his culpable negligence or wilful obstinacy, and they punish him accordingly. We have seen that in Africa the chief who fails to procure rain is often exiled or killed.² Examples of such punishments could be multiplied.

¹ Father C. Croonenberghs, in liii. (1881) pp. 262 sq., 267 sq. *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*,

² See above, pp. 344, 345, 346.

Thus, in some parts of West Africa, when prayers and offerings presented to the king have failed to procure rain, his subjects bind him with ropes and take him by force to the grave of his forefathers that he may obtain from them the needed rain.¹ The Banjars in West Africa ascribe to their king the power of causing rain or fine weather. So long as the weather is fine they load him with presents of grain and cattle. But if long drought or rain threatens to spoil the crops, they insult and beat him till the weather changes.² When the harvest fails or the surf on the coast is too heavy to allow of fishing, the people of Loango accuse their king of a "bad heart" and depose him.³ On the Grain Coast the high priest or fetish king, who bears the title of Bodio, is responsible for the health of the community, the fertility of the earth, and the abundance of fish in the sea and rivers; and if the country suffers in any of these respects the Bodio is deposed from his office.⁴ In Ussukuma, a great district on the southern bank of the Victoria Nyanza, "the rain and locust question is part and parcel of the Sultan's government. He, too, must know how to make rain and drive away the locusts. If he and his medicine-men are unable to accomplish this, his whole existence is at stake in times of distress. On a certain occasion, when the rain so greatly desired by the people did not come, the Sultan was simply driven out (in Ututwa, near Nassa). The people, in fact, hold that rulers must have power over Nature and her phenomena."⁵ Again, we are told of the natives of the Nyanza region generally that "they are persuaded that rain only falls as a result of magic, and the important duty of causing it to descend devolves on the chief of the tribe. If rain does not come at the proper time, everybody complains. More than one petty king has been banished his country because of drought."⁶ Similarly

Kings
in Africa
punished
for drought
and dearth.

¹ J. B. Labat, *Relation historique de l'Éthiopie occidentale* (Paris, 1732), ii. 172-176.

² H. Heccard, *Reise an der Küste und in das Innere von West Afrika* (Leipsic, 1854), p. 78.

³ A. Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, i. 354, ii. 230.

⁴ J. Leighton Wilson, *Western*

Africa (London, 1856), pp. 129 sq.; Miss Mary H. Kingsley, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxix. (1899) p. 62.

⁵ P. Kollmann, *The Victoria Nyanza* (London, 1899), p. 168.

⁶ Mgr Livinhac, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, lx. (1888) p. 110.

among the Antimores of Madagascar the chiefs are held responsible for the operation of the laws of nature. Hence if the land is smitten with a blight or devastated by clouds of locusts, if the cows yield little milk, or fatal epidemics rage among the people, the chief is not only deposed but stripped of his property and banished, because they say that under a good chief such things ought not to happen.¹ So, too, of the Antaimōrona we read that "although the chiefs of this tribe are chosen by the people, during their tenure of power they enjoy a respect which borders on adoration; but if a crop of rice fails or any other calamity happens, they are immediately deposed, sometimes even killed; and yet their successor is always chosen from the family."² Among the Latukas of the Upper Nile, when the crops are withering in the fields and all the efforts of the chief to bring down rain have proved fruitless, the people commonly attack him by night, rob him of all he possesses, and drive him away. But often they kill him.³

In other parts of the world kings have been punished for failing to regulate the course of nature.

In many other parts of the world kings have been expected to regulate the course of nature for the good of their people and have been punished if they failed to do so. It appears that the Scythians, when food was scarce, used to put their king in bonds.⁴ In ancient Egypt the sacred kings were blamed for the failure of the crops,⁵ but the sacred beasts were also held responsible for the course of nature. When pestilence and other calamities had fallen on the land, in consequence of a long and severe drought, the priests took the animals by night and threatened them, but if the evil did not abate they slew the beasts.⁶ On the coral island of Niuē or Savage Island, in the South Pacific, there formerly reigned a line of kings. But as the kings were also high priests, and

¹ D'Unienville, *Statistique de l'île Maurice* (Paris, 1838) iii. 285 sq.

² A. van Gennep, *Tabou et Totémisme à Madagascar* (Paris, 1904), p. 118, quoting Leguével de Lacombe, *Voyage à Madagascar* (Paris, 1840), i. 229 sq. Probably the Antimoirona are identical with the Antimores.

³ Emin Pasha, quoted by Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 779 sq.

⁴ Schol. on Apollonius Rhodius, *Argon.* ii. 1248 καὶ Ἡρόδωρος λέγει περὶ τῶν δεσμῶν τοῦ Προμηθεύς ταῦτα. εἶναι γὰρ αὐτὸν Σκυθῶν βασιλεῖα φησὶ καὶ μὴ δυνάμενον παρέχειν τοῖς ὑπηκόοις τὰ ἐπιτήδεια, διὰ τὸν καλούμενον Ἀετὸν ποταμὸν ἐπικλύζειν τὰ πεδία, δεθῆναι ὑπὸ τῶν Σκυθῶν.

⁵ Ammianus Marcellinus, xxviii. 5.

¹⁴.

⁶ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 73.

were supposed to make the food grow, the people became angry with them in times of scarcity and killed them; till at last, as one after another was killed, no one would be king, and the monarchy came to an end.¹ Ancient Chinese writers inform us that in Corea the blame was laid on the king whenever too much or too little rain fell and the crops did not ripen. Some said that he must be deposed, others that he must be slain.² The Chinese emperor himself is deemed responsible if the drought is at all severe, and many are the self-condemnatory edicts on this subject published in the pages of the venerable *Peking Gazette*. In extreme cases the emperor, clad in humble vestments, sacrifices to heaven and implores its protection.³ So, too, the kings of Tonquin used to take blame to themselves when the country was visited by such calamities as scanty harvests, dearth, floods, destructive hurricanes and cholera. On these occasions the monarch would sometimes publicly confess his guilt and impose on himself a penance as a means of appeasing the wrath of Heaven.⁴ In former days it sometimes happened that when the country suffered from drought and dearth the king of Tonquin was obliged to change his name in the hope that this would turn the weather to rain. But if the drought continued even after the change of name the people would sometimes resort to stronger measures and transfer the title of king from the legitimate monarch to his brother, son, or other near relation.⁵

Among the American Indians the furthest advance towards civilisation was made under the monarchical and

¹ G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 304 sq.

² A. Pfizmayer, "Nachrichten von den alten Bewohnern des heutigen Corea," *Sitzungsberichte der philosoph. Classe der kais. Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Vienna), lvii. (1868) pp. 483 sq. It would seem that the Chinese reported similarly of the Roman emperors. See Hirth, *China and the Roman Orient*, pp. 41, 44, 52, 58, 70, 78.

³ N. B. Dennis, *Folklore of China* (London and Hongkong, 1876), p. 125. An account of the *Peking Gazette*,

the official publication of the Chinese government, may be read in *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, Nouvelle Edition, xxi. 95-182.

⁴ Mgr Havard, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, vii. (1834) pp. 470-473.

⁵ Gio. Filippo de Marini, *Historia et relatione del Tunchino et del Giappone* (Rome, 1665), pp. 137 sq.; *Relation nouvelle et curieuse des royaumes de Tunquin et de Lao*, traduite de l'Italien du P. Mariny (sic) Romain (Paris, 1666), pp. 258 sq.

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theocratic governments of Mexico and Peru ; but we know too little of the early history of these countries to say whether the predecessors of their deified kings were medicine-men or not. Perhaps a trace of such a succession may be detected in the oath which the Mexican kings took when they mounted the throne : they swore that they would make the sun to shine, the clouds to give rain, the rivers to flow, and the earth to bring forth fruits in abundance.¹ Certainly, in aboriginal America the sorcerer or medicine-man, surrounded by a halo of mystery and an atmosphere of awe, was a personage of great influence and importance, and he may well have developed into a chief or king in many tribes, though positive evidence of such a development appears to be lacking. Thus Catlin tells us that in North America the medicine-men "are valued as dignitaries in the tribe, and the greatest respect is paid to them by the whole community ; not only for their skill in their *materia medica*, but more especially for their tact in magic and mysteries, in which they all deal to a very great extent. . . . In all tribes their doctors are conjurors—are magicians—are sooth-sayers, and I had like to have said high-priests, inasmuch as they superintend and conduct all their religious ceremonies ; they are looked upon by all as oracles of the nation. In all councils of war and peace, they have a seat with the chiefs, are regularly consulted before any public step is taken, and the greatest deference and respect is paid to their opinions."² Among the Loucheux of North-West America each band is "headed by a chief and one or more medicine-men. The latter, however, do not possess any secular power as chiefs, but they acquire an authority by shamanism to which even the chiefs themselves are subject." "The Loucheux are very superstitious, and place implicit faith in the pretended incantations of their medicine-men, for whom they entertain great fear. . . . The power of the medicine-men is very great, and they use every means they can to increase it by working on the fears and credulity of the people. Their influence exceeds even that of the chiefs. The power of the

¹ H. H. Bancroft, *The Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 146.

² Geo. Catlin, *Manners, Customs,*

*and Conditions of the North American Indians*⁴ (London, 1844), i. 40 sq.

latter consists in the quantity of beads they possess, their wealth and the means it affords them to work ill to those to whom they may be evil-disposed; while the power of the medicine-man consists in the harm they believe he is able to do by shamanism, should they happen to displease him in any way. It is when sickness prevails that the conjuror rules supreme; it is then that he fills his bead bags and increases his riches."¹ Amongst the Tinneh Indians of the same region "the social standing of a medicine-man is, on the whole, a desirable one; but it has also its drawbacks and its dark side. The medicine-man is decidedly influential among his fellow savages. He is consulted and listened to, on account of the superior knowledge imparted to him by the spirits. He is feared, on account of his power to do evil, viz. to cause the death of a person, to ruin his undertakings, to render him unsuccessful in the hunt by driving away the game from his path, to cause the loss of his property, of his strength, of his health, of his faculties, etc. The medicine-man is rich, because his services, when summoned, or even when accepted though uncalled for, are generously remunerated. He is respected on account of his continual intercourse with the supernatural world. His words, when said in a peculiar low tone, with a momentary glow in the eyes, which [he] seems able to control at will, or when uttered during his sleep (real or feigned) are taken as oracles, as the very words of the spirit. In short, for these tribes who have no chiefs, no religion, no medical knowledge, he is the nearest approach to a chief, a priest, and a physician."² Similarly in California "the shaman was, and still is, perhaps the most important individual among the Maidu. In the absence of any definite system of government, the word of a shaman has great weight: as a class they are regarded with much awe, and as a rule are obeyed much more than the chief."³ As leader of the local branch

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medicine-
men
among
the North
American
Indians.

¹ W. L. Hardisty, "The Loucheux Indians," *Report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1866*, pp. 312, 316.

² Rev. J. Jetté, "On the Medicine-Men of the Ten'a," *Journal of the R. Anthropological Institute*, xxxvii. (1907) p. 163. By the Ten'a the writer means the tribe which is vari-

ously known as the Tinneh, Déné, Dindjie, etc., according to the taste and fancy of the speller.

³ Roland B. Dixon, "The Northern Maidu," *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. xvii. part iii. (New York, 1905) p. 267.

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of a secret society the most noted Maidu shaman of each district was supposed to make rain when it was needed, to ensure a good crop of edible acorns and a plentiful supply of salmon, and to drive away evil spirits, disease, and epidemics from the village. Further, it was his business to inflict disease and death on hostile villages, which he did by burning certain roots and blowing the smoke towards the doomed village, while he said, "Over there, over there, not here! To the other place! Do not come back this way. We are good. Make those people sick. Kill them, they are bad people."¹ Among the Yokuts, another tribe of Californian Indians, the rain-makers exercised great influence. One of them by his insinuating address, eloquence, and jugglery spread his fame to a distance of two hundred miles, and cunningly availed himself of two years of drought to levy contributions far and wide from the trembling Indians, who attributed to his magic the fall of the rain.² In the same tribe the wizards drew large profits from the rattle-snake dance which they danced every spring, capering about with rattlesnakes twined round their arms; for after this exhibition many simpletons paid them for complete immunity from snake-bites, which the wizards were believed able to grant for a year.³

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men
among
the South
American
Indians.

In South America also the magicians or medicine-men seem to have been on the highroad to chieftainship or kingship. One of the earliest settlers on the coast of Brazil, the Frenchman Thevet, reports that the Indians "hold these *pages* (or medicine-men) in such honour and reverence that they adore, or rather idolise them. You may see the common folk go to meet them, prostrate themselves, and pray to them, saying, 'Grant that I be not ill, that I do not die, neither I nor my children,' or some such request. And he answers, 'You shall not die, you shall not be ill,' and such like replies. But sometimes if it happens that these *pages* do not tell the truth, and things turn out otherwise than they predicted, the people make no scruple of killing them as unworthy of the title and dignity

¹ Roland B. Dixon, *op. cit.* pp. 328, (Washington, 1877), pp. 372 sq. 331.

² S. Powers, *Tribes of California*

³ S. Power, *op. cit.* pp. 380 sq.

of *pages*." ¹ The Indians of Brazil, says a modern writer who knew them well, "have no priests but only magicians, who at the same time use medical help and exorcism in order to exert influence over the superstition and the dread of spirits felt by the rude multitude. We may perfectly compare them with the shamans of the north-eastern Asiatic peoples. But like the shamans they are not mere magicians, fetish-men, soothsayers, interpreters of dreams, visionaries, and casters-out of devils; their activity has also a political character in so far as they influence the decisions of the leaders and of the community in public business, and exert a certain authority, more than anybody else, as judges, sureties, and witnesses in private affairs." ² Among the Lengua Indians of the Gran Chaco every clan has its cazique or chief, but he possesses little authority. In virtue of his office he has to make many presents, so he seldom grows rich and is generally more shabbily clad than any of his subjects. "As a matter of fact the magician is the man who has most power in his hands, and he is accustomed to receive presents instead of to give them." It is the magician's duty to bring down misfortune and plagues on the enemies of his tribe, and to guard his own people against hostile magic. For these services he is well paid and by them he acquires a position of great influence and authority. ³ Among the Indians of Guiana also the magician or medicine-man (*piai*, *peaiman*) is a personage of great importance. By his magic art he alone, it is believed, can counteract the machinations of the great host of evil spirits, to which these savages attribute all the ills of life. It is almost impossible, we are told, to overestimate the dreadful sense of constant and unavoidable danger in which the Indian would live were it not for his trust in the protecting power of the magician. Every village has one such spiritual guardian, who is physician, priest, and magician in one. His influence is immense. No Indian dare refuse him anything he takes a fancy to,

Power of
medicine-
men
among
the South
American
Indians.

¹ F. A. Thevet, *Les Singularités de la France Antarctique, autrement nommée Andrique* (Antwerp, 1558), p. 65 [wrongly numbered 67].

² C. F. Phil. v. Martius, *Zur Ethnographie Amerikas, sumal Brasilien*

(Leipzig, 1867), p. 76.

³ G. Kurze, "Sitten und Gebräuche der Lengua-Indianer," *Mitteilungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft zu Jena*, xxiii. (Jena, 1905) pp. 19, 29.

from a trifle of food up to a man's wife. Hence these cunning fellows live in idleness on the fat of the land and acquire a large harem; their houses are commonly full of women who serve them in the capacity of beasts of burden as well as of wives, plodding wearily along under the weight of the baggage on long journeys, while their lord and master, fantastically tricked out in feathers and paint, strolls ahead, burdened only with his magic rattle and perhaps his bow and arrows.¹

Power of
medicine-
men
among the
pagan
tribes of
the Malay
Peninsula.

Among the wild pagan tribes of the Malay peninsula the connexion between the offices of magician and chief is very close; indeed the two offices are often united in the same person. Among these savages, "as among the Malays, the accredited intermediary between gods and men is in all cases the medicine-man or sorcerer. In the Semang tribes the office of chief medicine-man appears to be generally combined with that of chief, but amongst the Sakai and Jakun these offices are sometimes separated, and although the chief is almost invariably a medicine-man of some repute, he is not necessarily the chief medicine-man, any more than the chief medicine-man is necessarily the administrative head of the tribe. In both cases there is an unfailing supply of aspirants to the office, though it may be taken for granted that, all else being equal, a successful medicine-man would have much the best prospect of being elected chief, and that in the vast majority of cases his priestly duties form an important part of a chief's work. The medicine-man is, as might be expected, duly credited with supernatural powers. His tasks are to preside as chief medium at all the ceremonies, to instruct the youth of the tribe, to ward off as well as to heal all forms of sickness and trouble, to foretell the future (as affecting the results of any given act), to avert when necessary the wrath of heaven, and even when re-embodied after death in the shape of a wild beast, to extend a benign protection to his devoted descendants. Among the Sakai and the Jakun he is provided with a distinctive form of dress and body-

¹ Sir R. Schomburgk, *Reisen in Britisch-Guiana*, i. 169 sq., compare *id.* i. 423, ii. 431; (Sir) Everard F.

im Thurn, *Among the Indians of Guiana* (London, 1883), pp. 211, 223 sq., 328, 333 sq., 339 sq.

painting, and carries an emblematic wand or staff by virtue of his office."¹

Throughout the Malay region the rajah or king is commonly regarded with superstitious veneration as the possessor of supernatural powers, and there are grounds for thinking that he too, like apparently so many African chiefs, has been developed out of a simple magician. At the present day the Malays firmly believe that the king possesses a personal influence over the works of nature, such as the growth of the crops and the bearing of fruit-trees. The same prolific virtue is supposed to reside, though in a lesser degree, in his delegates, and even in the persons of Europeans who chance to have charge of districts. Thus in Selangor, one of the native states of the Malay Peninsula, the success or failure of the rice crops is often attributed to a change of district officers.² The Toorateyas of southern Celebes hold that the prosperity of the rice depends on the behaviour of their princes, and that bad government, by which they mean a government which does not conform to ancient custom, will result in a failure of the crops.³

Develop-
ment of
kings out of
magicians
among the
Malays.

The Dyaks of Sarawak believed that their famous English ruler, Rajah Brooke, was endowed with a certain magical virtue which, if properly applied, could render the rice-crops abundant. Hence when he visited a tribe, they used to bring him the seed which they intended to sow next year, and he fertilised it by shaking over it the women's necklaces, which had been previously dipped in a special mixture. And when he entered a village, the women would wash and bathe his feet, first with water, and then with the milk of a young coco-nut, and lastly with water again, and all this water which had touched his person they preserved for the purpose of distributing it on their farms, believing that it ensured an abundant harvest. Tribes which were too far

Belief of
the Dyaks
in the
power of
the rajah
to fertilise
the rice.

¹ W. W. Skeat and C. O. Blagden, *Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula* (London, 1906), ii. 196 sq.

² W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic* (London, 1900), p. 36.

³ G. Maan, "Enige mededeelingen

omtrent de zeden en gewoonten der Toorateya ten opzichte van de rijstbouw," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- en Volkenkunde*, xli. (1903) p. 339. The name Toorateya or "inlander" is only another form of Toradja

off for him to visit used to send him a small piece of white cloth and a little gold or silver, and when these things had been impregnated by his generative virtue they buried them in their fields, and confidently expected a heavy crop. Once when a European remarked that the rice-crops of the Samban tribe were thin, the chief immediately replied that they could not be otherwise, since Rajah Brooke had never visited them, and he begged that Mr. Brooke might be induced to visit his tribe and remove the sterility of their land.¹

Links
between
Malay
rajahs and
magicians.

Among the Malays the links which unite the king or rajah with the magician happen to be unusually plain and conspicuous. Thus the magician shares with the king the privilege of using cloth dyed yellow, the royal colour; he has considerable political influence, and he can compel people to address him in ceremonial language, of which indeed the phraseology is even more copious in its application to a magician than to a king. Moreover, and this is a fact of great significance, the Malay magician owns certain insignia which are said to be exactly analogous to the regalia of the king, and even bear the very same name (*kabesaran*).² Now the regalia of a Malay king are not mere jewelled baubles designed to impress the multitude with the pomp and splendour of royalty; they are regarded as wonder-working talismans,³ the possession of which carries with it the right to the throne; if the king loses them, he thereby forfeits the allegiance of his subjects. It seems, therefore, to be a probable inference that in the Malay region the regalia of the kings are only the conjuring apparatus of their predecessors the magicians, and that in this part of the world accordingly the magician is the humble grub or chrysalis which in due time bursts and discloses that gorgeous butterfly the rajah or king.

In Celebes
the regalia
are talis-
mans or

Nowhere apparently in the Indian Archipelago is this view of the regalia as the true fount of regal dignity carried to such lengths as in southern Celebes. Here the royal

¹ H. Low, *Sarawak* (London, 1848), pp. 259 sq.

² W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 59.

³ T. J. Newbold, *Political and*

Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca, ii. 193; W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 23-29.

authority is supposed to be in some mysterious fashion embodied in the regalia, while the princes owe all the power they exercise, and all the respect they enjoy, to their possession of these precious objects. In short, the regalia reign, and the princes are merely their representatives. Hence whoever happens to possess the regalia is regarded by the people as their lawful king. For example, if a deposed monarch contrives to keep the regalia, his former subjects remain loyal to him in their hearts, and look upon his successor as a usurper who is to be obeyed only in so far as he can exact obedience by force. And on the other hand, in an insurrection the first aim of the rebels is to seize the regalia, for if they can only make themselves masters of them, the authority of the sovereign is gone. In short, the regalia are here fetishes, which confer a title to the throne and control the fate of the kingdom. Houses are built for them to dwell in, as if they were living creatures; furniture, weapons, and even lands are assigned to them. Like the ark of God, they are carried with the army to battle, and on various occasions the people propitiate them, as if they were gods, by prayer and sacrifice and by smearing them with blood. Some of them serve as instruments of divination, or are brought forth in times of public disaster for the purpose of staying the evil, whatever it may be. For example, when plague is rife among men or beasts, or when there is a prospect of dearth, the Boogineese bring out the regalia, smear them with buffalo's blood, and carry them about. For the most part these fetishes are heirlooms of which the origin is forgotten; some of them are said to have fallen from heaven. Popular tradition traces the foundation of the oldest states to the discovery or acquisition of one of these miraculous objects—it may be a stone, a piece of wood, a fruit, a weapon, or what not, of a peculiar shape or colour. Often the original regalia have disappeared in course of time, but their place is taken by the various articles of property which were bestowed on them, and to which the people have transferred their pious allegiance. The oldest dynasties have the most regalia, and the holiest regalia consist of relics of the bodies of former princes, which are kept in golden caskets wrapt in silk. At Paloppo, the

fetishes, the possession of which carries with it the right to the throne.

Regalia as
talismans
in Celebes.

capital of Loowoo, a kingdom on the coast of Celebes, two toy cannons, with barrels like thin gas-pipes, are regalia; their possession is supposed to render the town impregnable. Other regalia of this kingdom are veiled from vulgar eyes in bark-cloth. When a missionary requested to see them, the official replied that it was strictly forbidden to open the bundle; were he to do so, the earth would yawn and swallow them up. In Bima the principal part of the regalia or public talismans consists of a sacred brown horse, which no man may ride. It is always stabled in the royal palace. When the animal passes the government fort on high days and holidays, it is saluted with the fire of five guns; when it is led to the river to bathe, the royal spear is carried before it, and any man who does not give way to the beast, or crosses the road in front of it, has to pay a fine. But the horse is mortal, and when it goes the way of all horse-flesh, another steed chosen from the same stud reigns in its place.¹

Magical
virtue of
regalia in
Egypt and
Africa.

But if in the Malay region the regalia are essentially wonder-working talismans or fetishes which the kings appear to have derived from their predecessors the magicians, we may conjecture that in other parts of the world the emblems of royalty may at some time have been viewed in a similar light and have had a similar origin. In ancient Egypt the two royal crowns, the white and the red, were supposed to be endowed with magical virtues, indeed to be themselves divinities, embodiments of the sun god. One text declares: "The white crown is the eye of Horus; the red crown is the eye of Horus." Another text speaks of a crown as a "great magician." And applied to the image of a god, the crown was supposed to confirm the deity in the possession of his soul and of his form.² Among the Yorubas of West Africa

¹ G. J. Harrebomée, "Een ornamentfeest van Gantarang (Zuid-Celebes)," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xix. (1875) pp. 344-351; G. K. Niemann, "De Boegineezen en Makassaren," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xxxviii. (1889) pp. 270 sq.; D. F. van Braam Morris, in *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxiv. (1891) pp. 215 sq.; A.

C. Kruijt, "Van Paloppo naar Posso," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xlii. (1898) pp. 18, 25 sq.; L. W. C. van den Berg, "De Mohammedaansche Vorsten in Nederlandsch-Indië," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, liii. (1901) pp. 72-80.

² A. Moret, *Le Rituel du culte divin journalier en Égypte* (Paris, 1902) pp. 94 sq.

at the present time the king's crown is sacred and is supposed to be the shrine of a spirit which has to be propitiated. When the king (*Oni*) of Ife visited Lagos some years ago, he had to sacrifice five sheep to his crown between Ibadan and Ife, a two days' journey on foot.¹ Among the Ashantees "the throne or chair of the king or chief is believed to be inhabited by a spirit to which it is consecrated, and to which human sacrifices were formerly offered: at present the victims are sheep. It is the personification of power; hence a king is not a king and a chief is not a chief until he has been solemnly installed on the throne."² Among the Hos, a Ewe tribe of Togoland in German West Africa, the king's proper throne is small and the king does not sit on it. Usually it is bound round with magic cords and wrapt up in a sheep's skin; but from time to time it is taken out of the wrappings, washed in a stream, and smeared all over with the blood of a sheep which has been sacrificed for the purpose. The flesh of the sheep is boiled and a portion of it eaten by every man who has been present at the ceremony.³

In Cambodia the regalia are regarded as a palladium on which the existence of the kingdom depends; they are committed to Brahmans for safe keeping.⁴ In antiquity the Scythian kings treasured as sacred a plough, a yoke, a battle-axe, and a cup, all of gold, which were said to have fallen from heaven; they offered great sacrifices to these sacred things at an annual festival; and if the man in charge of them fell asleep under the open sky, it was believed that he would die within the year.⁵ The sceptre of king Agamemnon, or what passed for such, was worshipped as a god at Chaeronea; a man acted as priest of the sceptre for a year at a time, and sacrifices were offered to it daily.⁶ The golden lamb of Mycenae, on the possession of which, according to legend, the two rivals Atreus and Thyestes based their claim to the throne,⁷ may have been a royal talisman of this sort.

Regalia
venerated
in Cam-
bodia,
Scythia,
and
ancient
Greece

¹ Sir William MacGregor, "Lagos, Abeokuta, and the Alake," *Journal of the African Society*, No. 12 (July, 1904), p. 472.

² E. Perregaux, *Chez les Achanti* (Neuchatel, 1906), p. 140.

³ J. Spieth, *Die Ewe-Stämme* (Berlin, 1906), pp. 76, 78, compare pp. 101 sq.

⁴ A. Bastian, *Völkerstämme am Brahmaputra* (Berlin, 1883), p. xi.

⁵ Herodotus, iv. 5-7. Compare K. Neumann, *Die Hellenen im Skythenlande*, 1. (Berlin, 1855) pp. 269 sq.

⁶ Pausanias, ix. 40. 11 sq.

⁷ Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, ed. R. Wagner, p. 185. On public talismans

The belief that kings possess magical or supernatural powers to control the course of nature for the good of their subjects seems to have been shared by the ancestors of all the Aryan races from India to Ireland.

The belief that kings possess magical or supernatural powers by virtue of which they can fertilise the earth and confer other benefits on their subjects would seem to have been shared by the ancestors of all the Aryan races from India to Ireland, and it has left clear traces of itself in our own country down to modern times. Thus the ancient Hindoo law-book called *The Laws of Manu* describes as follows the effects of a good king's reign: "In that country where the king avoids taking the property of mortal sinners, men are born in due time and are long-lived. And the crops of the husbandmen spring up, each as it was sown, and the children die not, and no misshaped offspring is born."¹ In Homeric Greece kings and chiefs were spoken of as sacred or divine; their houses, too, were divine and their chariots sacred;² and it was thought that the reign of a good king caused the black earth to bring forth wheat and barley, the trees to be loaded with fruit, the flocks to multiply, and the sea to yield fish.³ A Greek historian of a much later age tells us that in the reign of a very bad king of Lydia the country suffered from drought, for which he would seem to have held the king responsible.⁴ There is a tradition that once when the land of the Edonians in Thrace bore no fruit, the god Dionysus intimated to the people that its fertility could be restored by putting their king Lycurgus to death. So they took him to Mount Pangaeum and there caused him to be torn in pieces by horses.⁵ When the crops failed, the Burgundians used to blame their kings and depose them.⁶ In the time of the Swedish king Domalde a mighty famine broke out, which lasted several years, and could be stayed by the blood neither of beasts nor of men. Therefore, in a great popular

in antiquity see Ch. A. Lobeck, *Aglaophagus*, pp. 278 sqq.; and my note on Pausanias, viii. 40. 11.

¹ *The Laws of Manu*, ix. 246 sq., translated by G. Bühler, p. 385 (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxv.).

² Homer, *Odyssey*, ii. 409, iv. 43, 691, vii. 167, viii. 2, xviii. 405; *Iliad*, ii. 335, xvii. 464, etc.

³ Homer, *Odyssey*, xix. 109-114. The passage was pointed out to me by my friend Prof. W. Ridgeway. Naturally

this view was not shared by the enlightened Greeks of a later age. See Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 31 sqq.; Polybius, *Hist.* vi. 6 sq.

⁴ Nicolaus Damascenus, bk. vi. frag. 49, in *Fragmenta historicorum Graecorum*, ed. C. Müller, iii. 381. "Ἦν γὰρ δὴ κακὸς, καὶ ἄλλως βασιλευσάντος αὐτοῦ ἤρχοντο ἡ γῆ."

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

⁶ Ammianus Marcellinus, xxviii. 5. 14.

assembly held at Upsala, the chiefs decided that King Domalde himself was the cause of the scarcity and must be sacrificed for good seasons. So they slew him and smeared with his blood the altars of the gods. Again, we are told that the Swedes always attributed good or bad crops to their kings as the cause. Now, in the reign of King Olaf, there came dear times and famine, and the people thought that the fault was the king's, because he was sparing in his sacrifices. So, mustering an army, they marched against him, surrounded his dwelling, and burned him in it, "giving him to Odin as a sacrifice for good crops."¹ In the Middle Ages, when Waldemar I., King of Denmark, travelled in Germany, mothers brought their infants and husbandmen their seed for him to lay his hands on, thinking that children would both thrive the better for the royal touch, and for a like reason farmers asked him to throw the seed for them.² It was the belief of the ancient Irish that when their kings observed the customs of their ancestors, the seasons were mild, the crops plentiful, the cattle fruitful, the waters abounded with fish, and the fruit trees had to be propped up on account of the weight of their produce. A canon attributed to St. Patrick enumerates among the blessings that attend the reign of a just king "fine weather, calm seas, crops abundant, and trees laden with fruit." On the other hand, dearth, dryness of cows, blight of fruit, and scarcity of corn were regarded as infallible proofs that the reigning king was bad. For example, in the reign of the usurper king Carbery Kinncat, "evil was the state of Ireland: fruitless her corn, for there used to be only one grain on the stalk; fruitless her rivers; milkless her cattle; plentiful her fruit, for there used to be

Swedish
and Danish
kings.

Irish
kings.

¹ Snorro Starleson, *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway* (trans. by S. Laing), saga i. chs. 18, 47. Compare F. Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde* (Heilbronn, 1879), p. 7; J. Scheffer, *Upsalia* (Upsala, 1666), p. 137. In 1814 a pestilence broke out among the Chukchees of north-eastern Siberia, which carried off many of the people and spread its ravages among the herds of reindeer. The shamans declared that the spirits were angry and would not

stay the plague till the virtuous Kotchéne, one of the most venerated chiefs, had been offered to them in sacrifice. No one was found hardy enough to raise a sacrilegious hand against him, and the shamans had to force the chief's own son to cut his father's throat. See De Wrangell, *Le Nord de la Sibirie* (Paris, 1843), i. 263-267.

² Saxo Grammaticus, *Historia Danica*, bk. xiv. p. 779, ed. P. E. Müller,

Magical
virtue
attributed
to the chiefs
of the
Macleods.

buttoned acorn on the stalk."¹ Superstitions of the same sort seem to have lingered in the Highlands of Scotland down to the eighteenth century; for when Dr. Johnson travelled in Skye it was still held that the return of the laird to Dunvegan, after any considerable absence, produced a plentiful capture of herring.² The laird of Dunvegan is chief of the clan of the Macleods, and his family still owns a banner which is called "Macleod's Fairy Banner," on account of the supernatural powers ascribed to it. When it is unfurled, victory in war attends it, and it relieves its followers from imminent danger. But these virtues it can exert only thrice, and already it has been twice unfurled. When the potato crop failed, many of the common people desired that the magical banner should be displayed, apparently in the belief that the mere sight of it would produce a fine crop of potatoes. Every woman with child who sees it is taken with premature labour, and every cow casts her calf.³

A relic of
this belief
is the
notion that
English
kings can
heal
scrofula
by their
touch.

Perhaps the last relic of such superstitions which lingered about our English kings was the notion that they could heal scrofula by their touch. The disease was accordingly known as the King's Evil. Queen Elizabeth often exercised this miraculous gift of healing. On Midsummer Day 1633, Charles the First cured a hundred patients at one swoop in the chapel royal at Holyrood.⁴ But it was under his son Charles the Second that the practice seems to have attained its highest vogue. In this respect the Merry Monarch did not let the grass grow under his feet. It was the twenty-ninth of May 1660 when he was brought home in triumph from exile amid a shouting multitude and a forest of brandished swords, over roads strewn with flowers and through streets hung with tapestry, while the fountains ran wine and all the bells of London rang for joy. And it was on the sixth of July that he began to touch for the King's

¹ P. W. Joyce, *Social History of Ancient Ireland* (London, 1903), i. 56 sq.; J. O'Donovan, *The Book of Rights* (Dublin, 1847), p. 8, note. Compare Bérenger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances*, i. 492.

² S. Johnson, *Journey to the Western Islands* (Baltimore, 1815), p. 115.

³ J. G. Campbell, *Superstitions of*

the Highlands and Islands of Scotland (Glasgow, 1900), p. 5. As to the banner see also Th. Pennant, "Second Tour in Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 321 sq.

⁴ J. G. Dalyell, *The Darker Superstitions of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1834), pp. 62 sqq.

Evil. The ceremony is thus described by Evelyn, who may have witnessed it. "His Majestie began first to *touch for y^e evil*, according to costome, thus: His Ma^{tie} sitting under his state in the Banquetting House, the chirurgeons cause the sick to be brought or led up to the throne, where they kneeling, y^e King strokes their faces or cheekes with both his hands at once, at which instant a chaplaine in his formalities says, 'He put his hands upon them and he healed them.' This is sayd to every one in particular. When they have been all touch'd they come up again in the same order, and the other chaplaine kneeling, and having angel gold strung on white ribbon on his arme, delivers them one by one to his Ma^{tie}, who puts them about the necks of the touched as they pass, whilst the first chaplaine repeats, 'That is y^e true light who came into y^e world.' Then follows an Epistle (as at first a Gospell) with the liturgy, prayers for the sick, with some alteration, lastly y^e blessing; and then the Lo. Chamberlaine and the Comptroller of the Household bring a basin, ewer and towell, for his Majesty to wash."¹ Pepys witnessed the same ceremony at the same place on the thirteenth of April in the following year and he has recorded his opinion that it was "an ugly office and a simple."² It is said that in the course of his reign Charles the Second touched near a hundred thousand persons for scrofula. The press to get near him was sometimes terrific. On one occasion six or seven of those who came to be healed were trampled to death. While the hope of a miraculous cure attracted the pious and sanguine, the certainty of receiving angel gold attracted the needy and avaricious, and it was not always easy for the royal surgeons to distinguish between the motives of the applicants. This solemn mummary cost the state little less than ten thousand pounds a year. The cool-headed William the Third contemptuously refused to lend himself to the hocus-pocus; and when his palace was besieged by the usual unsavoury crowd, he ordered them to be turned away

Charles II.
touching
for the
king's
evil
(scrofula).

¹ *Memoirs of John Evelyn, Esq.*, New Edition (London, 1827), ii. 151 sq., under July 6th, 1660. Angel gold were gold coins with the figure of an angel stamped on them. As to Charles's triumphal entrance into

London, see Evelyn, *op. cit.* ii. 148 sq.

² *Memoirs of Samuel Pepys, Esq.*, edited by Lord Braybrooke, Second Edition (London, 1828), i. 187, compare *ib.*, p. 110, iii. 192.

English
kings
touching
for scrofula.

with a dole. On the only occasion when he was importuned into laying his hand on a patient, he said to him, "God give you better health and more sense." However, the practice was continued, as might have been expected, by the dull bigot James the Second¹ and his dull daughter Queen Anne. In his childhood Dr. Johnson was touched for scrofula by the queen, and he always retained a faint but solemn recollection of her as of a lady in diamonds with a long black hood.² To judge by the too faithful picture which his biographer has drawn of the doctor's appearance in later life we may conclude that the touch of the queen's hand was not a perfect remedy for the disorder; perhaps the stream of divine grace which had flowed so copiously in the veins of Charles the Second had been dried up by the interposition of the sceptical William.

Other
kings and
chiefs have
claimed to
heal
diseases by
a touch.

The kings of France also claimed to possess the same gift of healing by touch, which they are said to have derived from Clovis or from St. Louis, while our English kings inherited it from Edward the Confessor.³ We may suspect that these estimates of the antiquity of the gift were far too modest, and that the barbarous, nay savage, predecessors both of the Saxon and of the Merovingian kings had with the same justice claimed the same powers many ages before. Down to the nineteenth century the West African tribe of the Walos, in Senegal, ascribed to their royal family a like power of healing by touch. Mothers have been seen to bring their sick children to the queen, who touched them solemnly with her foot on the back, the stomach, the head, and the legs, after which the women departed in peace, convinced that

¹ T. B. Macaulay, *History of England*, chap. xiv. vol. iii. pp. 478-481 (First Edition, London, 1855).

² J. Boswell, *Life of Samuel Johnson*, Ninth Edition (London, 1822), i. 18 sq.

³ T. J. Pettigrew, *Superstitions connected with the History and Practice of Medicine and Surgery* (London, 1844), pp. 117-154; W. G. Black, *Folk-Medicine* (London, 1883), pp. 140 sqq.; W. E. H. Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1892), i. 84-90. Down to the end of

the eighteenth century it was believed in the Highlands of Scotland that some tribes of Macdonalds had the power of curing a certain disease by their touch and the use of a particular set of words. Hence the disease, which attacked the chest and lungs, was called "the Macdonald's disease." We are told that the faith of the people in the touch of a Macdonald was very great. See Rev. Dr. Th. Bisset, "Parish of Logierait," in Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, iii. (Edinburgh, 1792) p. 84.

their children had been made whole.¹ Similarly the savage chiefs of Tonga were believed to heal scrofula and cases of indurated liver by the touch of their feet; and the cure was strictly homœopathic, for the disease as well as the cure was thought to be caused by contact with the royal person or with anything that belonged to it.² In fact royal personages in the Pacific and elsewhere have been supposed to live in a sort of atmosphere highly charged with what we may call "spiritual electricity, which, if it blasts all who intrude into its charmed circle, has happily also the gift of making them whole again by a touch."³ We may conjecture that similar views prevailed in ancient times as to the predecessors of our English monarchs, and that accordingly scrofula received its name of the King's Evil from the belief that it was caused as well as cured by contact with a king.⁴ In Loango palsy is called the king's disease, because the negroes imagine it to be heaven's punishment for treason meditated against the king.⁵

On the whole, then, we seem to be justified in inferring that in many parts of the world the king is the lineal successor of the old magician or medicine-man. When once a special class of sorcerers has been segregated from the community and entrusted by it with the discharge of duties on which the public safety and welfare are believed to depend, these men gradually rise to wealth and power, till their leaders blossom out into sacred kings. But the great social revolution which thus begins with democracy and ends in despotism is attended by an intellectual revolution which affects both the conception and the functions of royalty.

On the whole kings seem to have been often evolved out of magicians, but in course of time to have exchanged magical for religious functions, in other words,

¹ Baron Roger, "Notice sur le gouvernement, les mœurs et les superstitions du pays de Walo," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), viii. (1827) p. 351.

² W. Mariner, *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands*, Second Edition (London, 1818), i. 434, note.

³ To this subject we shall recur later on. Meantime I may refer the reader to *The Golden Bough*, Second Edition, i. 319 sqq., 343; *Psyche's Task*, pp. 5 sqq.

⁴ A Roman name for jaundice was

"the royal disease" (*morbus regius*). See Horace, *Ars poetica*, 453; Celsus, *De medicina*, iii. 24. Can this have been because the malady was believed to be caused and cured by kings? Did the sight or touch of the king's red or purple robe ban the yellow tinge from the skin of the sufferer? As to such homœopathic cures of jaundice, see above, pp. 79 sqq.

⁵ Proyard's "History of Loango, Kakongo, and other Kingdoms in Africa," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 573.

to have
become
priests
instead of
sorcerers.

For as time goes on, the fallacy of magic becomes more and more apparent to the acuter minds and is slowly displaced by religion; in other words, the magician gives way to the priest, who renouncing the attempt to control directly the processes of nature for the good of man, seeks to attain the same end indirectly by appealing to the gods to do for him what he no longer fancies he can do for himself. Hence the king, starting as a magician, tends gradually to exchange the practice of magic for the priestly functions of prayer and sacrifice. And while the distinction between the human and the divine is still imperfectly drawn, it is often imagined that men may themselves attain to godhead, not merely after their death, but in their lifetime, through the temporary or permanent possession of their whole nature by a great and powerful spirit. No class of the community has benefited so much as kings by this belief in the possible incarnation of a god in human form. The doctrine of that incarnation, and with it the theory of the divinity of kings in the strict sense of the word, will form the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER VII

INCARNATE HUMAN GODS

THE instances which in the preceding chapters I have drawn from the beliefs and practices of rude peoples all over the world, may suffice to prove that the savage fails to recognise those limitations to his power over nature which seem so obvious to us. In a society where every man is supposed to be endowed more or less with powers which we should call supernatural, it is plain that the distinction between gods and men is somewhat blurred, or rather has scarcely emerged. The conception of gods as superhuman beings endowed with powers to which man possesses nothing comparable in degree and hardly even in kind, has been slowly evolved in the course of history.¹ By primitive peoples the supernatural agents are not regarded as greatly, if at all, superior to man; for they may be frightened and coerced by him into doing his will. At this stage of thought the world is viewed as a great democracy; all beings in it, whether natural or supernatural, are supposed to stand on a footing of tolerable equality. But with the growth of his knowledge man learns to realise more clearly the vastness of nature and his own littleness and feebleness in presence of it. The recognition of his helplessness does not, however, carry with it a corresponding belief in the impotence of those supernatural beings with which his imagination peoples the universe. On the contrary, it enhances his

The conception of gods has been slowly evolved.

¹ A reminiscence of this evolution is preserved in the Brahman theology, according to which the gods were at first mortal and dwelt on earth with men, but afterwards attained immor-

talities and ascended to heaven by means of sacrifice. See S. Lévi, *La Doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brâhmanas* (Paris, 1898), pp. 37-43, 59-61, 84 sq.

conception of their power. For the idea of the world as a system of impersonal forces acting in accordance with fixed and invariable laws has not yet fully dawned or darkened upon him. The germ of the idea he certainly has, and he acts upon it, not only in magic art, but in much of the business of daily life. But the idea remains undeveloped, and so far as he attempts to explain the world he lives in, he pictures it as the manifestation of conscious will and personal agency. If then he feels himself to be so frail and slight, how vast and powerful must he deem the beings who control the gigantic machinery of nature! Thus as his old sense of equality with the gods slowly vanishes, he resigns at the same time the hope of directing the course of nature by his own unaided resources, that is, by magic, and looks more and more to the gods as the sole repositories of those supernatural powers which he once claimed to share with them. With the advance of knowledge, therefore, prayer and sacrifice assume the leading place in religious ritual; and magic, which once ranked with them as a legitimate equal, is gradually relegated to the background and sinks to the level of a black art. It is now regarded as an encroachment, at once vain and impious, on the domain of the gods, and as such encounters the steady opposition of the priests, whose reputation and influence rise or fall with those of their gods. Hence, when at a late period the distinction between religion and superstition has emerged, we find that sacrifice and prayer are the resource of the pious and enlightened portion of the community, while magic is the refuge of the superstitious and ignorant. But when, still later, the conception of the elemental forces as personal agents is giving way to the recognition of natural law; then magic, based as it implicitly is on the idea of a necessary and invariable sequence of cause and effect, independent of personal will, reappears from the obscurity and discredit into which it had fallen, and by investigating the causal sequences in nature, directly prepares the way for science. Alchemy leads up to chemistry.

As religion grows, magic declines into a black art.

The conception of a man-god or deity

The notion of a man-god, or of a human being endowed with divine or supernatural powers, belongs essentially to that earlier period of religious history in which gods and

men are still viewed as beings of much the same order, and before they are divided by the impassable gulf which, to later thought, opens out between them. Strange, therefore, as may seem to us the idea of a god incarnate in human form, it has nothing very startling for early man, who sees in a man-god or a god-man only a higher degree of the same supernatural powers which he arrogates in perfect good faith to himself. Nor does he draw any very sharp distinction between a god and a powerful sorcerer. His gods, as we have seen,¹ are often merely invisible magicians who behind the veil of nature work the same sort of charms and incantations which the human magician works in a visible and bodily form among his fellows. And as the gods are commonly believed to exhibit themselves in the likeness of men to their worshippers, it is easy for the magician, with his supposed miraculous powers, to acquire the reputation of being an incarnate deity. Thus beginning as little more than a simple conjurer, the medicine-man or magician tends to blossom out into a full-blown god and king in one. Only in speaking of him as a god we must beware of importing into the savage conception of deity those very abstract and complex ideas which we attach to the term. Our ideas on this profound subject are the fruit of a long intellectual and moral evolution, and they are so far from being shared by the savage that he cannot even understand them when they are explained to him. Much of the controversy which has raged as to the religion of the lower races has sprung merely from a mutual misunderstanding. The savage does not understand the thoughts of the civilised man, and few civilised men understand the thoughts of the savage. When the savage uses his word for god, he has in his mind a being of a certain sort: when the civilised man uses his word for god, he has in his mind a being of a very different sort; and if, as commonly happens, the two men are equally unable to place themselves at the other's point of view, nothing but confusion and mistakes can result from their discussions. If we civilised men insist on limiting the name of God to that particular conception of the divine nature which we ourselves have formed, then we must confess that

incarnate
in human
form be-
longs to
an early
stage of
religious
history.

¹ See above, pp. 240-242.

the savage has no god at all. But we shall adhere more closely to the facts of history if we allow most of the higher savages at least to possess a rudimentary notion of certain supernatural beings who may fittingly be called gods, though not in the full sense in which we use the word. That rudimentary notion represents in all probability the germ out of which the civilised peoples have gradually evolved their own high conceptions of deity; and if we could trace the whole course of religious development, we might find that the chain which links our idea of the Godhead with that of the savage is one and unbroken.

Examples
of incar-
nate
human
deities.

With these explanations and cautions I will now adduce some examples of gods who have been believed by their worshippers to be incarnate in living human beings, whether men or women. The persons in whom a deity is thought to reveal himself are by no means always kings or descendants of kings; the supposed incarnation may take place even in men of the humblest rank. In India, for example, one human god started in life as a cotton-bleacher and another as the son of a carpenter.¹ I shall therefore not draw my examples exclusively from royal personages, as I wish to illustrate the general principle of the deification of living men, in other words, the incarnation of a deity in human form. Such incarnate gods are common in rude society. The incarnation may be temporary or permanent. In the former case, the incarnation—commonly known as inspiration or possession—reveals itself in supernatural knowledge rather than in supernatural power. In other words, its usual manifestations are divination and prophecy rather than miracles. On the other hand, when the incarnation is not merely temporary, when the divine spirit has permanently taken up its abode in a human body, the god-man is usually expected to vindicate his character by working miracles. Only we have to remember that by men at this stage of thought miracles are not considered as breaches of natural law. Not conceiving the existence of natural law, primitive man cannot

The in-
carnation
either
temporary
or per-
manent.

¹ Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought in India*, p. 268. However, as to the son of the carpenter it is said that "his followers scarcely

worshipped him as a god, yet they fully believed in his power of working miracles."

conceive a breach of it. A miracle is to him merely an unusually striking manifestation of a common power.

The belief in temporary incarnation or inspiration is world-wide. Certain persons are supposed to be possessed from time to time by a spirit or deity; while the possession lasts, their own personality lies in abeyance, the presence of the spirit is revealed by convulsive shiverings and shakings of the man's whole body, by wild gestures and excited looks, all of which are referred, not to the man himself, but to the spirit which has entered into him; and in this abnormal state all his utterances are accepted as the voice of the god or spirit dwelling in him and speaking through him. Thus, for example, in the Sandwich Islands, the king personating the god, uttered the responses of the oracle from his concealment in a frame of wicker-work. But in the southern islands of the Pacific the god "frequently entered the priest, who, inflated as it were with the divinity, ceased to act or speak as a voluntary agent, but moved and spoke as entirely under supernatural influence. In this respect there was a striking resemblance between the rude oracles of the Polynesians, and those of the celebrated nations of ancient Greece. As soon as the god was supposed to have entered the priest, the latter became violently agitated, and worked himself up to the highest pitch of apparent frenzy, the muscles of the limbs seemed convulsed, the body swelled, the countenance became terrific, the features distorted, and the eyes wild and strained. In this state he often rolled on the earth, foaming at the mouth, as if labouring under the influence of the divinity by whom he was possessed, and, in shrill cries, and violent and often indistinct sounds, revealed the will of the god. The priests, who were attending, and versed in the mysteries, received, and reported to the people, the declarations which had been thus received. When the priest had uttered the response of the oracle, the violent paroxysm gradually subsided, and comparative composure ensued. The god did not, however, always leave him as soon as the communication had been made. Sometimes the same *taura*, or priest, continued for two or three days possessed by the spirit or deity; a piece of a native cloth, of a peculiar kind, worn round one arm, was an indication

Temporary
incarnation
of gods in
human
form
among
the Poly-
nesians.

✓

of inspiration, or of the indwelling of the god with the individual who wore it. The acts of the man during this period were considered as those of the god, and hence the greatest attention was paid to his expressions, and the whole of his deportment. . . . When *uruhia*, (under the inspiration of the spirit,) the priest was always considered as sacred as the god, and was called, during this period, *atua*, god, though at other times only denominated *taura* or priest."¹

Temporary
incarnation
of gods in
Mangaia,
Fiji, Bali,
and
Celebes.

In Mangaia, an island of the South Pacific, the priests in whom the gods took up their abode from time to time were called "god-boxes" or, for shortness, "gods." Before giving oracles as gods, they drank an intoxicating liquor, and in the frenzy thus produced their wild whirling words were received as the voice of the deity.² In Fiji there is in every tribe a certain family who alone are liable to be thus temporarily inspired or possessed by a divine spirit. "Their qualification is hereditary, and any one of the ancestral gods may choose his vehicle from among them. I have seen this possession, and a horrible sight it is. In one case, after the fit was over, for some time the man's muscles and nerves twitched and quivered in an extraordinary way. He was naked except for his breech-clout, and on his naked breast little snakes seemed to be wriggling for a moment or two beneath his skin, disappearing and then suddenly reappearing in another part of his chest. When the *mbete* (which we may translate 'priest' for want of a better word) is seized by the possession, the god within him calls out his own name in a stridulous tone, 'It is I! Katouivere!' or some other name. At the next possession some other ancestor may declare himself."³ In Bali there are certain persons called *pèrmas*, who are predestined or fitted by nature to become the temporary abode of the invisible deities. When a god is to be consulted, the villagers go and compel some of these mediums to lend their services. Sometimes the medium leaves his consciousness at home, and is then conducted with marks of honour to the temple, ready to

¹ W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches, the South Pacific* (London, 1876), p. Second Edition (London, 1832-36), 35.

i. 372-5.

² W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs of* the author, dated August 26, 1898.

³ Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to

receive the godhead into his person. Generally, however, some time passes before he can be brought into the requisite frame of body and mind; but the desired result may be hastened by making him inhale the smoke of incense or surrounding him with a band of singing men or women. The soul of the medium quits for a time his body, which is thus placed at the disposal of the deity, and up to the moment when his consciousness returns all his words and acts are regarded as proceeding not from himself but from the god. So long as the possession lasts he is a *dewa kapidagan*, that is, a god who has become man, and in that character he answers the questions put to him. During this time his body is believed to be immaterial and hence invulnerable. A dance with swords and pikes follows the consultation of the oracle; but these weapons could make no impression on the ethereal body of the inspired medium.¹ In Poso, a district of Central Celebes, sickness is often supposed to be caused by an alien substance, such as a piece of tobacco, a stick, or even a chopping-knife, which has been introduced unseen into the body of the sufferer by the magic art of an insidious foe. To discover and eject this foreign matter is a task for a god, who for this purpose enters into the body of a priestess, speaks through her mouth, and performs the necessary surgical operation with her hands. An eye-witness of the ceremony has told how, when the priestess sat beside the sick man, with her head covered by a cloth, she began to quiver and shake and to sing in a strident tone, at which some one observed to the writer, "Now her own spirit is leaving her body and a god is taking its place." On removing the cloth from her head she was no longer a woman but a heavenly spirit, and gazed about her with an astonished air as if to ask how she came from her own celestial region to this humble abode. Yet the divine spirit condescended to chew betel and to drink palm-wine like any poor mortal of earthly mould. After she had pretended to extract the cause of the disease by laying the cloth from her head on the patient's stomach and pinching it, she veiled her face once more, sobbed,

Temporary
incarnation
of gods in
human
form.

¹ F. A. Liefcrinck, "Bijdrage tot de kennis van het eiland Bali," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxiii. (1890) pp. 260 sq.

quivered, and shook violently, at which the people said, "The human spirit is returning into her."¹

Deification of the sacrificer in Brahman ritual.

A Brahman householder who performs the regular half-monthly sacrifices is supposed thereby to become himself a deity for a time. In the words of the *Satapatha-Brâhmana*, "He who is consecrated draws nigh to the gods and becomes one of the deities."² "All formulas of the consecration are *audgrabhana* (elevatory), since he who is consecrated elevates himself (*ud-grabh*) from this world to the world of the gods. He elevates himself by means of these same formulas."³ "He who is consecrated indeed becomes both Vishnu and a sacrificer; for when he is consecrated, he is Vishnu, and when he sacrifices, he is the sacrificer."⁴ After he has completed the sacrifice he becomes man again, divesting himself of his sacred character with the words, "Now I am he who I really am," which are thus explained in the *Satapatha-Brâhmana*: "In entering upon the vow, he becomes, as it were, non-human; and as it would not be becoming for him to say, 'I enter from truth into untruth'; and as, in fact, he now again becomes man, let him therefore divest himself (of the vow) with the text: 'Now I am he who I really am.'"⁵ The means by which the sacrificer passed from untruth to truth, from the human to the divine, was a simulation of a new birth. He was sprinkled with water as a symbol of seed. He feigned to be an embryo, and shut himself up in a special hut, which represented the womb. Under his robe he wore a belt, and over it the skin of a black antelope; the belt stood for the navel-string, and the robe and the black antelope skin represented the inner and outer membranes (the amnion and the chorion) in which an embryo is wrapt. He might not scratch himself with his nails or a stick because he was an embryo, and were an embryo scratched with nails or a stick it would die. If he moved about in

The new birth.

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

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

³ *Op. cit.* p. 20.

⁴ *Op. cit.* p. 29.

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

the hut, it was because the child moves about in the womb. If he kept his fists doubled up, it was because an unborn babe does the same. If in bathing he put off the black antelope skin but retained his robe, it was because the child is born with the amnion but not with the chorion. By these practices he acquired, in addition to his old natural and mortal body, a new body that was sacramental and immortal, invested with superhuman powers, encircled with an aureole of fire. Thus, by a new birth, a regeneration of his carnal nature, the man became a god. At his natural birth, the Brahmins said, man is born but in part; it is by sacrifice that he is truly born into the world. The funeral rites, which ensured the final passage from earth to heaven, might be considered as a phase of the new birth. "In truth," they said, "man is born thrice. At first he is born of his father and mother; then when he sacrifices he is born again; and lastly, when he dies and is laid on the fire, he is born again from it, and that is his third birth. That is why they say that man is born thrice."¹

But examples of such temporary inspiration are so common in every part of the world and are now so familiar through books on ethnology that it is needless to multiply illustrations of the general principle.² It may be well, however, to refer to two particular modes of producing temporary inspiration, because they are perhaps less known than some others, and because we shall have occasion to refer to them later on. One of these modes of producing inspiration is by sucking the fresh blood of a sacrificed victim. In the temple of Apollo Diradiotes at Argos, a lamb was sacrificed by night once a month; a woman, who had to observe a rule of chastity, tasted the blood of the lamb, and thus being inspired by the god she prophesied or divined.³ At Aegira in Achaia the priestess of Earth drank the fresh blood of a

Tempora
incarnatio
or inspira
tion pro-
duced by
drinking
blood.

¹ S. Lévi, *La Doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brâhmanas* (Paris, 1898), pp. 102-108; Hubert and Mauss, *loc. cit.*; *Satapatha Brâhmana*, trans. by J. Eggeling, part ii. pp. 18-20, 25-35, 73, part v. pp. 23 sq. (*Sacred Books of the East*, vols. xxvi. and xlii.).

² See for examples E. B. Tylor,

Primitive Culture,² ii. 131 sq.

³ Pausanias, ii. 24. 1. In 1902 the site of the temple was identified by means of inscriptions which mention the oracle. See *Berliner philologische Wochenschrift*, April 11, 1903, coll. 478 sq.

Temporary
incarnation
or inspira-
tion pro-
duced by
drinking
blood.

bull before she descended into the cave to prophesy.¹ In southern India a devil-dancer "cuts and lacerates his flesh till the blood flows, lashes himself with a huge whip, presses a burning torch to his breast, drinks the blood which flows from his own wounds, or drinks the blood of the sacrifice, putting the throat of the decapitated goat to his mouth. Then, as if he had acquired new life, he begins to brandish his staff of bells, and to dance with a quick but wild unsteady step. Suddenly the *afflatus* descends. There is no mistaking that glare, or those frantic leaps. He snorts, he stares, he gyrates. The *démon* has now taken bodily possession of him; and, though he retains the power of utterance and of motion, both are under the demon's control, and his separate consciousness is in abeyance. The bystanders signalize the event by raising a long shout, attended with a peculiar vibratory noise, which is caused by the motion of the hand and tongue, or of the tongue alone. The devil-dancer is now worshipped as a present deity, and every bystander consults him respecting his disease, his wants, the welfare of his absent relatives, the offerings to be made for the accomplishment of his wishes, and, in short, respecting everything for which superhuman knowledge is supposed to be available."² Similarly among the Kuruvikkarans, a class of bird-catchers and beggars in Southern India, the goddess Kali is believed to descend upon the priest, and he gives oracular replies after sucking the blood which streams from the cut throat of a goat.³ At a festival of the Alfoors of Minahassa, in northern Celebes, after a pig has been killed, the priest rushes furiously at it, thrusts his head into the carcase, and drinks of the blood. Then he is dragged away from it by force and set on a chair, whereupon he begins to prophesy how the rice-crop will turn out that year. A second time he runs at the carcase and drinks of the blood; a second time

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 147. Pausanias (vil. 25. 13) mentions the draught of bull's blood as an ordeal to test the chastity of the priestess. Doubtless it was thought to serve both purposes.

² Bishop R. Caldwell, "On Demonolatry in Southern India," *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*,

i. 101 sq. For a description of a similar rite performed at Perlepatam in southern India see *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, Nouvelle Édition, x. 313 sq. In this latter case the performer was a woman, and the animal whose hot blood she drank was a pig.

³ E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, iv. 187.

he is forced into the chair and continues his predictions. It is thought that there is a spirit in him which possesses the power of prophecy.¹ At Rhetra, a great religious capital of the Western Slavs, the priest tasted the blood of the sacrificed oxen and sheep in order the better to prophesy.² The true test of a Dainyal or diviner among some of the Hindoo Koosh tribes is to suck the blood from the neck of a decapitated goat.³ The Takhas on the border of Cashmeer have prophets who act as inspired mediums between the deity and his worshippers. At the sacrifices the prophet inhales the smoke of the sacred cedar in order to keep off evil spirits, and sometimes he drinks the warm blood as it spouts from the neck of the decapitated victim before he utters his oracle.⁴ The heathen of Harran regarded blood as unclean, but nevertheless drank it because they believed it to be the food of demons, and thought that by imbibing it they entered into communion with the demons, who would thus visit them and lift the veil that hides the future from mortal vision.⁵

Drinking blood as means of inspiration.

The other mode of producing temporary inspiration, to which I shall here refer, consists in the use of a sacred tree or plant. Thus in the Hindoo Koosh a fire is kindled with twigs of the sacred cedar; and the Dainyal or sibyl, with a cloth over her head, inhales the thick pungent smoke till she is seized with convulsions and falls senseless to the ground. Soon she rises and raises a shrill chant, which is

Temporary incarnation or inspiration produced by means of a sacred tree or plant.

¹ J. G. F. Riedel, "De Minahasa in 1825," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- en Volkenkunde*, xviii. 517 sq. Compare "De godsdienst en godsdienst-plegtigheden der Alfoeren in de Menhassa op het eiland Celebes," *Tijdschrift van Nederlandsch Indië*, 1849, dl. ii. p. 395; N. Graafland, *De Minahassa*, i. 122; J. Dumont D'Urville, *Voyage autour du monde et à la recherche de La Perouse*, v. 443.

² F. J. Mone, *Geschichte des Heidenthums im nördlichen Europa* (Leipsic and Darmstadt, 1822-23), i. 188.

³ J. Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh* (Calcutta, 1880), p. 96. For other instances of priests or representatives of the deity drinking the warm blood of the victim, compare

H. A. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nipal* (London, 1880), ii. 296 sq.; *Asiatic Researches*, iv. pp. 40, 41, 50, 52 (8vo ed.); Paul Soleillet, *L'Afrique Occidentale* (Paris, 1877), pp. 123 sq. To snuff up the savour of the sacrifice was similarly supposed to produce inspiration (Tertullian, *Apologet.* 23).

⁴ C. F. Oldham, "The Nagas," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1901* (London, 1901), pp. 463, 465 sq., 467, 470 sq. The Takhas worship the cobra, and Mr. Oldham believes them to be descended from the Nagas of the Mahabharata.

⁵ Maimonides, quoted by D. Chwolson, *Die Sabier und der Sabismus* (St. Petersburg, 1856), ii. 480 sq.

Inspiration
produced
by means
of a sacred
plant.

caught up and loudly repeated by her audience.¹ So Apollo's prophetess ate the sacred laurel and was fumigated with it before she prophesied.² The Bacchanals ate ivy, and their inspired fury was by some believed to be due to the exciting and intoxicating properties of the plant.³ In Uganda the priest, in order to be inspired by his god, smokes a pipe of tobacco fiercely till he works himself into a frenzy; the loud excited tones in which he then talks are recognised as the voice of the god speaking through him.⁴ In Madura, an island off the north coast of Java, each spirit has its regular medium, who is oftener a woman than a man. To prepare herself for the reception of the spirit she inhales the fumes of incense, sitting with her head over a smoking censer. Gradually she falls into a sort of trance accompanied by shrieks, grimaces, and violent spasms. The spirit is now supposed to have entered into her, and when she grows calmer her words are regarded as oracular, being the utterances of the indwelling spirit, while her own soul is temporarily absent.⁵

Inspired,
victims.

It is worth observing that many peoples expect the victim as well as the priest or prophet to give signs of inspiration by convulsive movements of the body; and if the animal remains obstinately steady, they esteem it unfit for sacrifice. Thus when the Yakuts sacrifice to an evil spirit, the beast must bellow and roll about, which is considered a token that the evil spirit has entered into it.⁶ Apollo's prophetess could give no oracles unless the sacrificial victim trembled in every limb when the wine was poured on its head. But for ordinary Greek sacrifices it was enough that the victim should shake its head; to make it do so, water was poured on it.⁷ Many other peoples (Tonquinese,

¹ J. Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, p. 97.

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

³ Plutarch, *Quaestiones Romanae*, 112.

⁴ Rev. J. Roscoe, "Further Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 42.

⁵ C. Lekkerkerker, "Enkele opmerkingen over sporen van Shamanisme bij Madoerezen en Javanen," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xlv. (1902) pp. 282-284.

⁶ H. Vambéry, *Das Türkmenvölke* (Leipsic, 1885), p. 158.

⁷ Plutarch, *De defect. oracul.* 46, 49, 51. The Greeks themselves seem commonly to have interpreted the shaking or nodding of the victim's

Hindoos, Chuwash, and so forth) have adopted the same test of a suitable victim; they pour water or wine on its head; if the animal shakes its head it is accepted for sacrifice; if it does not, it is rejected.¹ Among the Kafirs of the Hindoo Koosh the priest or his substitute pours water into the ear and all down the spine of the intended victim, whether it be a sheep or a goat. It is not enough that the animal should merely shake its head to get the water out of its ear; it must shake its whole body as a wet dog shakes himself. When it does so, a kissing sound is made by all present, and the victim is forthwith slaughtered.²

The person temporarily inspired is believed to acquire, Divine power acquired by temporary inspiration. not merely divine knowledge, but also, at least occasionally, divine power. In Cambodia, when an epidemic breaks out, the inhabitants of several villages unite and go with a band of music at their head to look for the man whom the local god is supposed to have chosen for his temporary incarnation.

head as a token that the animal consented to be sacrificed. See Plutarch, *Quæst. conviv.* viii. 8. 7; Scholiast on Aristophanes, *Peace*, 960; Scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius, *Argon.* i. 425; and this explanation has been adopted by modern interpreters. See A. Willems, *Notes sur la Paix d'Aristophane* (Brussels, 1899), pp. 30-33; E. Monseur, in *Bulletin de Folklore*, 1903, pp. 216-229. But this interpretation can hardly be extended to the case of the Delphic victim which was expected to shake all over. The theory of possession applies equally to that and to the other cases, and is therefore preferable. The theory of consent may have been invented when the older view had ceased to be held and was forgotten.

¹ D. Chwolsohn, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, ii. 37; *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, xvi. 230 sq.; E. T. Atkinson, *The Himalayan Districts of the North-Western Provinces of India*, ii. (Allahabad, 1884) p. 827; *Panjab Notes and Queries*, iii. p. 171, § 721; *North Indian Notes and Queries*, i. p. 3, § 4; W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), i. 263; *Indian*

Antiquary, xxviii. (1899) p. 161; *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, i. 103; S. Mateer, *The Land of Charity*, p. 216; *id.*, *Native Life in Travancore*, p. 94; E. T. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, iii. 466, 469; Sir A. C. Lyall, *Asiatic Studies*, First Series (London, 1899), p. 19; J. Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, p. 131; P. S. Pallas, *Reisen in verschiedenen Provinzen des russischen Reiches*, i. 91; H. Vambery, *Das Türkenvolk*, p. 485; Erman, *Archiv für wissenschaftliche Kunde von Russland*, i. 377; "Über die Religion der heidnischen Tschermenissen im Gouvernement Kasan," *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, N.F. iii. (1857) p. 153; *Globus*, lxxvii. (1895) p. 366. When the Rao of Kachh sacrifices a buffalo, water is sprinkled between its horns; if it shakes its head, it is unsuitable; if it nods its head, it is sacrificed (*Panjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 120, § 911). This is probably a modern misinterpretation of the old custom.

² Sir George Scott Robertson, *The Kafirs of the Hindu Kush* (London, 1896), p. 423.

When found, the man is conducted to the altar of the god where the mystery of incarnation takes place. Then the man becomes an object of veneration to his fellows, who implore him to protect the village against the plague.¹ A certain image of Apollo, which stood in a sacred cave at Hylae near Magnesia, was thought to impart superhuman strength. Sacred men, inspired by it, leaped down precipices, tore up huge trees by the roots, and carried them on their backs along the narrowest defiles.² The feats performed by inspired dervishes belong to the same class.

Human
gods, or
men, per-
manently
possessed
by a deity.

Thus far we have seen that the savage, failing to discern the limits of his ability to control nature, ascribes to himself and to all men certain powers which we should now call supernatural. Further, we have seen that, over and above this general supernaturalism, some persons are supposed to be inspired for short periods by a divine spirit, and thus temporarily to enjoy the knowledge and power of the indwelling deity. From beliefs like these it is an easy step to the conviction that certain men are permanently possessed by a deity, or in some other undefined way are endued with so high a degree of supernatural power as to be ranked as gods and to receive the homage of prayer and sacrifice. Sometimes these human gods are restricted to purely supernatural or spiritual functions. Sometimes they exercise supreme political power in addition. In the latter case they are kings as well as gods, and the government is a theocracy: Thus in the Marquesas or Washington Islands there was a class of men who were deified in their lifetime. They were supposed to wield a supernatural power over the elements; they could give abundant harvests or smite the ground with barrenness; and they could inflict disease or death. Human sacrifices were offered to them to avert their wrath. There were not many of them, at the most one or two in each island. They lived in mystic seclusion.

Human
gods in the
Pacific.

¹ J. Moura, *Le Royaume du Camodge* (Paris, 1883), i. 177 sq. The practice in Tonquin is similar, except that there the person possessed seems only to give oracles. See *Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, iv. (1830) pp. 331 sq.

² Pausanias, x. 32. 6. Coins of Magnesia exhibit on the reverse a man carrying an uprooted tree. See F. B. Baker, in *Numismatic Chronicle*, Third Series, xii. (1892) pp. 89 sqq. Mr. Baker suggests that the custom may be a relic of ancient tree-worship.

Their powers were sometimes, but not always, hereditary. A missionary has described one of these human gods from personal observation. The god was a very old man who lived in a large house within an enclosure. In the house was a kind of altar, and on the beams of the house and on the trees round it were hung human skeletons, head down. No one entered the enclosure except the persons dedicated to the service of the god; only on days when human victims were sacrificed might ordinary people penetrate into the precinct. This human god received more sacrifices than all the other gods; often he would sit on a sort of scaffold in front of his house and call for two or three human victims at a time. They were always brought, for the terror he inspired was extreme. He was invoked all over the island, and offerings were sent to him from every side.¹ Again, of the South Sea Islands in general we are told that each island had a man who represented or personified the divinity. Such men were called gods, and their substance was confounded with that of the deity. The man-god was sometimes the king himself; oftener he was a priest or subordinate chief.² Tanatoa, king of Raiatea, was

¹ C. S. Stewart, *A Visit to the South Seas* (London, 1832), i. 244 sq.; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *Îles Marquises ou Nouka-Hiva* (Paris, 1843), pp. 226, 240 sq. Compare Mathias G * * *, *Lettres sur les Îles Marquises* (Paris, 1843), pp. 44 sq. The general name applied to these human gods was *atuas*, which, "with scarce a modification, is the term used in all the Polynesian dialects to designate the ideal beings worshipped as gods, in the system of polytheism existing among the people. At the Washington Islands, as at other groups, the *atuas*, or false gods of the inhabitants, are numerous and vary in their character and powers. Besides those having dominion respectively, as is supposed, over the different elements and their most striking phenomena, there are *atuas* of the mountain and of the forest, of the seaside and of the interior, *atuas* of peace and of war, of the song and of the dance, and of all the occupations and amusements of

life. It is supposed by them that many of the departed spirits of men also become *atuas*: and thus the multiplicity of their gods is such, that almost every sound in nature, from the roaring of the tempest in the mountains and the bursting of a thunderbolt in the clouds, to the sighing of a breeze through the cocoa-nut tops and the chirping of an insect in the grass or in the thatch of their huts, is interpreted into the movements of a god" (C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 243 sq.). The missionary referred to in the text, who described one of the human gods from personal observation, was the Rev. Mr. Crooke of the London Missionary Society, who resided in the island of Tahuata in 1797. On the deification of living men see Lord Avebury (Sir John Lubbock), *Origin of Civilisation* (London, 1882), pp. 354 sqq.

² J. A. Moerenhout, *Voyages aux Îles du Grand Océan* (Paris, 1837), i. 479; W. Fille, *Polynesian Researches*, Second Edition (London, 1832-1836), iii. 94.

Human
gods in the
Pacific.

deified by a certain ceremony performed at the chief temple. "As one of the divinities of his subjects, therefore, the king was worshipped, consulted as an oracle and had sacrifices and prayers offered to him."¹ This was not an exceptional case. The kings of the island regularly enjoyed divine honours, being deified at the time of their accession.² At his inauguration the king of Tahiti received a sacred girdle of red and yellow feathers, "which not only raised him to the highest earthly station, but identified him with their gods."³ A new piece, about eighteen inches long, was added to the belt at the inauguration of every king, and three human victims were sacrificed in the process.⁴ The king's houses were called the clouds of heaven; the rainbow was the name of the canoe in which he voyaged; his voice was spoken of as thunder, and the glare of the torches in his dwelling as lightning; and when the people saw them in the evening, as they passed near his house, instead of saying the torches were burning in the palace, they would remark that the lightning was flashing in the clouds of heaven. When he moved from one district to another on the shoulders of his bearers, he was said to be flying.⁵ The natives of Futuna, an island in the South Pacific, "are not content with deifying the evils that afflict them; they place gods everywhere, and even go so far as to suppose that the greatest of all the spirits resides in the person of their prince as in a living sanctuary. From this belief springs a strange mode of regarding their king, and of behaving under his authority. In their eyes the sovereign is not responsible for his acts; they deem him inspired by the divine spirit whose tabernacle he is; hence his will is sacred; even his whims and rages are revered; and if it pleases him to play the tyrant, his subjects submit from conscientious motives to

¹ D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels in the South Sea Islands, China, India, etc.* (London, 1831), i. 524; compare *ibid.* pp. 529 sq.

² Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 529 sq.

³ W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*,² iii. 108. The Ethnological Museum at Berlin possesses a magnificent robe

of red and yellow feathers with a feather helmet, also two very handsome tippets of the same materials. They were the insignia of the royal family of Hawaii, and might be worn by no one else.

⁴ J. Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands* (London, 1838), pp. 471 sq.

⁵ W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iii. 113 sq.

the vexations he inflicts on them."¹ The gods of Samoa generally appeared in animal form, but sometimes they were permanently incarnate in men, who gave oracles, received offerings (occasionally of human flesh), healed the sick, answered prayers, and so on.² In regard to the old religion of the Fijians, and especially of the inhabitants of Somosomo, it is said that "there appears to be no certain line of demarcation between departed spirits and gods, nor between gods and living men, for many of the priests and old chiefs are considered as sacred persons, and not a few of them will also claim to themselves the right of divinity. 'I am a god,' Tuikilakila would say; and he believed it too."³ In the Pelew Islands it is thought that every god can take possession of a man and speak through him. The possession may be either temporary or permanent; in the latter case the chosen person is called a *korong*. The god is free in his choice, so the position of *korong* is not hereditary. After the death of a *korong* the god is for some time unrepresented, until he suddenly makes his appearance in a new Avatar. The person thus chosen gives signs of the divine presence by behaving in a strange way; he gapes, runs about, and performs a number of senseless acts. At first people laugh at him, but his sacred mission is in time recognised, and he is invited to assume his proper position in the state. Generally this position is a distinguished one and confers on him a powerful influence over the whole community. In some of the islands the god is political sovereign of the land; and hence his new incarnation, however humble his origin, is raised to the same high rank, and rules, as god and king, over all the other chiefs.⁴

The ancient Egyptians, far from restricting their

¹ Missionary Chevron, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xv. (1843) p. 37. Compare *id.* xiii. (1841) p. 378.

² G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 37, 48, 57, 58, 59, 73.

³ Hazlewood, in J. E. Erskine's *Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific* (London, 1853), pp. 246 sq. Compare Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition*, New Edition (New York, 1851), iii. 87; Th.

Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*,² i. 219 sq.; R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 122. "A great chief [in Fiji] really believed himself to be a god—i.e. a reincarnation of an ancestor who had grown into a god" (Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to the author, dated August 26, 1898).

⁴ J. Kubary, "Die Religion der Pelauer," in A. Bastian's *Allerlei aus Volks- und Menschenkunde* (Berlin, 1888), i. 30 sqq.

Human
gods in the
Pacific.

Human
gods in
ancient
Egypt.

Human
gods in
ancient
Greece.

adoration to cats and dogs and such small deer, very liberally extended it to men. One of these human deities resided at the village of Anabis, and burnt sacrifices were offered to him on the altars; after which, says Porphyry, he would eat his dinner just as if he were an ordinary mortal.¹ In classical antiquity the Sicilian philosopher Empedocles gave himself out to be not merely a wizard but a god. Addressing his fellow-citizens in verse he said :—

*"O friends, in this great city that climbs the yellow slope
Of Agrigentum's citadel, who make good works your scope,
Who offer to the stranger a haven quiet and fair,
All hail! Among you honoured I walk with lofty air.
With garlands, blooming garlands you crown my noble brow,
A mortal man no longer, a deathless godhead now.
Where e'er I go, the people crowd round and worship pay,
And thousands follow seeking to learn the better way.
Some crave prophetic visions, some smit with anguish sore
Would fain hear words of comfort and suffer pain no more."*

He asserted that he could teach his disciples how to make the wind to blow or be still, the rain to fall and the sun to shine, how to banish sickness and old age and to raise the dead.² When Demetrius Poliorcetes restored the Athenian democracy in 307 B.C., the Athenians decreed divine honours to him and his father Antigonos, both of them being then alive, under the title of the Saviour Gods. Altars were set up to the Saviours, and a priest appointed to attend to their worship. The people went forth to meet their deliverer with hymns and dances, with garlands and incense and libations; they lined the streets and sang that he was the only true god, for the other gods slept, or dwelt far away, or were not. In the words of a contemporary poet, which were chanted in public and sung in private :—

¹ Porphyry, *De abstinence*, iv. 9; Eusebius, *Præparatio Evangelii*, iii. 12; compare Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, 29. The titles of the nomarchs or provincial governors of Egypt seem to shew that they were all originally worshipped as gods by their subjects (A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Ägypter*, p. 93; *id.* "Menschenvergötterung im alten Ägypten," *Am Urquell*, N.F. i. (1897) pp. 290 sq.).

² Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Philosophorum*, viii. 59-62; *Fragmenta philosophorum Graecorum*, ed. F. G. A. Mullach, pp. 12, 14; H. Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*,² I. (Berlin, 1906), p. 205. I owe this and the following case of a human god to a lecture on Greek religion by my friend Professor H. Diels, which I was privileged to hear at Berlin in December 1902.

"Of all the gods the greatest and the dearest
To the city are come.
For Demeter and Demetrius
Together time has brought.
She comes to hold the Maiden's awful rites,
And he joyous and fair and laughing,
As befits a god.
A glorious sight, with all his friends about him,
He in their midst,
They like to stars, and he the sun.
Son of Poseidon the mighty, Aphrodite's son,
All hail!
The other gods dwell far away,
Or have no ears;
Or are not, or pay us no heed.
But thee we present see,
No god of wood or stone, but godhead true.
Therefore to thee we pray."¹

The ancient Germans believed that there was something holy in women, and accordingly consulted them as oracles. Their sacred women, we are told, looked on the eddying rivers and listened to the murmur or the roar of the water, and from the sight and sound foretold what would come to pass.² But often the veneration of the men went further, and they worshipped women as true and living goddesses. For example, in the reign of Vespasian a certain Veleda, of the tribe of the Bructeri, was commonly held to be a deity, and in that character reigned over her people, her sway being acknowledged far and wide. She lived in a tower on the river Lippe, a tributary of the Rhine. When the people of Cologne sent to make a treaty with her, the ambassadors were not admitted to her presence; the negotiations were conducted through a minister, who acted as the mouthpiece of her divinity and reported her oracular utterances.³ The

Human
goddesses
among the
ancient
Germans.

¹ Plutarch, *Demetrius*, 10-13; Athenaeus, vi. 62 sq., pp. 253 sq. Apparently the giddy young man submitted to deification with a better grace than his rough old father Antigonus; who, when a poet called him a god and a child of the sun, bluntly remarked, "That's not my valet's opinion of me." See Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 24. For more evidence of the deification of living men

among the Greeks see Mr. A. B. Cook, in *Folk-lore*, xv. (1904) pp. 299 sqq.

² Tacitus, *Germania*, 8; *id.*, *Histor.* iv. 61; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* i. 15. 72, p. 360, ed. Potter; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* i. 50.

³ Tacitus, *Germania*, 8; *id.*, *Histor.* iv. 61, 65, v. 22. Compare K. Müllenhoff, *Deutsche Altertumskunde*, iv. 208 sqq.

example shews how easily among our rude forefathers the ideas of divinity and royalty coalesced. It is said that among the Getae down to the beginning of our era there was always a man who personified a god and was called God by the people. He dwelt on a sacred mountain and acted as adviser to the king.¹

Human
gods in
South-East
Africa.

An early Portuguese historian informs us that the Quiteve or king of Sofala, in south-eastern Africa, "is a woolly-haired Kaffir, a heathen who adores nothing whatever, and has no knowledge of God; on the contrary he esteems himself the god of all his lands, and is so looked upon and revered by his subjects." "When they suffer necessity or scarcity they have recourse to the king, firmly believing that he can give them all that they desire or have need of, and can obtain anything from his dead predecessors, with whom they believe that he holds converse. For this reason they ask the king to give them rain when it is required, and other favourable weather for their harvest, and in coming to ask for any of these things they bring him valuable presents, which the king accepts, bidding them return to their homes and he will be careful to grant their petitions. They are such barbarians that though they see how often the king does not give them what they ask for, they are not undeceived, but make him still greater offerings, and many days are spent in these comings and goings, until the weather turns to rain, and the Kaffirs are satisfied, believing that the king did not grant their request until he had been well bribed and importuned, as he himself affirms, in order to maintain them in their error."² The Zimbab, or Muzimbab, another people of south-eastern Africa, "do not adore idols or recognise any god, but instead they venerate and honour their king, whom they regard as a divinity, and they say he is the greatest and best in the world. And the said king says of himself that he alone is god of the earth, for which reason if it rains when he does not wish it to do so, or is too hot, he shoots arrows at the sky for not obeying him."³ Amongst the Barotse, a tribe on the upper Zambesi, "there is an old but waning

¹ Strabo, vii. 3, 5, pp. 297 sq.

² J. Dos Santos, "Eastern Ethiopia," in G. M'Call Theal's *Records of South-*

Eastern Africa, vii. (1901) pp. 190 sq., 199.

³ J. Dos Santos, *op. cit.* p. 295.

belief that a chief is a demigod, and in heavy thunderstorms the Barotse flock to the chief's yard for protection from the lightning. I have been greatly distressed at seeing them fall on their knees before the chief, entreating him to open the water-pots of heaven and send rain upon their gardens." "The king's servants declare themselves to be invincible, because they are the servants of God (meaning *the king*)."¹

The Maraves of South Africa "have a spiritual head to whom they ascribe supernatural powers, revering him as a prophet and designating him by the name of Chissumpe. Besides a considerable territory, which he owns and rules, he receives tribute from all, even from the king (*unde*). They believe that this being is invisible and immortal, and they consult him as an oracle, in which case he makes himself heard. He is personified by a *Fumo-a-Chissumpe*, that is, by an intimate of the Chissumpe, whose dignity is hereditary and who is revered exactly like the supposed Chissumpe, with whom he is naturally identical. As he names his own successor, disputes as to the succession do not arise. His oracles are as unintelligible and ambiguous as can well be imagined. He derives great profit from impostors of both sexes, who purchase the gift of soothsaying from him. In the settlement (*Muzinda*) of the Chissumpe there are women whom the people regard as his wives, but who, according to the universal belief, cannot bear children. If these women are convicted of an offence with a man, they are burnt along with the partner of their guilt."² The Mashona of southern Africa informed their bishop that they had once had a god, but that the Matabeles had driven him away. "This last was in reference to a curious custom in some villages of keeping a man they called their god. He seemed to be consulted by the people and had presents given to him. There was one at a village belonging to a chief

Human
gods in
South
Africa.

¹ F. S. Arnot, *Garenganze; or, Seven Years' Pioneer Mission Work in Central Africa* (London, N.D., preface, dated March 1889), p. 78.

² *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, vi. (1856) pp. 273 sq. This is from a German abstract (pp. 257-313, 369-420) of a work, which embodies

the results of a Portuguese expedition conducted by Major Monteiro in 1831 and 1832. The territory of the Maraves is described as bounded on the south by the Zambesi and on the east by the Portuguese possessions. Probably things have changed greatly in the seventy years which have elapsed since the expedition.

Magondi, in the old days. We were asked not to fire off any guns near the village, or we should frighten him away."¹ This Mashona god was formerly bound to render an annual tribute to the king of the Matabeles in the shape of four black oxen and one dance. A missionary has seen and described the deity discharging the latter part of his duty in front of the royal hut. For three mortal hours, without a break, to the banging of a tambourine, the click of castanettes, and the drone of a monotonous song, the swarthy god engaged in a frenzied dance, crouching on his hams like a tailor, sweating like a pig, and bounding about with an agility which testified to the strength and elasticity of his divine legs.²

Human
god of the
Makalakas.

"In the Makalaka hills, to the west of Matabeleland, the natives all acknowledge there dwells a god whom they name Ngwali, much worshipped by the bushmen and Makalakas, and feared even by the Matabele: even Lo Bengula paid tribute and sent presents to him often. This individual has only been seen by a few of those who live close by, and who doubtless profit by the numberless offerings made to this strange being; but the god never dies; and the position is supposed to be hereditary in the one family who are the intermediaries for and connexion between Ngwali and the outer world."³ This Makalaka god "resides in the depth of a cave, in the midst of a labyrinth. Nobody has ever seen him, but he has sons and daughters, who are priests and priestesses and dwell in the neighbourhood of the grotto. It is rather odd that not long ago three sons of this god were put to death like common mortals for having stolen wheat from the king. Lo Bengula probably thought that they should practise justice even more strictly than other folk. . . . In the middle of the cavern, they say, there is a shaft, very deep and very black. From this gulf there issue from time to time terrible noises like the crash of thunder. On the edge of the abyss the worshippers tremblingly lay flesh and

¹ G. W. H. Knight-Brace, *Memories of Mashonaland* (London and New York, 1895), p. 43; *id.*, in *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1890, pp. 346 sq.

² Father Croonenberghs, "La Mission du Zambèze," *Missions Catholiques*,

xiv. (1882) pp. 452 sq.

³ Ch. L. Norris Newman, *Matabeleland and how we got it* (London, 1895), pp. 167 sq. These particulars were communicated to Captain Newman by Mr. W. E. Thomas, son of the first missionary to Matabeleland.

wheat, fowls, cakes, and other presents to appease the hunger of the dreadful god and secure his favour. After making this offering the poor suppliants declare aloud their wishes and the object of their application. They ask to know hidden things, future events, the names of those who have cast a spell on them, the issue of such and such an enterprise. After some moments of profound silence there are heard, amid the crash of subterranean thunder, inarticulate sounds, strange broken words, of which it is hard to make out the sense, and which the medicine-men (*amazizis*), who are hand in glove with the makers of thunder, explain to these credulous devotees."¹

The Baganda of Central Africa believed in a god of Lake Nyanza, who sometimes took up his abode in a man or woman. The incarnate god was much feared by all the people, including the king and the chiefs. When the mystery of incarnation had taken place, the man, or rather the god, removed about a mile and a half from the margin of the lake, and there awaited the appearance of the new moon before he engaged in his sacred duties. From the moment that the crescent moon appeared faintly in the sky, the king and all his subjects were at the command of the divine man, or *Lubare* (god), as he was called, who reigned supreme not only in matters of faith and ritual, but also in questions of war and state policy. He was consulted as an oracle; by his word he could inflict or heal sickness, withhold rain, and cause famine. Large presents were made him when his advice was sought.² The chief of Urua, a large region to the west of Lake Tanganyika, "arrogates to himself divine honours and power and pretends to abstain from food for days without feeling its necessity; and, indeed, declares that as a god he is altogether above requiring food and only eats, drinks, and smokes for the pleasure it affords him."³ Among the Gallas, when a woman grows tired of the cares of housekeeping, she

Human
gods in
Central
and East
Africa.

¹ *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, lii. (1880) pp. 443-445. Compare Father Croonenberghs, "La Mission du Zambèze," *Missions Catholiques*, xiv. (1882) p. 452.

² R. W. Felkin, "Notes on the Waganda Tribe of Central Africa," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of*

Edinburgh, xiii. (1885-86) p. 762; C. T. Wilson and R. W. Felkin, *Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan*, i. 206; J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, pp. 15 sq.

³ V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa* (London, 1877), ii. 69.

begins to talk incoherently and to demean herself extravagantly. This is a sign of the descent of the holy spirit Callo upon her. Immediately her husband prostrates himself and adores her; she ceases to bear the humble title of wife and is called "Lord"; domestic duties have no further claim on her, and her will is a divine law.¹

Human
gods in
West
Africa.

The king of Loango is honoured by his people "as though he were a god; and he is called Sambee and Pango, which mean god. They believe that he can let them have rain when he likes; and once a year, in December, which is the time they want rain, the people come to beg of him to grant it to them." On this occasion the king, standing on his throne, shoots an arrow into the air, which is supposed to bring on rain.² Much the same is said of the king of Mombasa.³ Down to a few years ago, when his spiritual reign on earth was brought to an abrupt end by the carnal weapons of English marines and bluejackets, the king of Benin was the chief object of worship in his dominions. "He occupies a higher post here than the Pope does in Catholic Europe; for he is not only God's vicegerent upon earth, but a god himself, whose subjects both obey and adore him as such, although I believe their adoration to arise rather from fear than love."⁴ The king of Iddah told the English officers of the Niger Expedition, "God made me after his own image; I am all the same as God; and he appointed me a king."⁵ In the language of the Hos, a Ewe tribe of Togoland, the word for god is *Mawu* and the Great God is *Mawu gã*. They personify the blessing of god and say that the Great God dwells

¹ Mgr. Massaja, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xxx. (1858) p. 51.

² "The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battel," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 330; Proyart, "History of Loango, Kakongo, and other Kingdoms in Africa," in Pinkerton, *op. cit.* xvi. 577; O. Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 335.

³ Ogilby, *Africa*, p. 615; Dapper, *op. cit.* p. 400.

⁴ J. Adams, *Sketches taken during ten Voyages to Africa*, p. 29; *id.*, *Remarks on the Country extending from*

Cape Palmas to the River Congo (London, 1823), p. 111. Compare "My Wanderings in Africa," by an F.R.G.S. [R. F. Burton], *Fraser's Magazine*, lxvii. (April 1863) p. 414.

⁵ W. Allen and T. R. H. Thomson, *Narrative of the Expedition to the River Niger in 1841* (London, 1848), i. 288. A slight mental confusion may perhaps be detected in this utterance of the dark-skinned deity. But such confusion, or rather obscurity, is almost inseparable from any attempt to define with philosophic precision the profound mystery of incarnation.

with a rich man. "From the personification of the divine blessing to the deification of the man himself the step is not a long one, and as a matter of fact it is taken. The Hova know men in whose life are to be seen so many resemblances to the Great God that they call them simply *Mawu*. In the neighbourhood of Ho there lived a good many years ago a man who enjoyed an extraordinary reputation in the whole of the neighbourhood, and who accordingly named himself *Wuwu*, that is, 'more than the others.' The people actually paid him divine honours, not indeed in the sense that they sacrificed to him, but in the sense that they followed his words absolutely. They worked on his fields and brought him rich presents. On the coast there lived a respected old chief, who called himself *Mawu*. He was richer than all the other chiefs, and the inhabitants of twenty-seven towns rendered him unconditional obedience. In the circumstance that he was richer and more honoured than all the other chiefs he saw his resemblance to the deity."¹

Among the Hovas and other tribes of Madagascar there is said to be a deep sense of the divinity of kings; and down to the acceptance of Christianity by the late queen, the Hova sovereigns were regularly termed "the visible God" (*Andriamdnitra hita maho*), and other terms of similar import were also applied to them.² The chiefs of the Betsileo in Madagascar "are considered as far above the common people and are looked upon almost as if they were gods." "For the chiefs are supposed to have power as regards the words they utter, not, however, merely the power which a king possesses, but power like that of God; a power which works of itself on account of its inherent virtue, and not power exerted through soldiers and strong servants."³ "The *Ampandzaka-mandzaka* or sovereign whom the Sakalava of the north often call

Divinity
of kings
and chiefs
in Madag-
ascar.

¹ J. Spieth, *Die Ewe-Stämme* (Berlin, 1906), p. 419.

² Rev. J. Sibree, "Curiosities of Words connected with Royalty and Chieftainship," *Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine*, No. xi. (1887) p. 302; *id.* in *Journal of the*

Anthropological Institute, xxi. (1892) p. 218.

³ Rev. J. Sibree, in *Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine*, No. xi. (1887) p. 307; *id.* in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892) p. 225.

also *Zanahari ântani*, God on earth, is surrounded by them with a veneration which resembles idolatry, and the vulgar are simple enough to attribute the creation of the world to his ancestors. The different parts of his body and his least actions are described by nouns and verbs which are foreign to the ordinary language, forming a separate vocabulary called *Voûla fâli*, sacred words, or *Voûla n' ampandzâka*, princely words. The person and the goods of the *Ampandzaka-mandzaka* are *fali*, sacred."¹

Divine
kings in
the Malay
region.

The theory of the real divinity of a king is said to be held strongly in the Malay region. Not only is the king's person considered sacred, but the sanctity of his body is supposed to communicate itself to his regalia and to slay those who break the royal taboos. Thus it is firmly believed that any one who seriously offends the royal person, who imitates or touches even for a moment the chief objects of the regalia, or who wrongfully makes use of the insignia or privileges of royalty, will be *këna daulat*, that is, struck dead by a sort of electric discharge of that divine power which the Malays suppose to reside in the king's person and to which they give the name of *daulat* or sanctity.² The regalia of every petty Malay state are believed to be endowed with supernatural powers;³ and we are told that "the extraordinary strength of the Malay belief in the supernatural powers of the regalia of their sovereigns can only be thoroughly realised after a study of their romances, in which their kings are credited with all the attributes of inferior gods, whose birth, as indeed every subsequent act of their after-life, is attended by the most amazing prodigies."⁴

Miraculous
powers
attributed
to regalia.

Divine
kings and
men in the
East
Indies.

Among the Battas of Central Sumatra there is a prince who bears the hereditary title of Singa Mangaradja and is worshipped as a deity. He reigns over Bakara, a village on the south-western shore of Lake Toba; but his worship is diffused among the tribes both near and far. All sorts of strange stories are told of him. It is said that

¹ V. Noel, "Île de Madagascar : recherches sur les Sakkalava," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), Deuxième Série, xx. (1843) p. 56.

² W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 23 sq.

³ T. J. Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlement in the Straits of Malacca*, ii. 193. See above, pp. 362-364.

⁴ W. W. Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 29.

he was seven years in his mother's womb, and thus came into the world a seven-year-old child; that he has a black hairy tongue, the sight of which is fatal, so that in speaking he keeps his mouth as nearly shut as possible and gives all his orders in writing. Sometimes he remains seven months without eating, or sleeps for three months together. He can make the sun to shine or the rain to fall at his pleasure; hence the people pray to him for a good harvest, and worshippers hasten to Bakara from all sides with offerings in the hope of thereby securing his miraculous aid. Wherever he goes, the gongs are solemnly beaten and the public peace may not be broken. He is said to eat neither pork nor dog's flesh.¹ The Battas used to cherish a superstitious veneration for the Sultan of Minangkabau, and shewed a blind submission to his relations and emissaries, real or pretended, when these persons appeared among them for the purpose of levying contributions. Even when insulted and put in fear of their lives they made no attempt at resistance; for they believed that their affairs would never prosper, that their rice would be blighted and their buffaloes die, and that they would remain under a sort of spell if they offended these sacred messengers.² In the kingdom of Loowoo the great majority of the people have never seen the king, and they believe that were they to see him their belly would swell up and they would die on the spot. The farther you go from the capital, the more firmly rooted is this belief.³ In time of public calamity, as during war or pestilence, some of the Molucca Islanders used to celebrate a festival of heaven. If no good result followed, they bought a slave, took him at the next festival to the place of sacrifice, and set him on a raised place under a certain bamboo-tree. This tree represented heaven, and had been honoured as its image

Divine
kings and
men in the
East
Indies.

¹ G. K. N[iemann], "Bijdrage tot de Kennis van den Godsdienst der Bataks," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, iii. Serie, iv. (1870) pp. 289 sq.; B. Hagen, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Battareligion," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxviii. 537 sq.; G. A. Wilken, "Het animisme," *De Indische Gids*, July 1884, p. 85; *id.*, *Handleiding voor de vergelijkende Volkenkunde van*

Nederlandsch-Indië (Leyden, 1893), pp. 369 sq., 612; J. Freiherr von Brenner, *Besuch bei den Kannibalen Sumatras* (Würzburg, 1894), pp. 340.

² W. Marsden's *History of Sumatra* (London, 1811), pp. 376 sq.

³ A. C. Kruijt, "Van Paloppo naar Posso," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xlii. (1898) p. 22.

at former festivals. The portion of the sacrifice which had previously been offered to heaven was now given to the slave, who ate and drank it in the name and stead of heaven. Henceforth he was well treated, kept for the festivals of heaven, and employed to represent heaven and receive the offerings in its name.¹ Every Alfoor village of northern Ceram has usually six priests, of whom the most intelligent discharges the duties of high priest. This man is the most powerful person in the village; all the inhabitants, even the regent, are subject to him and must do his bidding. The common herd regard him as a higher being, a sort of demi-god. He aims at surrounding himself with an atmosphere of mystery, and for this purpose lives in great seclusion, generally in the council-house of the village, where he conceals himself from vulgar eyes behind a screen or partition.² However, in this case the god seems to be in process of incubation rather than full-fledged.

Divine
kings in
Burma and
Siam.

A peculiarly bloodthirsty monarch of Burma, by name Badonsachen, whose very countenance reflected the inbred ferocity of his nature, and under whose reign more victims perished by the executioner than by the common enemy, conceived the notion that he was something more than mortal, and that this high distinction had been granted him as a reward for his numerous good works. Accordingly he laid aside the title of king and aimed at making himself a god. With this view, and in imitation of Buddha, who, before being advanced to the rank of a divinity, had quitted his royal palace and seraglio and retired from the world, Badonsachen withdrew from his palace to an immense pagoda, the largest in the empire, which he had been engaged in constructing for many years. Here he held conferences with the most learned monks, in which he sought to persuade them that the five thousand years assigned for the observance of the law of Buddha were now elapsed, and that he himself was the god who was destined to appear after that period, and to abolish the old law by

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

² J. Boot, "Korte schets der noord-kust van Ceram," *Tijdschrift van het*

Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap, Tweede Serie, x. (1893) pp. 1198 sq.

substituting his own. But to his great mortification many of the monks undertook to demonstrate the contrary; and this disappointment, combined with his love of power and his impatience under the restraints of an ascetic life, quickly disabused him of his imaginary godhead, and drove him back to his palace and his harem.¹ The king of Siam "is venerated equally with a divinity. His subjects ought not to look him in the face; they prostrate themselves before him when he passes, and appear before him on their knees, their elbows resting on the ground."² There is a special language devoted to his sacred person and attributes, and it must be used by all who speak to or of him. Even the natives have difficulty in mastering this peculiar vocabulary. The hairs of the monarch's head, the soles of his feet, the breath of his body, indeed every single detail of his person, both outward and inward, have particular names. When he eats or drinks, sleeps or walks, a special word indicates that these acts are being performed by the sovereign, and such words cannot possibly be applied to the acts of any other person whatever. There is no word in the Siamese language by which any creature of higher rank or greater dignity than a monarch can be described; and the missionaries, when they speak of God, are forced to use the native word for king.³ In Tonquin every village chooses its guardian

Divinity of
the king of
Siam.

¹ Sangermano, *Description of the Burmese Empire* (reprinted at Rangoon, 1885), pp. 63 sq.

² E. Aymonier, *Le Cambodge*, ii. (Paris, 1901) p. 25.

³ E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe* (Westminster, 1898), pp. 142 sq. Similarly, special sets of terms are or have been used with reference to persons of royal blood in Burma (Forbes, *British Burma*, pp. 71 sq.; Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, ii. 118 sq.), Cambodia (Lemire, *Cochinchine française et le royaume de Cambodge*, p. 447), the Malay Peninsula (W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 35), Travancore (S. Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, p. 129), the Pelew Islands (K. Semper, *Die Palau-Inseln*, pp. 309 sq.), Ponape, one of the Caroline Islands (Dr. Hahl, "Mitteilungen über Sitten und rechtliche Verhältnisse

auf Ponape," *Ethnologisches Notisblatt*, ii. Heft 2 (Berlin, 1901), p. 5), Samoa (L. Th. Violette, in *Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 190; J. E. Newell, "Chief's Language in Samoa," *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists*, London, 1893, ii. 784-799), the Maldives (Fr. Pyrard, *Voyage to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas, and Brasil*, Hakluyt Society, i. 226), in some parts of Madagascar (J. Sibree, in *The Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine*, No. xi., Christmas 1887, pp. 310 sqq.; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892) pp. 215 sqq.), among the Bewanda of the Transvaal (Beuster, "Das Volk der Vawenda," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, xiv. (1879) p. 238), and among the Natchez Indians of North America

Divine
men in
Tonquin.

+

Divine
head of the
Babites.

spirit, often in the form of an animal, as a dog, tiger, cat, or serpent. Sometimes a living person is selected as patron-divinity. Thus a beggar persuaded the people of a village that he was their guardian spirit; so they loaded him with honours and entertained him with their best.¹ At the present day the head of the great Persian sect of the Babites, Abbas Effendi by name, resides at Acre in Syria, and is held by Frenchmen, Russians, and Americans, especially by rich American ladies, to be an incarnation of God himself. The late Professor S. I. Curtiss of Chicago had the honour of dining with "the master," as he is invariably called by his followers, when the incarnation expressed a kindly hope that he might have the pleasure of drinking tea with the professor in the kingdom of heaven.²

Human
gods in
India.

Divine
dairymen
among the
Todas.

But perhaps no country in the world has been so prolific of human gods as India; nowhere has the divine grace been poured out in a more liberal measure on all classes of society from kings down to milkmen. Thus amongst the Todas, a pastoral people of the Neilgherry Hills of southern India, the dairy is a sanctuary, and the milkman who attends to it has been described as a god. On being asked whether the Todas salute the sun, one of these divine milkmen replied, "Those poor fellows do so, but I," tapping his chest, "I, a god! why should I salute the sun?" Every one, even his own father, prostrates himself before the milkman, and no one would dare to refuse him anything. No human being, except another milkman,

(Du Pratz, *History of Louisiana*, p. 328). When we remember that special vocabularies of this sort have been employed with regard to kings or chiefs who are known to have enjoyed a divine or semi-divine character, as in Tahiti (see above, p. 388), Fiji (Th. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*,² i. 37), and Tonga (W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 79), we shall be inclined to surmise that the existence of such a practice anywhere is indicative of a tendency to deify royal personages, who are thus marked off from their fellows. This would not necessarily apply to a custom of using a special

dialect or particular forms of speech in addressing social superiors generally, such as prevails in Java (T. S. Raffles, *History of Java*, i. 310, 366 sqq., London, 1817), and Bali (R. Friederich, "Voorloopig Verslag van het eiland Bali," *Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxii. 4; J. Jacobs, *Eenigen tijd onder de Baliers*, p. 36).

¹ A. Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iv. 383.

² S. I. Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion To-day* (Chicago, 1902), p. 102.

may touch him; and he gives oracles to all who consult him, speaking with the voice of a god.¹

Further, in India "every king is regarded as little short of a present god."² The Hindoo law-book of Manu goes farther and says that "even an infant king must not be despised from an idea that he is a mere mortal; for he is a great deity in human form."³ As to the Brahmans it is laid down in the same treatise that a Brahman, "be he ignorant or learned, is a great divinity, just as the fire, whether carried forth (for the performance of a burnt-oblation) or not carried forth, is a great divinity." Further, it is said that though Brahmans "employ themselves in all sorts of mean occupations, they must be honoured in every way; for each of them is a very great deity."⁴ In another ancient Hindoo book we read that "verily, there are two kinds of gods; for, indeed, the gods are the gods; and the Brahmans who have studied and teach sacred lore are the human gods. The sacrifice of these is divided into two kinds: oblations constitute the sacrifice to the gods; and gifts to the priests that to the human gods, the Brahmans who have studied and teach sacred lore."⁵ The spiritual power of a Brahman priest is described as unbounded. "His anger is as terrible as that of the gods. His blessing makes rich, his curse withers. Nay, more, he is himself actually worshipped as a god. No marvel, no prodigy in nature is believed to be beyond the limits of his power to accomplish. If the priest were to threaten to bring down the sun from the sky or arrest it in its daily course in the heavens, no villager would for a moment doubt his ability to do so."⁶ As to the *mantras*, or sacred texts by means of which the Brahmans exercise

Kings and
Brahmans
considered
as gods
in India.

¹ W. E. Marshall, *Travels amongst the Todas* (London, 1873), pp. 136, 137; cp. pp. 141, 142; F. Metz, *Tribes inhabiting the Nilgerry Hills*, Second Edition (Mangalore, 1864), pp. 19 sqq. However, at the present day, according to Dr. W. H. R. Rivers, the *palol* or milkman of the highest class is rather a sacred priest than a god. But there is a tradition that the gods held the office of milkman, and even now the human milkman of one particular dairy is believed to be the direct successor

of a god. See W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas* (London, 1906), pp. 448 sq.

² Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought in India*, p. 259.

³ *The Laws of Manu*, vii. 8, p. 217, translated by G. Bühler (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxv.).

⁴ *Id.* ix. 317, 319, pp. 398, 399.

⁵ *Satapatha-Brahmana*, trans. by J. Eggeling, part i. pp. 309 sq.; compare *id.*, part ii. p. 341 (*Sacred Books of the East*, vols. xii. and xxvi.).

⁶ Monier Williams, *op. cit.* p. 457.

Other
human
gods in
India.

their miraculous powers, there is a saying everywhere current in India: "The whole universe is subject to the gods; the gods are subject to the Mantras; the Mantras to the Brahmans; therefore the Brahmans are our gods."¹ There is said to have been a sect in Orissa some years ago who worshipped the late Queen Victoria in her lifetime as their chief divinity. And to this day in India all living persons remarkable for great strength or valour or for supposed miraculous powers run the risk of being worshipped as gods. Thus, a sect in the Punjab worshipped a deity whom they called Nikkal Sen. This Nikkal Sen was no other than the redoubted General Nicholson, and nothing that the general could do or say damped the ardour of his adorers. The more he punished them, the greater grew the religious awe with which they worshipped him.² At Benares a few years ago a celebrated deity was incarnate in the person of a Hindoo gentleman who rejoiced in the euphönious name of Swami Bhaskaranandaji Saraswati, and looked uncommonly like the late Cardinal Manning, only more ingenuous. His eyes beamed with kindly human interest, and he took what is described as an innocent pleasure in the divine honours paid him by his confiding worshippers.³

Lingayat
priests
worshipped
as gods.

The Lingayats are the Unitarians of Hindooism, for they believe in only one god, Siva, rejecting the other two persons of the Hindoo Trinity. Yet "they esteem the *Jangam* or priest as superior even to the deity. They pay homage to the *Jangam* first and to Siva afterwards. The *Jangam* is regarded as an incarnation of the deity. . . . In practice the *Jangam* is placed first and, as stated above, is worshipped as

¹ Monier Williams, *op. cit.* pp. 201 sq.

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

³ I have borrowed the description of this particular deity from the Rev. Dr. A. M. Fairbairn, who knew him personally (*Contemporary Review*, June 1899, p. 768). It is melancholy to reflect that in our less liberal land the divine Swami would probably have been consigned to the calm seclusion of a gaol or a madhouse. The difference between a god and a madman or a criminal is often merely a question of latitude and longitude.

Swami departed this life in August

1899 at the age of about seventy. It is only fair to his memory to add that the writer who records his death bears high and honourable testimony to the noble and unselfish character of the deceased, who is said to have honestly repudiated the miraculous powers ascribed to him by his followers. He was worshipped in temples during his life, and other temples have been erected to him since his death. See Rai Bahadur Lala Baij Nath, B.A., *Hinduism Ancient and Modern* (Meerut, 1905), pp. 94 sq.

god upon earth.”¹ In 1900 a hill-man in Vizagapatam gave out that he was an incarnate god, and his claims to divinity were accepted by a following of five thousand people, who, when a sceptical government sent an armed force to suppress the movement, which threatened political trouble, testified to the faith that was in them by resisting even to the shedding of their blood. Two policemen who refused to bow the knee to the new god were knocked on the head. However, in the scuffle the deity himself was arrested and laid by the heels in gaol, where he died just like a common mortal.²

At Chinchvad, a small town about ten miles from Poona in western India, there lives a family of whom one in each generation is believed by a large proportion of the Mahrattas to be an incarnation of the elephant-headed god Gunputty. That celebrated deity was first made flesh about the year 1640 in the person of a Brahman of Poona, by name Mooraba Gosseyn, who sought to work out his salvation by abstinence, mortification, and prayer. His piety had its reward. The god himself appeared to him in a vision of the night and promised that a portion of his, that is, of Gunputty's holy spirit should abide with him and with his seed after him even to the seventh generation. The divine promise was fulfilled. Seven successive incarnations, transmitted from father to son, manifested the light of Gunputty to a dark world. The last of the direct line, a heavy-looking god with very weak eyes, died in the year 1810. But the cause of truth was too sacred, and the value of the church property too considerable, to allow the Brahmins to contemplate with equanimity the unspeakable loss that would be sustained by a world which knew not Gunputty. Accordingly they sought and found a holy vessel in whom the divine spirit of the master had revealed itself anew, and the revelation has been happily continued in an unbroken succession of vessels from that time to this. But a mysterious law of spiritual economy, whose operation in the history of religion we may deplore though we cannot alter, has decreed that the miracles

Human
incarna-
tions of the
elephant-
headed god
Gunputty.

¹ E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes in Southern India* (Madras, 1906), of *Southern India*, iv. 236, 280. p. 301.

² E. Thurston, *Ethnographic Notes*

wrought by the god-man in these degenerate days cannot compare with those which were wrought by his predecessors in days gone by; and it is even reported that the only sign vouchsafed by him to the present generation of vipers is the miracle of feeding the multitude whom he annually entertains to dinner at Chinchvad.¹

Worship
of the
Maharajas
as incarna-
tions of
Krishna.

A Hindoo sect, which has many representatives in Bombay and Central India, holds that its spiritual chiefs or Maharajas, as they are called, are representatives or even actual incarnations on earth of the god Krishna. Hence in the temples where the Maharajas do homage to the idols, men and women do homage to the Maharajas, prostrating themselves at their feet, offering them incense, fruits, and flowers, and waving lights before them, as the Maharajas themselves do before the images of the gods. One mode of worshipping Krishna is by swinging his images in swings. Hence, in every district presided over by a Maharaja, the women are wont to worship not Krishna but the Maharaja by swinging him in pendulous seats. The leavings of his food, the dust on which he treads, the water in which his dirty linen is washed, are all eagerly swallowed by his devotees, who worship his wooden shoes, and prostrate themselves before his seat and his painted portraits. And as Krishna looks down from heaven with most favour on such a minister to the wants of his successors and vicars on earth, a peculiar rite called Self-devotion has been instituted, whereby his faithful worshippers make over their bodies, their souls, and, what is perhaps still more important, their worldly substance to his adorable incarnations; and women are taught to believe that the highest bliss for themselves and their families is to be attained by yielding themselves to the embraces of those beings in whom the divine nature

¹ Captain Edward Moor, "Account of an Hereditary Living Deity," *Asiatic Researches*, vii. (London, 1803) pp. 381-395; Viscount Valentia, *Voyages and Travels*, ii. 151-159; Ch. Coleman, *Mythology of the Hindus* (London, 1832), pp. 106-111; *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency*, xviii. part iii. (Bombay, 1885) pp. 125 *sq.* I have to thank my friend Mr. W. Crooke for calling my attention to the second

and fourth of these works. To be exact, I should say that I have no information as to this particular deity later than the account given of him in the eighteenth volume of the Bombay Gazetteer, published some twenty-five years ago. But I think we may assume that the same providential reasons which prolonged the revelation down to the publication of the Gazetteer have continued it to the present time.

mysteriously coexists with the form and even the appetites of true humanity.¹

Christianity itself has not uniformly escaped the taint of these unhappy delusions; indeed it has often been sullied by the extravagances of vain pretenders to a divinity equal to or even surpassing that of its great Founder. In the second century Montanus the Phrygian claimed to be the incarnate Trinity, uniting in his single person God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.² Nor is this an isolated case, the exorbitant pretension of a single ill-balanced mind. From the earliest times down to the present day many sects have believed that Christ, nay God himself, is incarnate in every fully initiated Christian, and they have carried this belief to its logical conclusion by adoring each other. Tertullian records that this was done by his fellow-Christians at Carthage in the second century; the disciples of St. Columba worshipped him as an embodiment of Christ; and in the eighth century Elipandus of Toledo spoke of Christ as "a god among gods," meaning that all believers were gods just as truly as Jesus himself. The adoration of each other was customary among the Albigenses, and is noticed hundreds of times in the records of the Inquisition at Toulouse in the early part of the fourteenth century. It is still practised by the Paulicians of Armenia and the Bogomiles about Moscow. The Paulicians, indeed, presume to justify their faith, if not their practice, by the authority of St. Paul, who said, "It is not I that speak, but Christ that dwelleth in me."³ Hence the members of this Russian sect are known as the Christs. "Among them men and women alike take upon themselves the calling of teachers and prophets, and in this character they lead a strict, ascetic life, refrain from the most ordinary and innocent pleasures, exhaust themselves by long fasting

Pretenders
to divinity
among
Christians.

¹ Monier Williams, *op. cit.* pp. 136 sq. A full account of the doctrines and practices of the sect may be found in the *History of the Sect of the Maharajas or Vallabhacharyas*, published by Trübner at London in 1865. My attention was directed to it by my friend Mr. W. Crooke.

² A. Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmen-*

geschichte, i. 321.

³ F. C. Conybeare, "The History of Christmas," *American Journal of Theology*, iii. (1899) pp. 18 sq. Mr. Conybeare kindly lent me a proof of this article, and the statement in the text is based on it. In the published article the author has made some changes.

and wild ecstatic religious exercises, and abhor marriage. Under the excitement caused by their supposed holiness and inspiration, they call themselves not only teachers and prophets, but also 'Saviours,' 'Redeemers,' 'Christs,' 'Mothers of God.' Generally speaking, they call themselves simply Gods, and pray to each other as to real gods and living Christs or Madonnas."¹

Brethren
and Sisters
of the Free
Spirit.

In the thirteenth century there arose a sect called the Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit, who held that by long and assiduous contemplation any man might be united to the deity in an ineffable manner and become one with the source and parent of all things, and that he who had thus ascended to God and been absorbed in his beatific essence, actually formed part of the Godhead, was the Son of God in the same sense and manner with Christ himself, and enjoyed thereby a glorious immunity from the trammels of all laws human and divine. Inwardly transported by this blissful persuasion, though outwardly presenting in their aspect and manners a shocking air of lunacy and distraction, the sectaries roamed from place to place, attired in the most fantastic apparel and begging their bread with wild shouts and clamour, spurning indignantly every kind of honest labour and industry as an obstacle to divine contemplation and to the ascent of the soul towards the Father of spirits. In all their excursions they were followed by women with whom they lived on terms of the closest familiarity. Those of them who conceived they had made the greatest proficiency in the higher spiritual life dispensed with the use of clothes altogether in their assemblies, looking upon decency and modesty as marks of inward corruption, characteristics of a soul that still grovelled under the dominion of the flesh and had not yet been elevated into communion with the divine spirit, its centre and source. Sometimes their progress towards this mystic communion was accelerated by the Inquisition,

¹ D. Mackenzie Wallace, *Russia* (London, Paris, and New York, N.D.), p. 302. The passage in the text is "a short extract from a description of the 'Khlysti' by one who was initiated into their mysteries." As to these Russian Christs see further N. Tsakni,

La Russie sectaire (Paris, N.D.), pp. 63 *sqq.* Amongst the means which these sectaries take to produce a state of religious exaltation are wild, whirling dances like those of the dancing Dervishes.

and they expired in the flames, not merely with unclouded serenity, but with the most triumphant feelings of cheerfulness and joy.¹ In the same century a Bohemian woman named Wilhelmina, whose head had been turned by brooding over some crazy predictions about a coming age of the Holy Ghost, persuaded herself and many people besides that the Holy Ghost had actually become incarnate in her person for the salvation of a great part of mankind. She died at Milan in the year 1281 in the most fragrant odour of sanctity, and her memory was held in the highest veneration by a numerous following, and even honoured with religious worship both public and private.²

Incarnation of the Holy Ghost.

About the year 1830 there appeared, in one of the states of the American Union bordering on Kentucky, an impostor who declared that he was the Son of God, the Saviour of mankind, and that he had reappeared on earth to recall the impious, the unbelieving, and sinners to their duty. He protested that if they did not mend their ways within a certain time, he would give the signal, and in a moment the world would crumble to ruins. These extravagant pretensions were received with favour even by persons of wealth and position in society. At last a German humbly besought the new Messiah to announce the dreadful catastrophe to his fellow-countrymen in the German language, as they did not understand English, and it seemed a pity that they should be damned merely on that account. The would-be Saviour in reply confessed with great candour that he did not know German. "What!" retorted the German, "you the Son of God, and don't speak all languages, and don't even know German? Come, come, you are a knave, a hypocrite, and a madman. Bedlam is the place for you." The spectators laughed, and went away ashamed of their credulity.³ About thirty years ago a new sect was founded at Patiala in the Punjab, by a wretched creature named Hakim Singh, who lived in extreme poverty and filth, gave himself out to be a

Modern incarnations of Jesus Christ.

¹ J. L. Mosheim, *Ecclesiastical History* (London, 1819), iii. 278 sqq.

² J. L. Mosheim, *op. cit.* iii. 288 sq.

³ Mgr Flaget, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, vii. (1834) p.

84. Mgr Flaget was bishop of Bardonia, and his letter is dated May 4, 1833. He says that the events happened in a neighbouring state about three years before he wrote.

reincarnation of Jesus Christ, and offered to baptize the missionaries who attempted to argue with him. He proposed shortly to destroy the British Government, and to convert and conquer the world. His gospel was accepted by four thousand believers in his immediate neighbourhood.¹ Cases like these verge on, if they do not cross, the wavering and uncertain line which divides the raptures of religion from insanity.

Trans-
migrations
of human
deities.

Sometimes, at the death of the human incarnation, the divine spirit transmigrates into another man. In the kingdom of Kaffa, in eastern Africa, the heathen part of the people worship a spirit called *Dedce*, to whom they offer prayer and sacrifice, and whom they invoke on all important occasions. This spirit is incarnate in the grand magician or pope, a person of great wealth and influence, ranking almost with the king, and wielding the spiritual, as the king wields the temporal power. It happened that, shortly before the arrival of a Christian missionary in the kingdom, this African pope died, and the priests, fearing lest the missionary might assume the position vacated by the deceased prelate, declared that the *Dedce* had passed into the king, who henceforth, uniting the spiritual with the temporal power, reigned as god and king.² Before beginning to work at the salt-pans in a Laosian village, the workmen offer sacrifice to the divinity of the salt-pans. This divinity is incarnate in a woman and transmigrates at her death into another woman.³ In Bhotan the spiritual head of the government is a dignitary called the Dhurma Rajah, who is supposed to be a perpetual incarnation of the deity. At his death the new incarnate god shews himself in an infant by the refusal of his mother's milk and a preference for that of a cow.⁴

The Buddhist Tartars believe in a great number of living Buddhas, who officiate as Grand Lamas at the

¹ D. C. J. Ibbetson, *Outlines of Panjab Ethnography* (Calcutta, 1883), p. 123.

² G. Massaja, *I miei trentacinque anni di missione nell'alta Etiopia* (Rome and Milan, 1888), v. 53 sq. Compare Father Leon des Avanchers, in *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*

(Paris), Vme Série, xvii. (1869) p. 307.

³ E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos* (Saigon, 1885), pp. 141 sq.; *id.*, *Voyage dans le Laos*, ii. (Paris, 1897) p. 47.

⁴ W. Robinson, *Descriptive Account of Assam* (London and Calcutta, 1841), pp. 342 sq.; *Asiatic Researches*, xv. 146.

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

Trans-
migrations
of the
divine
Lamas. ✓

¹ Huc, *Souvenirs d'un voyage dans la Tartarie et le Thibet*, i. 279 sqq., ed. 12mo. For more details, see L. A. Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet* (London, 1895), pp. 245 sqq. Compare G. Timkowski, *Travels of the Russian Mission through Mongolia to China*, i. 23-25; Abbé Armand David, "Voyage en Mongolie," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), VI^{me} Série, ix. (1875) pp. 132-134; Mgr Bruguière, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, ix. (1836) pp. 296 sq.; Father Gabet, *ib.* xx. (1848) pp. 229-231; G.

Sandberg, *Tibet and the Tibetans* (London, 1906), pp. 128 sqq. In the Delta of the Niger the souls of little negro babies are identified by means of a similar test. An assortment of small wares that belonged to deceased members of the family is shewn to the new baby, and the first thing he grabs at identifies him. "Why, he's uncle John," they say; "see! he knows his own pipe." Or, "That's cousin Emma; see! she knows her market calabash" (Miss M. H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 493).

Divinity of
the Grand
Lama of
Lhasa.

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

Incarnate
human
gods in the
Chinese
empire.

But he is by no means the only man who poses as a god in these regions. A register of all the incarnate gods in the Chinese empire is kept in the *Li fan yüan* or Colonial

¹ Huc, *op. cit.* ii. 279, 347 sq.; C. Meiners, *Geschichte der Religionen*, i. 335 sq.; J. G. Georgi, *Beschreibung aller Nationen des russischen Reichs*, p. 415; A. Erman, *Travels in Siberia*, ii. 303 sqq.; *Journal of the Roy. Geogr. Soc.* xxxviii. (1868) pp. 168, 169; *Proceedings of the Roy. Geogr. Soc.* N.S. vii. (1885) p. 67; Sarat Chandra Das, *Journey to Lhasa and Central Tibet* (London, 1902), pp. 159 sq. The Grand Lama's palace is called

Potala. Views of it from a photograph and from a drawing are given by Sarat Chandra Das. In the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, &c.*, the Lama in question is called the Lama Gûrû; but the context shows that he is the great Lama of Lhasa.

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

Office at Peking. The number of gods who have thus taken out a license is one hundred and sixty. Tibet is blessed with thirty of them, northern Mongolia rejoices in nineteen, and southern Mongolia basks in the sunshine of no less than fifty-seven. The Chinese government, with a paternal solicitude for the welfare of its subjects, forbids the gods on the register to be reborn anywhere but in Tibet. They fear lest the birth of a god in Mongolia should have serious political consequences by stirring the dormant patriotism and warlike spirit of the Mongols, who might rally round an ambitious native deity of royal lineage and seek to win for him, at the point of the sword, a temporal as well as a spiritual kingdom. But besides these public or licensed gods there are a great many little private gods, or unlicensed practitioners of divinity, who work miracles and bless their people in holes and corners; and of late years the Chinese government has winked at the rebirth of these pettifogging deities outside of Tibet. However, once they are born, the government keeps its eye on them as well as on the regular practitioners, and if any of them misbehaves he is promptly degraded, banished to a distant monastery, and strictly forbidden ever to be born again in the flesh.¹

At the head of Taoism, the most numerous religious sect of China, is a pope who goes by the name of the Heavenly Master and is believed to be an incarnation and representative on earth of the god of heaven. His official title is *Chên-yen*, or "the True Man." When one of these pontiffs or incarnate deities departs this life, his soul passes into a male member of his family, the ancient house of Chang. In order to determine the chosen vessel, all the male members of the clan assemble at the palace, their names are engraved on tablets of lead, the tablets are thrown into a vase full of water, and the one which bears the name of the new incarnation floats on the surface. The reputation and power of the pope are very great. He lives in princely style at his palace on the Dragon and Tiger

Divine
head of the
Taoist
religion in
China.

¹ E. Pander (professor at the University of Peking), "Das lamaische Pantheon," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxi. (1889) p. 76; *id.*, "Geschichte

des Lamaismus," *Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte*, 1889, p. (202).

Divine
head of the
Taoist
religion in
China.

mountains in the province of Kiang-si, about twenty-five miles to the south-west of Kuei-Ki. The road, which is kept in good repair, partly flagged, and provided at regular intervals with stone halls for the repose of weary pilgrims, leads gradually upward through a bleak and barren district, treeless and thinly peopled, to the summit of a pass, from which a beautiful prospect suddenly opens up of a wide and fertile valley watered by a little stream. The scene charms the traveller all the more by contrast with the desert country which he has just traversed. This is the beginning of the pope's patrimony, which he holds from the emperor free of taxes. The palace stands in the middle of a little town. It is new and of no special interest, having been rebuilt after the Taiping rebellion. For in their march northward the rebels devastated the papal domains with great fury. About a mile to the east of the palace lie the ruins of stately temples, which also perished in the great rising and have only in part been rebuilt. However, the principal temple is well preserved. It is dedicated to the god of heaven and contains a colossal image of that deity. The papal residence naturally swarms with monks and priests of all ranks. But the courts and gardens of the monasteries, littered with heaps of broken bricks and stones and mouldering wood, present a melancholy spectacle of decay. And the ruinous state of the religious capital reflects the decline of the papacy. The number of pilgrims has fallen off and with them the revenues of the holy see. Of old the pope ranked with viceroys and the highest dignitaries of the empire; now he is reduced to the level of a mandarin of the third class, and wears a blue button instead of a red. Formerly he repaired every year to the imperial court at Peking or elsewhere in order to procure peace and prosperity for the whole kingdom by means of his ceremonies; and on his journey the gods and spirits were bound to come from every quarter to pay him homage, unless he considerably hung out on his palanquin a board with the notice, "You need not trouble to salute." The people, too, gathered up the dust or mud from under his feet to preserve it as a priceless talisman. Nowadays, if he goes to court at all, it seems to be not oftener than once in three years; and his

services are seldom wanted except to ban the demons of plague. But he still exercises the right of elevating deceased mandarins to the rank of local deities, and as he receives a fee for every deification, the ranks of the celestial hierarchy naturally receive many recruits. He also draws a considerable revenue from the manufacture and sale of red and green papers inscribed with cabalistic characters, which are infallible safeguards against demons, disease, and calamities of every sort.¹

From our survey of the religious position occupied by the king in rude societies we may infer that the claim to divine and supernatural powers put forward by the monarchs of great historical empires like those of Egypt, China, Mexico, and Peru, was not the simple outcome of inflated vanity or the empty expression of a grovelling adulation; it was merely a survival and extension of the old savage apotheosis of living kings. Thus, for example, as children of the Sun the Incas of Peru were revered like gods; they could do no wrong, and no one dreamed of offending against the person, honour, or property of the monarch or of any of the royal race. Hence, too, the Incas did not, like most people, look on sickness as an evil. They considered it a messenger sent from their father the Sun to call them to come and rest with him in heaven. Therefore the usual words in which an Inca announced his approaching end were these: "My father calls me to come and rest with him." They would not oppose their father's will by offering sacrifice for recovery, but openly declared that he had called them to his rest.² Issuing from the sultry valleys upon the lofty table-

Divine
kings of
Peru.

¹ Mgr Danicourt, "Rapport sur l'origine, les progrès et la décadence de la secte des Tao-ssé, en Chine," *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xxx. (1858) pp. 15-20; J. H. Gray, *China* (London, 1878), i. 103 sq.; Dr. Merz, "Bericht über seine erste Reise von Amoy nach Kui-kiang," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, xxiii. (1888) pp. 413-416.

² Garcilasso de la Vega, *First Part of the Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, bk. ii. chs. 8 and 15 (vol. i. pp. 131, 155, Markham's translation). This

writer tells us that the Peruvian Indians "held their kings not only to be possessed of royal majesty, but to be gods" (*ib.* bk. iv. ch. v. vol. i. p. 303, Markham's Trans.). Mr. E. J. Payne denies that the Incas believed in their descent from the sun, and stigmatises as a ridiculous fable the notion that they were worshipped as gods (*History of the New World called America*, i. 506, 512). I content myself with reproducing the statements of Garcilasso de la Vega, who had ample means of ascertaining the truth. His good faith has been questioned, but, as I

Divine
rulers
among the
Chibchas.

land of the Colombian Andes, the Spanish conquerors were astonished to find, in contrast to the savage hordes they had left in the sweltering jungles below, a people enjoying a fair degree of civilisation, practising agriculture, and living under a government which Humboldt has compared to the theocracies of Tibet and Japan. These were the Chibchas, Muyscas, or Mozcas, divided into two kingdoms, with capitals at Bogota and Tunja, but united apparently in spiritual allegiance to the high pontiff of Sogamoso or Iraca. By a long and ascetic novitiate, this ghostly ruler was reputed to have acquired such sanctity that the waters and the rain obeyed him, and the weather depended on his will.¹ The Mexican kings at their accession, as we have seen,² took an oath that they would make the sun to shine, the clouds to give rain, the rivers to flow, and the earth to bring forth fruits in abundance.³ We are told that Montezuma, the last king of Mexico, was worshipped by his people as a god.⁴

Divine
kings of
Mexico.

Divinity
of the
Chinese
emperors.

In China, if the emperor is not himself worshipped as a deity, he is supposed by his subjects to be the lord and master of all the gods. On this subject a leading authority on Chinese religion observes: "To no son of China would it ever occur to question the supreme authority wielded by the emperor and his proxies, the mandarins, not only over mankind, but also over the gods. For the gods or *shen* are souls of intrinsically the same nature as those existing in human beings; why then, simply because they have no human bodies, should they be placed above the emperor, who is no less than a son of Heaven, that is to say, a magnitude second to none but Heaven or the Power above

believe, on insufficient grounds. See below, vol. ii. p. 244 note¹.

¹ Alex. von Humboldt, *Researches concerning the Institutions and Monuments of the Ancient Inhabitants of America*, ii. 106 sqq.; H. Ternaux-Compans, *Essai sur l'ancien Cundimamarca*, pp. 14 sq., 19 sq., 40 sq.; Th. Waitz, *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, iv. 352 sqq.; J. G. Müller, *Geschichte der amerikanischen Urreligionen*, pp. 430 sq.; C. F. Ph. v. Martius, *Zur Ethnographie Amerikas*, p. 455; A.

Bastian, *Die Culturländer des alten Amerika*, ii. 204 sq.

² See above, p. 356.

³ H. H. Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 146.

⁴ *Manuscrit Ramires: Histoire de l'origine des Indiens qui habitent la Nouvelle Espagne*, publié par D. Charnay (Paris, 1903), p. 107; J. de Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, ii. 505, 508 (Hakluyt Society, London, 1880).

whom there is none—who governs the universe and all that moves and exists therein. Such absurdity could not possibly be entertained by Chinese reason. So it is a first article of China's political creed that the emperor, as well as Heaven, is lord and master of, all the gods, and delegates this dignity to his mandarins, each in his jurisdiction. With them then rests the decision which of the gods are entitled to receive the people's worship, and which are not. It is the imperial government which deifies disembodied souls of men, and also divests them of their divine rank. Their worship, if established against its will or without its consent, can be exterminated at its pleasure, without revenge having to be feared from the side of the god for any such radical measure; for the power of even the mightiest and strongest god is as naught compared with that of the august Celestial Being with whose will and under whose protection the Son reigns supreme over everything existing below the empyrean, unless he forfeits this omnipotent support through neglect of his imperial duties."¹

As the emperor of China is believed to be a Son of Heaven, so the Emperor of Japan, the Mikado, is supposed to be an incarnation of the sun goddess, the deity who rules the universe, gods and men included. Once a year all the gods wait upon him, and spend a month at his court. During that month, the name of which means "without gods," no one frequents the temples, for they are believed to be deserted.²

The early Babylonian kings, from the time of Sargon I. till the fourth dynasty of Ur or later, claimed to be gods in their lifetime. The monarchs of the fourth dynasty of Ur in particular had temples built in their honour; they set up their statues in various sanctuaries and commanded the people to sacrifice to them; the eighth month was especially dedicated to the kings, and sacrifices were offered to them at the new moon and on the fifteenth of each month.³ Again, the Parthian monarchs of the Arsacid house

Divinity
of the
Mikado.

Divinity
of early
Babylonian
kings.

¹ J. J. M. de Groot, *Sectarianism and Religious Persecution in China*, I. (Amsterdam, 1903), pp. 17 sq.

² *Manners and Customs of the Japanese in the Nineteenth Century*:

from recent Dutch visitors to Japan and the German of Dr. Ph. Fr. von Siebold (London, 1841), pp. 141 sqq.

³ H. Radau, *Early Babylonian History* (New York and London,

styled themselves brothers of the sun and moon and were worshipped as deities. It was esteemed sacrilege to strike even a private member of the Arsacid family in a brawl.¹

Divinity of
Egyptian
kings.

The kings of Egypt were deified in their lifetime, sacrifices were offered to them, and their worship was celebrated in special temples and by special priests. Indeed the worship of the kings sometimes cast that of the gods into the shade. Thus in the reign of Merenra a high official declared that he had built many holy places in order that the spirits of the king, the ever-living Merenra, might be invoked "more than all the gods."² "It has never been doubted that the king claimed actual divinity; he was the 'great god,' the 'golden Horus,' and son of Ra. He claimed authority not only over Egypt, but over 'all lands and nations,' 'the whole world in its length and its breadth, the east and the west,' 'the entire compass of the great circuit of the sun,' 'the sky and what is in it, the earth and all that is upon it,' 'every creature that walks upon two or upon four legs, all that fly or flutter, the whole world offers her productions to him.' Whatever in fact might be asserted of the Sun-god, was dogmatically predicable of the king of Egypt. His titles were directly derived from those of the sun-god."³ "In the course of his existence," we are told, "the king of Egypt exhausted all the possible conceptions of divinity which the Egyptians had framed for themselves. A superhuman god by his birth and by his royal office, he became the deified man after his death.

1900), pp. 307-317. Compare C. Brockelmann, "Wesen und Ursprung des Eponymats in Assyrien," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, xvi. (1902) p. 394; H. Zimmern, in E. Schrader's *Die Keilschriften und das Alte Testament*³ (Berlin, 1903), pp. 379, 639 sq.

¹ Ammianus Marcellinus, xxiii. 6, §§ 5 and 6.

² C. P. Tiele, *History of the Egyptian Religion*, pp. 103 sq. On the worship of the kings see also E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*,² i. 2. § 219, pp. 142 sq.; A. Erman, *Ägypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, pp. 91 sqq.; *id.*, *Die ägyptische Religion* (Berlin, 1905), pp. 39 sq.; V. von Strauss und Carnen, *Die altägyptischen*

Götter und Göttersagen, pp. 467 sqq.; A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Ägypter*, pp. 92 sq.; *id.*, "Menschenvergötterung im alten Ägypten," *Am Urquelle*, N.F. i. (1897), pp. 289 sqq.; *id.*, *Herodots zweites Buch*, pp. 274 sq.; G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines*, pp. 258-267; E. Naville, *La Religion des anciens Égyptiens* (Paris, 1906), pp. 225 sqq. Diodorus Siculus observed (l. 90) that "the Egyptians seem to worship and honour their kings as very gods."

³ P. le P. Renouf, "The priestly Character of the earliest Egyptian Civilisation," *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, xii. (1890) p. 355.

Thus all that was known of the divine was summed up in him."¹ "The divinity of the king was recognised in all the circumstances of the public life of the sovereign. It was not enough to worship Pharaoh in the temple; beyond the limits of the sanctuary he remained the 'good god' to whom all men owed a perpetual adoration. The very name of the sovereign was sacred like his person; people swore by his name as by that of the gods, and he who took the oath in vain was punished."² In particular the king of Egypt was identified with the great sun-god Ra. "Son of the sun, decked with the solar crowns, armed with the solar weapons, gods and men adored him as Ra, defended him as Ra from the attacks which menaced in him the divine being who, in his human existence, knew the glory and the dangers of being 'an incarnate sun' and 'the living image on earth of his father Tum of Heliopolis.'"³ Even the life of the gods depended on the divine life of the king. Gods and men, it is said, "live by the words of his mouth."⁴ "O gods," said the king before celebrating divine worship, "you are safe, if I am safe. Your doubles are safe if my double is safe at the head of all living doubles. All live, if I live."⁵ The king was addressed as "Lord of heaven, lord of earth, sun, life of the whole world, lord of time, measurer of the sun's course, Tum for men, lord of well-being, creator of the harvest, maker and fashioner of mortals, bestower of breath upon all men, giver of life to all the host of gods, pillar of heaven, threshold of the earth, weigher of the equipoise of both worlds, lord of rich gifts, increaser of the corn," and so forth.⁶ Yet, as we should expect, the exalted powers thus ascribed to the king differ in degree rather than in kind from those which every Egyptian claimed for himself. Professor Tiele observes that "as every good man at his death became Osiris, as every one in danger or need could by the use of magic sentences assume the form of a deity, it is quite comprehensible how the king, not only after

Divinity of
Egyptian
kings.

¹ A. Moret, *Du caractère religieux de la royauté pharaonique* (Paris, 1902), pp. 278 sq.; compare *ib.* pp. 313.

² A. Moret, *op. cit.* p. 306.

³ A. Moret, *op. cit.* p. 310.

⁴ A. Moret, *op. cit.* p. 299.

⁵ A. Moret, *op. cit.* p. 233.

⁶ V. von Strauss und Carnen, *op. cit.* p. 470. On the titles of the Egyptian kings see further A. Moret, *op. cit.* pp. 17-38.

death, but already during his life, was placed on a level with the deity."¹

Evolution
of sacred
kings out of
magicians.

We have now completed our sketch, for it is no more than a sketch, of the evolution of that sacred kingship which attained its highest form, its most absolute expression, in the monarchies of Peru and Egypt, of China and Japan. Historically, the institution appears to have originated in the order of public magicians or medicine-men; logically it rests on a mistaken deduction from the association of ideas. Men mistook the order of their ideas for the order of nature, and hence imagined that the control which they have, or seem to have, over their thoughts, permitted them to exercise a corresponding control over things. The men who for one reason or another, because of the strength or the weakness of their natural parts, were supposed to possess these magical powers in the highest degree, were gradually marked off from their fellows and became a separate class, who were destined to exercise a most far-reaching influence on the political, religious, and intellectual evolution of mankind. Social progress, as we know, consists mainly in a successive differentiation of functions, or, in simpler language, a division of labour. The work which in primitive society is done by all alike and by all equally ill, or nearly so, is gradually distributed among different classes of workers and executed more and more perfectly; and so far as the products, material or immaterial, of this specialised labour are shared by all, the whole community benefits by the increasing specialisation. Now magicians or medicine-men appear to constitute the oldest artificial or professional class in the evolution of society.² For sorcerers are found in every savage tribe known to us; and among the lowest savages, such as the Australian aborigines, they are the only professional class that exists. As time goes on, and the process of differentiation continues,

Magicians
or medi-
cine-men
the oldest
profes-
sional
class.

¹ C. P. Tiele, *History of the Egyptian Religion*, p. 105. Compare A. Moret, *op. cit.* pp. 71 sq., 312.

² In regard to the natives of the western islands of Torres Straits it has been remarked by Dr. A. C. Haddon that the magicians or sorcerers "con-

stituted the only professional class among these democratic islanders" (*Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, v. 321). The same observation could be applied to many other savage tribes.

the order of medicine-men is itself subdivided into such classes as the healers of disease, the makers of rain, and so forth;¹ while the most powerful member of the order wins for himself a position as chief and gradually develops into a sacred king, his old magical functions falling more and more into the background and being exchanged for priestly or even divine duties, in proportion as magic is slowly ousted by religion. Still later, a partition is effected between the civil and the religious aspect of the kingship, the temporal power being committed to one man and the spiritual to another. Meanwhile the magicians, who may be repressed but cannot be extirpated by the predominance of religion, still addict themselves to their old occult arts in preference to the newer ritual of sacrifice and prayer; and in time the more sagacious of their number perceive the fallacy of magic and hit upon a more effectual mode of manipulating the forces of nature for the good of man; in short, they abandon sorcery for science. I am far from affirming that the course of development has everywhere rigidly followed these lines: it has doubtless varied greatly in different societies. I merely mean to indicate in the broadest outline what I conceive to have been its general trend. Regarded from the industrial point of view the evolution has been from uniformity to diversity of function: regarded from the political point of view, it has been from democracy to despotism. With the later history of monarchy, especially with the decay of despotism and its displacement by forms of government better adapted to the higher needs of humanity, we are not concerned in this enquiry: our theme is the growth, not the decay, of a great and, in its time, beneficent institution.

¹ For example, amongst the Todas the medicine-man has been differentiated from the sorcerer; yet their common origin is indicated by their both using the same kind of magical formulas or spells to accomplish their different ends. See Dr. W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 271: "It seems clear that the Todas have advanced beyond the stage of human culture in which all misfortunes are produced by magic. They recognise that some ills are not due to human intervention, but yet they employ the same kind of

means to remove these ills as are employed to remove those brought about by human agency. The advance of the Todas is shown most clearly by the differentiation of function between *pilikdren* and *utkdren*, between sorcerers and medicine-men, and we seem to have here a clear indication of the differentiation between magic and medicine. The two callings are followed by different men, who are entirely distinct from one another, but both use the same kind of formula to bring about the effect they desire to produce."

APPENDIX

HEGEL ON MAGIC AND RELIGION

My friend Professor James Ward has pointed out to me that the view which I have taken of the nature and historical relations of magic and religion was anticipated by Hegel in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*.¹ So far as I understand the philosopher's exposition, the agreement between us amounts to this: we both hold that in the mental evolution of humanity an age of magic preceded an age of religion, and that the characteristic difference between magic and religion is that, whereas magic aims at controlling nature directly, religion aims at controlling it indirectly through the mediation of a powerful supernatural being or beings to whom man appeals for help and protection. That I take to be the substance of Hegel's meaning in the following passages which I extract from his lectures on the philosophy of religion.

Speaking of what he calls the religion of nature he observes: "Fear of the powers of nature, of the sun, of thunder-storms, etc., is here not as yet fear which might be called religious fear, for this has its seat in freedom. The fear of God is a different fear from the fear of natural forces. It is said that 'fear is the beginning of wisdom'; this fear cannot present itself in immediate religion. It first appears in man when he knows himself to be powerless in his particularity, when his particularity trembles within him. . . . It is not, however, fear in this higher sense only that is not present here, but even the fear of the powers of nature, so far as it enters at all at this first stage of the religion of nature, changes round into its opposite, and becomes magic.

"The absolutely primary form of religion, to which we give the name of magic, consists in this, that the Spiritual is the ruling power over nature. This spiritual element does not yet exist,

¹ *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, i. 220 sqq. (vol. xi. of the first collected edition of Hegel's works, Berlin, 1832). The coincidence was also pointed out to me by my friend Dr. J. M. E. McTaggart.

however, as Spirit; it is not yet found in its universality, but is merely the particular, contingent, empirical self-consciousness of man, which, although it is only mere passion, knows itself to be higher in its self-consciousness than nature—knows that it is a power ruling over nature. . . . This power is a direct power over nature in general, and is not to be likened to the indirect power, which we exercise by means of implements over natural objects in their separate forms. . . . Here the power over nature acts in a direct way. It thus is magic or sorcery.

"As regards the external mode in which this idea actually appears, it is found in a form which implies that this magic is what is highest in the self-consciousness of those peoples. But in a subordinate way magic steals up to higher standpoints too, and insinuates itself into higher religions, and thus into the popular conception of witches, although in that form it is recognised as something which is partly impotent, and partly improper and godless.

"There has been an inclination on the part of some (as, for example, in the Kantian philosophy) to consider prayer too as magic, because man seeks to make it effectual, not through mediation, but by starting direct from Spirit. The distinction here, however, is that man appeals to an absolute will, for which even the individual or unit is an object of care, and which can either grant the prayer or not, and which in so acting is determined by general purposes of good. Magic, however, in the general sense, simply amounts to this,—that man has the mastery as he is in his natural state, as possessed of passions and desires.

"Such is the general character of this primal and wholly immediate standpoint, namely, that the human consciousness, any definite human being, is recognised as the ruling power over nature in virtue of his own will. The natural has, however, by no means that wide range which it has in our idea of it. For here the greater part of nature still remains indifferent to man, or is just as he is accustomed to see it. Everything is stable. Earthquakes, thunder-storms, floods, animals, which threaten him with death, enemies, and the like, are another matter. To defend himself against these recourse is had to magic.¹ Such is the oldest mode of religion, the wildest, most barbarous form. . . .

"By recent travellers, such as Captain Parry, and before him Captain Ross, this religion has been found among the Esquimaux, wholly without the element of mediation and as the crudest consciousness. Among other peoples a mediation is already present.

¹ Similarly I have pointed out elsewhere (*Totemism and Exogamy*, i. 169 sq.) that it is the unstable, apparently

irregular, incalculable element in nature which the magician particularly aims at controlling, while so far as the

"Captain Parry says of them¹: ' . . . They have not the slightest idea of Spirit, of a higher existence, of an essential substance as contrasted with their empirical mode of existence. . . . On the other hand, they have amongst them individuals whom they call *Angekoks*, magicians, conjurers. Those assert that they have it in their power to raise a storm, to create a calm, to bring whales near, etc., and say that they learnt these arts from old *Angekoks*. The people regard them with fear; in every family, however, there is at least one. A young *Angekok* wished to make the wind rise, and he proceeded to do it by dint of phrases and gestures. These phrases had no meaning and were directed toward no Supreme Being as a medium, but were addressed in an immediate way to the natural object over which the *Angekok* wished to exercise power; he required no aid from any one whatever.' . . .

"This religion of magic is very prevalent in Africa, as well as among the Mongols and Chinese; here, however, it is no longer found in the absolute crudeness of its first form, but mediations already come in, which owe their origin to the fact that the Spiritual has begun to assume an objective form for self-consciousness.

"In its first form this religion is more magic than religion; it is in Africa among the negroes that it prevails most extensively. . . . In this sphere of magic the main principle is the direct domination of nature by means of the will, of self-consciousness—in other words that Spirit is something of a higher kind than nature. However bad this magic may look regarded in one aspect, still in

course of nature is observed to be stable, regular, and uniform it lies comparatively outside the operations of magic. "To put it generally, the practice of magic for the control of nature will be found on the whole to increase with the variability and to decrease with the uniformity of nature throughout the year. Hence the increase will tend to become more and more conspicuous as we recede from the equator, where the annual changes of natural conditions are much less marked than elsewhere. This general rule is no doubt subject to many exceptions which depend on local varieties of climate. . . . But, on the whole, this department of magic, if not checked by civilisation or other causes, would naturally attain its highest vogue in the temperate and polar zones rather than in the equatorial regions; while, on the other hand, the branch of magical art which deals

directly with mankind, aiming for example at the cure or infliction of disease, tends for obvious reasons to be diffused equally over the globe without distinction of latitude or climate" (*Totemism and Exogamy*, i. 170). The reason why the latter branch of magic tends to be equally prevalent in all parts of the world is, of course, that in all parts of the world human nature is equally unstable, seemingly irregular, and incalculable by comparison with the stability, regularity, and uniformity of nature.

¹ I have not found the passage of Captain Parry which Hegel here quotes, whether from the English original or from a German translation. I should doubt whether the gallant English explorer would have spoken of an "empirical mode of existence," which appears to me to savour rather of the professor's lecture-room than of the captain's quarter-deck.

another it is higher than a condition of dependence upon nature and fear of it. . . .

"Such, then, is the very first form of religion, which cannot indeed as yet be properly called religion. To religion essentially pertains the moment of objectivity, and this means that spiritual power shows itself as a mode of the Universal relatively to self-consciousness, for the individual, for the particular empirical consciousness. This objectivity is an essential characteristic, on which all depends. Not until it is present does religion begin, does a God exist, and even in the lowest condition there is at least a beginning of it. The mountain, the river, is not in its character as this particular mass of earth, as this particular water, the Divine, but as a mode of the existence of the Divine, of an essential, universal Being. But we do not yet find this in magic as such. It is the individual consciousness as this particular consciousness, and consequently the very negation of the Universal, which is what has the power here; not a god in the magician, but the magician himself is the conjurer and conqueror of nature. . . . Out of magic the religion of magic is developed."¹

¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, translated by the Rev. E. B. Spiers, B.D., and J. Burdon Sanderson, i. (London, 1895)

pp. 290-298. Further, Hegel observes (p. 300) that "magic has existed among all peoples and at every period."

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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 Græco-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

Depart-
mental
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

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

Priesthood
of the
Alfai.

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 considerably 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.

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.

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

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

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

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*, xii. (1841) p. 143; H. Mouhot, *Travels in the Central Parts of Indo-China* (London, 1864), ii. 35; A. Bastian, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Gebirgsgestämme 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.

pp. 608 sq. On the vast woods of Germany, their coolness and shade,

² Julian, *Fragm.* 4, ed. Hertlein,

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 Griechen-*

land (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 unforgettable 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, *Livonicas 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*, lxxvii. (1895) pp. 343, 348. This article is an abstract of a Finnish book *Suomen suvun pakanillinen jumalten palvelus*, by J. Krohn (Helsingfors, 1894).

² "Heilige Haine und Bäume der Finnen," *Globus*, lxx. (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 Siamèse 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 Bensley and others that the theories of animism and transmigration current among rude peoples of Asia are derived from Buddhism, is to reverse the facts.

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.

Trees regarded by the savage as animate.

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'ing*, 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 *Jatakas*. For examples see H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, pp. 259 sqq.; *The Jataka*, 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; *Volks Glaube 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 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

Sycamores
in ancient
Egypt.

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 inexpressible 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.⁵ 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* (Leipzig 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 Kayahs 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 if 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

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 and 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, *Volksthumliches aus Schwaben*, i. pp. 464 sq., § 6; K. Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Mecklenburg*, ii. 228 sq.; W. Kolbe, *Sächsische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche*,² p. 29; R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde* (Brunswick, 1896), p. 234; R. Wutke, *Sächsische Volkskunde*³ (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 sensi-
tive 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 Ojeb-way Indians*, p. 104.

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

⁴ A. Peter, *Volkstümliches 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 religiösen 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 Prática 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 tēndi in verband met Si Dajang," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zending-gemeenschap*, 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 *Salapatha-Brāhmana*, 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 Marselles 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, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 34; A. Strausz, *Die Bulgaren* (Leipzig, 1898), p. 352. Compare R. F. Kaindl, "Aus der Volksüberlieferung der Bojken," *Globus*, lxxix. (1901) p. 152. 3, 422

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

Compare M. Abeghian, *Der armenische Volksglaube* (Leipzig, 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 (*Sarcobolus 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," *Bydragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1895) p. 511.

² A. G. Vorderman, "Planten-ani-

misme 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 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

Artificial
fertilisation
of the date-
palm.

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 *Hero lotus*, 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. Chwolson, *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 (*Ocimum 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 Nepal, in the upper course of the river Gandak, 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'Inde* (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 Bharatavasa or India* (Westminster and Leipsic, 1893), pp. 337-359; *id.*, "Note sur les Sālagāmas," *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 Cochinchina, do not dare to touch the rice in the granary at

¹ *Die gestragelte 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." *Tydschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1843 (Batavia), dl. ii. p. 605; A. Bastian, *Indonesien*, i. 156.

³ G. W. W. C. Baron van Hoevell, *Ambon en meer bepaaldelyk de Oelzarsers* (Dordrecht, 1875), p 62.

⁴ G. A. Wilken, "Het animisme by

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. Kuhr, "Schetsen uit Borneo's Westerafdeeling," *Bydragen 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 Zendinggenootschap*, xlv. (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

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

Trees supposed to be tenanted by the souls of the dead

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 geestelyk en maatschappelyk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendingsgenootschap*, xxxix. (1895) pp. 22, 138.

⁴ *Ibid.*, "Eenige ethnografische aan

teekeningen omtrent de Toboengkoe en Tomori," *ib.*, xlv (1900) p. 227.

⁵ C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Het Gayo-land en zyne 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 Ignorotes, 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

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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

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 ever-green 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

Trees supposed to be tenanted by the souls of the dead

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 inhabited by spirits of 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 Volkerstamme 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 Aardrykskundig Genootschap*, 1 weede 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, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Sudslaven*, 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

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 Siao, 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

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

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 geografische en ethnographische aantekeningen betreffende het eiland Siao," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- en Volkskunde*, xli. (1899) pp. 379 *sq.*

Trees con-
ceived 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 Dandkil, Galla und Somäl (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

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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," *Mede-*

deelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap, xl. (1896) pp. 28 sq.

⁴ A. C. Kruijt, "Eenige ethnografische aantekeningen omtrent de Toboengkoë en de Tomori," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xlv. (1900) pp. 220 sq.

⁵ A. C. Kruijt, *op. cit.* p. 242.

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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 Nederlands Indië* (1844), dl. i. p. 358.

³ C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Het Gajaland 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

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

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¹ F. Blumentritt, *Versuch einer Ethnographie der Philippinen* (Gotha, 1882), p. 13 (*Petermanns Mittheilungen, Ergänzungsheft*, 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, *Volkbeschrijving van Midden-Sumatra* (Leyden, 1882), p. 156.

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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 Halmaheira, 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 coconut, 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 Galelarese 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 † 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

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

Propitiating tree-spirits in house-timber.

¹ W. Küenthal, *Forschungsreise in den Molukken und in Borneo* (Frankfurt, 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.

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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 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 'koppens-nellen der Toadja's van Midden-Celebes en zijne beteekenis," *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der konink. Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Afdeling 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 *sāl* 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.

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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 *sāl*, *pīpal*, 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), vii^{me} 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

Even where no mention is made of wood-spirits, we ^{Sacred} may generally assume that when trees or groves are sacred ^{groves} 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 Borussia antiquitatibus," in Simon Grynaeus's *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum* (Paris, 1532), p. 510; J. Laszczki, "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. Laszczki's work has been reprinted by W. Mannhardt, in *Magazin herausgegeben von der lettisch-litvianischen 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 sacrilege 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 Wotjaken* (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 Supersti-*

tions 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*

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 klassischen 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.

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

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, coconuts, 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 drouht 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 Borussia 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

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 Wabondci 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-

Tree-spirits supposed to make the crops grow.

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 apellées Guinée* (Paris, 1669), p. 266 sq.; Labat, *Voyage du chevalier des*

Marchais en Guinée, îles 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 Punjab no one is allowed to cut grass or any green thing with an iron sickle till the festival of the ripening grain has been celebrated; otherwise the field-god would be angry and send frost to destroy or injure the harvest (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 feeblcr 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*

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 Sripkala, 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

Fertilising
virtue
attributed
to trees.

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.

Influence
of May-
trees on
cattle.

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

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

Pre-
cautions
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).

Pre-
cautions
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 strewn 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* (Gutersloh, 1886), pp. 178 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Germanische Mythen* (Berlin, 1858), pp. 17 sq.

³ J. D. II. Temme, *Die Volkssagen der Altmark* (Berlin, 1839), p. 85; E. Sommer, *Sagen, Marchen und Gebrauche aus Sachsen und Thüringen* (Halle, 1846), p. 149; A. Kuhn, *Sagen,*

Gebrauche und Marchen aus Westfalen, ii. p. 154, § 432, p. 155, § 436; A. Schleicher, *Volkstümliches aus Sonnenberg* (Weimar, 1858), p. 139; A. Peter, *Volkstümliches aus Österreichisch-Schlesien* (Troppau, 1865-67), ii. 252; R. Eisel, *Sagenbuch des Voigtlandes* (Gera, 1871), p. 210; Reinsbeig-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.

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

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

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.; Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances*, v. 309 sq.; Ch.

Beauquier, *Les Mois en Franche-Comté* (Paris, 1900), pp. 69-72; F. Chapi-seau, *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 *mahwā*-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, *Volks Glaube 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 Marāṭhī *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 sūti* a round the selected shrub, by which the bridegroom sits, while turmeric-dyed rice (*aksata*) 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 Barār," *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 Brāhmins) 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 *tālī*, and, in case of a third marriage, a man has to tie a *tālī* first to the erukkan (arka: *Ca'otropis 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 *tālī* 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* (West-

minster, 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

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.

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

May-trees
in Europe

May-trees
and May-
bushes in
England.

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. Boilase, *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 Pe cy 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

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 eggshells, 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

May
customs in
France,
Germany,
and
Greece.

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

Whitsun-
tide
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 Altmärk 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 Ger-
many 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

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 Stång' (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

Mid-
summer
trees and
poles in
Sweden.

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 mervaille, 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. Prohle, *Hansbilder* (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* (Praag, 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. Threlton 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 nosc-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 quacrere*), 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, *Contumes, mythes et*

traditions des provinces de France (Paris and Lyons, 1846), p. 137.

⁴ Béranger-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-Kalen-*

dar aus Bohmen, p. 217; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 566.

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

⁵ Aristophanes, *Plutus*, 1054; W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feld kulte*, 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 blanched, 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 fleet messenger to-day." A second voice answered, "I can run like the wind." "I need a swifter envoy," said the father. Then a third voice cried, "I can run like the thought of man." "You are after my own heart. Fill a bag full of gold and take it with my friend and benefactor to his home." Then he caught the soldier by the hat, crying, "The hat to the man, and the man to the house!" The same moment the soldier felt his hat fly from his head. When he looked about for it, lo! he was at home in the old familiar parlour wearing his old peasant clothes, and the great sack of money stood beside him. Yet on parade and at the roll-call he was never missed. When the man who told this story was asked, "Who could the stranger be?" he answered, "Who but a tree-elf?"¹

There is an instructive class of cases in which the tree-spirit is represented simultaneously in vegetable form and in 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 Elften abergläubische Gebrauche, 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, de-

scribed 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 ^{The} May is led about.¹ In the small towns of the Franken Wald ^{Walber.} 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

Amongst the Slavs of Carinthia, on St. George's Day ^{Green} (the twenty-third of April), the young people deck with flowers ^{George in} and garlands a tree which has been felled on the eve of the ^{Carinthia} 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 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 Walburgis. 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
representa-
tion 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 Wilslocki, *Volks Glaube 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
representa-
tion of the
harvest-
goddess
Gauri by a
bundle of
plants and
an un-
married
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 *lôlô*, 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 *lôlô* 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. Mann-
hardt'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 *IValber*. 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

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.

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

Tree-spirit
or vegeta-
tion-spirit
represented
by a person
alone.

Green
George in
Russia.

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 315 sq. *tales*, p. 345. As to Green George see above, pp. 75 sq.

² W. R. S. Ralston, *Russian Folk-*

Whitsun-
tide
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*,¹ ii. 657.

³ A. de Noye, *Contumes, mythes et traditions des provinces de France*, pp. 17 sq.; Béranger-Féraud, *Réminis-*

scences 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 Trimourette. A custom of the same general character was practised down to recent times in the Jura (Béranger-Féraud, *Réminiscences populaires de la Provence*, p. 18).

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 Rollshausen 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 (*Pfingst-liimmel*), 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
nummers
at Whit-
suntide.

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 heid-*

nischen 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 Eng-
land.

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-sweepers, 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-sweepers 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 (Württemberg) 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 Württemberg.

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
representa-
tive 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
Whitsun-
tide 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. p. 380.

² A. Kuhn und W. Schwartz, *Nord-deutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*,

³ F. Tetzner, "Die Tschechen und Mährer in Schlesien," *Globus*, lxxviii (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 At Währstedt in Brunswick the boys at Whitsuntide choose by lot a king and a high-steward (*fürstje-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 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

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-slayer 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-slayer 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 harbour, 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-Kalen dar 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

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 France⁷ and familiar in England. Thus at the adjoining

May-
Queens
and Whit-
suntide
Queens.

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.; Béranger-Féraud, *Réminiscences populaires de la Provence*, pp. 17 sq.; Ch. Beauquier,

The May
Queen in
Warwick-
shire.

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
simultane-
ously by a
King and
Queen or
a Bride-
groom 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'épouse*, "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

Whitsun-
tide King
and Queen

¹ From information given me by Miss A. Wyse of Halford. *dar aus Bohmen*, pp. 265 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 422.

² Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalen-*

Whitsun-
tide 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 Volks Glaube 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

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

Whitsun-
tide Bride-
groom and
Bride in
Denmark.

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 Volks-

brauch," *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

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 awakens 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 *Voages 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 Scot-*

land, pp. 247 sq. The Rev. James Macdonald, of Keay 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 Ochertyre, *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 aymys noight. 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

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

May Bride
or Whit-
suntide
Bride.

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 *seq.* 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 Whit-
suntide
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, *Markische Sagen und Märchen*, pp. 318 sqq. ; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 437.

² W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 438.

³ R. Andree, *Brannschweiger Volkskunde* (Brunswick, 1896), p. 248.

⁴ D. Monnier, *Traditions populaires comparées*, pp. 283 sq. ; E. Coitet, *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 homocopathic 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 ceremonies¹ 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 homocopathic 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* (Ley-

den, 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 considerably placed at his disposal. It is set up under the tree and is adorned with carved figures of the birds whose shrill clarion heralds the approach of the sun in the East. On this occasion pigs and dogs are sacrificed in profusion; men and women alike indulge in a saturnalia; and the mystic union of the sun and the earth is dramatically represented in public, 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 stuik-en kroeshavige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, pp. 337, 372-375, 410 sq.; G. W. W. C. Baion van Hoevell, 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 konink. Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, xvii. (1900) pp. 594, 612, 615 sq. The

name of the festival is variously given as *porêke*, *porêka*, *poroka*, 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 Timoreezen," *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 bepaaldelyk 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 Zendinggenootschap*, xxvi. (1882), pp. 128-132. This and the preceding custom have been already quoted by G. A. Wilken ("Het animisme bij de volken van den Indischen Archipel," *De Indische Gids*, June 1884, pp. 962 sq. ; and *Handleiding voor de vorgelij-*

kende 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 battlefield.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.

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;

Relics of
similar
customs in
Europe.

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," *Nederdeelingen 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 observe, 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 Gebrauche 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 Gebrauche unter den Sachsen Siebenbürgens* (Heimannstadt, 1880), p. 7.

⁴ R. Temesvary, *Volksbräuche und Aberglauben in der Geburtshilfe und der Pflege der Neugeborenen in Ungarn* (Leipzig, 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 arcca-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

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

Illicit love
supposed
to blight
the fruits
of the
earth.

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

Sumatta," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, dl. iii. Afdeling, meer uitgebreide artikelen, No. 3 (1886), pp. 514 sq.; M. Joustra, "Het leven, de zeden en gewoonten der Bataks," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xlv. (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

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

Kayan
belief that
adultery or
fornication
spoils the
harvest.

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. Nicuwenhuis, *Quer durch Borneo*, ii. 99; *id.*, *In Centraal Borneo* (Leyden, 1900), ii. 278.

² B. F. Matthes, "Over de *Adâ's* of gewoonten der Makassaren en Boegineezen," *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Afdeling 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

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

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

¹ A. C. Kruijt, "Eenige ethnografische aantekeningen omtrent de Toboengkoe en de Tomori," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xlv. (1900) p. 235.

² A. C. Kruijt, "Van Posso naar Mori," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xlv. (1900) p. 162.

³ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen,

Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indie*, 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*, xlv. (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 תְּבִיאָה. 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.

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

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

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.

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.

² G. Keating, *History of Ireland*,

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

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.

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.

Explanation of the seeming contradiction in the foregoing customs.

Indirect benefit of some of these superstitious customs.

The ascetic
view of
chastity
not under-
stood 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 Milton¹ that chastity in itself is a noble virtue, and that the restraint which it imposes on one of the strongest impulses of our animal nature marks out those who can submit to it as men raised above the common herd, and therefore worthy to receive the seal of the divine approbation. However natural this mode of thought may seem to us, it is utterly foreign and indeed incomprehensible to the savage. If he resists on occasion the sexual instinct, it is from no high idealism, no ethereal aspiration after moral purity, but for the sake of some ulterior yet perfectly definite and concrete object, to gain which he is prepared to sacrifice the immediate gratification of his senses. That this is or may be so, the examples I have cited are amply sufficient to 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 expence 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 Smectymnus," *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 homocopathic 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 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 Erithesean 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

Diana a goddess of the woodlands

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 aere 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 rom. 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 free 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 Dictæan 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

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

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

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-

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

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 Lcschiy 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.

hunter 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 Samagitiens 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

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,

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.

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 crown-
ing of hunt-
ing dogs a
form of
purifica-
tion.

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 tongue² 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 Day² 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

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

Similarly the crowning of hunting dogs may

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

² J. H. Schmitz, *Sitten und Bräuche, Lieder, Spruchwörter 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, *Markische Sagen und Märchen*, pp. 315 sq., 327 sq.; P. Drechsler, *Sitte, Brauch und Volks Glaube 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, Lithauens 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, *Volkssthumliches aus Schwaben*, i. p. 278, § 437; R. Eisel, *Sagenbuch des Voigtlandes*, p. 210; F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Elsten*, p. 363; F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube 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 Nepal a festival known as Khichâ Pūjâ 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, *Extirpación de la idolatría 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.

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.

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

§ 2. *The Marriage of the Gods*

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

Marriages of the gods in Babylonia and Assyria.

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 Baby-
lonia 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 *Encyclopædia 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
monu-
ments.

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.

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

These
representa-
tions prob-
ably
copied
from the
life.

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

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 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 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

Human
concubines
of Ammon
in Roman
times.

Apollo and
his pro-
phetess at
Patara.

The
Essenes of
Artemis at
Ephesus.

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 milles 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. "Εσσην. 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 aptum 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.v. Διονύσιον γάμος and γεπαῖα; *Etymologicum Magnum*, s.v. γεπαῖα; Pollux, viii. 108; K. F. Hermann, *Gottesdienstliche Alterthümer*,² § 32. 15, § 58. 11 sqq.; Aug. Mommsen, *Feste der Stadt Athen im Altertum* (Leipzig, 1898), pp. 391 sqq. From Demosthenes, *i.e.*, 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-Moellendorf, *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 καταβᾶσιον τὸ σκοτεινόν, καὶ αἱ σεμναὶ τοῦ ιεροφάντου πρὸς τὴν Ιερειαν συντυχίαι, μόνου πρὸς μόνην; Οὐχ αἱ λαμπάδες σβέννυνται, καὶ ὁ πολλὸς καὶ ἀναριθμητὸς δῆμος τὴν σωτηρίαν αὐτῶν εἶναι νομίζουσι τὰ ἐν τῷ σκότῳ παρὰ τῶν δύο πραττόμενα; Psellus, *Quaestiones sunt Graecorum opiniones de daemonibus*, p. 39, ed. J. F. Boissonade, τὰ δὲ γε μυστήρια τούτων, ὅσα αὐτίκα τὰ Ἐλευσίνια, τὸν μυθικὸν ὑποκρίνεται Δία μινγνόμενον τῇ Διοῖ, ἄγουν τῇ Δήμητρι. . . Ὑποκρίνεται δὲ καὶ τὰς τῆς Διοῦς ὁδούς. Ἰκετηρίαὶ γοῦν αὐτίκα Διοῦς καὶ χολῆς πῶσις καὶ καρδιαλγία. Ἐφ' οἷς καὶ τι τραγικὸς ἐλὲς μῦθος παθαινόμενος περὶ τοῖς διδύμοις, ὅτι περ ὁ Ζεὺς, δίκας ἀποτινύς τῆς βίας τῇ Δήμητρι, τράγου ὄρχεσι ἀποτεμῶν, τῷ κόλπῳ ταύτης κατέθετο ὥσπερ δὴ καὶ ἑαυτοῦ (compare Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, v. 20-23); Schol. on Plato, *Gorgias*, p. 497 C, Ἐρελεῖτο δὲ ταῦτα (the Eleusinian mysteries) καὶ Διοῖ καὶ Κορῇ, ὅτι ταύτην μὲν Μοῦσῳ ἀρπάξει, Διοῖ δὲ μίγῃ Ζεὺς; Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, v. 8, pp. 162, 164, ed. Dunccker and Schneidewin, λέγουσι δὲ αὐτὸν (God), φησί, Φρύγες καὶ χλοερὸν στάχυν τεβρισμένον, καὶ μετὰ τοὺς Φρύγας Ἀθηναῖοι μυοῦντες Ἐλευσίνια, καὶ ἐπίδεικνύντες τοῖς ἐποπτεύουσιν τὸ μέγα καὶ θαυμαστὸν καὶ τελειότατον ἐποπτικὸν ἐκεῖ μυστήριον ἐν σιωπῇ, τεβρισμένον στάχυν. Ὁ δὲ στάχυν οὗτός ἐστι καὶ παρὰ Ἀθηναίους ὁ παρὰ τοῦ ἀχαρακτρίστου φωστήρη τέλειος μέγας, καθάπερ αὐτὸς ὁ ιεροφάντης, οὐκ ἀποκεκομμένος μὲν, ὡς ὁ Ἄττις, εὐνοχισμένος δὲ διὰ κωελου καὶ πᾶσαν παρηγμένους τὴν σαρκικὴν

γένεσιν, νυκτὸς ἐν Ἐλευσίνι ὑπὸ πολλῷ πυρὶ τελῶν τὰ μεγάλα καὶ ἄρρητα μυστήρια βοᾷ καὶ κέκραγε λέγων· ἱερὸν ἔτεκε πόντια κοῦρον Βριμὺ Βριμόν, τούτέστιν 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 sqg.). 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 sqg. (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

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-

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

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 re-presented.

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-goddess²—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 homocopathic 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. 17².

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 Platacan 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 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

The god
Frey and
his human
wife in
Sweden.

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. *ἑρὸν γάμον* ; *Etymologicum Magnum*, s.v. *ἑρῶν γάμος*, 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*, Leipzig, 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. *Ἀνθεῖα*, 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. *ἡποάνθεια*, compare Photius, *Lexicon*, s.v. *Ἠποάνθεια*). 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 plentiful 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* (Leipzig, 1903), pp. 198 sqq., 217, 520, 529; E. H. Meyer, *Mythologie der Germanen* (Strasburg, 1905), 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

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.

¹ "Passio Sancti Symphoriani," chs. 2 and 6 (Migne's *Patrologia Græca*, 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 Mukylcín, 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 (*Inuaca*). 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 sacrificed to the idol for the people. They shewed her the utmost reverence and deemed her divine.³ 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

Marriage
of a woman
to the Sun
among the
Blackfoot
Indians

¹ Max Buch, *Die Wotjaken* (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 Algon-
quins.

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 homocopathic 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 Orāḍs," *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.

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 sweet-meats, 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

Marriage
of women
to gods in
India and
Africa.

¹ W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India* (West-

minster, 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 (Sawbwa) 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

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

Egyptian custom of drowning a girl as a sacrifice to the Nile.

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 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 C. 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.

Girls
sacrificed
as brides
of croco-
diles.

in the Maldiv 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 'Ibrecat, 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 'Ibrecat 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 Maldiv Islands.

The jinnee
of the sea
and his
bride in the
Maldivé
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 Maldivé 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
phosphor-
escence 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 Maldivé 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*

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.

Stories of
the Perseus
and Andro-
meda type.

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

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

Sacrifices
of human
beings to
water-
spirits.

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 Dandkil, Galla und Somäl* (Berlin, 1896), pp. 46, 50; "De Dajaks op Borneo," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendeling-*

genootschap, 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*, lxx. (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 Toluca 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 *sg.*

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

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

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 beneficent beings who dispense fertility.

Water-spirits conceived as bestowing offspring on women

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 Punjab 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.

Folk-lore of Northern India (Westminster, 1896), ii. 50 sq., 225 sq.

117.

² S. I. Curtiss, *op. cit.* p. 119.

⁴ *Census of India, 1901*, vol. xvii.,

³ W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and 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 Binglefield 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

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

Water-spirits conceived as bestowing offspring on women

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. 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.

wooded 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 Macander, 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.

Midsummer 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. Pirrè, *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, barcheaded, 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 mean-
ing 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.

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

Suggested
origin of
the
custom.

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. Taillepie, *Recueil des Antiquitez et singularitez de la ville de Rouen* (Rouen, 1587), pp. 93-105; A. Floquet, *Histoire du privilège 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 *Contumes, 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*

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

Egeria at Nemi a nymph of water and of the oak, perhaps a form of Diana

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-nymphs³ 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

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.

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

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 Altertumskunde* (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*, I.

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 traditional 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 s., iii.³ 507 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, *l.c.*; Strabo, v. 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 volkstümliche 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 Etruscae. Hoc vocabulum est coronaurum, quas gemmis et foliis ex auro quercinis ob Jovem insignes ad deducendas thesas cum palmatis togis sumunt.*" The thesae 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 aequae triumphantis et servi fortasse coronam sustentis.*" Compare Zonaras, *Annal.* vii. 21; Juvenal, x. 38 sqq. Mommsen says that the triumphal golden crown was made in the shape of laurel leaves (*Romisches 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 lauro erant, post fieri ex auro coepit*"). 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.

The oak
crown as
an emblem
of Jupiter
and of the
Roman
emperors.

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

¹ For instances see Fr. Kunstmann, "Valentin Ferdinand's Beschreibung der Serra Leoa," *Abhandlungen d. histor. Classe d. kon. 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 Samoeden 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 voyages 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 mé-*

moires, 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, *Tristitia*, 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 Circa 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

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

To the Romans the breach between the human and the divine was not so wide as it seems to us.

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. Hefbig, *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. βασιλεὺς, διοτρεφής, and θεῖος.

⁸ J. Tzetzes, *Antehomerica*, 102 *sq.*:

οἱ πρὶν γὰρ τε Δίας πάντας ἀδελφὸν βασιλῆας, οὐνεκά μιν καλὸς Διὸς ἀσπὴρ σκῆπτρον ὀπάξει.

id., *Chiliades*, i. 474:

τοὺς βασιλεῖς δ' ἀνέκαθε Δίας ἐκδλουν 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.

The kings of Alba seem also to have claimed to represent Jupiter.

The Silvii and the Julii.

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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

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 Julius, whose name, as some of the ancients themselves perceived, means the Little Jupiter. The people decided in favour of Silvius, but his rival Julius 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 Julius 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 Julius 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

Julius, 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, *Origogentis 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 Julius, see Aurelius Victor, *op. cit.* 15, "*Igitur Latini Ascanium ob insignem virtutem non solum Jove ortum crediderunt, sed etiam per diminutionem, declinato pau-*

lulum nomine, primo Jobum, dein postea Julum appellarunt"; also Steudling, in W. H. Roscher's *Lexikon d. griech. u. rom. Mythologie*, ii. 574. Compare W. M. Lindsay, *The Latin Language* (Oxford, 1894), p. 250. According to Diodorus, the priesthood bestowed on Julius was the pontificate; but the name Julius 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 Julius. 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*,

Cacsars, 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 praeponcbant, unde Veiovem parvum Iovem et vegrandum 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. Cir-

censian 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, *Origogentis 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?

In this connexion it deserves to be noted that, according to the legend, Salmoncus, 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

The legends of the deaths of Roman kings point to a close connexion between the king and the thunder-god.

i. 3. 9. The king is called Romulus by Livy, Remulus by Ovid, Aremlus by Aurelius Victor, Amulius by Zonaras, Amulius or Arramulius by Diosdorus, and Alodius 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 Marcius 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
dedication
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, *Fasts*, 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

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*

Every Latin town probably had its local Jupiter.

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 (*aquaelectium*), 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.

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

Oak woods
on the
Roman
hills in
antiquity.

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, *l.c.*; 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.

The sacred
Vestal fire
fed with
oak-wood.

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 sepulchres 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

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 memorabilia 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.

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 Alban kings may have imitated Latian Jupiter, who dwelt on the top of the Alban Mount.

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.

Theo-
phrastus'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 pros-
pect 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.

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

Resemblance between the Latin worship of Jupiter and the Druidical worship of the oak.

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*,⁵ 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.

Janus and
Carna.

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 Caclian 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

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 Alesia, 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 *Aveni* or *Ayli*). Nothing else is known about Helernus, unless with Meikel (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 sorcerers³ 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.

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

Ancient use of white thorn or buckthorn to ward off witchcraft.

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 buck-

thorn 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, untrammelled 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, *Quæst. Rom.* III εκδὸς μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ καὶ τὸν ἱερέα τοῦ Διὸς ὡς περ ἐμψυχόν καὶ ἱερὸν ὄργανον καταφύγιον ἀνεῖσθαι τοῖς θεομέτοισι; 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, xlv. 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.

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

At the sacred marriage the King and Queen of Rome probably personated the god and goddess of the oak.

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, *Quæstiones Romanæ*, 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

THUS far we have dealt mainly with those instances of the Sacred Marriage of the Fire-god with a woman. 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.

First, let us take the legend of the birth of King Servius Legend of the birth of King Servius Tullius from the fire. 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;

Legend of
the birth
of Romulus
from the
fire.

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.

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 Caelus 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 Caelus 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 Amata³ 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 Julius 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 Cacculus, 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 Symonds³ (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. 229.

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.

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.

Rational-
istic theory
of the
duties of
the Vestals
rejected.

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 advo-

cated 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 continua-
tion of the
fire on the
king's
hearth.

The
round
temple of
Vesta a
copy of
the ancient
Italian hut.

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

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 *saeptus* 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, *Fasts*, 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
earthen-
ware
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; Acon 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 Arva
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 sinpuvio 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.

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 *factores Vestalium* and the *factores 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. 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

Savage
supersti-
tions as to
the making
of pottery.

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, "*factores dicti a fingendis libis*"), explain these *factores* 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 *factores* of the Vestals and Pontiffs, and further, that in Latin *factor* 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. Peller, *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

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

Mode of rekindling the Vestal fire at Rome by means of the fire-drill.

Use of the fire-drill by savages.

¹ Festus, s.v. "Ignis," p. 106, ed. C. O. Müller: "*Ignis Vestæ si quando interstinctus esset, virgines verberibus afficiebantur a pontifice, quibus mos erat tabulam felicitæ materiae tandiu terebrare, quousque exceptum ignem cribro aëneo virgo in ædem 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 the 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.

The fire-drill.

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.

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.

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

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. Polleṇ 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 (*saku*).³

"The ancient Bedouins kindled fire by means of the fire-drill, which was composed of a horizontal stick, the *senda*, 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 *Schraubennutter*, *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 *senda*, which the Arabs made out of *Calotropis procera* ('*oshur*'), while for the upright stick they used a hard branch of *markh*."⁴

The fire-drill among the Arabs.

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 (*kirkil*) 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

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

Fire-
customs of
the Herero

¹ J. Macdonald, *Lives in Africa*²
(London, 1890), pp. 216 sq.

² Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*
(London, 1904), pp. 51 sq.

The
country of
the Herero.

The Herero
a pastoral
people.

Huts and
villages 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

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-Südwest-afrikas," *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. Buttner *Das Hinterland von Walfischbai und Angra Peguena* (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

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 (*omurangerero* 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

Sacred fire of the Herero village maintained in or before the hut of the chief's principal wife.

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 dread 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 kuragefasste Grammatik des Otjiherero* (Leipsic, 1886), s.v. "*okuruo*";

id. "Pyrolatrie in Südafrika," *Globus*, lvii. (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 chief or headman of the village is also the priest; he alone may perform religious ceremonies except such as

The sacred fire among the Herero is watched and fed by the chief's eldest unmarried daughter, who performs other priestly duties.

(*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 Otjiherero*, s.v. "*okuruo*"; *id.* "Pyrolatrie in Südafrika," *Globus*, lxxvii. (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 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

Fire taken from the chief's hearth by the founder of a new village.

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.

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. Buttner, *l.c.*; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* pp.

166, 167, 186; Meyer, quoted by J. Kohler, *op. cit.* p. 315; P. II. Brincker, in *Mittheilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, iii. (1900) Dritte Abtheilung, pp. 75 sq.; J. Irlé, *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

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 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.

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 pruinigenum*). 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 *otjiya*; *id.* "Character, Sitten, und Gebräuche, speciell der Bantu Deutsch-Südwestafrikas," *Mittheilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, iii. (1900) Dritte Abtheilung, p. 75; *id.* "Pyrolatrie in Südafrika," *Globus*, lxxvii. (January, 1895) p. 96; H. Schinz, *op. cit.* pp. 165 sq.; J. Kohler, *op. cit.* pp. 305, 315; J. Irlé, *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 (*l.c.*), though Dr. Schinz gives *otyia* as the name. I have followed Dr. Brincker in accepting *otyiya* (*otjiya*) 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 Noihās, 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.

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-zero 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 migra-

tion see J. Chapman, *Travels in the Interior of South Africa*, pp. 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.

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 worship of the chief's fire is a form of ancestor-worship.

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

The sacred hearth is a special seat of the ancestral spirits.

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. Irlé, *Die Herero*, pp. 74, 75, 77. Apparently it is only a powerful or eminent man who be-

comes 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
represent-
ing 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 Larcs, 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 (*okurno*). 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

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

The sacred sticks representing the ancestors are probably the fire-sticks which were used to kindle fresh fire in the village after a death.

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. Irlé, *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, Sacred fire-boards among the Koryaks and Chuckchees of north-eastern Asia. 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, "of much account" (Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, p. 23).

32-36 (*Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. vi., Leyden and New York, 1908).

¹ W. Jochelson, "The Koryak," pp.

"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 Chuckchee Religion," pp. 349-353 (*Memor 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

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 *onumborombonga* 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

Similarity between the fire-customs of the Herero and the ancient Latins.

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 chamber⁴ 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.

Amongst the Ilcerro 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 homocopathic 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

Rites performed by the Vestals for the fertility of the earth and the fecundity of cattle.

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

The Vestals were probably regarded as embodiments of Vesta, who was a mother-goddess, the bestower of offspring on cattle and women.

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.

Custom of
leading a
bride round
the fire
perhaps a
fertility
charm.

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 home² 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 Herzegovina, 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

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 kais. Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien*, xl., Vienna, 1892); H. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, p. 312; G. A. Grierson, *Bihâr Peasant Life* (Calcutta, 1885), p. 368; F. S. Krauss, *Sitte und Brauch der Sudslaven*, pp. 386, 436, cp. 430; J. Lasicius, "De diis Samagitarum caeterorumque Sarmatarum," in *Magasin herausgegeben von der Lettisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft*, xiv. 99; J. Maletius (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. V. 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 Russia⁴ 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 Wotjaken* (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 Hierero,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. 'Αμφιδρόμια; Hesychius, s.v. ἀποιδρόμων 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, *In Bismarck-Archipel*, pp. 94 sq.; J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluit-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

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

Reasons why a procreative virtue was ascribed to fire.

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 repre-

sentative 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 trec, 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.

bräuche der Esten (Berlin, 1888), pp.

² L. v. Schroeder, *Die Hochzeits-* 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.

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,

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.

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, "Mittheilungen aus dem Frauenleben der Órang Belendas, der Órang Djákun und der Órang Láut," 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.

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 Slavs of the Balkans fire is made by a young girl and boy.

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

Among the Kachins fire is made by a man and woman jointly.

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. V. 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 (*Easton*, 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.

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.

² M. Martin's "Description of the

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

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

Reasons
for entrust-
ing the
making
of fire to
unmarried
boys and
girls.

¹ J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴
1. 504.

² E. Casalis, *The Basutos*, pp.
267 sq.

ashes.¹ Idcas 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, *Anti-quit. 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-Touns] 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 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

Not to breathe on a holy fire.

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. Salmon 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. VI. Titelbach, "Das heilige Feuer bei den Balkan-slaven," *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 Rugen, 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.

Early Irish
monas-
teries
built in
oak groves.

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:—

*"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."

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

Virgin
priestesses
of fire
among the
Incas of
Peru.

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 Incas*, 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 Man*, 4th ed. 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 Μηδῶν, περὶ δὲ τὰ Μηθρῶν should be altered to ὑπὸ Μελδῶν περὶ τὰ Μηθρῶν. 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?

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

Virgin
priestesses
of fire in
Mexico
and
Yucatan.

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 l'hai ou Stam*, 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

Resem-
blance
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, Atis, 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 Brah-
mans.

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, *Quæst. 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 philologist, 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*, Frankfurt 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 *yonî*, 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

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

The Indian
fire sticks
made from
the sacred
fig and
sami wood

¹ W. Crooke, *op. cit.* i. 31-33.

² W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), ii. 104 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 Urvashi, whose loves and sorrows formed the theme of a beautiful tale.⁴

vol. ii. pp. 25-27; *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 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 *soni*, 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 Punjab, 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 Brāhmaṇa*, 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. σροπεύς*; Schol. on Apollonius Rhodius, *Argon.* i. 1184; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 208; Seneca, *Nat. Quæst.* 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 com-

pares 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

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

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.

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. Jager, 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 Indië*, xxxv. (1875), pp. 82. 83. Compare C. Hager, *Kaiser Wilhelms-Land und der Bis-*

marck-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 Pygmies* (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. Chi-holm, "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 Cam-

bodia 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 (Leipzig, 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

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

Many savages carry fire constantly with them as a matter of convenience.

(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, *l.c.* 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 Pérouse, 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 con-
venience.

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

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 *kalamí*. Bent speaks of the plant as a reed,

which is a mistake. The plant is described by Theophrastus (*Hist. 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 Polynésia* (London, 1861), p. 326.

³ Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas, die materielle Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Somali* (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 Amboim 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 main-
tained 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.

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

Fire carried
before
chiefs and
kings as a
symbol of
royalty.

¹ Du Pratz, *History of Louisiana* (London, 1774), pp. 330-334, 346 sq., 351-358; Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 172 sq.; Lafitau, *Mœurs des sauvages Américains*, 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," *Recueil 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*, xlv. 41 (vol. ii. p. 188 ed. Meineke); Hesychius, s.v. πυροφόρος.

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 Melcager,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, in-
cluding the
mainten-
ance 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 priest-hoods 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 Staatsver-waltung*, iii.³ 237, 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. Conrardt, "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 Anthropol. 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 Pinner'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 Pelw Islands, when a death has taken place, fire is transferred from the house to a shed erected beside it (J. S. Kuhlary, "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.

What was the rule of succession to the Latin kingship?

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.

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 Königl. 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.

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.*

² See B. G. Niebuhr, *History of Rome*, i. 205-207; A. Schwegler, *Römische Geschichte*, i. 339, 342-345. However, Niebuhr admits that some

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 mirari possit, 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 confuge ac fortunis omnibus commigrasse.*" And see a passage in a speech actually spoken by the Emperor Claudius: "*Quondam reges hanc tenere 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 matriachate. 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.

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

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.

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 I. 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

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

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.

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
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only, girls
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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,
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kingdom
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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 Fantec 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.

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

Traces of
a similar
state of
things in
Uganda.

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. Funch, 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.

Near the Chambezi river, which falls into Lake Ben-gweolo 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

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 Proyard'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*, xxiv. (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.

Similar rights enjoyed by queens in Central Africa.

Traces of female descent of the kinship in ancient Greece.

With this rule of descent of the kingship males rule over different kingdoms in successive generations.

Migrations of the male descendants of Aeacus.

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 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 Diomedes 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; Ilyginus, *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

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.

These migrations not understood in later times.

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

Traces of similar migrations in Scandinavian tradition.

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 (Eiríkr 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. (Leipzig, 1907) pp. 233 sq.

² G. W. Dasent, *Popular Tales from the Norse*, pp. 131 sqq.; S. Grundtvig, *Danische Volksmärchen*, First Series (Leipzig, 1878), pp. 285 sqq. (Leo's German translation); Cavallius and 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, Sprichwörter, 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 Mährchen*, 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 mar-
riage with
a princess

The
Lydian
kingship
apparently
trans-
mitted
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 slaves² 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 pre-
decessor.

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, *quote*¹ by Athenaeus, xii. 11, p. 516 A B. The Armenians also prostituted their daughters before marriage, dedi-

cating 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*, *Ostiris*, 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.

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

Traces of the system of female kinship among the Aryans.

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 Epi-
zephyrian
Locrians,
the Cant-
abrians,
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 by¹ 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 Σδλων ὁμοπατρῶν ἐφείλ ἀγεσθαι, τὰς ὁμομητρῶν ἐκώλυσεν, ὃ δὲ Λακεδαιμονίων νομοθέτης ἔμπαλιν, τὸν ἐπὶ ταῖς ὁμογαστρῶν γάμον ἐπιτρέψας, τὸν πρὸς τὰς ὁμοπατρῶν

ἀπείνεν, 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. J. 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 Melan-esians*, 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 Cennad, 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. Daigun, *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 παῖδια, οὐκ εἰδότες ὅπου πατὴρ ἐστὶν ἕκαστον, Athenaeus, xii. 14, p. 517 D E.

³ "Non enim hic, ubi ex Tusco modo tute tibi indigne dolem quaeas 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.

i. 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*,² 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.

Sometimes a conquering race may have left a nominal kingship to members of the old royal house.

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-

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.

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.

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.

Sometimes the chief is chosen from several families in rotation

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

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), 1, 134 sqq.

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

chiefs and
kings in
Africa
elected
from
several
families in
rotation.

¹ D. Livingstone, *op. cit.* p. 434.

² H. Heccquard, *Reise an die Küste und in das Innere von West-Afrika* (Leipzig, 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 'Corona-

tion' 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 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 choose 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 late times of Rome it was held that the custom had been for the people to elect the kings and for the senate

Thus the Roman monarchy may have combined the hereditary with the elective principle.

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. i. 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
Præsidium reges ipsi sibi perfugiumque,
Et pecus atque agros dividere 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 Fat kings 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 Long-headed kings and chiefs.

¹ Nicolaus Damascenus, in Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, xlv. 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 Buirrows, *The Land of the Pygmies* (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 D  nd* (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 S  dsee* (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 backwoods of Brazil a tribe of savages in all seriousness observed a custom which he thought absurd even on the stage.²

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-

Succession
to the
throne
determined
by a race.

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*, xlv. 41 (*Fragmenta His-*

toric. 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 shown 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. i. 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. 16, vi. 20. 7.

⁴ Pausanias, iii. 12. 1, 20. 10 sq.

noble suitors, both Libyans and foreigners, ran to her as the goal, and Alcidas, 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 Atalanta, 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

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

Custom of
racing for
a bride
among the
Kirghiz
and
Calmucks.

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, 1903), 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 *brätlauf*, modern German *Brautlauf*, Anglo-Saxon *bryðhildap*, 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 primæ 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. Brind, *Popular Antiquities*, ii.

153-155 (Bohn's edition); J. Jamieson, *Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, s.v. "Broose."

⁴ E. Herrmann, "Über Lieder und Brauche bei Hochzeiten in Karnten," *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*, xlv. 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

The Indian
Svayam-
vara.

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

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 Vikramaditya-*

charita, edited by G. Bühler (Bombay, 1875), pp. 38-40; A. Holtzmann, *Das Mahābhārata 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 Iliyria 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 Ihippodamia. 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.

Hippo-
clides 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 Skygod," *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 &c. 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, *Königliche 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 homocopathic 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; Arian, *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. "Opina 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 pocolorum*, 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.;

Derobry, *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*, xii. 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. Pitti, *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

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 (*capr*) or the goddess of the wild fig-tree, for

The violent ends of the Roman kings.

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
Nonae
Capro-
tinae
seems to
have been
the festival
of the
fertilisation
of the fig.

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

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. 557b, 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 Königlich-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. 8. 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. Pitre, *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

Importance of the fig as an article of diet.

¹ A. Engler, in V. Hehn's *Kulturpflanzen und Haustierte*¹ (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 homocopathic 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.

Supposed fertilisation of barren women by the wild fig-tree among the Akikuyu of British East Africa.

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,

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 Zam-chschar, cited by Graf zu Solms-Laubach, *op. cit.* p. 82. For

more evidence as to the fig in antiquity see V. Hehn, *Kulturpflanzen und Haustierte*,¹ 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 (*ainu*). 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 Nations 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 cele-
brated a
sacred
marriage
on the
Nonae
Capro-
linae 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 *figus 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 (*figus 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 (*figus*), not a wild fig (*caprificus*), and Dionysius agrees with them. Plutarch alone (*Romulus*, 4) describes it as a wild fig-tree (*épavebs*). 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?

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

The marriage of the divine king or human god often followed by his death.

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. 5; 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. Thielton 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

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 god-head, 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

The suc-
cession to
the Latin
kingship
may some-
times have
been
decided
by single
combat.

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 prob-
ably per-
sonated
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." *Ovinus*, "sheep-man,"

Caprilus, "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 sg.; Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 801-806; *id.*, *Metam.* xiv. 774 sg.; 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. Pieller, *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 compressis 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; Propertius, *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.

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 Parilia was perhaps the time when the flocks and herds were turned out for the first time in spring to graze in the open.

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.

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.

Precautions taken by the Esthonians against wolves and witches on St. George's Day.

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.

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. 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.

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

The Esthonians generally drive their cattle out to pasture for the first time on St. George's Day.

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
Esthoni-
ans 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 Esthoni-ans 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 rational 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 aberglaubische Gebrauche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, pp. 82-84, 116-118; F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und ausseren Leben der Ehsten*, pp. 332, 356-361; Holzmayer, "Osili-ana," *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.

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

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.

Precau-
tions 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 horse-back 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 merry-makers hastening to a revel. The sorry image of the saint, carved in wood and about an ell

¹ R. F. Kaindl, *Die Husulen* *id.*, "Zauberglaube bei den Huzulen," (Vienna, 1894), pp. 62 sq., 78, 88 sq.; *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

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 (*Heiligkreustal*), 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.*, *Volksthumliches 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
Rouman-
ians of
Trans-
sylvania

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 wise-acre 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
Walach-
ians.

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 Siebenburger Sachsen* (Vienna, 1885), p. 281.

² W. Schmidt, *Das Jahr und seine Tage in Meinung und Brauch der Romanen Siebenbürgens* (Hermannstadt,

1866), pp. 9, 11. Compare R. F. Kaindl, "Zur Volkskunde der Rumanen 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

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 Sudslanen*, 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

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,

Swedish
observ-
ances at
turning
out the
cattle to
graze after
their winter
confinement.

¹ W. J. A. Teitau und J. D. H. Temme, *Die Volkssagen Ostpreussens, Lithauens und Westpreussens* (Berlin, 1837), p. 263.

Swedish
observ-
ances 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.

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 George¹ 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

Green George a personification of a spirit of trees or of vegetation in general.

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

" Ringing out the grass " on St. George's Day.

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" (*Grasauslauten*), 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* (Strasbourg, 1900), p. 423; K. Freiherr von Leoprechting, *Aus dem Lechraun* (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

It is natural to suppose that a saint who can bestow <sup>Love-
 charms
 practised
 among
 the Slavs
 on St.
 George's
 Day.</sup> 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 Hanu, 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 child-
less
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.

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

In Europe St. George seems to have displaced an old Aryan god of the spring, such as the Lithuanian Pergrubius.

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 Borussiae Livonum aliarumque vicinarum gentium," *Mitteilungen der Literarischen 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-literarischen 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 wachsen laub und 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*

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.

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

The Latin
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thunder,
and the
rain?

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 pre-historic times

We have seen that long before the dawn of history Europe was covered with vast primeval 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. 7-19.

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

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 ascendancy 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

Former
oak woods
of Den-
mark and
Scan-
dinavia.

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*⁶ (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 Encyclopedia*.

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 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

The inhabitants of the lake dwellings subsisted partly on acorns

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* (Leipzig, 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.

The oak
woods of
ancient
Italy and
Greece.

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

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 6 "*Hercyniae silvae roborem vastitas . . . glandiferae maxime generis omnes, quibus honos apud Romanos perpetuus.*"

² H. Hirt, "Die Urheimat der Indogermanen," *Indogermanische Forschungen*, i. (1892), p. 480; P. Kretschmer, *Einführung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache* (Göttingen, 1896), p. 81; O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der Indogermanischen 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

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

The oak still the chief forest tree of Europe.

Thus the old classical tradition that men lived upon acorns before they learned to till the ground⁴ 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

In Europe acorns have been used as human food both in ancient and modern times.

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.*, *Fast.*, 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; Porphry, *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 *phagos* 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, *Physische Geographie von Griechenland*, p. 379.

² C. Neumann und 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. Worship of the oak in Greece; its association with Zeus.

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 sanctuary⁴ were

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, *Frags.* vii. 3; Stephanus Byzantius, *s.v.* Δωδώνη; Suidas, *s.vv.*

Δωδωναίων χαλκείων 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 Lycacus 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

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

Zeus as the
rain god of
the Greeks.

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

Iodorus, *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. Πάρον.

⁵ Pausanias, i. 32. 2.

⁶ Pausanias, ii. 25. 10. As to the climate and scenery of these barren mountains, see A. Philippon, *Der Peloponnes* (Berlin, 1891), pp. 43 *sq.*, 65.

⁷ Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iv. 43.

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

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 Salmoneus⁶ 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

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-

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, *Inchriften 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. ἡλόσιον; *Etymologicum Magnum*, p. 341. 8 sqq.; Artemidorus, *Onirocrit.* ii. 9; Pausanias, v. 14. 10; Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Grae-*

carum,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

Zeus as the god of thunder and lightning.

The Greek kings personified Zeus, as the Italian kings personified Jupiter.

Jupiter in Italy as the god of the oak, the thunder, and the rain.

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 primæval 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 Latinæ selectæ*, 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 expectatis*"). 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 Latinæ selectæ*, 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 Thundergod," *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. i, 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*,⁶ 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 *dair*, 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 aih*, "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 wor-
ship 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 Tagesgotter* (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 F. H. Meyer, *Mythologie der Germanen* (Stuttgart, 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

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

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

Perun, the god of the oak and the thunder among the Slavs.

Perkunas, the chief Lithuanian god.

¹ Adam of Bremen, *op. cit.* 26, 27, with the Scholia (Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, cxlvi. coll. 642-644).

² J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,¹ 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*, Frankfurt 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. Maelctius

(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 *Mittheilungen der Literarischen Gesellschaft Masovia*, Heft 8 (Löten, 1902), p. 187; Chr. Hartknoch, *Alt- und neues Preussen* (Frankfort and Leipsic, 1684), pp. 131 sqq.; S. Ros-towski, quoted by A. Büchner, *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 Lithauen und Livland"); Schleicher, "Lituanica," *Sitzungsberichte der philosoph.-histor. Classe d. kais. Akademie d. Wissen.* (Vienna), xi. (1853 pub. 1854) p. 96; H. Usener, *Gotternamen* (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, *Vollwägen Ostpreussens, Lithauens 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 Neuasssa (Niewiaza, a tributary of the Niemen). See Malecki (Maclæti, 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 main-

tained 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, Litvaniae, 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

Wedge 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

The god of the oak and the thunder among the Esthonians.

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*, IIeft 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 *Frjörgyn*, 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, *Einführung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache*, pp. 81 sq. The

identity of the names Perkunas and Parjanya had been maintained long before by G. Böhler, 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 and H. Neus, *Mythische und magische Lieder der Esten* (St. Petersburg, 1854), pp. 16, 26, 27, 56, 57, 104; F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Esten*, 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 and Neus, *op. cit.* pp. 12 sq.

⁵ Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Esten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten* (St. Petersburg, 1854), p. 2.

Esthonia in
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 1,
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

¹ J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴
1 146

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) Philo-*

logical 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.

Gods of thunder, rain, and fertility among the Indians of the Andes and the Abchases of the Caucasus

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 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 (*Collo-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 Abchassen," *Globus*, lxi. (1894) p. 73.

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 eyewitness 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

Traces of the worship of the oak in modern Europe.

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
develop-
ment 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, *Even-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, pp. 37 sq.; H. Seidel, "Der Yew'e Dienst im Togolande," *Zeitschrift für afrikanische und ozeanischen 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 Bando-Meeress* (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*,³ ii. 262).

³ L. Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*,⁴ i. 116 sq.; *id.*, *Römische Mythologie*,⁵ 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, "*Aspicit hoc sublimem 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 *verberna*, "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 Hubbert 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. Muller; 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 sky⁴ 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, *Grundsätze der griechischen Etymologie*,⁶ pp. 236 sq., 616 sq.; A. Vaniček, *Griechisch-lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, i. 353 sq.; 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. Krietschmer, *Einleitung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache*, pp. 78 sqq., 91, 161 sq. Messrs. Speijer and Krietschmer 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 Janus¹ 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.

⁶ Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, vii. 9 sq.

⁷ *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, v. No. 783.

⁸ 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 gods⁴ 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 door-
ways so as
to face both
ways, out-
wards 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, *Grundsätze der griechischen Etymologie*,⁶ 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 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 praesse januis*

nomen ostendit, quod est simile Oupalq. Nam et cum clavi ac virga figuratus, 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.

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