

ART. VII.—*The Festival of the Dead.** By R. G. HALIBURTON, F.S.A.

IN European Calendars, the last day of October, and the first and second days of November, are designated as the Festivals of All Halloween, All Saints, and All Souls.

Though they have hitherto never attracted any special attention, and have not been supposed to have been connected with each other, they originally constituted but one commemoration of three days duration, known among almost all nations as “the festival of the dead,” or the “feast of ancestors.”

It is now, or was formerly, observed at or near the beginning of November by the Peruvians, the Hindoos, the Sandwich Islanders, the people of the Tonga Islands, the Australians, the ancient Persians, the ancient Egyptians, and the northern nations of Europe, and continued for three days among the Japanese, the Hindoos, the Australians, the ancient Romans, and the ancient Egyptians.

Halloween is known among the Highlanders by a name meaning the consolation of the spirits of the dead, and is with them, as with the Cinghalese,† the Sandwich Islanders, and almost every race among whom the festival

* At the suggestion of the writer, the above paper was substituted for one read before the Institute, which had been privately printed. In the previous one, on “New materials for the History of man, derived from a comparison of the customs and superstitions of nations,” it was endeavored to show that the source of these superstitions, so far from being “absolutely unattainable,” as it has been hitherto considered by all who have treated of them, could be arrived at by a comparison of the customs of civilized and savage races; and that those superstitions, being possessed of a marvellous vitality, are valuable historical memorials of primitive society.

As an illustration of the duration and universality of primitive superstitions and customs, those connected with the habit of saying “God bless you!” to a person who sneezes, were selected. This absurd custom, referred to by Homer, and found in Europe, Asia, Africa, Polynesia and America, was traced to a belief found in the Arctic regions, Australia, and Central Africa, (and it might have been added in Ireland), that death and disease are not the result of natural but of supernatural causes; and that when a person sneezes, he is liable to be a victim of the spirits, or as the Celtic race express it, “to be carried off by the fairies.” It was also argued that this custom, the trivial nature of which precludes the idea that it could have been borrowed by nations from each other, or that nature can everywhere have suggested it to the human race, plainly must have been inherited from a common source, and is a very conclusive argument in favor of the unity of origin of our race. These views have been confirmed by the observations of Captains Speke and Grant—(see *Illustrated London News*, July 4, 1863, p 23.) An interesting little work by W. R. Wylde, on “Irish Popular Superstitions,” published by William S. Orr & Co., London—which the writer was unable to procure until after the paper was read before the Nova Scotian Institute—supplies very curious facts, which corroborate his conclusions as to the origin of this custom. See from p. 120 to 135; also p. 51 to 58. See also Strada’s *Prolusiones—Cur sternuentes salutentur* Lib. iii. Præl. iv.

† See Brady’s *Clavis Calendaria*, as to Oct. 31st.

is observed, connected with a harvest home. or, south of the equator, with a first fruits celebration. An old writer asks why do we suppose that the spirits of the dead are more abroad on Halloween than at any other time of the year?* and so convinced are the Finns and the Irish peasantry of the fact, that they discreetly prefer remaining at home on that ill-omened night.

The Halloween torches of the Irish, the Halloween bonfires of the Scotch, the Coel Coeth fires of the Welsh, and the Tindle fires of Cornwall, lighted at Halloween, are clearly memorials of a custom found almost everywhere at the celebration of the festival of the dead. The origin of the lantern festival has never yet been conjectured. It will be found, I believe, to have originated in the wide-spread custom of lighting bonfires at this festival.

The Church of de Sens, in France, was endowed by its founder in the days of Charlemagne, for the purpose of having mass said for the dead, and the grave yard visited on All Halloween.† Wherever the Roman-Catholic Church exists, solemn mass for *all souls* is said on the first day of November; on that day the gay Parisians, exchanging the boulevard for the cemetery, lunch at the graves of their relatives, and hold unconsciously a funeral feast on the very same day that savages in far distant quarters of the globe observe in a similar manner their "feast of ancestors."‡

Even the Church of England, which rejects *All Souls*, as based on a belief in purgatory, and as being a creation of popery, devoutly clings to All Saints, which is clearly a relic of primeval heathenism.

On All Souls day, the English peasant goes *a-souling*, begging for "a soul cake for all Christen souls." He has very little suspicion that he is preserving a heathen rite, the meaning of which is not to be found in the book of common prayer, but (as I shall hereafter show) is to be discovered in the sacred books of India, in which country the consecrated cake is still offered, as it has been for thousands of years in November, to the souls of deceased ancestors. But, though the festival of the dead is so generally observed in November, there are some exceptions. Thus it was observed in February by the Greeks, the Romans, the Persians, and the Algonquins, and in August by the Japanese and Chinese. The traces of its being observed in May are very few, and those of its being

* See Brand's Popular Antiquities, v.I, p. 388, 396. (Ed. 1853.)

† Hodie in Ecclesia Senonensi, sit Anniversarium solemne, et generale pro defunctis.—*Thiers' Traité des Superstitions*, iii. 98.

‡ Atlantic Monthly for May, 1862.

held at any other times of the year, are of exceedingly rare occurrence. Before, therefore, I can attempt to treat of the festival of the dead, or refer to its origin and history, and the influence it has exerted on ancient mythology, it is necessary to confine this paper simply to questions connected with the Calendar, and the times when the festival is found to be observed. It is important to trace the ancient November festival to the primeval year, which must have fixed it in that month among races South, as well as North of the Equator. This year, I believe I have succeeded in discovering; and, as it appears to have originated in, or at least only now exists in, the Southern hemisphere, I have designated it as the Primitive Southern year. It is also necessary to show that the festival of the dead, occurring in February or August, indicates a change having taken place, and a more recent year commencing in February having been substituted. As we only find this year north of the Equator (so far as I have been able to learn), I have designated it as the Primitive Northern year.

Wherever the festival occurs in November, it is, or at least originally was, the new year's festival, of the primitive Southern year. Where it is held in February, it is, or once was, the commemoration of the commencement of the Northern year.

As the mode of investigation pursued on this point materially adds to the credibility of my conclusions, I may be pardoned for referring to it.

The startling fact that "this feast was celebrated among the ancient Peruvians at the same period, and on the same day that Christians solemnize the commemoration of the dead, (2d November)"* at once drew my attention to the question, how was this uniformity in the time of observance preserved, not only in far distant quarters of the globe, but also through that vast lapse of time since the Peruvian, and the Indo-European first inherited this primeval festival from a common source?

It was plain that this singular uniformity could never have been preserved by means of the defective solar year in vogue among ancient nations. How then could this result have been produced? It was apparent that the festival must have been regulated by some visible sign, or mark, that nature had supplied—such as the rising of some constellation.

Remembering the ancient traditions as to the Pleiades, I naturally turned my attention to them. Professor How kindly offered to ascertain from an excellent astronomer whether the Pleiades could have ever risen in November in Asia or Europe. I was fortunately, however, able to save

* Peruvian Antiquities, by M. Rivero and Von Tschudi, translated by Dr. Hawks, New York, 1855, p. 134.

that gentleman the calculation. On turning to Bailly's *Astronomie Indienne*,* I found him state that the most ancient year, as regulated by the calendar of the Brahmins of Tirvalore, began in November, and I was much gratified at finding that, in that Calendar, the month of November is called Cartiguey, *i. e.* the month of the Pleiades,—a circumstance which M. Bailly says, would seem to indicate that that Constellation by their rising or setting in that month, must have regulated the commencement of the ancient year in November.

But here a fresh difficulty arose, as respects the Calendar. To suppose that the Pleiades rose in that month, and commenced the year in the autumn, was not only opposed to ancient traditions respecting them, and to their name as the Stars of Spring (*Vergiliæ*), but also to their actual movements, at the present day at least.

We could not assume that great astronomical changes could ever have produced this result. How then could we account for the anomaly? I discovered the clue in extending my researches to the Southern hemisphere, where I found the festival of the dead to occur in November, and to be the vernal New Year's festival of a year commencing in November, and regulated by the rising of the Pleiades *in the evening*. Before concluding this prefatory paper, it may be as well to state that the whole subject referred to by me, both as regards the primitive New Year Festival of the Dead, and the primitive year, has altogether escaped the observation of the learned. De Rougemont, in his "Peuple Primitif," published at Paris in 1856, has, out of three volumes, not devoted as many pages to "Les Fêtes des Morts," though they are unquestionably the most remarkable memorials we possess of Le peuple Primitif. Festivals connected with the seasons, he says, cannot now be investigated, from our ignorance of the primitive calendar; and he therefore only selects those that took place at the time of the Vernal Equinox, and the Summer Solstice, *i. e.* associated with a solar year, and hence of a comparatively recent date, and subsequent to those of the two primitive calendars which I have referred to.

"Nous ne pouvons ici faire une étude spéciale de celles, qui se rapportent avant tout aux saisons; les calendriers des anciens nous sont trop imparfaitement connus, pour que nous puissions espérer de reconstruire celui du peuple primitif."†

The primitive year of two seasons, commencing in November, and the connection of the Pleiades with the primeval calendar, are not even referred to in the latest work on the astronomy of the ancients, published last year

* Vol. 1. p. xxxi. 28, 134.

† Vol. 1. p. 523.

in Paris.* Though very many remarkable facts in the history of the calendar, and of our race, to which the study of the festival of the dead has afforded me a clue, are referred to by Greswell in his learned works on the Calendars of the Ancients, he has attempted to explain them by resorting to the miracles in the Bible—as to the sun having stood still or gone back on certain occasions—events which he contends must not only have disturbed, but have even left their impress on the calendars of the ancients. But they are, I believe, capable of a more common-place solution. I trust that I shall be able to prove that these subjects are susceptible of an explanation, without having, with Greswell, to refer to miracles in the days of Hezekiah, or with Ovid, to leave the knotty point to be unravelled by the Gods—

“Dicta sit unde dies, quæ nominis extet origo
Me fugit, ex aliquo est invenienda deo.”†

THE FESTIVAL OF THE DEAD BROUGHT TO EUROPE AND ASIA BY A
MIGRATION OF RACES FROM THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE.

“Mudan de pays y de estrellas.”‡—*Garcillasso de la Vega*.

“Who can restrain the pleasant influences of the Pleiades?” we are asked in the book of Job, the most ancient production of sacred or profane literature. “The lights in the firmaments of the heavens,” “for signs and for seasons, and for days, and for years,” are supposed to have reference to that constellation, as well as to the sun and moon, for in early ages neither the sun nor the moon could have indicated the length of the year, or its division into seasons. The extreme veneration of remote antiquity for the Pleiades, or *Vergiliæ*, for having marked the seasons, and the beginning of spring, are amongst the most venerable traditions of our race, and are now only realized among Australian savages, who still worship the Pleiades as announcing spring, “and as being very good to the blacks;” and at their culmination hold a great New Year’s corroboree in November, in honor of the *Mormodellick*, as they call that time-honored constellation. The name given to these stars by the Romans, *Vergiliæ*, is plainly connected with the strange tradition of Northern natives, of the Pleiades having marked the commencement of spring. They are popu-

* “Antiquité des Races Humaines. Reconstitution de la Chronologie, et de l’Histoire des Peuples Primitifs. Par l’examen des documents originaux, et par l’Astronomie,”—by Rodier.

† *Fasti*, Lib. v.

‡ They change their country and their stars.

larly known, from France to India, by the same name—a circumstance which proves, says Mr. Bailly,* that our first knowledge of these stars was derived from the most ancient nations of Asia.

The question naturally suggests itself, whence arose this veneration for a constellation, that among us, at least, are no longer revered? When and where can they have marked the beginning of spring, and what were those “pleasant influences,” referred to in the book of Job, and still celebrated by Australian savages?

So far from rising in Europe or Asia in the spring, they first appear in June, a summer month. How could the *Vergiliæ*, then, have acquired their name, as the stars of spring? It is plain that they could not have marked a vernal commencement of the year, as the most ancient year commenced in the autumn, and among most ancient nations we find traces of a traditional or civil year commencing in the autumn.

We also find traces of a very singular year of six months, the very existence of which Sir Cornwall Lewis has somewhat hastily questioned. “These abnormal years,” he tells us, “are designated by Censorinus as involved in the darkness of remote antiquity.”† Dupuis suggests that we must turn to the Pleiades, as well as to other constellations, to account for these “abnormal years,” as well as for the ancient year commencing in the autumn,—“pour expliquer les fictions relatives à ce commencement, d’année, soit chez les Juifs, soit chez les autres peuples, qui ont eu le commencement d’année en automne. Tels étaient ceux qui avaient des années de six mois.”‡ In confirmation of his conjecture, I have found that in the Arabian calendar of lunar mansions, which is made up of two divisions, one belonging to summer, and the other to winter,—one of the mansions is designated by the name of the Pleiades. Let us see if his suggestion will prove equally correct respecting the autumnal year; and let us endeavor to find in that constellation a clue to the remarkable circumstance of the festival of the dead having been observed in Hindostan, Peru, Ceylon, Egypt, and Europe, in November.

I may here state that the classical nations of antiquity, with whom the influence of the Pleiades was rather a matter of tradition than of practical use, when they spoke of the rising of the Pleiades, referred to the

* This name was the *Hen and Chickens*; among the Hindoos, Pillalou Codr; among the Jews, Succoth Benoth (?); among the Italians, Gallineta, and among the French, *La pousinière*. See Dupuis *De l’origine de tous les Cultes*, ix., 192. Bailley’s *Astronomie Indienne*, l. xxxv., 134, 328. See, however, Landseer’s *Sabæan Researches*, Lecture XI., p. 19.

† *Historical Survey of the Astronomy of the Ancients*, p. 31.

‡ *L’Origine de tous Les Cultes*, v. l., p. 104.

heliacal rising of the constellation in the morning, *i. e.* the time, when at dawn, the stars where first visible—*

“The grey dawn and the Pleiades
Shedding sweet influence.”

This took place in the middle of May, 2000 years ago, and marked the beginning of summer in the South of Europe and Asia.† But we must conclude either that the Pleiades must have once, in some other manner, than by their heliacal rising, indicated the beginning of spring, or else that there must have been, by a long lapse of years, a change in their movements, that rendered their rising inconsistent with their very name as the stars of spring. It must, however, have been nearly 5000 years since the heliacal rising of the Pleiades occurred at the beginning of April, and even then it could not have indicated the commencement of seed time in the South of Asia and of Europe, or marked the beginning of spring. Their name, the Hesperides, too, would seem to connect them with the evening rather than the morning. But, if at such a remote era, the Pleiades regulated the seasons by their heliacal rising at that time of the year, they must have left their impress on primitive calendars, and traces of the connection of the calendar with the heliacal rising of the Pleiades, would still be found among many races, either in their names for March or April, or at least in their traditions as to the time when their year once commenced. But this is not the case. There are no traces of a primitive year in general use in remote antiquity, commencing in March, April or May; the only apparent exception being the solar year, regulated by the vernal Equinox, which was of comparatively recent invention.

But on examining the calendars of ancient races, we find in Persia India, Egypt and Peru, that the month in which our first of November festival would fall, bears in its very name a singular impress of its former connection, either with the Pleiades or the festival of the dead.

In the most ancient calendar in India, the year commenced in the month of November, which bears the name of Cartiguey, *i. e.*, the Pleiades; a constellation which, Bailly suggests, must have by their rising or setting at that time, once have regulated the primitive year. We

* Pleiades adspecies omnes, totumque sororum
Agmen; ubi ante Idus nox erit una super.
Tunc mihi non dubiis autoribus incipit aetas,
Et tepidi finem tempora veris habent.

Ov. Fast., Lib. v.

† See as to the cosmical and heliacal risings of stars, Greswell's *Fasti Catholici*. v. III, p. 18.

find also that towards the end of October, the Hindoo like ourselves, have three days which are connected with the festival of the dead.

In the ancient Egyptian calendar the same resemblance can be traced between the name of the Pleiades, which among the Hebrews and Chaldeans is Athor-aye, with that of the Egyptian month of November, which is Athor. The Arab name for the Pleiades, Atauria, also suggests a resemblance.

In November took place the primeval festival of the dead, clad in a veil of Egyptian mythology. The Isia, the solemn mourning for the God Osiris, "the Lord of Tombs," lasted for three days, and began at sunset, like the Lemuria of the Romans, and the festival of the dead among the Persians and other nations.

The singular custom of counting the days from the sunset of the preceding day, or the noctidiurnal system, was so universal, that Greswell refers to it as a conclusive proof of the unity of origin of our race. *The bible tells us, "the evening and the morning were the first day." Our words "fortnight" and "sennight," are traces of this primitive custom; and he might have added the first day of our festival of the dead, a still stronger illustration, as it is called *Halloween*. The origin of this system has not been explained by Greswell. He tells us, however, of the Egyptian belief, that whoever could discover the origin of the Isia, or the Egyptian festival of the dead, would know why the day came to be counted from the evening of the preceding day. Hence the origin of this wide-spread noctidiurnal system is to be found (if the Egyptians were correct) in whatever caused the festival of the dead to commence at sunset, or with a *Halloween*.

Let us turn to the primitive races of the Southern Hemisphere to find a solution.—

1st—For the festival of the dead being connected with an agricultural celebration. 2d—For its being held in November. 3rd—For its commencing with a *Halloween*. 4th—For the primitive year commencing in November. 5th—For the Pleiades being connected with that month. 6th—For their being revered as the *Vergiliæ* and *Hesperides*, the stars of the spring and the evening. 7th—For the "abnormal year" of six months, found North of the Equator.

A reference to the Australians and Pacific Islanders, will enable us to give a very simple explanation for these various points, without imagining that miracles must have given rise to some, or that we must leave the solution of others to the gods.

* See Volmer's *Wörterbuch der Mythologie*, verb Athor, p. 371.

We find that, among these Southern races,* when the Pleiades are in the evening first visible at the horizon, which is at the beginning of November, they mark the beginning of the year, and the vernal new year's festival, a feast consecrated to first fruits, and to the dead. As long as at evening they continue visible, they mark a season called *the Pleiades above*. When they cease to be visible in the evening, the second season commences of *the Pleiades below*: these seasons nearly equally dividing the year. Hence we can understand why tradition has connected the Pleiades with November, as the first month of the year, has preserved their name as the stars of the evening and of the spring, and has caused the festival of the dead to commence in the evening, or with a Halloween. We can also understand how the year of six months arose, that has so puzzled Astronomers.

In the voluminous report on the Aborigines, by a Committee of the Legislative Council of Victoria, Session 1858-9, we find W. Hull, Esquire, J. P., a gentleman who has written a work on the Aborigines, stating "their grand corroborees are held only in the spring, when the Pleiades are generally most distinct; and their corroboree is a worship of the Pleiades as a constellation, which *announces spring*. Their monthly corroboree is in honor of the moon." (p. 9.)

In another place Mr. Hull says, "referring again to their worship of the stars, I may mention that one night I showed Robert Cunningham the Pleiades, and he said 'they were the children of the moon, and very good to the black fellows,'—a remark that recals to our mind 'the pleasant influences of the Pleiades.'"

C. J. Tyers, Esq., Commissioner of Crown Lands, Alberton, (p. 79,) says in confirmation of the foregoing,—“Regarding their religious practices very little is known, so little that Europeans generally believe them to be devoid of any. Yet they do, according to their manner, worship the hosts of heaven, and believe particular constellations rule natural causes. For such they have names; and *sing and dance to gain the favor of the Pleiades*, (Mormodellick,) the constellation worshipped by one body as the giver of rain.” Now the Pleiades are most distinct at the beginning of the spring month of November, when they appear at the horizon in the evening, and are visible all night. Hence their vernal festival of the Pleiades takes place in honor of the Vergiliæ, the stars of spring, at the beginning of November, the very month called in the calen-

*I have only been able to fix the date of this festival among the natives of the Society and Tonga Islands. The difficulty of procuring necessary works of reference in a Colony will plead, I trust, an excuse for many omissions.

dar of the Brahmins of Tirvalore, the month of the Pleiades, and among the ancient Egyptians connected with the name of that constellation.

But we are told by another gentleman examined by the committee, that all the corroborations of the natives are connected with a worship of the dead,* and *last three days*. If this be the case, is it not somewhat startling to find that Australian savages, at or near the time of Halloween, All Saints and All Souls, also consecrate three days to the memory of the dead, as a vernal New Year's celebration, regulated by the time-honored Pleiades,—and like the northern festival of the dead, beginning in the evening, or with a Halloween?

“Hinc ubi protulerit formosa ter Hesperus ora,
Ter dederint Phœbo sidera victa locum;
Ritus erit veteris nocturna Lemuria sacri;
Inferias tacitis Manibus illa dabunt.”†

In the Tonga Islands, which belong to the Feejee group, the festival of Inachi, a vernal first fruits celebration, and also a commemoration of the dead, takes place towards the end of October,‡ and commences at sunset.

“The Society Islanders,” Ellis tells us, “divided the year into two seasons of the Pleiades or Matarii. The first they called the *Matarii inia*, or the *Pleiades above*.” It commenced when, in the evening these stars appeared, at or near the horizon,” (*i. e.* at or near the beginning of November), and the half year during which, immediately after sunset, they were seen above the horizon, was called *Matarii inia*. The other seasons commenced when, at sunset these stars are invisible, and continued until at that hour they appeared again above the horizon. This season was called *Matarii iraro*, *i. e.* “the *Pleiades below*.” The Pleiades are visible at the horizon in the evenings at the beginning of November. They then culminate near midnight, and are visible till morning. Ellis says that this year began in May; but it is evident that what he calls the first season, “the Pleiades above,” commenced at or near the beginning of November, and the second division must have begun towards the end of April, or early in May. If they appear at the horizon in the evening, on 5th November, they continue visible at that time till the 24th April following. But, not only was the month of November connected with the

* In confirmation of this, a member of the N. S. Institute, who has been at these annual corroborations, tells me, that as the natives for these occasions paint a white stripe over their arms, legs and ribs, they appear, as they dance by their fires at night, like so many skeletons rejoicing. The custom, however, is peculiar, I believe, to Australia. *White* paint is used for mournful, and *red* for joyful festivals. See Report on Aborigines, p. 70, 94.

† Ov. Fast., Lib. v.

‡ Mariner's Tonga Islands, p. 157, 381, 385.

rising of the Pleiades, but also with a festival of the dead, and a first fruits celebration, as among the people of the Tonga Islands.

“The most singular of their stated festivals was the ripening or completing of the year. Vast numbers of both sexes attended it; the women, however, were not allowed to enter the sacred enclosure. A sumptuous banquet was then held. This ceremony was viewed as a *national acknowledgment to the Gods*. When the prayers were finished, and the banquet ended, a usage prevailed *resembling much the popish custom of mass for souls in purgatory*. Each one returned to his home or family marae, there to offer special prayers for the spirits of departed relatives.” Ellis does not tell us to what mode of dividing the year he refers (for they appear to have had three); but, as the Inachi of the Tonga Islands, a precisely similar celebration, as well as the festival of the Pleiades in Australia, took place near the beginning of November, we may assume that this was the new year’s festival of the seasons of the Pleiades.

Let us turn from the Islands of the Pacific to Peru, and there we find this primitive calendar of two seasons marked by a new year’s festival of the dead, occurring in November; and celebrated at precisely the same time as in Europe and Polynesia.

The month in which it occurs, says Rivero, “is called Aya-marca, from Aya, a corpse, and *marca*, carrying in arms, because they celebrated the solemn festival of the dead, with tears, lugubrious songs, and plaintive music; and it was customary to visit the tombs of relations, and to leave in them food and drink. *It is worthy of remark that the feast was celebrated among the ancient Peruvians at the same period, and on the same day, that Christians solemnize the commemoration of the dead, (2nd November).*”

Finding the festival held at the beginning of November, I felt convinced that it never could have been fixed in that month by a solar year, such as was in use in Peru, but that it must have been originally the New Year’s festival of the year or seasons of the Pleiades, that must have once been in use in that country. Subsequent investigations bore out the conclusion.

M. Rivero tells us that in November took place the termination of the year and of seed time. Garcilasso* bears distinct testimony to the existence of a traditionary year of seasons.

* Book II. ch. xi. Garcilasso says the harvest time was in March; but Rivero (p. 132) places it in May.

“ Yet, for all this sottish stupidity, the Incas had observed that the Sun accomplished his course in the space of a year, which they called *huata*; though the commonality *divided it only by its seasons*, and reckoned their year to end or be finished with their harvest,” (*i. e.* in May.)

Here we have the year ending with the months of November, and May, a plain proof that the Southern years of the Pleiades ending in November and May, must have existed there before the Incas invented or introduced the solar year; and were the seasons referred to by Garcilasso. As the festival of the dead is, however, the new year's festival of the year of the Pleiades, we may assume that it must have, in Peru, originally marked the commencement of the year at the beginning of November. Wherever the festival of the dead occurs in November, even among nations now far north of the equator, the same inference may, I believe, be adduced. The race by whom it is preserved must have once regulated that festival in November, by the rising of the Pleiades, like the Australians and the Pacific Islanders.

In Persia we find a singular light thrown on the calendar by the festival of agriculture and of death celebrated south of the equator. In the ancient calendar November was consecrated to the angel who presided over agriculture and death. We have seen that the month in which this festival occurred in Peru, was called “the month of carrying corpses.” The month of November, was formerly called in Persia *Mordâd*, the month of the angel of death. In spite of the calendar having been changed, at the same time as in Peru, the festival of the dead took place as a new year's festival, (although the year no longer commenced then.) It is called by some writers the *Nouruz of the Magi*, because the Magi still adhered to their primitive new year's festival.* It commenced in the evening with a Halloween, which was regarded as peculiarly sacred. “ Unde hujus diei *Vespera* quibusdam Persarum, peculiari nomine signatur *Phristâph*.† Bonfires were lighted at this festival as they are in Britain, and in most portions of the globe, at this season of the year.‡

In Ceylon, Sir Emerson Tennent says a festival is held that is a species of harvest home and a commemoration of the dead. It must, however, be rather a first fruits celebration, like that of nations south of the equator, as the harvest is over in May or June. This festival of agriculture and of death took place at the beginning of November.§

We now turn to Mexico, and there we find that the great festival of the

* *Rel. Vet. Persarum*, 238. † *Id.* 237. ‡ *Id.* 249.

§ Tennent's *Christianity in Ceylon*, 202, 228. Forbes' *Ceylon*, 2, 322. See *Mahavansi* transl'd. by Upham, III. 164.

Mexican cycle was held at the beginning of November, and was regulated by the Pleiades. It began at sunset; and at midnight, as the constellation approached the zenith, a human victim, Prescott says, was offered up to avert the dread calamity which they believed impended over the human race. This belief* was so remarkable that I cannot omit a reference to it here. They had a tradition that at that time the world had been previously destroyed; and they dreaded lest a similar catastrophe would, at the end of a cycle, annihilate the human race.

Now it is most remarkable to find that the Egyptians, with their Isia, or new year's festival of agriculture, and of the dead, that took place on the 17th day of November, associated traditions as to the deluge, and it is still more surprising to find that the 17th day of November is the very day on which, the Bible tells us, the deluge took place.†

Greswell has devoted several chapters, and much learning, to the 17th day of November (Athor),‡ to show how remarkable a landmark it has always been, through a long lapse of centuries, for the corrections of the Egyptian calendar, and he derives from it some curious arguments in support of his view. De Rougemont and other writers have referred to this day, but have thrown no light upon it. They seem, however, not to have observed that even among the Persians the same day was peculiarly venerated. Hyde says that in the ancient Persian calendar the 17th day of November was held so sacred, that all favors asked by rulers were granted on that day;§ but why it was so venerated he does not attempt to conjecture. Even tradition has been unable to preserve the history of this day, that must be sought for in the very earliest ages of the world, or among

* Prescott's Conq. of Mexico, I., b. 1, ch. iv.

† While the above was going through the press, as I was convinced that the memory of the deluge had been thus preserved among the Hebrews, Egyptians, Greeks and Mexicans, in the traditions connected with the new year's festival, and that the date of the commencement of the deluge, the 17th day of the first month of the primitive year, was not of an historical but of an astronomical character, I more closely examined the Mosaical account of the deluge, and found my conjecture singularly verified. The deluge commenced on the 17th of the 2nd month of the Jewish year (*i. e.* November); the ark rested on Mount Ararat on the 17th day of the 7th month; and the dove returned with the olive branch on the 17th day of the 11th month. Though the connection of this with the traditions and calendars of heathen races is somewhat startling, I am convinced that should the study of *Ethology* afford a clue to the primeval origin of pagan idolatry, it will at the same time conclusively prove how entirely different and distinct must have been the source from which the Hebrews derived the great truths and principles of our religion.

‡ Those wishing to examine into these points, will find the following references bearing on them:—Greswell's *Fasti Catholici*, I., 82, 152, 154, 168, 181, 196, 198, 200, 225, 228, 229, 343, 356: II., 104, 115, 226; III., 88, 89, 112, 113, 131, 160, 166, 330, 405, 407, 413, 416: IV. 173, 610. See *Origines Kalendarie Italice*, I., 344, 348, 351 to 390, 423, 430: III., 33, 460, 516.

§ See *Rel. Vet. Pers.*, p. 243.

the rudest existing types of man. In the mysteries of Isis, the goddess of agriculture and of death, the funereal part of the ceremonies, the lamentations and search for Orisis, commenced on the 17th and ended on the 19th. There was also an obsolete year of the Egyptians, which commenced, Greswell says, about the 18th of November.

Herodotus tells us, what is very plain, that Isis is the same as the Greek goddess Ceres, who, with her daughter Proserpine, presided over agriculture and the dead.*

Among the Greeks, besides existing in other ceremonies, the primeval new year's festival appears under a veil of mythology in all the ancient mysteries, but above all in the greatest of them, the Eleusinian. The Greeks, however, must have at some remote era changed the beginning of the year from the 17th of November to the 17th of February, when the Attic year commenced. On the 17th, 18th and 19th days of February, the funereal part of the Eleusinian mysteries, the lament for Proserpine, took place.

The Macedonians retained the primitive year beginning in November.† It is peculiarly interesting to note that with the new year's festival, the tradition as to the deluge was also transferred by the Athenians to the 17th day of February. Even in some other months, the 17th seems to have been a conspicuous day in the Greek calendar. In Persia, in every month, there were three days of sadness and fasting; but as the 17th and 18th days were dies nefasti, on which no work was done, we may assume that the 19th was the ultima dies placandis manibus,‡ and the 17th, 18th and 19th were the days of mourning.§ In Europe, Asia and Africa, we find days in every month consecrated to the memory of the dead.

Let us now look south of the Equator for an explanation: 1st—Why the 17th, 18th and 19th of the month were so funereal. 2nd—Why the primitive year of the Egyptians and of other races, and their funereal mysteries, began on the 17th day of the month. 3rd—Why, not only at every new year's festival, but even monthly, the dead were commemorated.

Almost all savage races, like all nations in remote antiquity, regulate

* It is strange to mark how they were connected together: The dead were called Demetriakoi, or belonging to Ceres; while the name of Proserpine means the bringer of fruits. They were evidently originally one Deity, presiding over the festival of agriculture and the dead. See Müller's History of the Dorians, translated by Sir Cornwall Lewis, II., 405.

† See as to the commencement of ancient year, Clinton's Fasti Hellenici, 355, 364, 366, 618.

‡ Greswell's Origines Kal. Ital. I, 429.

§ Hyde Rel. Vet. Pers., p. 230, 232, 248, 262.

their months by the new or the full moon, and hold festivals of a funereal character at the time of the new moon, or when the nights are darkest.

The Australians not only hold an annual corroboree of the Pleiades, but also a monthly corroboree of the moon, of three days duration, and apparently connected with a dread of ghosts, or a worship of the dead. They regulate their months by the full moon. The Hindoos offer in every lunar month, on Mahacala, the day of the conjunction, and defined as "*the day of the nearest approach to the sun*, obsequies to the manes of the *pitris*, or certain progenitors of the human race, to whom the *darker* fortnight is *peculiarly sacred*." Sir William Jones, also says, referring to a Hindu work, "many subtle points are discussed by my author concerning *the junction of two, or even three lunar days in forming one fast or festival*."*

The Chinese, the Africans, the Caribs, and other races of America, the Greeks, the Romans, and almost all ancient nations, kept a commemoration of the dead in the dark nights of the moon.†

Here we have an explanation for a monthly commemoration of the dead; but why were the 17th, 18th and 19th days of each month, among some races, especially of a funereal character? Ellis tells us that the Society Islanders regard the 17th, 18th and 19th nights, as seasons "when spirits wander more than at any other time,"‡ a plain proof that even among the Pacific Islanders, these three days, in every month, must have been consecrated to the dead, as to this day, it is still believed in Britain, that on Halloween, when the festival of the dead once commenced, "the spirits of the dead wander more than at other times of the year." "This is a night when devils, witches, and other mischief making beings, are all abroad on their baleful midnight errands."

But the question arises, how came the beginning of the year to be, among some nations, on the 17th day of the month? The explanation, I think, is plain. The Chinese, the Hebrews, and other races, regulated the beginning of the year at the time of the new moon, *i. e.*, at the time of the festival held in the dark nights of the moon. With many races, the 17th, 18th, and 19th days after the full moon, or the three succeeding the new moon, or month, were evidently regarded as peculiarly sacred

* Sir William Jones' Works, (ed. 1807) vol. IV. p. 129.

† De Rougemont Le Peuple Primitif, 2, 246, 263, 355. Boulanger, I, 269 to 297 301. Horace, Odes III. 23.

‡ Ellis' Polynesian researches, I, 88. Ellis is evidently in error, in making the month commence at the new moon. If the Society Islanders commenced the month at the new moon, the nights peculiarly consecrated to the dead, would be the light nights, instead of the dark nights of the moon. If their month was like that of the Australians, the Hindoos, and other races, the 17th, 18th and 19th, would be the three dark nights succeeding the new moon, and would correspond with those devoted in Hindostan, and other countries, to a commemoration of the dead.

to the dead, and were the monthly days of rest, or the monthly *Sabbath* of heathen races.

Our own mode of regulating Easter, will serve to explain the commencement of the ancient year. The common prayer-book says: "Easter day is always the first Sunday after the full moon which happens upon or next after the 21st day of March." But the Hebrews substituted four sabbaths in place of one monthly time of rest, and used the vernal equinox, instead of the rising of the Pleiades, to regulate their Passover. Let us substitute the monthly festival of the dead for the word sabbath, and the rising of the Pleiades for the 21st March, and we read, "New Year's day is always the monthly sabbath after the full moon which happens upon or next after the culmination of the Pleiades at midnight." But as this would occur near the month of November, we can understand that when the months commencing with the full moon ceased to be lunar, and their festivals "moveable," the new year would, for some time at least, continue to commence on the 17th day of November, and that the 17th, 18th and 19th days of every month would still appear in ancient calendars as funereal days. We can also understand that a traditionary veneration for the 17th day of the month, especially of November, would long continue, like some old sea margin, to show the changes which time had effected; and that the new year's festival of the dead, preserved in the mysteries of Isis and of Proserpine, would long be held on the 17th, 18th and 19th nights of the first month, though no longer those dark nights of the moon in which the spirits of the dead are wont to wander forth from their Maraes and their temples to receive the offerings of their trembling worshippers.*

Among the Romans we find a trace of a partial observance of the festival of the dead in November.† With the Northern year, commencing in February, the Romans borrowed from the Athenians their new year's festivals of the dead, the popular Anthesteria, and the mystic Eleusinian mysteries. The more ancient institution was the Lemuria, or festival of the ghosts, celebrated in May—a month, therefore, so unlucky that no marriage took place in it. Ovid and Greswell both agree as to the antiquity of the Lemuria. It is evident that this festival, transferred from November to May, was originally regulated by the heliacal rising of the Pleiades in the morning. Yet the offering to the spirits took place at

* This view is confirmed by a festival of Callee, the Hindoo Isis, taking place at the new moon after the full moon of November.

† Wherever we find the festivals of a nation, especially those of a mournful or funereal character, occurring on the 15th or on the 17th, 18th and 19th days of the month, there is strong reason to assume that the month must have originally commenced, not with the new, but with the full moon. Among the Hindoos, both systems are in vogue. See on this point Greswell's *Fasti Catholici*, I. 62. Sir William Jones' works, IV. 128.

† Sauberti de Sacrificiis, 89.

midnight, a time when that constellation was invisible. What can have made that hour so peculiarly marked?

“Non haec Pleiades faciunt, nec aquosus Orion.”*

Greswell connects this circumstance with the November festival of the Aztecs, which commenced in the evening, and in which midnight was the hour of sacrifice. On this he constructs a theory as to their festival commemorating the event of the sun having gone back ten degrees in the days of Hezekiah. His remarks as to the Astec festival, supply a clue to the fact, that the Lemuria must have been moved from November to May, from the month when the Pleiades rose in the evening and culminated at midnight, to May when they were invisible till early dawn; and above all, they will prove that a miracle should be the *dernier ressort* of a philosopher, and that he should be the last to consider “omne ignotum pro mirifico.”†

Before concluding this necessarily superficial sketch of this primeval new year's festival, a subject respecting which scores of volumes might be written, I must turn to Britain to see if we have among us any traces of this primitive year, or seasons of the Pleiades. That it did exist among the Celtic race‡ has long been known to those who have studied its history and customs. Wylde says “the first great division of the year was into summer and winter, Samradh and Geimradh, the former beginning in May, or Bealtine, and the latter in November, or Samhhuim, summer end. On the first of May took place the great Druid festival of Beal or Bel, and at the beginning of November All Halloween;§ and it is strange

* Propertius II, 16, 51.

† “The ceremony of the secular fire among the Aztecs, the oldest, the most solemn, and most sacred of all in their calendar, seems to imply the same thing of them; for that was celebrated at midnight; that is though the ceremony itself began at sunset, the consummation or conclusion, by the lighting anew of the secular fire, took place at midnight. The primitive rule of the cycle,” (the noctidiurnal system, the day commencing in the evening,) “and a co-ordinate rule borrowed from midnight, seem both to have been associated in this one ceremony.

“We have very little doubt indeed that, were the truth known, both the ceremony of the secular fire, and the change of the rule of the noctidiurnal cycle (if it must be so called) among these nations, would be found to be ultimately due to the miracle of B. C. 710, and to the circumstance under which it took place among them, and to the effect which it produced on their fears and apprehensions.” But the connection of the Pleiades with the Aztec festival, seems to have somewhat puzzled Greswell, “We recommend this point to the notice of astronomers. The fact is certain that the culmination of this particular constellation, was one of the phenomena presented by the heavens, to which the Aztecs in particular, for some reason or other, looked with peculiar interest, and attached peculiar importance. It was associated with the ceremony of the secular fire, and apparently from the first; the moment prescribed for the offering of the stated sacrifice, followed by the rekindling of the extinguished fires, being precisely that when the Pleiades were in the middle of the sky. What, too, was so likely to give occasion to a ceremony of this kind (the extinction of fires of every kind at a stated time), as the sudden extinction of the light of the sun itself in the midst of its meridian splendor.”—Fasti Catholici I, 362; as to Lemuria, p. 356; also see risings of stars being reversed, p. 343.

‡ Wylde's Irish Popular Superstitions, p. 38.

§ That Halloween was not only a funereal, but also an agricultural festival, is perfectly clear. Associated in Britain with a harvest home, the *Kernbaby*, or Cornbaby, must have once been one of its features. The following passage is in point:

Shaw, in his History of the Province of Moray, p. 241, says “A solemnity was kept on the eve of the 1st November, as a thanks giving for the safe ingathering of the produce of the fields. This, I am told, but have not seen it, is observed in Buchan, and other Counties, by having *Hallow eve fires* kindled on some rising ground.” Brand's Pop. Ant. 388.

that both the eve of May day, and Halloween, are ill-omened nights, on which prudent persons in Ireland, from fear of encountering fairies and ghosts, avoid being out after dark.*

Classical writers of antiquity tell us that in Britain Ceres and Proserpine were worshipped in the same manner as in the mysteries of the Cabiri. Now we have seen that Proserpine and her mother Ceres are really the same Deities, both being connected with agriculture and the dead. In Sicily, Ceres was worshipped in May, and Proserpine in the autumn.† The latter was called Core, or the damsel. Are there any traces of her still in Britain? It is manifest that the May queen, and the Kernbaby of the harvest home, are either relics of this deity, or the origin of the myth. But we have evidence that they are as old, if not older than Proserpine herself. In the Tonga Islands, at a first fruits celebration, a child presides as a sort of Southern queen of the spring, a November queen, if I may give her a new title.

The Tow Tow, a species of first fruits celebration, takes place "at the time when the yams are approaching maturity, *in the early part of November,*" when prayers are offered up to A'lo A'lo, the God of weather. Mariner, in describing it, says "a deputation of nine or ten men from the priests of A'lo A'lo, all dressed in mats, with green leaves round their necks, arrives with a female child, to represent the wife of A'lo A'lo".‡ They offer up a prayer for a fruitful season to the god, and then divide the provisions collected for the occasion. One pile being assigned to A'lo A'lo, and to other gods. Mariner tells us that "she is selected from the chiefs of the higher ranks, and *is about eight or ten years old*; during the eighty days of this ceremony, she resides at the consecrated house of A'lo A'lo, where, a day before the ceremony, a cava party is held, at which she presides, as well as at a feast which follows. She has nothing to do on the actual days of the ceremony, except to come with the deputation and to sit down with them." Here then we have, South of the Equator, a "queen of the May," or a *Kernbaby*, whichever we may call her. But in China, Core, or the damsel, assumes more distinctly the funereal cha-

* See Wyld, 52 to 58; Brady's *Clavis Calendaria*; also, Brand's *Popr. Antiquities*, v. I, p. 580.

† This festival is such a conclusive proof of the myth having reference to the two seasons of the Pleiades, that I cannot omit mention of it. In the autumn, for three days, Ceres mourns for her daughter, who, for six months, is visible on earth, and for the rest of the year is compelled to reign with Pluto in hell. Now, it is manifest that she was invisible from May to November, because after three days' search in November, she rises to light once more, and is received with great rejoicings. But this is the very time of the year when the great festival "of the Pleiades above" is celebrated by the Australians. The fact that there was a temple in Sicily,* in which Ceres or Proserpine, and the Pleiades were jointly worshipped, confirms my view of this strange myth.

* See Dupuis, V. 270.

‡ Mariner's *Tonga Islands*, 385.

racter of Proserpine.* At the festival of the dead, a child presides, who receives the offerings made to deceased ancestors.† In the South she is the wife of A'lo, the god of weather, but in Grecian mythology, she is "in autumn wed"‡ to Pluto, the god of the dead; and in Egyptian fables, she is doomed, at the November festival of the new year, to mourn Osiris, the God of Agriculture and "the Lord of Tombs." It would be strange, if, in the half naked little Fiji savage, the wife of A'lo, we should find a clue to her, who was "the ancient goddess" in the days of the Patriarchs, and whose statues bore the inscription, "I am all that has been, that shall be; and none among mortals has hitherto taken off my veil."§

Such then, north of the Equator, are the scattered fragments of, what

* Since writing the above, I have met with a very interesting confirmation of my views Callee, the Hindoo Core, "who appears," says Sir William Jones, "in the *calijug*, as a damsel twelve years old," presides over a festival of the dead at the beginning of October. "She wore a necklace of golden skulls descriptive of the dreadful rites in which she took so gloomy a delight." The offerings which were prescribed by the Vedas were human sacrifices, for which, however, bulls and horses were substituted. Soul cakes are also consecrated to her, as they were to Proserpine in Greece, as the deity presiding over the dead.

Our soldiers found at Cawnpore an ode invoking "the black Goddess," the cruel Callee, written by Nina Sahib before the outbreak. The soul cake, the symbol of revolt among the Hindoos, was the emblem of this bloody goddess; and there can be but little doubt that the slaughter of our unhappy countrymen was regarded by the fanatical Sepoys as a welcome offering to their sanguinary deity. If any of her victims had ever in their native land been at a rustic "maying," or harvest home, how little could they have dreamed, as they looked at the May Queen or the Kernbaby, that they saw before them the primitive type of a cruel deity, at whose altar they were doomed to be sacrificed!—See Sir William Jones' works IV. 185.—Maurice's Indian antiquities, II. 181. Hardwicke, the late Christian Advocate at Cambridge, is strangely in error on this point; see "Christ and our other Masters," part II, page 19.—See as to worship of the dead, III, 32, 125, 176, 196, IV, 78.

† De Rougemont, *Peuple Primitif*, v. II, p. 356.

‡ See Orphic Hymn to Proserpine.

§ Exhibiting a funereal and agricultural character, the ancient mysteries were, as we have seen, clearly connected, by their very time of observance, with the new year's celebration of the South, the festival of first fruits, and of the dead. But even their obscene rites and their peculiar secrecy, may be solved by a reference to the savages of Australia and of Central Africa. Europeans, who have been initiated by the Australians into their mysteries, which they describe as being of an obscene nature, whenever they make themselves known to the natives by the secret signs they have learned, are implored not to divulge the sacred mysteries.

The same freemasonry exists among the natives of America, and of Central Africa. Among the latter the priest is called an *Obi* man, and the temples where these secret rites are observed are called *Oboni*, or houses of *Obi*, and are ornamented with phallic emblems, or symbols of generation.

Now, I have found, that *Obi* means, in Central Africa, *an ancestor*, one who begets. Hence the *Obi* man is inspired by ancestors, and the *Oboni* are temples of the dead. Our very word necromancy (prophecy by aid of the dead) carries us back to the *Obi* of the Africans. At the Oracle of Delphi, the priestess, before she uttered responses, was inspired by *Ob*, and must have been originally nothing more or less than an *Obi* woman.

Is it not strange that phallic emblems, though so very offensively significant, have been assigned by the learned to almost everything except the worship of ancestors?—See Report on Aborigines, p. 64, 69, 70.—See Bowen's Central Africa, (New York, 1857,) p. 271, 315 to 319; also Dictionary of Yoruba Language, Smithsonian Contributions, X., xvi. xix. 109.—De Rougemont's *Peuple Primitif*, II, 363. I refer those who may take an interest in such matters, to the following authorities as to the funereal character of ancient mysteries, and the time of their observance, &c.: Dupuis l., 234, and seq., 312, 340, 349, 364, 390, 402, 410, 422, 427, 439, 443. Boulanger *L'antiquite devoilee*, l., p. 269 to 303; III., 178 to 186. St. Croix sur les Mysteres du Paganisme, I. 54, 55, 66, 75, 78, 317, 340, et passim. Le Monde Primitif, III. 329. Ouvaroff on the Mysteries, p. 1, 27; also Christie's notes, 169, 172. Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses, Faber's Origin of Pagan Idolatry, and Bryant's Mythology, are principally devoted to a subject, which has caused more learned and fruitless speculation than any other topic connected with the history of ancient nations.

we can only regard as the wreck of the primitive Southern year, and of its New Year's festival of first fruits, and the dead. I have endeavoured to collect together these *disjecti membra*, diffused and hitherto lost in vague myths, confused calendars, uncertain traditions, and obsolete customs.* Yet, in the New, as well as in the Old World, civilized and savage races gaze with equal wonder on the memorials, that everywhere exist, of the observance of this festival by primeval man. In the large deposits of ashes, and of the remains of food, found in vast burial tumuli in Australia, America and Asia, the graves of races long extinct,† we have significant evidence of this new year's commemoration dating back to the most remote ages; while even at the burial cave at Aurignac, to which an antiquity of not less than 8000 years is assigned by some authorities, we have the same memorials of the feasts and fires of this ancient festival.‡ Its memory has long been forgotten. Preserved only in the rites of heathen races, or merely lingering, among civilized nations, in the customs and superstitions of the peasantry, this festival has never been considered worthy of the attention of the historian or of the ethnologist; and

* Though it has required much time and labor to collect even the materials which I have used, respecting this festival north of the equator, the difficulty has been far greater in obtaining any definite information regarding its observance in the southern hemisphere; first, because travellers are generally ignorant of, or inattentive to the festivals of savage races, and rarely specify the time or the particulars of their observance; and secondly, because in a colony, from the absence of extensive libraries, it is almost impossible to glean precise information, which, even if it exists, can only be procured from a large number of writers. As regards Polynesia, I have felt this difficulty very much. Ellis, on whom I have had mainly to rely, though he regards the Polynesians as belonging to the same race, and almost identical in their customs and religious ideas, does not clear up a point of no little importance in these investigations, as to the festival of the dead, and the year of the Pleiades existing universally throughout the Pacific Islands, his remarks being, in a great measure, confined to the groups of numerous Islands, known as the Georgian, and Society Islands. Even his work I could not procure while writing this paper. I had therefore to rely on notes made some years ago, while reading his works, before my attention had been particularly drawn to this subject. As, however, south of the equator, on the west coast of South America, among the ancient Peruvians, as well as in the southern Pacific, in Tahiti, the Tonga Islands, and Australia, we find the year of the Pleiades or its New Year's festival, there can be but little doubt that equally distinct traces of them will be found in the more northern islands of the Pacific. A reference to Crawford's "Indian Archipelago" will confirm this view. See I., 28.

† See Report on Aborigines, p. 62. The work of Messrs. Squier and Davis on the Mississippi mounds, and Dr. McPherson's researches at Kertch, throw a light on this subject.

‡ The existence of articles resembling American wampum in the cave at Aurignac, is peculiarly interesting, both as tending to throw light on the habits of the race that then existed in Europe, and as giving some clue to their representatives among existing nations. The cowrie (*Cypræa moneta*) is used in Asia and Africa, and is entirely different from the relics to which I refer. In America, shell money is made from the shell of the hard shelled clam, (*mercenaria violacea*, Schum.) which is cut into small oblong pieces, perforated for the purpose of being strung into "belts of wampum," which are buried with the possessor at his death. Hence in most Indian graves we find numerous pieces of perforated shell. This throws a light on the following passage in Sir Charles Lyell's "Antiquity of man," (p. 188.) "Mixed with the human bones, inside the grotto, first removed by Bonnemaïson, were eighteen small, round and flat plates of a white, shelly substance, made of some species of Cockle (*cardium*), and pierced through the middle, as if for being strung into a bracelet."

As there is no further remark made concerning these specimens resembling wampum, soon after the work appeared, I drew the author's attention to the point. They are plainly not cowries, as the shape precludes such an inference.

Should the use of wampum be limited to the New World, an inquiry into this subject may lead to interesting conclusions. The mode of making wampum is described in a note to "Rule and Misrule of the English in America," by the author of Sam Slick, b. ii., ch. v. See Prehistoric Man. by Dr. Danl. Wilson, I, 218, 443, II, 147.

this paper is the first attempt that has been made to throw any light on its history or its origin.

I have restricted my remarks to such points as connect it with a year commencing in November, a branch in itself far too extensive for the space at my disposal. My next paper will show the light which this festival, occurring in February, throws on the primitive northern year; and my third will be devoted to a far more interesting and easier branch of enquiry, as to the prime origin of this festival of the dead, and the influence it has exerted on the idolatry, the mythology, and the religious rites of all ancient nations, an influence even still discernable in the customs and modes of thought of civilized nations.

That, from Australia to Britain, we have all inherited this primitive year and its new year's festival, from a common source, is plainly manifest. Was it carried south by northern nations; or, has there been a migration of southern races to northern latitudes?

That the "Feast of Ancestors," which still lingers in our All Halloween, All Saints and All Souls, is the same as the *Inachi* of the South, and was originally the New Year's festival of a primitive year commencing in November, is a matter, which can, I believe, be established beyond any question; but in what part of the world it first originated, is necessarily, with me, a matter of vague conjecture only, especially with the limited materials I possess respecting the festivals of southern races. The fact, that the year of the Pleiades, as well as the ancient reverence for that constellation, only now exists south of the equator, is, however, in itself very significant.

We have hitherto examined the universal customs of nations, let us now turn to those wide spread primitive traditions, which, though hitherto unexplained, and apparently inconsistent with each other, have been regarded from the days of Plato to the present, as embodying the dim outlines of primeval history.

First—We have the very remarkable tradition of remote antiquity, referred to by Plato, and by modern writers, as to the sun, moon and stars having once risen in the opposite quarter to what they now do. Greswell* regards the tradition as historical evidence of a miracle. Can it be explained by natural causes? It can; but only in one way—by supposing a migration of races from south to north of the equator.

To the Tahitians, the sun, moon and stars rise on their right hand; to us, they rise on our left.

* *Fasti Catholici* I, 343.

Second—The most ancient tradition perhaps in the world, one that has left its impress on the astronomical systems, the religious rites, and even the social customs of nations from Syria to Japan, preserves the belief of the Chaldæans that the first inhabitants of Asia were a maritime race that landed on the shores of the Persian gulf.*

Third—From China to ancient Britain prevailed the uniform belief that the ancestors of the human race came from Islands; and from the time of Plato to the present, scores of volumes have been written on the subject.† A celebrated French philosopher asks us, “Ne trouvez vous pas, Monsieur, quelque chose de singulier, dans cet amour des anciens pour les îles? Tout ce qu’il y a de sacré, de grand, et d’antique, s’y est passé: pourquoi les habitans du continent ont ils donné cet avantage aux îles, sur le continent même?”‡ An enthusiastic Welshman has gone near home for the primeval paradise, though a mistaken impression undoubtedly existed among ancient nations, that Britain much more nearly resembled the infernal regions.§

Let us imagine that a migration did take place from Southern latitudes, and what would be the result? The wanderers would bear with them a recollection of the Islands of the south, which they had left. They would see with dread, and remember long, that the stars that once rose on their right hand, had apparently reversed their movements. They might bring with them a year of seasons only suited to their former homes.

The stars that once announced spring would long continue to be revered as the Vergiliæ, though rising at the beginning of summer. Once marking the commencement of the year by appearing to their worshippers on the southern Halloween, and hence causing “the evening and the morning” to be “the first day,” the Pleiades would long retain their name as the Hesperides (the stars of the evening), even when they had ceased to regulate the year, when their “pleasant influences” had been forgotten; when their rising in the evening was no longer revered, and their heliacal rising and setting in the morning was alone regarded;|| when even that mode of regulating the seasons, had become disused, and the past influence and history of the Pleiads only existed as a matter of fable, and of doubt even to Astronomers themselves.

* Faber’s, II. 378, De Rongemont, I. 325. Dupuis, V. 1. Layard’s Nineveh and its remains II. 466.

† De Rougement, II. 248. Faber’s origin of Pagan idolatry, I. 393.

‡ Letters sur L’Atlantide, par M. Bailly, p. 361.

§ Davies’ Mythology of the British Druids, 158, 181.

¶ || See Greswell’s Orig. Kal. Ital. III, 58, 460, 516. Also, Fasti Catholici, II. 110, which is particularly in point, also 104. Dupuis IX, 183. Sir Cornewall Lewis’ Astronomy of the Ancients, p. 11, 25, 60 to 67.

Yet we find among ancient nations, that the Hesperides were connected most singularly with the traditions as to the primitive abodes of our race. The Southern Garden of the Hesperides recalls them to our mind;* while the name of these daughters of Atlas and of the Ocean, is blended with the memory of the lost Island of Atlantis. The key to many a mysterious myth will yet be found in the history of the seasons of the Pleiades.†

It is not less interesting to mark the wreck of the southern year, and of its New Year's festival of first fruits and of the dead, over which the *Virgiliæ* once presided.

In some cases, as in ancient Egypt, in Britain and Persia, we find it stranded in November as an ancient popular observance, though the year had long ceased to commence in that month. In other countries it drifted off from the autumn to form a New Year's festival in February. In one instance it shared the fate of the Pleiades, and took place, as the Lemuria of the Romans, in May, in which month it must have once been regulated by the heliacal rising of the *Hesperides* in the morning; while the year of two seasons only survived in fables as to the two-faced Janus, or as matters of doubt and mystery to astronomers.

So entirely have the history and "the pleasant influences of the Pleiades" been forgotten, that the latest work on the astronomy of the ancients does not even refer to the primitive year commencing in November, or to the Pleiades as dividing its seasons. Even where history has

* See Dupuis I, 329. De Rougemont, II, 248.

† As the fables of Io and Icarus, hitherto unexplained, seem to relate to traditions as to a migration of races, and to changes in the seasons, it may be worth while to refer to them here. Io, the daughter of *Inachus*, is the same as Isis, who, we have seen, is plainly a mythical embodiment of the primitive year, and of its funereal and agricultural New Year's festival. The name of the Hindoo Isis, *Cali*, means *time*. Mythology tells us that Io, accompanied by the Pleiades, after wandering over the whole earth, and being persecuted by Juno, on account of Jupiter, arrived at last at the Nile, where she was worshipped as Isis. To what can this refer, except to a year regulated by the Pleiades, having been brought from some distant country, and embodied in the myth of Isis. The fable of Io appears plainly in the Hindoo god, *Carticeya*, (the Pleiades?). A reference to the representation of him, given by Sir Wm. Jones, will leave but little doubt on this point. By his name, as well as by his crown of seven stars, he represents the Pleiades. By his faces looking in opposite directions, and by his six arms on each side, Janus bifrons, and the year of two seasons of six months each; while in the peacock, on which he rides, we have the well known classical emblem of the many eyed Argus, the watchful keeper of Io.

Sir William Jones calls *Carticeya* the Hindoo Orus; but Orus or Horus, Bunsen says, unites in himself all the myths of Isis and Osiris.

The persecutions of Io, probably refer to traditions, as to the seasons having changed, in consequence of a migration of races, and having become unsuited to the year and its festivals.

Icarus falling short in his flight, from Jupiter or the sun having melted the wax with which his wings were fastened on, must also have reference to a change in the time of harvest.

Now it is a curious coincidence, if nothing more, that in Africa, to this day, *Oro* is still worshipped, as he is in Polynesia. *Isi* means a new period of time, *isimi* a feast or festival, and *ikore* the harvest.

See Sir Wm. Jones' works III, p. 363.

Bunsen's Egypt's Place in Universal History, I. 434 to 437.

Dicty. of Yoruba Language—introd. XVII.

Bowen's Central Africa, p. 272, 317.

The learned have invariably ignored the fact, that Greek mythology points, with singular uniformity, not to Egypt or to Asia for its origin, but to Ethiopia, and the ocean beyond Africa.

preserved the tale of the Aztecs regulating their cycle in November by the culmination of the Pleiades, Greswell considers the circumstance so remarkable, as to deserve the special attention of Astronomers, and assumes that, if explained, it will favor his view as to there having been once a miraculous suspension of the laws that govern the universe.

It is not gratifying, it is true, for civilized and refined nations to trace their origin to the savages of the Pacific Islands, yet those persons who may dislike the conclusion to which this enquiry tends, may, if they agree in the correctness of my views, console themselves by remembering the monuments of an extinct civilization, that are still to be found in those Islands, and that must have been the work of races far superior to the present natives of Polynesia.*

Yet the Islands of the southern ocean most nearly realize the memory of the Fortunate Isles, "where the air was wholesome and temperate, and the earth produced an immense number of fruits, without the labors of men." The early European voyagers, transported with the beauty and salubrity of the Islands of the Pacific, fixed upon them as the primeval abodes of our race. Even nature would appear to confirm the impression. There the very ocean and the stars seem subservient to man. The tides with unvarying regularity† mark morning and evening, midday and midnight; the Pleiades divide the seasons and regulate the year; and "the celestial clock,"‡ the brilliant Southern Cross, by its deflection in the heavens, proclaims the hours of the night.

The conclusions to which ethology§ has led me, that we must look south of the equator, if we would find the origin of our November festival of the dead, or a solution for the traditions as to the Pleiades, receive a very significant confirmation from the following passage in a lecture

* I refer here to the singular remains in the Easter Islands, that have attracted so much attention.—Ellis' Pol. Res., III. 325.

† "But the most remarkable circumstance is the uniformity of the time of high and low water. During the year, whatever be the age or situation of the moon, the water is lowest at six in the morning, and at the same hour in the evening, and highest at noon, and midnight. This is so well established, that the time of night is marked by the ebbing and flowing of the tide; and in all the Islands, the term for high water and midnight is the same."—Polynesian Res. I. 29.

‡ Humbolt's Cosmos, translated by O. C. Otte, (N. Y. 1850) II. 290.

§ I may, I trust, be pardoned for coining a new word for researches into a subject hitherto considered to be either unworthy of attention or closed against regular investigation. That the customs and superstitions of nations are most wonderfully enduring memorials of the past, will, I trust, be apparent from some of the facts contained in this paper. When I come to treat more particularly of the festival of the dead and of its origin, this will be much more conclusively established. Even should the interpretations, which I have given, prove entirely incorrect, it will be plain that, to more competent enquirers, the study of customs opens up a new and most interesting field, that is even more susceptible of scientific research, and that will shed more light on the social and religious life of primitive man, than philology itself.

The Father of History says, "Pindar appears to me to have truly said that custom is the king of all men;" and Sir William Jones, the only modern writer, who seems to have duly

delivered February 23rd, 1863,* by Professor Max Müller. His remarks, coming from one whose profound researches have shed so much light on the history of our race, are entitled to a peculiar weight. Referring to his attention having been recently drawn to the supposed similarity in the structure of Polynesian, and Indo-European languages, he says, "strange as it may sound to hear the language of Homer and Ennius spoken of as an offshoot of the Sandwich Islands, mere ridicule would be a very inappropriate and very inefficient answer to such a theory." "There are other theories not less startling than that, which would make the Polynesian language the primitive language of mankind."

ART. VIII.—*On Magnesia-Alum, or Pickerinigte, containing a little nickel and cobalt, occurring in slate, in Hants Co.* By PROF. How, D. C. L., King's College, Windsor.

[Read May 4th, 1863.]

THE mineral forming the subject of the present communication was found in the spring of 1862, and sent to me for examination, through Dr. Weeks, of Brooklyn. A gentleman working in the laboratory of this College at the time, Mr. Lyttleton, examined the small quantity of substance furnished, and brought out the fact that it contained the elements of Magnesia-Alum, with a little cobalt. Interested in this result, I proceeded to the locality in the autumn, and procured a supply of the mineral. I found it to occur on a nearly perpendicular cliff of slate, some 60 feet high, on the land of Mr. F. Parker, in Newport. It is met with as an efflorescence on the slate, protected from rain by overhanging ledges of the rock, in the form of compact and also of loosely coherent masses, of a white or yellowish colour, which are sometimes apparently amorphous in structure, sometimes distinctly crystalline, in short silky needles, (as shewn in the specimens sent for the cabinet of the Institute.) It is soluble

recognized the value of these historical materials, suggests that if a comparison of the *times of observance* of the festivals of nations were made, "there would be found striking resemblance among them; and an attentive comparison of them all might throw great light on the religion, and perhaps on the history of the primitive world." See Sir W. Jones' Works (ed. 1807,) IV. p. 165.

I use the word *Ethology*, for although Ethics would really embrace these researches, that word has now acquired a limited and conventional meaning, while Ethology is quite as admissible as *Ethnology*, although Herodotus, I am aware, uses a different word from that which I have selected, when he refers to customs. Those desirous of knowing the views hitherto entertained as to the possibility of tracing popular customs and superstitions to their origin, are referred to Brand's preface to his *Popular Antiquities*.—(Ed. 1853) p. vii. to xi.

* Published in Macmillan's Magazine for March, 1863.