CHAPTER VI.

PAGAN SURVIVALS AND REMINISCENCES.

I.

Rites and symbols common to Christianity and to ancient religions—Suspicious Practices—Incubation—Collections of Miracles—Literary borrowings from pagan sources—Unavoidable analogies—Superstitions.

THE subject on which we are about to enter is fertile in surprises, and, let us confess at once, in regrettable confusions. It has borne, and still bears, the brunt of an over-ingenious criticism, eager to connect certain religious phenomena which come specially within the range of hagiography with certain pagan beliefs and practices. By means of a subtle exegesis, frequently based on a very wide learning, students try to discern beneath the surface of Christian legend remains of the older mythologies and links with an earlier worship; they point out, between rival religions, analogies or similitudes which they maintain can only be explained by the fact of their having been borrowed.

There are men indeed who do not hesitate to assert that in the struggle between Christianity and idolatry victory was not always on the side where it has been assumed to be, and, as might be supposed, it is the cultus of the saints that supplies arguments in support of this paradox.

It were unfair to try and discredit the study of rites or of comparative religion by insisting unduly on the exaggerations of those who have sinned in these matters by over-refinement or by superficiality. The problem before us, in spite of the obscurity in which it is involved, is worthy of serious examination.

A material but wholly external link between the new religion and the old consists in the common possession of a certain number of rites and symbols which we are accustomed to regard as our own special property, and which we are consequently surprised to discern existing in polytheism and bearing much the same meaning.

In point of fact it would be very surprising if, when seeking to propagate her doctrines in the midst of Græco-Roman civilisation, the Church had adopted for her intercourse with the people a wholly unknown language, and had systematically repudiated everything that until then had served to give expression to religious feeling.

Within the limit imposed by the conventions of race and culture, the method of interpreting the emotions of the heart cannot be indefinitely varied, and it was natural that the new religion should end by appropriating to itself a whole ritual which only required to be sanely interpreted to become the language of the Christian soul aspiring to the one True God. All external signs which did not implicitly involve the recognition of polytheism would find grace in the eyes of the Church, and if on the one hand she showed no undue haste in adapting them officially to her use, on the other hand she did not protest when they made their appearance as a means of expressing the religious instincts of the people. Certain attitudes of prayer and reverence, the

use of incense and of lamps burning night and day in the sanctuary, the offering of ex-votos as a testimony to benefits received, are such natural expressions of piety and gratitude towards a divine power, that it would be strange if their equivalents were not met with in all religions.

It is therefore an uncritical proceeding to fall back on the hypothesis of a direct borrowing, when human nature, acting under the influence of religious feeling, affords an adequate explanation.[1] Nevertheless I know there are persons who in our places of pilgrimage cannot watch the faithful mounting the steps of the shrine on their knees, without reflecting that the Emperor Claudius ascended the steps of the Capitol in the same manner.[2] Others are quick to recall that renowned fresco in the Naples museum in which one may see a priest of Isis standing before the *cella* of the temple and pre-

[1] The prayer of Demetrius, given by Seneca in *De Providentia*, v., 5-6, offers one of the most curious examples in illustration of this. The following are the terms in which the philosopher expresses the conformity of his will to that of the gods: "Hoc unum de vobis, di immortales, queri possum, quod non ante mihi voluntatem vestram notam fecistis. Prior enim ad ista venissem, ad quæ nunc vocatus adsum. Vultis liberos sumere? vobis illos sustuli. Vultis aliquam partem corporis? sumite. Non magnam rem promitto; cito totum relinquam. Vultis spiritum? Quidni? nullam moram faciam, quo minus recipiatis quod dedistis. A volente feretis, quicquid petieritis. Quid ergo est? maluissem offerre quam tradere. Quid opus fuit auferre? accipere potuistis. Sed ne nunc quidem auferetis, quia nihil eripitur nisi retinenti. Nihil cogor nihil patior invitus, nec servio Deo sed adsentior, eo quidem magis quod scio omnia certa et in æternum dicta lege decurrere." If the reader will compare this prayer with the *Suscipe* of St. Ignatius, the eloquent outpouring which closes the volume of Spiritual Exercises, he will be surprised at the resemblance between the two. Yet it is scarcely temerarious of me to affirm that in the moment of composing it St. Ignatius was in no way inspired by the recent reading of Seneca.

[2] Dion Cassius, lx., 23.

senting to the adoration of the congregation a form of pyx containing water from the sacred Nile.[1] With but little alteration this scene might be made to represent an exposition of relics or a benediction in accordance with our existing rites. Cicero tells us that at Agrigentum there was a much-venerated statue of Hercules of which the mouth and chin were worn away by the many worshippers who pressed their lips to it. The bronze foot of the statue of St. Peter in Rome has not withstood any better the kisses of the faithful.[2]

Yet modern Christians have undoubtedly learnt nothing from the Sicilian contemporaries of Verres, any more than the pilgrims dragging themselves on their knees in the fulfilment of a vow, or a Catholic priest blessing his congregation with a reliquary are carrying out rites inherited from the Romans under the Empire. What is true is that the same thought, under analogous circumstances has found expression after an interval of centuries in identical actions and attitudes. Concerning this point it appears to me that no further discussion is called for.

It must however be confessed that there are certain rites of a markedly pagan character sometimes brought to our notice, the origin of which is distinctly open to suspicion. The curious ceremony which consists in dipping the images of saints into water, too obviously recalls the sacred bath of the mother of the gods [3] for it to be possible that there is no connection between the two. In the same way, it has been thought the Church preserved for many centuries a survival of the

[1] C. A. Böttiger, *Isis-vesper* in *Kleine Schriften*, vol. ii., Dresden, 1838, pp. 210-30.

[2] Verr., iv., 43.

[3] Ovid, *Fasti*, iv., 337-46.

rite of incubation, a superstitious usage widely practised in the sanctuaries of Æsculapius, Amphiaraus and Serapis. In its essential features it consisted in sleeping in the temple, after due preparation and certain prescribed ceremonies, with the object of being favoured in a dream by an apparition of the divinity, and obtaining either a revelation as to the future or the healing of some disease.

We possess very full information concerning incubation, thanks mainly to the inscriptions at Epidaurus.[1] The object aimed at was the dream in which the god revealed himself and bestowed health, or, more frequently, indicated the treatment to be followed. The somewhat complicated ritual which usually served as preparation was only a condition for propitiating the divinity.

Among the documents which have been collected on the subject of Christian incubation[2] a first place must be accorded to the miracles of SS. Cosmas and Damian and SS. Cyrus and John. It would be difficult to deny that a number of their features do recall incubation as it was practised in the temples of Æsculapius. The saints appear to the patients during their sleep and either cure them or prescribe remedies. Nevertheless, there is nothing to show that at these Christian shrines the practice of incubation was systematically organised as it was at Epidaurus, or that we have in fact anything more here than isolated occurrences.

Without wishing to contest the fact of the survival, in certain basilicas, of a rite that undoubtedly had its

1 Collitz-Bechtel, *Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften*, n. 3339-41; P. Cavvadias Τὸ ἱερὸν τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ ἐν Ἐπιδαύρῳ, Athens, 1900, pp. 256-67. [A. Defrasse- H. Lechat, *Epidaure*, Paris, 1895. 3d ed.]

2 L. Deubner, *De incubatione capita quatuor*, Leipzig, 1900, 138 pages. [3d ed. has added about two pages of discussions of incubation, with particular reference to practises in the Orient, largely drawn from his *Les recueils antiques de miracles des saints*, Brussels, 1925.]

superstitious side, we must not lose sight of the very special character of the documents which give us information concerning it. It is an admitted fact that the larger collections of miracles bequeathed to us by the Middle Ages are compilations in which the most varied materials are mixed up at random, and which in consequence can only be used with the utmost circumspection.

Greek hagiographic literature is notably less rich than the Latin in collections of this kind. But the examples it does contain greatly surpass all others in their grotesque and improbable features, and there can be no doubt that a close study of their origins would lead to the identification of a number of pagan reminiscences and even of formal adaptations.

One of the most celebrated collections is that of the miracles of St. Menas, attributed to Timothy of Alexandria.[1] Tillemont who was only acquainted with an incomplete edition of the work containing but five miracles,[2] declared that "the first is altogether extraordinary, the second rather less so, the third and fourth not bad, and the fifth in the highest degree scandalous". Tillemont was not the first person to be scandalised, and editors of the Menæa[3] felt they could not admit the narrative in question without notable modifications. The fundamental idea of this imaginary miracle, putting aside the burlesque treatment, is anything but Christian. The story bears as its title, *The Paralytic and the Dumb Woman*, and it tells how the saint ordered a paralytic to share the couch of a dumb woman, and it was as the

1 Published by J. Pomjalovskij, *Vie de St. Pâisios le grand* (in Russian), St. Petersburg, 1900, pp. 62-89.

2 *Mémoires pour servir a l'histoire ecclésiastique*, vol. v., p. 760.

3 At the date 11th November.

result of this order, under the influence of surprise and emotion, that the one recovered the use of his limbs and the other her powers of speech.

This anecdote recalls too vividly certain comic cures attributed to Æsculapius, not to have some connection with the *ἰάματα* of the god. What proves moreover that it has no personal connection with St. Menas, is that the story is to be found with identical details in the volume of miracles of SS. Cosmas and Damian.[1] As for those who resent the idea of any literary interdependence between Christian miracles and the official records of the marvellous cures wrought through the invocation of Æsculapius, it is necessary to remind them of several well-authenticated examples of identical miracles in the one and in the other which must be derived from one and the same source. The miracle of the broken goblet, attributed to St. Lawrence by Gregory of Tours,[2] may be read in a closely similar form on one of the *stelæ* at Epidaurus.[3] The marvellous history of the decapitated head, related on the same *stelæ*, is an adaptation of a still more ancient narrative;[4] it also has been taken over by Christian chroniclers in spite of its obviously grotesque character.[5]

The editors of volumes of miracles have freely availed themselves of both borrowing and adaptation, and it will only be after a thorough inquiry into the sources

1 Wangnereckius-Dehnius, *Syntagmatis historici de tribus sanctorum Cosmæ et Damiani nomine paribus partes duæ*, Vienna, 1660, pp. 481-83.

2 *In gloria martyrum*, c. xxx.

3 Collitz-Bechtel, *Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften*, n. 3339. *Le miracle du vase brisé* in *Archiv für Religions-wissenschaft*, ser. viii. (1905), pp. 305-9.

4 See O. Crusius in *Mélusine*, vol. v., p. 203.

5 P. Perdrizet in the *Revue des études anciennes*, vol. ii., 1900, pp. 78-79; also in *Mélusine*, vol. v., pp. 97-100.

from which these miracle books are derived that they can be made use of as historical documents. As far as investigations have gone at present, it is impossible to ascertain what really belongs to them, and it is consequently only with prudent reservations that they can be quoted in evidence of the custom we are discussing.

It is therefore very difficult to decide to what extent incubation, as it appears to have been practised in certain basilicas, continued to retain all the characteristics of pagan incubation, nor do we know whether the Church ever formally sanctioned the rite in certain places, while attempting to give it a Christian character. It is however quite certain that the extent of its diffusion throughout the Christian world has been greatly exaggerated. In point of fact the majority of examples that are quoted have no more real connection with incubation than the story of Redemptus, Bishop of Ferentino, related by St. Gregory as follows:—

"Quadam die dum parochias suas ex more circuiret, pervenit ad ecclesiam beati Eutychii martyris. Advesperascente autem die, stratum fieri sibi juxta sepulcrum martyris voluit, atque ibi post laborem quievit. Cum nocte media, ut asserebat, nec dormiebat, nec perfecte vigilare poterat, sed depressus, ut solet, somno, gravabatur quodam pondere vigilans animus; atque ante eum idem beatus martyr Eutychius adstitit, dicens: Redemte, vigilas? cui respondit: Vigilo. Qui ait: Finis venit universæ carnis, finis venit universæ carnis, finis venit universæ carnis. Post quam trinam vocem visio martyris, quæ mentis eius oculis apparebat, evanuit."[1]

1 "On a certain day as he was making the round of his diocese he came to the church of blessed Eutychius, the martyr. As night was coming on, he had a bed made for himself beside the martyr's tomb, and there after his labour he lay down to rest. Towards midnight, so he declared, he was neither asleep nor yet could keep fully awake,

Note that the bishop, without expecting any vision, merely had his couch prepared in the basilica of the martyr. There was neither rite nor religious observance involved. Save for the apparition, which was quite accidental, the incident was one which might still occur in missionary lands. Bishop and priest are frequently compelled to pass the night in the humble little chapels of the villages they pass through on their apostolic journeys. In other instances we hear of sick persons who refuse to quit the tomb of the saint until they are cured. They fall asleep and the cure comes to them, with or without a vision, while they are sleeping. In all these instances there are certain details in common with those of incubation, but the ceremonial as a whole and the institution itself are not found.

In general the study of superstitious practices of which the existence has been proved at certain shrines dedicated to very popular saints, should be carried on with far greater discernment and a more critical spirit than is generally to be met with among folk-lorists who have undertaken the duty of collecting documents for the historian. The accuracy of their information is often more apparent than real, and not a few among them possess a quite remarkable gift for establishing far-fetched resemblances.

Thus there is the ancient rite which consisted in passing through some aperture—a stone with a hole

but his active mind oppressed with drowsiness, as often happens, seemed to be crushed by some heavy weight. When lo! the said blessed martyr Eutychius stood before him, saying, 'Redemptus, sleepest thou?' To whom he answered, 'I am awake'. Whereupon he said, 'The end of all flesh has come, the end of all flesh has come, the end of all flesh has come'. After which triple utterance, the appearance of the martyr which had been perceptible to his mental vision vanished." *Dial.*, iii., 38. [There has been some re-ordering of the paragraphs in the 3d ed.]

in it or the hollow of a tree—in order to be cured of certain diseases. Folk-lorists may be excused for discovering reminiscences of the custom in certain churches in which the tomb of the saint is raised from the ground in such a way as to allow of pilgrims passing beneath, as for example at Gheel in Campine where lunatics make the round of the choir by passing beneath the archway above which stands the shrine of St. Dymphna. It must, however, be admitted that even if it exists at all, the connection between such rites is extremely remote, and that there is a wide distinction between a vain observance the efficacy of which depended upon a pierced stone, and a practice mainly founded on a belief in the virtue of relics.[1]

But folk-lorists have gone much further than this, and have been determined to discover examples of the suspected practice here, there and everywhere, even in the first ages of Christianity and beneath the roof of our most venerable basilicas. St. Peter's in Rome itself has not escaped. This is how Gregory of Tours described the tomb of the apostle in a celebrated chapter.[2] "Hoc enim sepulcrum sub altare collocatum valde rarum habetur. Sed qui orare desiderat, reseratis cancellis, quibus locus ille ambitur, accedit super sepulcrum, et sic fenestella parvula patefacta immisso introrsum capite, quæ necessitas promit efflagitat."[3]

Archæologists are too familiar with the "fenestella confessionis" (the window or orifice of the "confession") for it to be necessary to explain its purpose:

1 H. Gaidoz, *Un vieux rite médical*, Paris, 1892, 85 pages.
2 *In gloria martyrum*, xxvii.
3 "For this tomb placed beneath the altar is considered to be a very rare thing. But he who desires to pray, opening the grating with which the spot is enclosed, comes right over the tomb, and when the little orifice is exposed to view, inserting his head he makes such petitions as his needs suggest."

its position was affected by the arrangement of its surroundings and the shape of the "confession," and in no sense whatever by any superstitious custom. The sepulchre of St. Venerandus at Clermont,[1] which also had its "fenestella," has been quoted with equally little reason; with still less, the tomb of St. Martin which Gregory of Tours touched with his aching tongue "per lignum cancelli".[2] Far from recalling pagan rites, these acts of devotion at the shrine of a saint inspired by a desire to approach as closely as possible to the relics, are distinctly redolent of the spirit of primitive Christianity.

Nevertheless we are far from denying the survival, among Christian nations, of a certain number of customs of which the origin is extremely remote, and which are in direct opposition to Christian beliefs or Christian ethics. The greater number of the superstitions against which the Church has perpetually made war with changeful tactics and varying degrees of success, are an inheritance from our pagan ancestors.[3] As a general rule they have no direct relation with public worship, and their accidental association with established religious practices or even their connection with the name of a saint confers on them no sort of authorisation. The incident of the Count of Toulouse, who suddenly left Montpellier in 1212, terror-stricken at having seen St. Martin's bird flying on his left hand,[4]

1 *In Gloria confessorum*, xxxvi.

2 "Through the bars of the grating." *De virtutibus S. Martini*, iv., 2.—All these examples are quoted by Gaidoz, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.

3 See, for example, Weinhold's studies on the vestiges of ritual nudity in various superstitious practices, *Zum heidnischen Ritus* in the *Abhandlungen der k. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, 1896, i., pp. 1-50.

4 Pierre de Vaux-Cernay, *Hist. Albigensium*, n. 47; Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 43: "Viderat enim quandam avem quam indigenæ vocant avem sancti Martini, ad sinistram volantem, et perterritus fuit valde. Ipse enim more Sarracenorum, in volatu et cantu avium et ceteris auguriis spem habebat."

has no reference either to hagiography or to the history of religions, but is connected with the history of superstitions just as definitely as the "sinistra cornix" of Moeris in Virgil. The same may be said of all astrological practices[1] and incantation formulas,[2] in which one would be surprised at meeting with the names of saints, did we not know that absurdity and incoherence is the characteristic note of all manifestations of popular credulity. This aspect of the question, however, need not detain us for the moment. What does interest us is to know in what instances and to what extent hagiographic monuments reveal the existence of an actual link between polytheism and any public and normal manifestation of Christian piety.

1 In a collection of portents published by D. Bassi and E. Martini, *Catalogus codicum astrologorum græcorum, Codd. Ital.*, Brussels, 1903, pp. 158-69, one may find the following invocations recommended: Stephen, Thecla, Michael, Parasceve, George, Irene, Cosmas and Damian, Catherine, Demetrius, Anastasia, the Holy Cross, Anne, the Blessed Virgin, Nicholas, Barbara, Pantaleone and Gregory. They would appear to be the saints whose names had been given to the stars from which the portents were derived.

2 In Egypt the names of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus and the forty martyrs of Sebaste have more than once been found inserted in magic formulas. R. Pietschmann, *Les inscriptions coptes de Farâs* in the *Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archeologie egyptiennes et assyriennes*, vol. xxi., 1899, pp. 175-76. See also W. Pleyte and P. A. Boeser, *Manuscrits coptes du musée d'antiquites des PaysBas*, Leyden, 1897, pp. 441-86.

II.

Saint-worship and hero-worship—The centre of hero-worship—Solemn translations—Relics—Fortuitous coincidences.

THE debate at this point has to be transferred to a vast arena, for it is the veneration of saints itself which is denounced as being a prolongation of idolatrous paganism. The critics admit that, in its first beginnings, the religion of Christ was pure and undefiled, and rejected everything that could obscure the conception of the one True God. But when the faithful ceased to be an elect few, and when the Church was, so to speak, invaded by the populace, she was forced to relax her severity, give way before the instincts of the mob, and make concessions to the polytheistic ideas that were still stirring in the brain of the people.

By the introduction of the cultus of the saints, the Church opened the door to a clearly marked current of paganism. There is no essential difference, so it is affirmed, between the saints of the Church and the heroes of Greek polytheism. Beyond question the two cults resemble each other in their manifestations, but they are also identical in their spirit, and we are clearly here in the presence of a pagan survival.[1] Such is the thesis that is developed by the folklorists with much self-complacency.

We cannot neglect the details of the parallel. Nothing could be more instructive, if only that it enables

1 "Christianorum quoque religio habebat atque habet suos semideos, suos heroas; sanctos scilicet martyresque." L. Deubner, *De Incubatione*, p. 57: "Die Heiligen der christlichen Kirchen vor allem die der griechischen Kirche, stellen die gerade Fortentwicklung des griechischen Heroenkults dar. Die Heilige sind die Heroen der Antike." G. Wobbermin, *Religionsgeschichtliche Studien*, Berlin, 1896, p. 18. See also E. Maass, *Orpheus*, Munich, 1895, p. 244.

us to appreciate the exact value of certain hagiographic legends.[1]

Among the Greeks, heroes are mortals made superior to the vulgar herd by the gifts they have received from the gods. Privileged beings, holding a position midway between divine and human nature, they can lay claim to some portion of the power of the immortals, and they are enabled to intervene effectually in human affairs.

These heroes, the mortal sons of some divinity, great warriors, benefactors of humanity or founders of nations, were specially honoured in the city with which they were connected either by birth or by their exploits. They became its protectors and patrons. Every country, indeed every town, had its heroes to whom monuments were erected and whom the people invoked in their prayers.

The centre of devotion to a hero was his tomb, which was sometimes erected in the middle of the agora, the centre of public life. In most cases it was sheltered by a building, a sort of chapel known as ἡρῷον. A great number of tombs of heroes adorned the celebrated temples, just as the tombs of saints are honoured in Christian churches.[2]

When the actual body of the hero could not be venerated a cenotaph was erected to his memory. But no means were neglected to secure the veritable re-

1 Concerning hero-worship see F. A. Ukert, *Ueber Dämonen, Heroen und Genien* in the *Abhandlungen der k. sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, vol. i., pp. 138-219; Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*, vol. ii.; W. Schmidt, *Der Atticismus*, vol. iv., Stuttgardt, 1896, p. 572, and above all F. Deneken, *Heros*, in Roscher, *Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, vol. i., col. 2441-589. [P. Foucart, *Le Culte des héros chez les Grecs*, in *Mémoires de l'Institut*, vol. xlii, 1922, p. 1-166. Added in 3d ed.]

2 On this special point see K. Th. Pyl, *Die griechischen Rundbauten*, Greifswald, 1861, p. 67 ff.

mains, for the people had faith in the power of a hero's bones and ashes, and when the precious object which was to serve as a protection to the city could be discovered, it was seized upon and conveyed thither with the greatest pomp and with ceremonies which undoubtedly recall the translation of Christian relics.[1]

The most celebrated account of one of these pagan translations is that of the transference of the remains of Theseus to Athens,[2] under the archonship of Apsephion (B.C. 469). The hero rested in the island of Scyros, but the spot of his interment was carefully kept secret by the inhabitants. An oracle arrived in the first instance from Delphi, recommending the Athenians to go and take possession of the bones of Theseus and cherish them in their own city with all the honour that was due to them. Cimon, son of Miltiades, proceeded to lead an expedition against Scyros, took possession of the island and instituted a search for the tomb. A further prodigy revealed the exact spot: he was simply to dig at the place that an eagle would point out to him with beak and talon. In the coffin was found the skeleton of a tall man with spear and sword. Cimon carried his precious burden on board his trireme, and the remains of the hero made a triumphal entry into Athens amid sacrifices and every demonstration of joy. He was laid to rest in the centre of the town near the site of the gymnasium, and the tomb of the hero, who, in his life-time had been kind and helpful to the humble, became an inviolable refuge for slaves and other needy persons anxious to escape from the exactions of the mighty. A great sacrifice in his honour was established on the eighth of the

1 Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 280; Rohde, *Psyche*, vol. i., pp. 161-63.
2 Plutarch, *Theseus*, 36; *Cimon*, 8.

month of Pyanepsion in memory of his return from Crete, but he was also commemorated on the eighth of other months.

This page of Plutarch might be adapted, with but few alterations, to more than one mediæval translation of relics. In the majority of cases these solemn journeys of relics are preceded in the same way by heavenly warnings; miraculous incidents accompany the discovery of the sacred remains; the people provide a brilliant and enthusiastic welcome; magnificent shrines are erected for their reception, and their presence is regarded as a protection to the country; finally an annual feast-day is inaugurated in honour of the happy event.

Nor was this an isolated case. The translations of the ashes of heroes were of frequent occurrence in Greece.[1] Thebes recovers from Ilion the bones of Hector, and presents to Athens those of Œdipus, to Lebadea those of Arcesilaus, and to Megara those of Aigialeus. Rarely are these disinterments ventured upon without an authorisation or command from some oracle. In spite of these divine interventions it is frequently necessary to have recourse to cunning in order to gain possession of a sacred tomb, and the incident of Lichas possessing himself of the body of Orestes[2] forms a curious counterpart to certain expeditions in search of the relics of a saint.

Not infrequently also it happened, as in the Middle Ages, that a new cultus sprang up at some fresh discovery of human bones. Whenever these were of

1 Pausanias is our leading authority on this point. The most important documents have been quoted by Rohde, *Psyche*, vol. i., p. 161, and by Deneken previously cited.
2 Herodotus, i., 67, 68.

large size they were assumed to be the skeleton of a hero, and sometimes an oracle would be consulted as to his name. Thus it was that the Syrians learnt from the god of Claros that the body of a giant found in the dry bed of the Orontes was that of a hero of the same name, of Indian origin.[1]

It is not only in the honours paid to the mortal remains of heroes that we may trace an analogy between pagan practices and devotion to relics. Just as, in our own churches, objects that have belonged to saints or that recall their memory in some special way are exposed for the veneration of the faithful, so in the temples visitors would be shown divers curiosities whose connection with a god or hero would command their respect. In Rome were to be seen the bones of a whale found at Joppa which were said to be those of the monster to which Andromeda was exposed. In other places might be seen the cithara of Paris, the lyre of Orpheus, the ships of Agamemnon and Æneas. And as the eager credulity of travellers rendered the *neocoroi* and the *periegetai* as ingenious as our modern vergers and *ciceroni*, in the end no relic was too improbable for them to profess to exhibit: Leda's egg, the white sow with her thirty little ones sacrificed by Æneas on the site of Alba, the anvil which Jupiter suspended to Juno's feet, and the remains of the clay out of which Prometheus had created man.[2]

No single detail will be lacking from the parallel when we have pointed out that, like ourselves, the ancients were not without experience of duplicated

1 Pausanias, viii., 29, 4.

2 The documents have been collected by Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 52. Ukert, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-4; Friedländer, *Sittengeschichte*, vol. ii., chap. i., *Die Reisen*.

relics, and were surprised to discover at Memphis the hair which Isis had torn out in her despair at the death of Osiris and which they had already been shown at Coptos. More remarkable still the tombs of certain heroes were to be found on more than one spot. Thus that of Æneas was pointed out not only at Berecyntus in Phrygia, but also at Ænea in Macedonia, and on the shores of the Numicius near Lavinium.[1]

Would it not appear as though the critics had established their case now that we have had to admit the existence among the Greeks of a cultus which in every detail recalls that paid to our saints, a cultus with relics, translations, inventions, apparitions and spurious or even forged relics. Can further parallels be needed to prove that the veneration of saints is merely a pagan survival?

The theory is plausible, and yet it will not stand for a second before the judgment of history. The cultus of the saints is not an outcome of hero-worship, but of reverence for the martyrs; and the honours paid to the martyrs from the outset by the early Christians, men who had known the baptism of blood, are a direct consequence of the high dignity of those witnesses to Christ as proclaimed by our Lord Himself. From the veneration with which their mortal remains were treated and from the confidence of Christians in their intercession arose the cultus of relics, with its varied manifestations, with, alas, its too natural exaggerations,—indeed, we may frankly say, with its excesses, excesses which have occasionally compromised the memory of those to whom it was intended to pay honour.[2]

It seems scarcely necessary to insist that hero-worship among the Greeks never possessed the same

1 J. A. Hild, *La légende d'Enée* in the *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, vol. vi., 1882, p. 67.

[2 See *Les origines du culte des martyrs*. p. 1-119. 3rd ed.]

theological foundation and was never expressed in the same exact definitions which always place an infinite distance between God and man favoured by God. But it had an analogous starting-point and developed under the influence of general ideas which are not without some affinity with those which urged swarms of the faithful towards the tombs of the martyrs. Hence it necessarily arrived at practically identical consequences, and the history of these two cults represents a logical and parallel development without however any interdependence. It was not necessary to remember the gods and the heroes in order to turn in perfect confidence to the martyrs, to beg of them the healing of the sick, to place perilous journeys and difficult undertakings under their protection or to bestow on them visible proofs of gratitude for benefits received. Moreover it was certain to come about that the tomb of a martyr should be regarded not only as an honour but as a safeguard to the town that possessed it, and that the patron saint should receive all those honorary titles which in earlier days had fallen to protecting heroes: Sosipolis, Sosipatris, Philopolis and the like.[1]

In the same way, there is no real reason for supposing that the earliest narratives of the finding of relics, whatever may be the analogy of the facts or the similitude

[1] Upon these grounds M. Gelzer maintains that St. Demetrius came to replace the tutelary god of Thessalonica. His words are these: "Der Typus einer solchen Paganisierung des Christentums ist nun vor allem der heilige Demetrius. Er ist gleichsam die Personifikation oder die Fleischwerdung des antiken griechischen Polisgedankens. Wie Apollon und Herakles führt er den Beinamen Sosipolis." *Die Genesis der Byzantinischen Themenverfassung* in the *Abhandlungen der kgl. sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, vol. xviii, 1899, n. 5, p. 54.

of the details, were inspired by the records of pagan translations. These narratives, of which the earliest date from the fourth century, were neither forgeries nor imitations. They are the natural outcome of an identical state of mind under similar circumstances.

We must, however, guard against exaggeration. If we are told that the ideas disseminated through society by hero-worship predisposed the mind to a ready acceptance of the *rôle* of saints in the Christian dispensation and of their value as intercessors before God, I see no reason whatever for contesting the statement. The markedly rapid development of the cultus of saints and martyrs may well be explained by the fact that the human mind was already prepared to accept it. In point of fact, ancient ecclesiastical writers made no sort of difficulty about admitting the existence of analogies between the cultus of martyrs and that of heroes. Indeed, Theodoret made use of the fact as the starting-point of his controversy with the pagans. Although other people should take exception to our practices, he declares, you should be the last to complain, you who possess heroes and demi-gods and deified men.[1]

As for certain exaggerations which from time to time have made their appearance to the detriment of the religious spirit, I see no reason whatever for connecting them with unconscious reversions to paganism. We have already pointed out sufficiently the popular tendency towards material and tangible things to account for these aberrations, which need to be continually kept in check, and which are to be found more especially in countries where passions are strong and imaginations keen. A statue or the body of a saint which appeals to a man's eyes, impresses him far more vividly than

[1] *Græc. affect. curatio*, viii., Schulze, vol. iv., pp. 902-3.

mysteries which appeal only to his faith. I should not therefore regard the manifestations of Neapolitan piety as mere paganism,[1] though I am far indeed from proposing them as a model to be imitated.

III.

Pagan survivals in worship—Holy places—Christian transformations—Adaptation of names—A method for ascertaining primitive titles—Sacred sources.

We believe we have sufficiently demonstrated by examples that too much value must not be attributed to exterior resemblances or fortuitous coincidences when any question arises regarding the continuity that may have existed between certain Christian practices and the Græco-Roman faith, not to mention other religions. The matter has to be investigated somewhat more closely, and wherever, in hagiographic matters, there is question of going back to the origins of a traditional cultus, three essential elements must be studied: the place, the date, and the legend. We will examine briefly the various questions connected with these points.

It was only after the complete triumph of Christianity that it became possible to establish her sanctuaries on the very sites of ancient temples that were either disused or had been wrecked. The Christians had not awaited the final abandonment of pagan monuments to erect magnificent buildings in accordance with the

1 The work by Th. Trede, *Das Heidentum in der Römischen Kirche*, 4 vols., Gotha, 1889-91, is not only very wearisome to read, but is the outcome of a very superficial study. The author is intimately acquainted with the Neapolitans, but his prejudices, which he is never able to set aside, show that he is quite incapable of understanding the character of the people and their exuberant devotion. Throughout the work he makes no allowances for them.

requirements of their liturgy. In many cases they attacked the ancient religion on its own ground and contested its pre-eminence.

We are fairly well instructed concerning the methods adopted by the Church to combat superstitions attached to certain localities. In most cases she did so by erecting a basilica or a chapel, and by fostering there a new cultus of her own in order to distract popular attention, and to supply Christian nourishment to the religious instincts of the people.

We know, for example, how Cæsar Gallus (351) caused the body of the martyr Babylas to be conveyed to Daphne, which was at that time both a centre of idolatry and a scene of debauchery, and how in order to house it he commanded a church to be built in the immediate vicinity of the temple of Apollo of which the oracle was forthwith reduced to silence. Julian, enraged at receiving no reply from it, caused the relics of the martyr to be returned to Antioch.[1]

In the time of St. Cyril there was a little town named Menouthis near Canopus, about twelve miles east of Alexandria, celebrated for its oracle which the heathens came in crowds to consult and by which even Christians were sometimes led away.[2] It is true there was a Christian church at Menouthis dedicated to the apostles that had been built by Theophilus of Alexandria, but the den of superstition attracted greater crowds than the house of God. Cyril put a stop to these idolatrous gatherings by causing the bodies of SS. Cyrus and John which until then had lain in the Church of St.

1 The documents on this point have been collected by Tillemont, *Mémoires*, vol. iii., p. 405.

2 *Acta SS.*, Jan., vol. ii., p. 1083; *Deubner, De incubatione*, pp. 80-98. [See *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. xxx, p. 448-450, 3d ed.]

Mark at Alexandria, to be transported in solemn state to Menouthis. Such were the beginnings of one of the most famous shrines of Christian Egypt.

Gregory of Tours relates[1] how, in the Gévaudan district, there was a large lake on a mountain named Helanus, to which, as he says, the country folk made some sort of libation, by flinging stuffs, cakes and various objects into the water. Every year the people would arrive with waggons, bringing food and drink with them, slaughtering cattle and giving themselves up for three whole days to feasting. The fourth day, just as they were starting for home, they were always caught in a violent storm. The Bishop of Javols arrived on the scene and exhorted the crowd to abstain from evil practices, threatening them with divine wrath. But his preaching was in vain. Then, under the inspiration of God, he built a church in honour of St. Hilary of Poitiers on the shores of the lake, transported thither certain relics of the saint and began his exhortations anew. This time he was more successful, the lake was abandoned and the objects that formerly had been flung into its waters were offered to the basilica. Moreover the storms ceased to rage at the time of the festival, which henceforward was consecrated to God[2] as the dedication feast.

In this particular instance we see that the Church did not take possession of the sacred spot, but that she

1 *In gloria confessorum*, ii. [*Helanus* becomes *Helarius* in the 3d ed.]

2 We have less reliable information concerning the substitution that took place on the Mons Garganus. But it has long been admitted that the legend of the sanctuary contains echoes of the oracle of Calchas so celebrated on this spot. See, for example, F. Lenormant, *À travers l'Apulie et la Lucanie*, vol. i., Paris, 1883, p. 61; G. Gothein, *Die Culturentwicklung Süd-Italiens*, Breslau, 1886, pp. 67-75.

ruined it by competition. When once the temples were definitely forsaken she was too wise to abandon to secular usages sites that had frequently been selected with great discrimination, and she consecrated them to the one true God whenever circumstances rendered such a course possible.

The history of the liquidation of the property of vanquished paganism has been related many times, and it has been possible to draw up long lists of churches erected upon the foundations of heathen temples, or built with their very stones, or indeed simply installed in the ancient edifice.[1] The classic examples of this latter category are the Pantheon in Rome and the Parthenon at Athens.

In the case of many other less illustrious temples replaced at a later date by Christian churches the memory of their primitive destination has been less carefully preserved. Certain learned men have invented an ingenious theory in order to supplement, in many instances, the silence of history. Because it has sometimes been possible to note an analogy between the Christian title of the transformed temple and its earlier title, they have felt justified in attributing to the Church a systematic Christianisation of pagan sanctuaries supposed to be based upon a very accommodating consideration for new converts. In order to permit them the illusion of not having wholly broken with the past, the new churches were placed under the patronage of saints

1 Marangoni, *Delle cose gentilesche e profane trasportate ad uso e adornamento delle chiese*, Rome, 1744, pp. 256-87; L. Petit de Julleville, *Recherches sur l'emplacement et le vocable des églises chrétiennes en Grèc* in the *Archives des Missions scientifiques*, second series, vol. v., Paris, 1868, pp. 469-533; P. Allard, *L'art paien sous les empereurs chrétiens*, Paris, 1874, pp. 259-98.

who, by their name or legend, recalled the divinity who had previously been honoured on the same spot.

Thus, at Eleusis we find a church of St. Demetrius on the site of a temple of Demeter: it is the name of the goddess but slightly modified. It is true that there was also a church of St. George, but it was again Demeter, the goddess of agriculture, who was disguised under the name of the "holy agriculturist," *Γεώργιος*.[1] In other places St. George has taken the place of Theseus or Hercules, but on those occasions it is as the vanquisher of wild beasts that he is substituted for the victor over the Minotaur or the destroyer of the Lernean hydra.[2] Thus, whether the analogy be phonetic or symbolic the archæologists make capital out of it, and find little difficulty in pointing out some resemblance between the new patrons and the old.

It is somewhat more difficult to prove that these resemblances have been generally sought after, and the proof should certainly be forthcoming whenever it is proposed to link the name of the saint with that of the deity he displaced. It is clear that most valuable topographical indications might be collected by this process.[3] But its efficacy is entirely illusory, and if certain critics have put it to strange uses, others have regarded it with well-merited suspicion.

In those instances in which we have historical proof of the action of the Church, favouring the cultus of a saint in order to uproot some superstitious practice, we have no reason to suspect any link between either the name or the legend of the saint and those of the pagan divinity he supplanted. Remember the martyr-bishop

1 Petit de Julleville, *op. cit.*, pp. 492, 493.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 504, 505.

[3 A few examples are offered in the 3d ed. — Helarius, Cyril of Alexandria and St. Cyr, bishop Babylas at Antioch — with the warning that "from a small number of examples one may not conclude a system." This revised section largely subsumes the following paragraph, "In those instances . . . a sacred lake," which does not appear in the 3d ed.]

Babylas opposed to Apollo; Cyrus and John, the one a soldier, the other a monk, brought to Menouthis to combat the oracle of the goddess; and Hilary of Poitiers, confessor and pontiff, enticing the populace from the shores of a sacred lake.

I am far from denying that here and there popular devotion may occasionally have become tinged with the still vivid memories of ancient superstitions and that they have often profoundly modified the physiognomy of certain saints; that, for example, SS. Cyrus and John have ended by becoming types of healing saints, or disinterested physicians, like Cosmas and Damian, or that this latter group—of which the origin and true history will probably always evade research—have assumed in popular imagination a new and definite character as kindly genii eager to help humanity in imitation of the Dioscuri.[1] But, as far as facts are concerned, nothing authorises one to affirm that the Church has systematically encouraged these transpositions of names leaving the thing unaltered, and indeed it is most improbable that in early days she should have lent herself to such dangerous equivocations.

A few examples are necessary to put the reader on his guard concerning this seductive theory to which we have referred. Thus there is St. Elias, dedicated to whom there exist in Greece a large number of chapels built on the summit of hills and mountains. Some

1 Pagans were in the habit of noting the resemblance as may be seen from various texts of the miracles of SS. Cosmas and Damian. They have been collected by Deubner, *De incubatione*, p. 77. Dr. R. Harris who has searched all hagiographic literature for replicas of Castor and Pollux has strangely overlooked Cosmas and Damian. [The omission, however, has been supplied in his later book, *The Cult of the Heavenly Twins*, Cambridge, 1906, pp. 96-104.]

writers have admitted that Elias usually takes the place of his namesake Helios, the god of the sun.[1] The assimilation is specious, but it is not borne out by the facts. It is not on the heights of Greece that the shrines of Helios were the most numerous. Moreover, sun-worship became almost completely absorbed in Apollo-worship, a fact which upsets the play upon words that is supposed to account for the numerous chapels erected to St. Elias. The history of the prophet as it is related in the Bible, his being carried up to heaven in a chariot of fire, his apparition at the side of Christ in the Transfiguration, "made of him the natural patron of high places".[2] It is probable enough that the invocation of St. Elias has taken the place in many instances of some pagan divinity, but there is nothing to prove that the divinity in question was Helios.

Moreover in order to draw conclusions from these titles they ought at least to be primitive and to belong to a time anterior to the moment when the dedication of the sanctuary was altered. But in point of fact several of those quoted are of more recent date.

At Athens, for example, the church of St. Paraskeve occupies the site of the Pompeion, a building dedicated to the organisation of religious processions,[3] as Pausanias tells us: ἐς παρασκευήν ἐστι τῶν πομπῶν.[4] Is it not obvious that there must be some connection between St. Παρασκευή, the titular saint of the church,

[1] C. Wachsmuth, *Das alte Griechenland im neuen*, Bonn, 1864, p. 23; Petit de Julleville, *op. cit.*, pp. 505-6.
[2] F. Lenormant, *Monographie de la voie sacrée Éleusinienne*, Paris, 1864, p. 452.
[3] Petit de Julleville, *op. cit.*, pp. 488, 514; A. Mommsen, *Athenæ christianæ*, p. 89.
[4] Pausanias, i., ii., 4.

and the preparation, παρασκευή, of processions which took place on the same spot? And yet we are in a position to affirm, without fear of error, that no such connection exists, and that we are in the presence of a simple coincidence the importance of which has been exaggerated by certain archæologists.

In point of fact St. Paraskeve can only have bestowed her name upon the chapel at a comparatively recent date, for she was unknown to the ancients, and liturgical documents of the tenth and eleventh centuries prove that her cultus, and still more her popularity, were posterior to that period. Need we add that even had her memory been held in honour from the most remote times, no one would have dreamt of bestowing her name on the little edifice to which Pausanias refers. If the author makes use of the word παρασκευή in this connection it was certainly not the name by which the building in question was known to the people.

It may be observed that various scholars, starting from a vague resemblance between names combined with certain topographical data, have built up regular romances on the strength of some hagiographic text. Among these productions we may class the attempt of a mythologist[1] to prove that St. Donatus took the place of Pluto, or, what comes to the same thing, of Aidoneus, King of the Molossi, whose name, every one is ready to admit, bears a resemblance to "Aios Donatos". I should be the first to concede that we possess no really authentic records concerning St. Donatus, and moreover that various scraps of mythological lore have been made use of in order to supply him with a

[1] E. de Gubernatis, *Aidoneo e San Donato, studio di mitologia epirotica* in the *Rivista Europea*, an. v., 1874, vol. ii., pp. 425-38.

biography. But the erudite fiction which seeks to identify him with the god of the infernal regions merits as little consideration as the traditional narrative.

At the back of more than one learned disquisition on the origins of devotion to the saints one may discern the idea that the great martyrs and thaumaturgists of the ancient world, more especially those who were early regarded as the patrons of cities, were the direct inheritors of some tutelary deity whose altars attracted the multitude. The concourse of pilgrims could thus be easily explained by the renown attached to the spot. The wave of popular devotion would merely have been slightly deflected from its earlier course, abandoning the temple of the idol in order to flow past the Christian basilica.[1]

The instances, previously quoted, of a species of Christian "canalisation" of the irresistible stream of religious emotion, are by no means rare in history. Occasionally even, we are willing to admit, the phenomenon may have been spontaneously produced, without any intervention from the leaders of the Church. But all this does not justify us in formulating a general law which, if true, would have a very important bearing on the study of comparative religions. It would not be difficult, with the assistance of texts and documents, to quote the name of some god or pagan hero specially honoured in each of the Greek towns which later were to become the centres of Christian pilgrimages. This only amounts to saying that one local cult replaced

1 Exception might be taken on more than one point to the ideas on this subject expressed in his posthumous volume by E. Lucius, recently published by G. Anrich, *Die Anfänge des Heiligenkults in der christlichen Kirche*, Tübingen, 1904. See *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. xxiv., p. 487.

another just as one may note everywhere that one religion succeeded to another. But it does not follow that there was any bond of connection between the two.

On the Capitoline hill in Rome there was a temple dedicated to the lord of heaven, who there received through many centuries the incense of kings and people. In later centuries pilgrims from the whole world flocked to Rome to the tomb of the prince of the apostles. Yet would any one seriously suggest that St. Peter is the direct heir of Jupiter Capitolinus?

A chapter of popular hagiography connected with the christianisation of centres of superstition by the introduction of the cultus of the saints is suggested by the passage from Gregory of Tours already quoted. We refer to water-worship, which was all the more difficult to uproot as the object of it could neither be destroyed nor removed at will. The number of wells placed under the patronage of some saint is very considerable. Certain devoted students of local history have drawn from the fact conclusions which cannot all be equally commended for accuracy and definiteness.[1] It would be a wearisome undertaking to attempt a synthesis of this mass of material, incongruous and ill-classified as it is. We shall not embark upon the task, although we cannot refrain from inquiring whether the majority of

1 It would be difficult to draw up anything like a complete bibliography on this subject, and we do not propose to undertake the task. References to it may be found in A. Bertrand, *La religion des Gaulois*, Paris, 1897, pp. 191-212; *Bulletin archéologique du comité des travaux historiques*, 1897, pp. 150-60; 1898, pp. lxv.-lxvi. Consult also the important work by R. C. Hope, *Holy Wells: Their legends and Superstitions*, in The *Antiquary*, vol. xxi., 1890, pp. 23-31, and the following volumes; also the book by the same author, *Legendary Lore of the Holy Wells of England*, London, 1893, 222 pages.

the wells to which the names of saints are attached are in any sense witnesses to the struggle of the Church against paganism.

This is clearly not the case. It would be extremely difficult to prove that all these springs were the objects, in remote times, of superstitious worship, and it is obviously false to assert that the memory of a saint could only be connected with them by an act of ecclesiastical authority. As we have already shown, the common people never miss an opportunity of baptising the noteworthy spots in their locality, and quite naturally they bestow upon them any name that happens to occupy their minds. A well dedicated to St. Martin is not necessarily a holy well; it merely testifies to the popularity of St. Martin. One must therefore distinguish carefully between the wells which only attract attention by their name, and those which have been a centre of devotion or superstition. To this second category belong all those to which the heathen were in the habit of offering their prayers and their gifts.

IV.

Dates of festivals—Alteration of object—Difficulty of proving coincidences—A method for ascertaining dates of pagan festivals—Examples.

An important element in seeking to establish the first beginnings of a cultus is the correspondence of dates. Celebrations which attract a large concourse of people are necessarily fixed for specified days. Every one will agree that there is nothing more difficult to alter than the date of a fair or pilgrimage; in nothing does the tenacity of popular custom display itself more forcibly than in the faithful observance of festivals.

One may be perfectly certain that if a Christian people has retained anything whatever of a pagan festival it will certainly be the date.

Generally speaking, it may be said that when it was simply a question of affording some compensation to converts compelled to renounce all pagan rejoicings, they were invited to keep the feasts of the martyrs which were celebrated on the anniversary of their death. In this way St. Gregory Thaumaturgus organised annual reunions for his people in honour of the martyrs, and thus facilitated the transition from worldly pleasures to purely spiritual joys.[1]

It was far otherwise where the bishops had to combat some definitely idolatrous festival and to uproot some celebration of immemorial antiquity. When, as must frequently have happened, it was impossible for them to prevent the people coming together, the only thing for them to do was to change the purpose of the gathering, and thus sanctify the day.[2] The Bishop of Javols would never have triumphed over the superstitions that were rife in his diocese, had he been content to celebrate the feast of St. Hilary on the shores of Lake Helanus on the day appointed by the liturgy. What

1 *Vita S. Gregorii Thaumat.*, Migne, P. G., vol. xlvi., p. 954.

[2 On the island of Malta at the end of the sixteenth century, a feast in honour of St. John the Baptist was celebrated, the ceremony of which had plainly showed pagan aspects. R. Wünsch, *Das Frühlingsfest der Insel Malta*, Leipzig, 1902, there saw the feast of the return of spring, christianized at an unknown period. He had reason; but I cannot follow him when he pretends to recognize in the procession of 12 March (pp. 68-70) a following of that custom already long abolished. And I like less his ideas on the ceremony of Good Friday at Athens, which for him recalls the feasts of Adonis; and not at all the minute paralleling of St. John the Baptist and Adonis which is not essential to his thesis. 3d ed.]

he did do was to celebrate it on the day of the heathen festival: *in hac solemnitate quae dei erat*, says Gregory of Tours.[1] Hence the coincidence of the dates becomes an element of the first importance for those who are anxious to establish any bond of continuity between the pagan and the Christian feast-day.

But if all are agreed as to the importance of this class of proof, they are far from agreement as to the difficulty of demonstration. Precise details are indispensable and it may well be asked whether the subject is of a nature to afford it. The differences between the various calendars, the difficulty of bringing them into agreement, the multiplicity of feasts in honour of the same divinity, the liturgical divergencies in various localities, all complicate the problem of the date to such an extent as to render the assimilation almost always illusory.

Where it is merely a question of establishing a parallel between some Christian solemnity and a festival of the Roman calendar the problem is simple enough and one can arrive at definite conclusions. Thus it may freely be admitted that the greater Litanies of St. Mark's Day are a Christian continuation of the Robigalia observed on 25th April.[2] The date, taken in conjunction with the similarity of the rite, and the identity of the object of the festival, leaves no place for reasonable doubt.

But the solution in other cases is often far less easy to arrive at. The number of pagan festivals being very considerable, the chances of a purely fortuitous coincidence are proportionately great, and it seems

1 See above, p. 170.

2 Anrich, *Mysterienwesen*, Leipzig, 1894, p. 231; Duchesne, *Christian Worship* (Eng. tr.), pp. 261-62.

probable that the *natalis invicti*, which was celebrated on 25th December, had no influence on the choice of that day as the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord. The selection of the date would appear to have been the result of a calculation having as its basis 25th March, that being presumed to be the date of the death of Christ.[1] This last theory, which makes the cycle of the feasts of the infancy of our Lord depend upon Easter, certainly the older celebration, is more probable than the other, which rests only on an ingenious identification of date.

People have also professed to see in the Feast of the Purification a Christianised version of the Lupercalia. In point of fact this last was kept not on the 2nd of February but on the 15th.[2]

Coincidences are far more difficult to establish when it becomes a question of comparing our own calendar with that of the Greeks or Asiatics, and with very varying systems of festivals. Thus we find that the festival of the gods and the heroes was celebrated at Athens not only on a special date but on the corresponding date of each month.[3] These repeated commemorations increase very materially the possibilities of a coincidence, and it becomes obvious that we must

1 Duchesne, *op. cit.*, pp. 247-54; Thurston, *Amer. Eccles. Rev.*, Dec. 1898, pp. 561-576. [See also an article by P. H. Grisar, *Relazione tra alcune feste cristiane antiche e alcune usanze pagane*, in *Civiltà cattolica*, ser. xvii, vol. xii, p. 450-8. 3d ed.]

2 Marquardt, *Le culte chez les Romains*, vol. ii., pp. 179-83. A. Dufourcq in *Études sur les Gesta martyrum*, Paris, 1900, p. 207, asks himself whether the date of the feast of St. Hippolytus, 13th August, has not been fixed by that of the pagan festival *Dianæ in Aventino* (Marquardt, *op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 373). The link he suggests between the two feasts is of the slenderest, and 13th August in undoubtedly the date of the death of St. Hippolytus. [After the Marquardt citation the 3d ed. adds: Cf. D. DeBruyne, in *Revue Bénédictine*, vol. xxxiv, p. 18-26.]

3 Chr. Petersen, *Ueber die Geburtstagsfeier bei den Griechen*, Leipzig, 1857, pp. 313-14. See also A. Mommsen, *Feste der Stadt Athen*, Leipzig, 1898, pp. 1-5.

not hastily jump at conclusions because two feasts happen to fall on the same day.

We have already pointed out how inconclusive is the reasoning which professes to recognise, in the Christian titles of certain ancient shrines, the primitive name of the tutelary divinity of the same place. It is equally dangerous to attempt to deduce the unknown date of a pagan festival from Christian data presumed to have some sort of connection with it.[1] The efforts already made in this direction have always appeared to me, if their authors will forgive my saying so, particularly unfortunate, in spite of the remarkable ingenuity of which they give evidence. The following is a recent example. A series of deductions, drawn from the survival of the worship of the Dioscuri, would seem to point to the existence from the very earliest times of a monthly festival in honour of the two heroes, which would fall, in accordance with common usage, on the corresponding date of each month, either the 18th or the 19th. The following is the argument by which we arrive at this unexpected discovery.[2]

We start with the assertion that a whole series of saints are merely Castor and Pollux in a Christian disguise; then the dates of their feasts are collocated in the following fashion:—

1 M. H. Usener is of a different opinion. This is how he expresses himself: "Die christlichen Heiligen die an die Stellen von Göttern gesetzt worden sind, gestatten uns in ihrem Gedenktag die Zeit des ursprünglichen Götterfestes mit Sicherheit zu erkennen und dadurch das Wesen des Festes und der Gottheit zu ermitteln," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, vol. vii., 1904, p. 14.

2 J. Rendel-Harris, *The Dioscuri in the Christian Legends*, London, 1903, p. 62. The same author has recently published on this subject a new work which is scarcely an improvement on its predecessor: *The Cult of the Heavenly Twins*, Cambridge, 1906. See H. Thurston, S.J., in *The Month*, cviii. (1906), pp. 202-7; *Analecta Bollandiana*, 1907, no. 1. [The 3d ed. omits the reference to Rendel-Harris' 1906 work, and to Thurston's article; it adds: This is a veritable obsession of Dioscures. *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. xxvi, p. 332-33; vol. xxxviii, p. 182-3.]

19th April.—St. Dioscorus.
19th May.—St. Polyeuctes.
18th June.—SS. Mark and Marcellianus.
19th June.—St. Judas-Thomas and SS. Gervase and Protase.
18th August.—SS. Florus and Laurus.
18th September.—St. Castor.
18th December.—St. Castulus.
19th December.—St. Polyeuctes.

I have shown elsewhere that not one of the above saints has anything whatever in common with the Dioscuri.[1] Nearly all of them are clearly defined historical personages, while their cultus is regularly established and rests on a traditional basis. Add to this the fact that no Dioscuri are to be met with in the martyrologies for 19th April. It is the 18th May that must be meant, for on that date the memory of St. Dioscorus, lector, was celebrated in Egypt. The 19th of May is not the date of the martyrdom of St. Polyeuctes. This saint is the second in the group of Timotheus and Polyeuctes inscribed in the Syriac martyrology for 20th May, and it is only by the commonplace blunder of a copyist that the names have been repeated among the martyrs of the 19th.

But putting aside all these difficulties, admitting even that there may have been some sort of link—which as a matter of fact there was not—between the Dioscuri and the saints already enumerated, let us suppose that their feasts were all celebrated on the same day of the month, the 18th. Should we be justified in concluding that in all probability the festival of the Dioscuri was fixed for the 18th of every month? Far from it, for it is obvious at a glance that the date of the 18th in the

1 *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. xxiii., pp. 427-32.

Julian Calendar does not correspond with the 18th in the Greek, Syrian or Asiatic calendars, in accordance with which the festival of Castor and Pollux, had it been celebrated monthly, would in the first instance have been fixed.

We have here a further example of the necessity of not being satisfied with a mere coincidence of dates.[1] One of the arguments brought forward to prove that SS. Florus and Laurus are merely the Dioscuri under another name, is the date of their feast, 18th August, for St. Helena is also commemorated on this same day. Helena, in the fable, is the sister of Castor and Pollux. Give Florus and Laurus their correct names, and you will then discover in the martyrology an authentic feast of the Dioscuri and their sister.

The matter, however, is not quite so simple as it appears. It so happens that the collocation of Florus and Laurus with Helena is entirely fortuitous. No single Latin martyrology makes any mention of Florus and Laurus, who are only known to Greek tradition, whereas no Greek synaxary names Helena on 18th August; she is always associated with Constantine on 11th May, and does not appear in any other place. It was the accidental result of a compilation composed of Greek and Latin elements that brought Helena and the Greek martyrs together at the same date in the martyrology. This fortuitous collocation does not go back further than the sixteenth century, a simple observation which should suffice to eliminate from the ancient calendar the supposed festival of the Dioscuri corresponding to 18th August.

We shall have something to say later concerning the

1 Harris, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-19. See also *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. cit., pp. 428-29; and compare *The Month*, March, 1907, pp. 225 ff.

theory which has resulted in fixing 7th January as the date of the festival of the "Epiphany of Dionysus" in Bithynia.

In order to establish a connection between St. Pelagia, specially honoured on 8th October, and Aphrodite, much emphasis has been laid,[1] among other reasons, on the date of the festival, supported by the text of an inscription at Aegæ in Cilicia, in the following terms:—

Θεῷ Σεβαστῷ Καίσαρι καὶ Ποσειδῶνι ἀσφαλείῳ καὶ Ἀφροδείτῃ Εὐπλοίᾳ.[2]

Euploia is the title of the Aphrodite of Cnidus. It might at least be expected that the first thing to prove would be that the goddess was honoured on 8th October. Not at all. One solitary date has been verified in connection with the worship of the Pelasgic Venus,[3] and that has reference to a local festival, the dedication of a temple and statue to the goddess at Nigra Corcyra (Curzola) on 1st May, in the year 193 of the Christian era. But it is pointed out that Poseidon is mentioned in the same votive inscription, and that in point of fact the 8th of each month was dedicated to Poseidon. I must confess that the argument would make but a feeble impression upon me, even if it could be proved that the God of the sea had his festival on the 8th of the month in Cilicia as well as at Athens.

1 H. Usener, *Legenden der heiligen Pelagia*, Bonn, 1879, p. xxi.
2 C. I. G., 4443.
3 C. I. L., iii., 3066, *Signia Vrsa Signi Symphori templum Veneri Pelagiæ a solo fecit et signum ipsius deæ posuit Falcone et Claro cos. k. mais.*

V.

Pagan legends—Christian adaptations—Three cases to be considered —Examples: Legend of St. Lucian of Antioch—Legend of St. Pelagia and allied legends—St. Livrada.

The legends which offer the most vulnerable points, those which in their entirety or in certain portions appear to reflect pagan traditions, are those which have most attracted the attention of critics, and it is in fact mainly through such legends that they have attempted to connect a certain number of the saints—and not the least celebrated among them—with paganism. We must follow them upon their own ground and attempt to outline the methods which should be applied to this branch of research.

If people merely wish to assert that among a series of legends certain features are to be found that were already in circulation among the nations of classical antiquity, we have nothing to say against their view, and indeed when we ourselves were treating generally of the origins of our hagiographic narratives we quoted sufficient examples of such adaptations to leave no room for doubt on the point.[1] The further our researches in the domain of comparative literature can be carried, the greater will be the number of these parallels, and people will be surprised to discover in mediæval lore so many remnants[2] of classical antiquity.

1 See above, pp. 30-35.

2 In order to convey some idea of the discoveries that may still be made in this direction, I will quote a page from the collection, justly celebrated in the Middle Ages, in which St. Gregory has brought together so many quaint narratives, stories of saints, pious anecdotes, visions and revelations with which, with charming candour, he entertains his deacon Peter. The thirty-sixth chapter of book iv. of the *Dialogues* bears the curious title, *De his qui quasi per errorem educi videntur e corpore*. One of the incidents related by St. Gregory thoroughly illustrates the title. The saint had gathered it from the lips of a certain Stephen who related it as his own experience. Stephen had died and saw his soul conducted to hell. Brought before "the judge who presided there" he was refused admittance. "That is not the man I sent for," said the judge, "it was Stephen the blacksmith." Forthwith the soul of the dead man was returned to his body and the blacksmith, his namesake and neighbour, died (Migne, P. L., vol. lxxvii., p. 384). It is impossible to be mistaken in this matter. The friend of St. Gregory was an unscrupulous person who boasted of being the hero of a tale he had read in some book. Without speaking of St. Augustine, he might have read it in Plutarch, or still better in Lucian's *Philopseudes*, in which Cleomenes relates in similar fashion how having been taken to Hades before the tribunal of Pluto he was sent back to earth again, and one of his friends, the blacksmith Demylus, was taken in his stead. See E. Rohde, *Psyche*, 2nd edition, vol. ii., p. 363; L. Radermacher, *Aus Lucians Lügenfreund* in *Festschrift Theodor Gomperz dargebracht*, Vienna, 1902, p. 204. [The 3d ed. adds a reference to A. Jülicher, *Augustinus und die Topik der Aretalogie*, in Hermes, vol. liv, 1919, p. 94-103.]

But whether such material was used in its raw state or whether it was first given a Christian colouring, there is, as a general rule, no reason for talking of pagan infiltration or even of pagan survivals. It is not the religious element which is responsible in these cases, it is the stream of literary activity carrying along with it the debris of earlier ages.

The problem to be solved is whether a Christian legend perpetuates in any sense a religious incident appertaining to paganism, in other words, whether it is the expression of an ancient cultus, surviving under a Christian form. One must, therefore, in the first place, put aside all legends that are independent of any religious observance. In hagiographic collections such as menologies and passionaries and in compilations such as synaxaries and martyrologies there are many names and documents which represent merely a literary tradition. These may well date from classic times

without our having to discuss the possible influence of paganism.

Our business is with saints whose cultus is proved by a church erected in their honour, by a regularly observed festival or by relics offered to the veneration of the faithful. Such cases may come under three categories.

In the first place, it may happen that legends whose dependence upon pagan antiquity is admitted to have been purely literary may end by giving birth to a cultus. In its origin the History of the Seven Sleepers was a pious romance which, little by little, left the sphere of literature to pass into the domain of liturgy.[1] The heroes of this wholly imaginative work end by being honoured as saints of whom the burial-place is shown, and whose relics are in request. Similarly, Barlaam and Joasaph, the principal personages of a Buddhist romance, eventually, after long delays, attained to similar honours. But their artificially created cultus does not bury its roots in the distant past of Buddhism any more than that of the Seven Sleepers is a continuation of a religious episode of the polytheism of Greece.

In the second place, a legend possessing pagan features may have for its subject an authentic saint whose cultus dates from a period anterior to the legend and is quite independent of it. The problem suggested by these circumstances is not always easy to solve. It may be that the fabulous element has become mingled with the history of the saint merely in virtue of that inevitable law which connects legendary incidents totally devoid of any special religious interest with the name of any illustrious personage. But it is also possible that the

1 *Acta SS.*, July, vol. vi., p. 376.

saint has inherited the attributes of some local deity together with the honours paid to him. No point is more difficult to unravel in practice.

We must not indeed forget that a great number of practices and expressions and stories, beyond doubt religious in their origin, and implying, if we press them, doctrines that were clearly polytheistic, have by degrees wholly lost their original significance, and have become either mere embellishments or conventional formulæ devoid of objectionable meaning. The graceful little genii that painters and sculptors love to set climbing among the festoons and vine-branches are mere decorative motifs, just as the *Dis Manibus Sacrum* was written quite guilelessly at the head of Christian inscriptions on tombs without people seeing in the fact anything save the obligatory prelude to an epitaph.[1]

Indeed the history of the saints supplies many examples that allow us to appreciate the exact value of certain facts which at first sight would appear to be dependent on religion and worship but which in reality are only connected with them by a very slender thread.

The Byzantines sometimes named stars after the saints whose feasts corresponded with their rising. Thus the star of 26th October became the star of St. Demetrius, that of 11th November was named after St. Menas, that of the 14th was the star of St. Philip.[2] It is difficult to see in these appellations anything further than the expression of a date, and I should not like to assert that the Byzantines believed that the

1 F. Becker, *Die heidnische Weiheformel, D. M.*, Gera, 1881, pp. 65-67.

2 *Catalogus codicum astrologorum græcorum II.: Codices venetos descripserunt*, G. Kroll and A. Olivieri, Brussels, 1900, p. 214.

saints ruled over the stars or that they attributed to them in the firmament functions from which the gods had been deposed.[1] It seems to me clear that, putting aside certain superstitious customs,[2] they talked of the star of St. Nicholas just as we should speak of the Michaelmas term. When sailors referred to the autumn equinoctial gales as the "Cyprianic winds" the expression [3] no doubt testified to the popularity of St. Cyprian, but in no way implied any practice of piety.

Hence it does not follow because some characteristic belongs both to mythology and to the legend of a saint that therefore the saint must be regarded as a deity in disguise. It would scarcely be logical to raise doubts concerning the existence of St. George merely because of his legend, and it is highly temerarious to affirm positively that in his person "the Church has converted and baptised the pagan hero Perseus".[4] When the origin of the shrines of St. George has become better known we shall perhaps be enabled to replace him on the historical footing which hagiographers have done so much to undermine. No one has, however, been able to prove hitherto that his cultus among Christians was a mere prolongation of some pagan devotion.[5]

The majority of the hagiographic legends that are adorned with mythological rags and tatters appertain in all probability to saints who have nothing else in

1 Cumont, *Catalogus*, etc., vol. iv., 1903, p. 159.

2 See above, p. 159.

3 Procopius, *Bell. Vand.*, i., 21; Τὸν χειμῶνα οἱ ναῦται . . . δμωνύμως τῇ πανηγύρει προσαγορεύειν εἰώθασιν, ἐπεὶ ἐς τὸν καιρὸν ἐπισκήπτειν φιλεῖ ἐφ' οὗ ταύτην οἱ Λίβυες ἄγειν ἐς ἀεὶ τὴν ἑορτὴν νενομίκασι. *Cf.* i., 20, Dindorf, pp. 393, 397.

4 E. S. Hartland, *The Legend of Perseus*, vol. iii., London, 1896, p. 38.

[5 In the 3d ed. these two sentences have been further developed and he draws upon his *Légendes grecques des saints militaires*, pp. 45-50, and 75; the cultus of St. George is perfectly localized at Lydda in Palestine, and the episode of the dragon, he pointedly observes, does not enter into any of the ancient legends of St. George.]

common with pagan deities. Yet this is not a universal law. Certain very well-authenticated saints have developed in certain shrines such special features that in the cultus paid to them it is difficult to deny the survival of a pagan ritual or belief. Whatever may have been the primitive history of SS. Cosmas and Damian they were represented at an early age as the successors of the Dioscuri, and the honours paid to them at certain of their shrines undoubtedly betray points of contact with pre-existing forms of worship.[1]

For a long time sailors also had their own special ways of honouring St. Nicholas [2] and St. Phocas,[3] and of attributing to them powers which remind one of the heroes of antiquity. One might therefore describe these saints as the successors of Poseidon. No doubt little by little the figures of the holy protectors took the place of the sea god, but the phenomenon is due to accidental circumstances, and even when heir to a pagan god the saint none the less preserves his individuality.[4]

We have still to consider a third case, that of the legend which reveals purely and simply the continuity of a religious tradition, to-day Christian, yesterday idolatrous and superstitious. It is no longer a question of deciding whether an authenticated saint has assimilated some of the characteristics or even the general physiognomy of an earlier deity, but of ascertaining by a careful study of all the narratives concerning the saint

[1 See *Les recueils antiques de miracles des saints*, p. 8-18. 3d ed.]

2 The sailors of Aegina wish each other a good crossing in the formula, "May St. Nicholas be seated at thy helm". E. Curtius, *Die Volksgrüsse der Neugriechen*, in *Sitzungsberichte der k. Preussischen Akademie*, 1887, p. 154.

3 L. Radermacher, *St. Phokas*, in *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, vol. vii, 1904, p. 445-452.

[4 The scholarly author of *Hagios Nikolaos*, Leipzig, 1913-17, M. Anrich, arrives at the same conclusion after a thorough examination of the question — vol. ii., p. 505. 3d ed.]

whether he himself is not a god or pagan hero raised to the altars after a decent transformation.

The distinctions we have sought to establish may seem to some over-subtle, but to ourselves they appear indispensable unless we wish to be satisfied with superficial resemblances and far-fetched comparisons. In order to realise the difficulties of mythological investigations, based upon the analysis of legends of saints, it will suffice to examine thoroughly one or two individual cases over which scholars have already exercised their wits and to measure the results of a criticism as searching as it is ingenious. We propose to restrict ourselves to the legends of St. Lucian [1] and St. Pelagia,[2] and the interpretation which we shall suggest is very different from that which has been current for some years past.

St. Lucian is one of the most celebrated martyrs of the fourth century. He died at Nicomedia, 7th January, 312, and his body was conveyed to Drepanum, a town on the coast of Bithynia which was re-named Helenopolis by Constantine in honour of his mother. Nothing could be better authenticated than the fact of of his martyrdom, nothing more firmly established than his cultus, witnessed to by the basilica of Helenopolis as well as by literary documents.

Among the principal testimonies to the history of St. Lucian we have that of Eusebius,[3] a panegyric by St. John Chrysostom,[4] and a celebrated legend [5] incorporated in the menology of Metaphrastes, but dating undoubtedly from a much earlier period.

1 H. Usener, *Die Sintfluthsagen*, Bonn, 1899, pp. 168-80.
2 *Id., Legenden der heiligen Pelagia*, Bonn, 1879, xxiv., 62 pp.
3 *Hist. Eccles.*, ix., 6.
4 Migne, P. G., vol. 1., pp. 519-26.
5 *Ibid.*, vol. cxiv., pp. 397-416.

We need not stop here to discuss the life of St. Lucian [1] in its general features, but it is necessary to dwell upon certain details of the legends which have been made use of in support of the theory which it is our intention to examine.

In the first place, the author of the passion relates that the martyr suffered torture by hunger for fourteen entire days: τέσσαρες καὶ δέκα τὰς πάσας ἡμέρας.[2] After the first few days he announced to his disciples that he would celebrate with them the Feast of the Theophany and would die on the following day. This prophecy came true: in the presence of the emperor's representatives, filled with amazement at his prolonged endurance, he repeated three times "I am a Christian," and expired.[3]

Others affirm, writes the chronicler, that while still alive he was flung into the sea. The Emperor Maximian, exasperated by his constancy, had commanded that he should be cast into the waves with a heavy stone fastened to his arm, so that he should be deprived for ever of the honours of Christian burial. And he remained in the sea fourteen days, the precise number he had spent in prison; τέσσαρες καὶ δέκα τὰς ὅλας ἡμέρας. On the fifteenth day a dolphin is supposed to have brought his sacred body back to land, and to have died immediately after depositing his precious burden.[4]

No one can fail to recognise in this marvellous incident one of the most popular of all legendary themes of classic antiquity. The dolphin, the friend of man,

1 The best work we possess on the Acts of St. Lucian is that of Pio Franchi, *Di un frammento di una Vita di Costantino*, taken from *Studi e documenti di storia e diritto*, vol. xviii., 1897, pp. 24-45.
2 *Passio S. Luciani*, n. 12, Migne, P. G., vol. cxiv., p. 409.
3 *Ibid.*, n. 15.
4 *Ibid.*, n. 16.

who bears him, living or dead, upon his back, is the subject of more than one poetic fable and of a whole host of works of art.[1] Melicertes, Hesiod, Arion—in this latter case also the dolphin expired on the sand—were all popular types, and there is nothing surprising in the fact that so poetic a legend should have passed into the realms of hagiography. The dolphin further plays a part in the lives of St. Martinian,[2] St. Callistratus,[3] St. Arianus [4] and others. This circumstance alone is sufficient to prove that the dolphin episode in the legend before us is purely adventitious and has only an accidental, and in no sense a mysterious, connection with its history, even should we fail to ascertain the precise circumstances under which St. Lucian came to be associated with this reminiscence of a classical myth.

It has been suggested that dolphins may have been carved on the sarcophagus of the martyr, and that this decorative design may of itself have sufficed to set popular imagination working.[5] This explanation combined with the mythical tradition which had not been lost at that period and which the sight of the dolphins would recall, is not lightly to be set aside. But it has the disadvantage of being a pure hypothesis suggested by the necessities of the case. In point of fact we

1 O. Keller, *Thiere des klassischen Alterthums*, Innsbruck, 1887, pp. 211-35 ;A. Marx, *Griechische Märchen von dankbaren Tieren*, Stuttgart, 1889, p. 1 ff.

2 *Acta SS.*, Feb., vol. ii., p. 670.

3 *Ibid.*, Sept., vol. vii., p. 192.

4 *Ibid.*, March, vol. i., p. 757; *Synaxarium ecclesiæ Constantinopolitanæ*, p. 308.

5 P. Batiffol, *Étude d'hagiographie arienne. La Passion de saint Lucien d'Antioche*, in *Compte-rendu du Congrès scientifique international des catholiques*, Brussels, 1894, vol. ii., pp. 181-86.

possess no information concerning the decoration of the sarcophagus of St. Lucian.

A second explanation has been brought forward which possesses the merit of being at least founded on fact.[1] St. Lucian was martyred at Nicomedia, yet his basilica is situated, not in that town, but across the gulf, at Helenopolis. The translation of the sacred remains probably left no impression on popular memory, and later on the inhabitants explained the anomaly by the familiar device of a miraculous intervention of which tradition furnished them with so many examples.

The presence of the dolphin in the Nicomedian legend has, however, suggested conclusions of a far more radical nature to our school of mythologists.

Note, they say, the persistence with which the number 15 recurs in connection with the name of St. Lucian. Putting aside, suggestive as it is, the fact that among the Greeks his feast has been transferred to the 15th of October, let us study the legend itself. The saint expired after fifteen days of suffering; the dolphin brought his body to shore on the fifteenth day; he died the day after the Epiphany which was the 15th of the month of Dionysius, and observe that at Helenopolis his feast is celebrated on the eve which is precisely the 15th of the month of Tishri.[2]

And what meaning has the dolphin? It is one of the attributes of Dionysus. And why is it connected with the memory of St. Lucian? Because his feast coincided with the feast of Dionysus which was observed in Bithynia on the 15th of the month of Dionysius. Therefore it was a pagan feast which the people

1 P. Franchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-43.

2 In the Syriac Martyrology. See De Rossi-Duchesne, *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* in *Acta SS.*, Nov., vol. ii., p. lii.

still remembered and which they associated with this Christian commemoration. The dolphin of the legend of St. Lucian is a witness to the affection of the new converts for their ancient superstitions.

Such is in brief the reasoning of these learned critics.

One would of course be bound to discuss these weighty conclusions, if in point of fact we knew from other sources that the great solemnity in honour of Dionysus was really celebrated on the 15th of the month, coinciding with 7th January, and also that a legend of Dionysus, current in Bithynia, was one of the numerous replicas of the history of the dolphin bringing to shore the body of Melicertes. But we know nothing of the kind. It is to the legend of St. Lucian itself that we are referred for the evidence of these statements.[1]

What can we think of this logical structure save that it is destitute of any sound basis and that not only do we discern no sort of link between St. Lucian and Dionysus, but, in studying the matter closely, we find that Dionysus disappears completely from the scene, to leave us in the presence of one of the most ordinary phenomena of folk-lore in all countries? It seems superfluous to insist on the feebleness of the argument—it should rather be called the suggestion—drawn from the number 15, which itself has not even been established beyond question. The Arian commentary on Job, which would appear to contain an echo of the same tradition

1 "Durch die legende des Lukianos wissen wir das die Bithynier die epiphanie des Dionysos am xv. des auf wintersonnenwende folgenden monats Dionysios feierten. Wir wissen daraus auch, unter welchen mythischen bilde die erscheinung des gottes geschaut wurde. Als entseelter auf dem rucken eines gewaltigen delphin zum lande gebracht, das war das bild Bithynischer epiphanie." Usener, vol. cit., p. 178.

as the passion of St. Lucian, bears another figure: *Hic namque beatus duodecim diebus supra testas pollinas extensus, tertia decima die est consummatus.*[1]

Thus the legend of St. Lucian involves no sort of reflection upon the Christians of Bithynia. It would justify no one in suspecting the purity of their faith or in attempting to prove that they had more difficulty than other people in forgetting Dionysus. Moreover, it remains to be proved that the great festival of the god really did coincide with the day after the Christian Epiphany, the day of the martyrdom of St. Lucian. For, so far, neither his own legend nor any historical text has furnished any proof of the assertion.

The legend of St. Pelagia has been the starting-point of a most laborious inquiry, conducted on the same principles, of which the results, although accepted by many scholars who have not felt bound to investigate them further, are certainly surprising. Its authors profess to have discovered that the Church continued, though admittedly under a very modified form, to pay homage to Aphrodite, to Venus, to the goddess of carnal pleasure and animal fecundity.

Pelagia, known also as Margarito, was, owing to the splendour of her pearls and jewels, one of the most celebrated as also one of the most corrupt of the dancing-girls of Antioch. One day she entered the church while Bishop Nonnus was exhorting the faithful. Touched by grace she begged for baptism, and when she quitted the white robe of the newly baptised she donned a hair shirt and a man's tunic, and left Antioch in secret in order to hide herself on Mount Olivet

1 "For this blessed saint after lying for twelve days upon a bed of minute shells breathed his last upon the thirteenth day." Migne, P. G., vol. xvii., p. 471.

outside Jerusalem. There she lived for three years in a little cell under the name of Pelagius, after which she entered upon the reward of her life of penance. The Greek Church celebrates her feast on 8th October.

Under this form, and taken by itself, the history of Pelagia offers no very improbable features, and it would certainly not be easy to draw from it any conclusions favourable to a mythological survival. But its critics compare it with other legends with which it constitutes a whole, of which the pagan origin and character are according to them clearly manifest.

In the first place, on 8th October, a commemoration is made of another Pelagia of Antioch, a virgin martyr, whose heroic death was related by St. John Chrysostom in a panegyric preached in her honour.

The same day recalls the martyrdom of a third Pelagia, of Tarsus, who preferred death by fire in a brazen bull to the love of the emperor's son.[1]

Pelagia of Tarsus reappears at Seleucia on 22nd August under the name of Anthusa, with a history[2] of which the incidents, if not the closing scenes, recall the preceding version.

St. Marina of Antioch, in Pisidia, commemorated by the Greeks on 17th July,[3] and St. Margaret of Antioch by the Latins on 20th July,[4] suffered death like Pelagia of Tarsus, for having scorned the advances of the judge, the prefect Olybrius.

1 The three legends are summarised in *Synaxarium ecclesiæ Constantinopolitanæ*, pp. 117-20. The sources in *Bibl. hag. græc.*, pp. 105-6.

2 Published by H. Usener in the *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. xii., pp. 10-41.

3 H. Usener, *Acta Sanctæ Marinæ et Christophori*, Bonn, 1886, pp. 15-46.

4 The different versions of the Passion of St. Margaret, *Bibl. hag. lat.*, 5303-10.

It is easy to trace the connection of yet another group of saints with the preceding.

St. Margaret, commemorated on 8th October, flies from her nuptial chamber disguised as a man. She hides herself in a monastery where she passes under the name of Pelagius. Accused of having seduced a nun she suffers the penalty for a sin she could not have committed. Her innocence is only established after her death. She receives the name of Reparata.[1]

Maria, or Marina (12th Feb.), also enters a monastery disguised as a man. One day the daughter of an innkeeper travelling in the neighbourhood accuses the supposed monk of being the father of her baby. Marina is driven from the monastery and forced to maintain the child. The severity of her penances re-open the doors of the cloister to her, but only after her death is the discovery made that she has been the victim of calumny.[2]

St. Eugenia (24th Dec.) ruled as abbot over a monastery of monks. She also was falsely accused by a woman before the tribunal of her father who was prefect of Egypt.[3] It is also in Egypt that we meet with a St. Apollinaria (5th Jan.) who hides herself under the name of Dorothea, and suffers a similar misfortune.[4] Euphrosyne of Alexandria (25th Sept.) adopts the name of Smaragdos and lives peacefully in a community of monks until at length she is recognised by her father.[5]

Theodora of Alexandria (11th Sept.) convicted of infidelity, retires into a monastic house for men in

1 *Acta SS.*, Oct., vol. iv., p. 24.
2 Migne, P. G., vol. cxv., p. 348 ff.
3 *Ibid.*, vol. cxvi., p. 609 ff.
4 *Acta SS.*, Jan., vol. i., pp. 257-61.
5 A. Boucherie, in *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. ii., pp. 196-205.

order to do penance. She is denounced for misconduct and rehabilitated after her death.[1]

It is clear that all these legends are interconnected, as may be seen partly by the similarity in the names: Pelagia, Marina, Pelagius or Margaret recalling the surname of Margarito given to the courtesan of Antioch, and partly by the theme: a woman disguised as a monk and keeping the secret of her sex until death. Sometimes the theme is complicated by the further theme of calumny, which, under the circumstances, is only a logical development of the main idea.

Before indicating the series of deductions by means of which folk-lorists have succeeded in recognising Venus or Aphrodite in the person of St. Pelagia, let us try to determine the starting-point of the whole series of legends which we have just summarised.

In the fourth century the Church of Antioch celebrated on 8th October the feast of a St. Pelagia,[2] a quite historical personage, concerning whom both St. John Chrysostom[3] and St. Ambrose[4] have furnished us with information. But her history in no way resembles that of the penitent courtesan, and there is nothing in it to suggest anything in the nature of masquerading. Pelagia is a maiden of fifteen who sees

1 K. Wessely, *Die Vita S. Theodoræ*, Vienna, 1889, pp. 25-44. We refrain from mentioning Porphyria of Tarsus, who is not a saint, or Andronicus and Athanasia who, in our opinion, burden M. Usener's list quite superfluously. He might, however, have included in it St. Papula who lived with some monks of the diocese of Tours and was placed by them at the head of their monastery. Gregory of Tours, *In gloria confessorum*, xvi.

2 Date furnished by the Syriac Martyrology, *Acta SS.*, Nov., vol. ii., p. lxi.

3 Migne, P. G., vol. l., pp. 579-85.

4 *De virginibus*, iii., 7, 33; Migne, P. L., vol. xvi., p. 229; *Epist.* xxvii., *ad Simplicianum*, 38; *ibid.*, p. 1093.

her father's house in the hands of the soldiery. To escape from their outrages she begs for a delay, the time to array herself in her finest robes. And while the soldiers are waiting below for their victim she flings herself from the roof and preserves her virginity by a voluntary death.

Should we then admit the existence of a second St. Pelagia of Antioch, the penitent sinner? The identity of dates, 8th October, gives food for reflection. An admirable passage from St. John Chrysostom may profitably be recalled at this juncture.

In his sixty-seventh Homily on St. Matthew, the saintly doctor recalls the history of a celebrated actress whose name he does not give, and who came to Antioch from one of the most corrupt cities of Phœnicia, having become so notorious, thanks to her evil life, that her fame had spread as far as Cilicia and Cappadocia. She brought ruin to a large number of persons, and the very sister of the emperor fell a victim to her seductions. Suddenly she resolved to reform her life, and, under the influence of grace, she wholly renounced her evil ways. She was admitted to the sacred mysteries, and after her baptism lived for long years in the strictest austerity, wearing a hair-shirt, and shutting herself up in a voluntary prison, where she allowed no one to visit her.

Nothing justifies us in assuming that this anonymous penitent became after death the object of an ecclesiastical cultus, indeed the way in which St. John Chrysostom speaks of her seems to imply the contrary. But it may be taken as certain that the narrative known under the name of Pelagia's Repentance is neither more nor less than an adaptation of the incident related by St. John Chrysostom. The editor, who

bestows on himself the name of James, no doubt considered it too simple and therefore introduced into it the idea of the disguise with which more than one tale would have made him familiar.

It is very difficult to decide whether the so-called James originally intended to write an edifying romance in which a heroine named Pelagia should play the leading part, or whether, by means of fresh data, he proposed to write the legend of the venerated saint of Antioch. We know from illustrious examples both how quickly historical tradition concerning local saints may disappear beneath the action of legendary compositions, and also how little hagiographers hesitate in making alterations that render their subjects almost unrecognisable. However this may be, whether or no in the mind of the so-called James there was any identity between his heroine and St. Pelagia of Antioch, it was inevitable that such identity should soon be assumed to exist.[1]

The further legend of Pelagia of Tarsus in Cilicia appears to us to be the result of the double tradition that surrounded the name of Pelagia. In certain aspects she recalls the courtesan of Antioch, whose reputation, as we are expressly told by St. John Chrysostom, had penetrated as far as Cilicia, and who had also had relations with the imperial family. On the

1 It must not be maintained that no confusion has existed, nor can the three saints bearing the name of Pelagia, and entered in the synaxaries for 8th October, be produced in support of such a contention. The similarity of the date is in itself sufficient to explain the error. The three notices referring to the three namesakes are the outcome of a very ordinary proceeding among compilers of synaxaries. Whenever they met with two traditions concerning one and the same saint which were not easy to reconcile, they had no hesitation in resolving him into two distinct people.

other hand, Pelagia of Tarsus was a virgin, and in that, as in her martyrdom, she recalls the primitive Pelagia whose cultus was established as early as the fourth century.

The history of Pelagia in its double form proved highly successful and gave rise to an amazing wealth of legendary lore of which other examples may be found in hagiographic literature. The version by the self-styled James, at once the most interesting and the most highly coloured, is that which has enjoyed the greatest popularity. The true personality of the saint of Antioch, shadowy at the outset, soon disappeared entirely in the interest taken in her legend. This latter lost by degrees every vestige of historic fact; even the account of the conversion became eliminated and the purely legendary residuum passed under various names, thus degenerating into the primitive form of a tale strictly so called, thanks to which we have the saints Mary or Marina, Apollinaria, Euphrosyne and Theodora, who are simply literary replicas of the Pelagia of the self-styled James; or else, as in the case of St. Eugenia, the theme of a woman hiding her sex was tacked on to other narratives having for their hero some historic personage.

We have dealt at length with this development, which we regard as a somewhat commonplace phenomenon to be explained by the normal action of the legendary ferment. If there is any item of religious interest to be deduced from all this, it is the fact that a traditional cultus may have the life crushed out of it by legend. But the cultus in this instance was Christian, so too was the subsequent legend, although mingled with elements drawn from the domain of general literature. Nowhere does a pagan influence make itself felt.

Such, however, as may be supposed, is not the interpretation accepted by those who profess to identify Pelagia with Aphrodite.

After having glanced over the series of narratives of which we have given a summary, the conclusion is arrived at that "this bird's-eye view must give rise, even in the most prejudiced minds, to the conviction that one and the same divinity reappears in the multiple variety of these legends like a trunk despoiled of its branches; thus the image that was profoundly impressed upon the soul of the people, though banished from its temples, continued to draw from its secret roots sustenance for the new branches that were shooting out on every side. . . . The Hellenism of the Imperial epoque contained but one conception which could have produced all these legendary forms: that of Aphrodite. It was necessary to tear from the hearts of the faithful the dangerous image which personified carnal beauty; it was accepted as it was, but purified in the fire of repentance and suffering in order to render it worthy of heaven." [1]

Clearly the point now is to prove that Aphrodite or Venus is indeed no other than the heroine of our legends.

Nothing, it seems, is more simple. Aphrodite was the goddess of the sea, and she is known under a profusion of titles which recall this quality: Aigaia, Epipontia, Thalassaia, Pontia, Euploia, and finally Pelagia, of which Marina is merely a translation.

And this is the whole kernel of the demonstration; and as, in point of fact, nothing is to be drawn from the dates of the festivals it is the whole of the argument.[1] Is it needful to add that I consider it a weak one?

1 Usener, *Legenden der heiligen Pelagia*, p. 20.

If only the name of Pelagia had been a rare or unusual one among women, if it had been less well known at Antioch, the common home of the various versions, or again, if the title of Pelagia had been one of the popular epithets applied to Aphrodite, there might have been some excuse for this loose reasoning. But only one solitary example[2] of a Venus Pelagia and two of a Venus Marina, both supplied by Horace,[3] are to be discovered, whereas there is every reason to believe that Pelagia was quite a common name both at Antioch and elsewhere.[4]

Doubtless we shall be excused from dwelling on other comparisons which are intended to support the main contention. Thus *Anthusa* of Seleucia is compared with the Aphrodite *Anthera* of Knossos; *Porphyria* of Tyre with the Venus *Purpurina* of Rome; *Margarita* with the Venus Genitrix because Cæsar dedicated to her a cuirass studded with pearls.[5] What erudition wasted on a futile task!

We cannot however neglect a further consideration produced in support of the theory we are combating, one that is really ingenious and intended to demonstrate an unequivocal trace of the worship of Aphrodite under one of its most monstrous developments, in the very heart of Christianity. Attention is specially

1 The question of the date has been already discussed, p. 185.

2 C. I. L., iii., 3066. *Cf.* Preller-Robert, *Griechische Mythologie*, vol. i., 1894, pp. 364-65. Nothing on the subject among the Greek poets, C. F. H. Bruchmann, *Epitheta deorum quæ apud poetas græcos leguntur*, Leipzig, 1893, p. 68.

3 See T. B. Carter, *Epitheta deorum quæ apud poetas latinos leguntur*, Leipzig, 1902, p. 102.

4 C. I. G., 3369, 3956, 9497.

5 Usener, *op. cit.*, pp. xxi-xxii.

drawn in the Pelagian legends to the contrast between pleasure and penance, between lust and chastity, and to the ever-recurrent theme of sex-disguise. The object of this is to bring us back to the goddess of Amathus in Cyprus, who could be regarded at will as Aphrodite or Aphroditos, and who wore the dress of a woman with the beard of a man. In the sacrifices offered at this shrine the men were dressed as women and the women as men.[1] It was the worship of the Hermaphrodite. The legend of Pelagia, it is suggested, has retained the imprint of this; but the cultus continues formally within the Church; the bearded woman has been raised to the altars. In Rome it is St. Galla;[2] in Spain, St. Paula;[3] and in other places SS. Liberata, Wilgefortis, Kümmernis, Ontkommer, etc.[4]

I have already pointed out that the incident of sex-dissimulation is a most ordinary theme in circulation in every literature; and as for the supposed replicas of the Hermaphrodite, they could not have been more ill-chosen. Can any one seriously bring forward the case of Galla, whose history, told by St. Gregory, is of the most vulgar kind? Physicians, in order to induce her to marry again, assured her that if she did not do so she would grow a beard, and so it came to pass.[5] Paula is an obscure saint of Avila whose history is a repetition of that of Wilgefortis. This grotesque legend, however, is very far from possessing the mysterious origin which some people are anxious to attribute to it. It took its rise, as has already been shown, from the diffusion of the picture of the *Volto*

1 Usener, *op. cit.*, p. xxiii.
2 *Acta SS.*, Oct., vol. iii., pp. 147-63.
3 *Ibid.*, Feb., vol. iii., p 174.
4 *Ibid.*, July, vol. v., pp. 50-70.
5 St. Gregory, *Dial.*, iv., p. 13

Santo of Lucca, and is merely a coarse interpretation of an unusual iconographic type.[1]

VI.

Mythological names—Other suspicious names—Iconographic parallels—The Blessed Virgin—"Saints on horseback".

In the preceding pages it has been made clear that saints' names play a certain *rôle* in the researches of mythologists, and that not infrequently a real importance is attributed to them in the question of pagan survivals. Thus we have been assured that "the Greek nations of the continent, the Islands and Asia Minor turned with ardour towards the ancient gods of the Hellenes, on whom they were content to bestow new and often very transparent names: Pelagia, Marina, Porphyria, Tychon, Achilleios, Mercurios," etc.[2] It is easy to show that assumptions based merely upon the name are, in the present instance, particularly misleading.

From very remote times the Romans were in the habit of bestowing the names of Greek divinities more especially upon slaves and newly enfranchised persons; later, the names of Roman gods became equally popular. The Greeks conformed to the custom which became more prevalent as polytheism died out. Hence the frequency with which one meets with the names of gods and heroes such as Hermes, Mercurius, Apollo, Aphrodite, Pallas and Phœbus,[3] as well as with derivatives from mythological names, such as Apollonios,

1 See above, p. 110.
2 Gelzer, *Die Genesis der byzantinischen Themenverfassung*, p. 54.
3 The sources are given by H. Meyersahm, *Deorum nomina hominibus imposita*, Kiliae, 1891.

Pegasios, Dionysios, etc.[1] Several of these are the names of quite authentic saints, and this fact should suffice to show that, in a general way, a pagan name should not throw suspicion on the saint who bears it. Certain names, moreover, are only mythological in appearance. St. Venera, for example, whose name recalls that of Venus, is no other than St. Paraskeve, *vendredi*, in its Latin or Italian form.[2]

This is not to say that in the calendar of saints we do not come across strange names which may give rise to legitimate suspicions. In Corfu (Corcyra) honour is paid to an obscure female saint named Corcyra, *Κέρκυρα*, who plays a part in the legend of the Apostles of Corcyra, Jason and Sosipater.[3] It would be difficult not to believe that this St. Corcyra stands in the same relation to the Island as Nauplius to Nauplia,[4] Romulus to Rome, Byzas to Byzantium, or Sardus to Sardinia,[5] and that she is simply the product of the brain of the hagiographer. A study of the Acts of SS. Jason and Sosipater entirely confirms this impression.[6]

There is yet another class of names which may well excite distrust. I refer to those which express a quality or function such as Therapon, Sosandros, Panteleemon and others. It is almost always to saints with a

1 H. Usener, *Götternamen*, Bonn, 1896, p. 358 ff.

2 A fact admitted by Wirth himself, *Danae in den christlichen Legenden*, Vienna, 1892, pp. 24-26.

3 *Acta SS.*, June, vol. v., pp. 4-7. Compare *Synaxarium ecclesiæ Constantinopolitanæ*, pp. 633-36.

4 A. Boeckh, *Encyklopaedie der philologischen Wissenschaften*, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1886, p. 560.

5 "Sardus Hercule procreatus. . . . Sardiniam occupavit et ex suo vocabulo insulæ nomen dedit." Isidore, *Etymol.*, xiv., 6, 39, Migne, P. L., vol. lxxxii., p. 519. Isidore's compilation is rich in analogous examples.

6 Mustoxidi, *Delle cose Corciresi*, Corfu, 1848, pp. xi.-xx.

marked reputation as thaumaturgists that names of this character are applied, nor is it always the result of chance. I am well aware that people have denounced, and with reason, the mania for transforming into myths all personages whose names correspond with the activity attributed to them. "It would be quite easy," writes Boeckh, "considering that nearly all names in classical times possessed a meaning, to explain the greater number of them by myths, and it would be somewhat embarrassing to decide how the Greeks should have named their children in order to guard them from the danger of losing their identity and seeing themselves reduced to a state of myth. Sophroniscos, the father of Socrates, would fall under grave suspicion, for it is Socrates who makes men wise, *σώφρονας*; his mother Phænarete has in point of fact been suspected by Buttmann, for Socrates is *ὁ φαίνων τὴν ἀρετήν*."[1]

The matter could not be expressed better. But, in the case before us, the existence of the saints who appear to be the personification of attributes is frequently only guaranteed by strange legends, and we know, moreover, that people are quick to bestow on the saints they invoke, names in keeping with the *rôle* they are presumed to play. St. Liberata, Ontkommer or Kummernis offers an example of this. The homage paid to her was in reality addressed to Christ, as originally it was the crucifix of Lucca that people venerated before the transformation wrought in accordance with the data of the legend. The cultus of other saints of the same stamp may possibly have veiled a worship of a very different character, difficult to specify and connected by mysterious links with some pagan supersti-

1 Boeckh, *Encyklopaedie*, p. 581.

tion. Such an hypothesis cannot be wholly excluded, but it certainly cannot be asserted as a general principle. It is, for instance, very improbable that it is applicable to St. Panteleemon whom Theodoret places among the most celebrated martyrs of his day[1] and who possessed many famous shrines in the time of Justinian.[2]

We cannot bring this chapter to a close without touching cursorily on a point which will illustrate in some degree the ideas we have already developed. Just as, in the domain of legend, certain scholars have been eager to mark the stages of a sort of Christian metamorphosis having its starting-point in absolute paganism, so certain Christian pictures and statues appear to them simply as the Christianised interpretation of an idolatrous idea. In such a matter the danger of assuming the existence of a real dependence from certain outward resemblances becomes particularly evident, the more so because the arts afford after all only a narrow range of expression.

In point of fact it may be said that the few timid attempts in this direction that have hitherto been undertaken have been remarkably unfortunate, and that, in almost every instance, a simple confrontation with definite historical data has proved sufficient to shatter all the conclusions drawn from the vague analogy between certain Christian compositions and figures of admittedly pagan origin. Need we recall the extraordinary pretension of a certain learned person to trace the type of the Virgin with the seven swords, so popular in Catholic countries ,back to the Assyrian goddess Istar ?[3] As it so happens the genesis of this representation of Our Lady of Seven Dolours, as indeed of the devotion

[1 See our *Origines du culte des martyrs*, p. 220. The 3d ed. deletes the phrase about Theodoret placing St. Panteleemon among the most celebrated martyrs of his day.]

2 *Acta SS.*, July, vol. vi., p. 398.

3 H. Gaidoz, *La Vierge aux Sept Glaives* in *Mélusine*, vol. vi., 1892, pp. 126-38.

itself, is known in all its details, both the time and the place of its origin having been accurately ascertained. We have evidence that it does not date back farther than the sixteenth century, and that it comes from the Low Countries.[1]

Another writer has professed to discover numerous analogies, indicative of a common origin, between the worship of the Madonna and the worship of Astarte. He has even gone so far as to recognise in those pictures of the Virgin to be seen in our churches adorned with a long triangular embroidered robe a continuation of the sacred cone which represented the Eastern divinity.[2]

Again, an effort has been made to prove the descent of the Madonnas of the thirteenth century from the type of Gallic mother-goddesses "through the medium of Gallo-Roman types of a more skilful execution which already wear a virginal expression".[3] This channel of transmission is supposed to be found in statues representing goddesses in the form of a woman nursing her child. Surely every one can see that such a group would very easily suggest the mother of God, and that it is in no way surprising if here and there our forefathers were deceived by the resemblance. But so far were they from needing a model from which to represent the Blessed Virgin in that attitude, that this is precisely the type of the most ancient Madonna known to us, that painted on a wall of the catacomb of Priscilla.[4]

1 *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. xii., pp. 333-52. [P. Soulier, *La confrérie de Notre-Dame des Sept Douleurs dans les Flandres*, Brussels, n.d., 71 pp.; A. Duclos, *De eerste eeuw van het broederschap der Zeven Weedommen van Maria*, Brussels, 1922, 142 pp.]

2 See *Mélusine*, vol. iii., 1887, p. 503; also G. Rösch, *Astarte-Maria in Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, vol. lxi., 1888, pp. 265-99.

3 J. Baillet, *Les Déesses-Mères d'Orléans*, Orleans, 1904, p. 14.

4 It is more surprising that archæologists of eminence should have allowed themselves to be mistaken concerning the significance of

From the fact that Horus is always represented on horseback, piercing a crocodile with his lance, we must not rush to the conclusion that St. George, who is equally represented on horseback, killing a dragon, is identical with the Egyptian divinity.[1] Apart from the fact that the great majority of warrior-saints are represented on horseback,[2] and that the sight of an equestrian statue might suggest this iconographic type, the legend of St. George, the dragon-slayer, a legend without any sort of link with the god Horus, would naturally induce Christian artists to confer upon the image of the saint what has come to be its consecrated form. St. Menas with the two camels, his indispensable companions, equally recalls Horus and his crocodiles. It may well be that Coptic sculptors derived their inspiration from so widely spread a representation and in this way helped to create the popular type of the great martyr. But it does not follow that he should therefore be regarded as a pagan divinity, and made into a sort of

an Egyptian stele representing Isis with Horus at her breast. M. Gayet in *Les monuments coptes du musée de Boulaq* in the *Mémoires de la mission archéologique du Caire*, vol. iii., pl. xc., p. 24, has no hesitation in recognising it as the Blessed Virgin giving suck to the Holy Child, although with the proviso "that this representation must belong to the earliest times of Coptic evolution when the antique manner was still predominant". G. Ebers, *Sinnbildliches, Die Koptische Kunst*, etc., Leipzig, 1892, has also adopted the explanation. But M. C. Schmidt had only to turn round the stone of which the reverse side had served for a Christian epitaph to eliminate the stele from the series of Coptic monuments, and restore it to the worship of Isis and Horus. C. Schmidt, *Ueber eine angebliche altkoptische Madonna-Darstellung* in the *Zeitschrift für aegyptische Sprache*, vol. xxxiii., 1895, pp. 58-62.

1 Clermont-Ganneau, *Horus et saint Georges* in the *Revue Archéologique*, N.S., vol. xxxii., 1876, pp. 196-204, 372-99, pl. xvii.

2 See J. Strzygowski, *Der koptische Reiterheilige und der hl. Georg* in *Zeitschrift für aegyptische Sprache*, vol. xl., 1902. pp. 49-60.

understudy to Horus.[1] The classical origin of the type of St. Peter seated on a throne with the keys in one hand and the other raised in blessing is beyond dispute. But is St. Peter in consequence to be ranked entirely with the personages represented in a similar attitude?[2]

1 I. A. Wiedemann, *Die Darstellungen auf den Eulogien des heiligen Menas* in the *Actes du sixieme congrès des Orientalistes*, vol. iv., Leiden, 1885, pp. 159-64.

2 H. Grisar, *Analecta Romana*, Rome, 1899, pp. 627-57.

THE LEGENDS OF THE SAINT

AN INTRODUCTION TO HAGIOGRAPHY

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