

which were transmitted from coast to coast, are still in use all over Europe and the custom of lighting fires in the evening on certain days in the spring for that purpose appointed, is still an amusement of youth in many places where they faithfully observe the old rubric, without knowing the reason of it.

The priests, during the year, appeared but seldom in public, except at the time of religious affairs. They went out in the spring, that is in February, and met to judge the differences of private persons, that these might afterwards freely go about their respective works.

The assembly of priests to judge the people was proclaimed by a Horus with a great beard and a scythe in his hand, and by an Isis with many breasts, and encompassed with the heads of animals. The Horus with his great beard denotes the assembly of ancient men. The scythe (at present the emblem of time) denotes hay making and the harvest, which immediately followed the assize.

They by degrees lost the meaning of these plain figures and names, that were in use at the feasts in which the whole was become an invariable ceremonial. The current or the running writing caused the sense of them to be neglected; on the other hand nothing contributed more to make it forgotten than the custom of not reckoning exactly the sacred year, and of always putting the beginning of it back a whole day every fourth year; so that the feasts and figures relating to the operations of the spring, being placed in autumn or winter and so of the rest, they no longer understood anything of what this multitude of figures meant. All being taken for so many men and women, whose apotheosis was celebrated, the people assigned to them a genealogy agreeable to the order of the feasts. Thus all these great personages that have peopled heaven, whom every country flattered themselves with having had for their inhabitants, to whom poets have attributed tragical adventures, and all the accidents of humanity; these great conquerors, the histories of whom our learned men are incessantly sifting, even so far as to penetrate into the political concerns that prompted them to act, prove at last to be, as well as Cancer, Capricorn, the Balance or the Sphinx, mere ensigns or public marks and figures posted up to direct the people and regulate the feasts and public works all the year round.

*Saturn* was represented by the Greeks with eyes before and behind, some of which are awake and others asleep, and with four wings, two of which are spread and two closed; he was the symbol of justice whose penetration nothing can escape, the many eyes and wings mark out the penetration and continuance of the work of the judges, who relieved each other by succession night and day, to dispatch the affairs of the people and those of the state. Homer calls him the penetrating, the sagacious, the subtle and quick sighted Saturn. In imitation of the Egyptian Horus, the Greeks also placed into the hands of Saturn a scythe, and as the name Chronos, under which he was known to them,