

restore Proserpine to her mother, which he consented to do on condition that she had taken no food in his dominions. The fates agreed to the condition, but unfortunately it turned out that Proserpine, walking in the garden of the infernal regions, had plucked a pomegranate, of which she had eaten seven kernels. The only compromise Jupiter could agree to in this emergency was that she should live six months alternately with her husband and six months with her mother.

Ceres had a son named Iacchus. This Iacchus, also called Bacchus, was introduced into the Eleusinian Mysteries, and was the same as the Horus of the Egyptians. He was eventually murdered by the Titans, as Osiris was by Typhon.

The Dionysiad Mysteries were also sacred to Bacchus, as was the Sabasian and Orphic; the legend with some variation, was common to all.

MITHRAS.

From what we have stated with regard to the Mysteries of Mithras, it is evident that the legends of this Sun god made a much nearer approach to the true history of the creation, the entrance of evil into this world, and of the fall of man from his original condition, than those of any other Pagan nation which have come down to us.

SCANDINAVIAN.

It is related in one of the cantos of the Edda of the Scandinavians, that a certain architect undertook, with the help of his horse alone, to build a city or fortress for the gods which could not be taken by siege; and demanded that Freya (the Scandinavian Venus) should be given him to wife in lieu of wages, and that he should receive the Sun and the Moon as an additional recompense. When his work was almost completed, Thor killed him with a blow of his club, and his body was precipitated into the infernal regions, or "Nifheim." Another canto of the same book relates, that Balder the Good had a palace in which were pillars with Runic characters on them, by means of which the dead could be raised.

This Balder at one time had a frightful dream, which he believed betokened danger to his life. The other gods of the Valhalla to whom he communicated his apprehensions, determined to do everything in their power to allay his fears, and took an oath of all animals, vegetables and minerals, that neither of them should do any harm to Balder. The only exception to this oath was the mistletoe, a parasite plant of the oak, which, on account of its feebleness, was supposed to be unable to cause any mischief. By this means, Balder was in their eyes rendered invulnerable; the gods then amused themselves by throwing stones and other projectiles at him, which touched without hurting him. Hoder the Blind (or Destiny), being prevented by his infirmity, was the only one who did not join in this pastime; but Locke (the evil principle) offered to guide his aim, that he, as well as the others, might throw something at Balder. Hoder accepting his offer, Locke put into his hand a branch of the mistletoe, and by his aid, Hoder threw it at Balder, whom it pierced through and through, causing him instantly to expire; and thus it is why the Gaulish Druids and Scandinavian Drottes went at the winter solstice in search of the mistletoe, and with great ceremony cut it with a golden knife or

sickle, whose curved shape recalls that portion of the year or zodiacal circle in which the murder of Balder was perpetrated.

In the Druidical initiation, a scenic death and resurrection took place. In one of Taliesin's poems, the hierophant describes the process he had himself undergone: "I have been a grain of the Arkites which vegetated upon a hill. I was received by the hen with the red fangs and divided crest. I remained nine nights an infant in her womb. I have been Aedd, returning to my former state. I have died. I have revived, and was fully instructed by her with the red fangs. Of what she gave me, scarcely can I express the great praise that is due."

ASTRONOMICAL.

There is no doubt whatever that the ancient Pagan initiation had a direct astronomical reference; but I am fully convinced that a far deeper mystery was concealed in their rites. And although their original meaning was lost even to themselves, when they forgot or cast aside the true revelation and depended on their own reason and fancy for their guidance, yet a portion of the ancient traditions handed down from the time of the creation still remained among them, (yet certainly much obscured by their fables); and the careful enquirer may still trace up to its source the interpretation of many of their types and emblems, and divest them of the false coloring and application, which, in course of time, came to be accepted as the *original* meaning of the ceremony.

As regards the astronomical view, take the Egyptian myth, Osiris, slain by Typhon; the Scandinavian Balder slain by Locke; the Phœnician Adonis, by a wild boar; the Samothracian Casmilus, by his three brothers; the Grecian Bacchus, murdered by the Titans; the Phrygian Atys, also killed by a wild boar; and the figurative sacrifice of the candidate in the Persian system of Mithras. In all these, the candidate represents the great Sun god, figuratively slain by the rigors and cold of winter; which, depriving the Sun of his heat and a great portion of his light, renders him powerless to perform the functions of his being, and to bring forth the fruits of the earth. But with the Spring comes a change; the Sun revives, his heat increases, and the return of Summer is hailed with shouts of joy, as being a resurrection from the dead.

There is a striking resemblance to each other in all these myths we have been considering; and we very naturally find a similar likeness in our Master Mason's legend. We say naturally, for all have the same source; but in the one case, the original idea is lost, or so obscured that we can but faintly trace it up, while in the other, the true light still shines. That sacred Book ever open in our Lodge tells us, that from the creation of man, and even before it, there has been an unceasing struggle between good and evil; that the scene of warfare was transferred to this globe; that man, created at first upright, fell before the temptation of the Evil One; but that with the fall came also the promise of his resurrection from both moral and physical death. I repeat my full conviction, that our Masonic rites and the ancient Pagan mysteries have one common origin, and that the record of that origin is alone to be found in the Scriptures of truth; that the events to which the spurious mys-