among the semi-civilized and barbarous races than in still lower stages of culture. In Australia, however, where sacrifice of the ordinary type is unknown, the ritual killing of a child is practised in connexion with the initiation of a magician; it is therefore by no means axiomatic that animals were offered before human beings; the problem of priority is one to be solved for each area separately, but probably no solution is possible; in the absence of Aztec traditions it would hardly have seemed probable that two centuries had seen so great a transformation.

Among the forms of human sacrifice must be reckoned religious suicide. This is perhaps mainly found in India but is not unknown in Africa and other parts of the world. Human sacri­fices were known in ancient India and survived till late in the 19th century (see below); both Greeks and Romans practised them, no less than the wilder races of ancient Europe. Semites and Egyptians, Peruvians and Aztecs, slew human victims; Africa, especially the West Coast, till recently saw thousands of human victims perish annually; in Polynesia, Tahiti and Fiji were great centres of the rite—in fact, it is not easy to name an area where it has not been known.

No general survey of sacrifice on geographical lines is possible, but some of the more important features in each area may be noticed.

*Sacrifice in Greece and Rome.—*Both the mainland of Greece and the Greek colonies practised human sacrifice, usually as a means towards expulsion of evil. Thus, the Athenians main­tained a number of outcasts, from whom in times of national calamity two were selected, one for the men, one for the women, and stoned to death outside the city; at the Thargelia two victims were annually put to death in the same way. Many animal sacrifices were known; of especial importance is the annual sacrifice of a goat on the Acropolis, though at other times the animal was not permitted to enter the temple.

Important features of Greek sacrifice, though not necessarily found in every rite, were the putting of wreaths and pieces of wool on the victim, the gilding of its horns, the lustration of the officiant and the sprinkling of those present with holy water. It was held inauspicious if the animal were unwilling; if it nodded all was well. Barley meal@@1 was strewn on its neck, and a lock of hair cut from its forehead and burned. The animal was then clubbed, its throat cut and the altar sprinkled with its blood. Finally the body was skinned and cut up and the god’s share burned on the altar.

The important Attic sacrifice of the Dipolia, known as τά *βοvφοviα,* demands some notice. Cakes were laid on the altar of Zeus Polieus and oxen driven round; the one which touched the cakes was the victim. An officiant at once struck it with his axe and another cut its throat; then all save the one who struck the first blow partook of its flesh. Then the hide was stuffed with grass and yoked to a plough; the participants were charged with ox murder and each laid the blame on the other; finally the axe was thrown into the sea. The interpreta­tion of the rite is uncertain; it may perhaps be connected with agrarian rites.

At Rome the scapegoat did not suffer death; but in the Saturnalia a human victim seems to have been slain till the 4th century a.d. Many forms of animal sacrifice were found; the generalized account given above for Greece is true also for the Romans.

*Sacrifice in Egypt.*—Of Egyptian ritual little is known; our knowledge rests mainly on the evidence of pictures. At Deir el Bahri we see that the animal had its throat cut in Mahommedan fashion; it lay on its side, the legs tied together; the heart was taken out, then the liver; the burnt sacrifice was hardly known.

*Sacrifice in India.—*An account of animal sacrifice has been given above. Among human sacrifices may be mentioned the *suttee,* or custom of immolating a widow on the funeral pyre of the husband, and the Khond sacrifice of the Meriah, who was either purchased or the son of a victim father. Some days before

the sacrifice, the victim, who was often kept in captivity for long periods, was devoted by the cutting of his hair, previously unshorn, and his sanctity was increased later by various ceremonies of anointing. Finally he was taken in procession, stupefied or otherwise rendered incapable of resistance, and put to death by strangulation or pressure. The remains were dismembered and carried to the fields, excepting the portion offered to the earth goddess, which was buried.

*Sacrifice in Africa.—*Especially in West Africa many forms of sacrifice are found. In the annual “ customs ” of Dahomey, now abolished, hundreds of human victims were offered. Three main forms of human sacrifice existed in this area: (1) the scapegoat; (2) the messenger; and (3) the expiation, but combinations were not infrequent. The victim was often kept in captivity and well fed; to transfer their sins people laid their hands upon him as he was led in procession, his head covered with ashes; on the way to the place of sacrifice were three enclosures, the second open to chiefs and priest only, the third to the officiant and his helper alone; the blood of the victim was offered to the gods. At the present day the animal victim may be burned or drowned, buried in the earth or simply exposed. Sometimes the sacrificer’s hands are laid on the victim before it is slain, or he may be smeared with its blood; in other cases the blood is smeared on the door posts, or the sacrificer is touched on every part of the body with the victim’s body. On the Congo, if a man commits a murder, the community votes whether he shall die or be expelled; if the latter, a victim is killed, of which all must partake; but this is not, as might be imagined, a case of Robertson Smith’s *piaculum* for the re-establishment of the tribal bond; for the criminal is driven out of the com­munity.

*Sacrifice in America.—*Sacrifice was relatively infrequent and undeveloped among the Red Indians. The Pawnees, however, had an elaborate ritual, in which a human victim was sacrificed to the Morning Star; the blood of the victims was sprinkled on the fields, and the details of the rite are not unlike those of the Khond custom. The Iroquois sacrifice of the white dog bore in later times the character of a scapegoat festival; but it is doubtful how far this was an original feature. The animals were decorated with wampum and strangled, and then the sins of the people were transferred to them ; then the remains were burned and the ashes gathered up, taken through the village and sprinkled before every house. In Mexico human sacrifices were very common; the lowest estimate is 20,000 annually. The victims were often feted for a whole year and treated as divine; the heart was an offering to the god, the body was eaten by the priests and nobles and the head was preserved with those of previous victims.

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(N. W. T.)

*The Idea of Sacrifice in the Christian Church.*

There can be no doubt that the idea of sacrifice occupied an important place in early Christianity. It had been a funda­mental element of both Jewish and Gentile religions, and Christianity tendecl· rather to absorb and modify such elements than to abolish them. To a great extent the idea had been modified already. Among the Jews the preaching of the prophets had been a constant protest against the grosser forms of sacrifice, and there are indications that when Christianity arose bloody sacrifices were already beginning to fall into disuse; a saying which was attributed by the Ebionites to Christ repeats this

@@@1 This sprinkling of the victims with sacrificial meal (Lat. *mola)* is the origin of the word *immolare,* to sacrifice, slaughter; Eng. “ immolate.” “ immolation.”