time he was ſpeaking: from whence we may be led to infer, that it was then diſcontinued among the Ro­mans. And we are told by Pliny, that it had then, and not very long, been diſcouraged. For there was a law enacted, when Lentulus and Craſſus were conſuls, ſo late as the 657th year of Rome, that there ſhould be no more human ſacriſices: for till that time thoſe horrid rites had been celebrated in broad day without any maſk or controul; which, had we not the beſt evidence for the fact, would appear ſcarce cre­dible. And however they may have been diſcontinued for a time, we find that they were again renewed; tho’ they became not ſo public, nor ſo general. For not very long after this, it is reported of Auguſtus Caeſar, when Peruſia ſurrendered in the time of the ſecond triumvi­rate, that beſides multitudes executed in a mihtary manner, he offered up, upon the Ides of March, 300 choſen perſons, both of the equeſtrian and ſenatorial order, at an altar dedicated to the manes of his uncle Julius. Even at Rome itſelf this cuſtom was revived: and Porphyry aſſures us, that in his time a man was every year ſacrificed at the ſhrine of Jupiter Latialis. Heliogabalus offered the like victims to the Syrian deity which he introduced among the Romans. The ſame is ſaid of Aurelian.

The Gauls and the Germans were ſo devoted to this ſhocking cuſtom, that no buſineſs of any moment was tranſacted among them without being prefaced with the blood of men. They were offered up to various gods; but particularly to Heſus, Taranis, and Thau- tates. Theſe deities are mentioned by Lucan, where he enumerates the various nations who followed the fortunes of Caeſar.

The altars of theſe gods were far removed from the common reſort of men; being generally ſituated in the depth of woods, that the gloom might add to the horror of the operation, and give a reverence to the place and proceeding. The perſons devoted were led thither by the Druids, who preſided at the ſolemnity, and performed the cruel offices of the ſacriſice. Ta­citus takes notice of the cruelty of the Hermunduri, in a war with the Catti, wherein they had greatly the advantage; at the cloſe of which they made one ge­neral ſacriſice of all that was taken in battle. The poor remains of the legions under Varus ſuffered in ſome degree the ſame fate. There were many places deſtined for this purpoſe all over Gaul and Germany; but eſpecially in the mighty woods of Arduenna, and the great Hercynian foreſt; a wild that extended above 30 days journey in length. The places fit apart for this ſolemnity were held in the utmoſt reverence, and only approached at particular ſeaſons. Lucan mentions a grove of this fort near Maſſilia, which even the Roman ſoldiers were afraid to violate, though com­manded by Cæſar. It was one of thoſe ſet apart for the ſacriſices of the country.

Claudian compliments Stilicho, that, among other advantages accruing to the (vornan armies through his conduct, they could now venture into the awful foreſt of Hercynia, and follow the chace in thoſe ſo much dreaded woods, and otherwiſe make uſe of them.

Theſe practices prevailed among all the people of the north, of whatever denomination. The Maſſagetae, the Scythians, the Getes, the Sarmatians, all the various nations upon the Baltic, particularly the

Suevi and Scandinavians, held it as a fixed principle, that their happineſls and ſecurity could not be obtained but at the expence of the lives of others. Their chief gods were Thor and Woden, whom they thought they could never ſufficieutly glut with blood. They had many very celebrated places of worſhip; eſpecially inthe iſland Rugen, near the mouth of the Oder; and in Zeeland: ſome, too, very famous among the Sem­nones and Naharvalli. But the moſt reverenced of all, and the moſt frequented, was at Upſal; where there was every year a grand celebrity, which continued for nine days During this term they ſacrificed animals of all ſorts: but the moſt acceptable victims, and the moſt numerous, were men. Of theſe ſacriſices none were eſteemed ſo auſpicious and ſalutary as a ſacriſice of the prince of the country. When the lot fell for the king to die, it was received with univerſal acclama­tions and every expreſſion of joy; as it once happen­ed in the time of a famine, when they call lots, and it fell to king Domalder to be the people’s victim: and he was accordingly put to death. Olaus Tretelger, another prince, was burnt alive to Woden. They did not ſpare their own children. Harald the ſon of Gunild, the firſt of that name, flew two of his chil­dren to obtain a ſtorm of wind. “He did not let (fays Verſtegan) to ſacriſice two of his ions unto his idols, to the end he might obtain of them ſuch a tempeſt at ſea, as ſhould break and diſperſe the ſhipping of Harald king of Denmark. ” Saxo Grammaticus men­tions a like fact. He calls the king Haquin; and ſpeaks of the perſons put to death as two very hopeful young princes. Another king ſlew nine ſons to pro­long his own life; in hopes, perhaps, that what they were abridged of would in great meaſure be added to himſelf. Such inſtances, however, occur not often: but the common victims were without end Adam Bremenſis, ſpeaking of the awful grove at Upſal, where theſe horrid rites were celebrated, ſays, that there was not a ſingle tree but what was reverenced, as if it were gifted with ſome portion of divinity: and all this becauſe they were ſtained with gore and foul with human putrefaction. The ſame is obſerved by Scheiffer in his account of this place.

The manner in which the victims were ſlaughtered, was diverſe in different places. Some of the Gauliſh nations chined them with a ſtroke of an ax. The Celtae placed the man who was to be offered for a ſacrifice upon a block, or an altar, with his breaſt up­wards, and with a ſword ſtruck him forcibly acroſs the ſternum; then tumbling him to the ground, from his agonies and convulſions, as well as from the effuſion of blood, they formed a judgment of future events. The Cimbri ripped open the bowels; and from them they pretended to divine. In Norway they beat mens brains out with an ox-yoke. The ſame operation was per­formed in Iceland, by daſhing them againſt an altar of ſtone. In many places they transfixed them with ar­rows. After they were dead, they ſuſpended them upon the trees, and left them to putrefy. One of the wri­ters above quoted mentions, that in his time 70 car-cafes of this fort were found in a wood of the Scevi. Dithmar of Merſhurgh, an author of nearly the ſame age, ſpeaks of a place called *Ledur* in Zeeland, where there were every year 99 perſons ſacrificed to the god Swantowite. During theſe bloody festivals a general