their own children. Harald the son of Gunild, the first of that name, slew two of his children to obtain a storm of wind. “ He did not hesitate,” says Verstegan, “ to sacrifice two of his sons 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 similar 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 ife, in hopes, perhaps, that what they were abridged of would in a 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 Scheif- fer in his account of this place.

The manner in which the victims were slaughtered was different in different places. Some of the Gaulish nations chined them with a stroke of an axe. The Celtæ 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 men’s brains out with an ox-yoke. The same operation was per­formed in Iceland, by dashing them out against an altar of stone. In many places they transfixed them with arrows. After they were dead, they suspended them upon trees, and left them to putrefy. One of the writers above quoted mentions, that in his time seventy carcasses of this sort were found in a wood of the Suevi. Dithmar of Mersburg, an author of nearly the same age, speaks of a place called Le- dur in Zeeland, where there were every year ninety-nine persons sacrificed to the god Swantowite. During these bloody festivals a general joy prevailed, and banquets were most royally served. They fed, caroused, and gave a loose to indulgence, which at other times was not permitted. They imagined that there was something mysterious in the number nine ; for which reason these feasts were in some places celebrated every ninth year, in others every ninth month, and continued for nine days. When all was ended, they washed the image of the deity in a pool, and then dis­missed the assembly. Their servants were numerous, who attended during the term of their feasting, and partook of the banquet. At the close of all, they were smothered in the same pool, or otherwise made away with. On this Ta­citus remarks, how great an awe this circumstance must ne­cessarily infuse into those who were not admitted to these mysteries.

These accounts are handed down from a variety of au­thors in different ages, many of whom were natives of the countries which they describe, and to which they seem strongly attached. They would not therefore have brought so foul an imputation on the part of the world in favour of which they w ere each writing, nor could there be that con­currence of testimony, were not the history in general true.

The sacrifices of which we have been treating, if we ex­cept some few instances, consisted of persons doomed by the chance of war, or assigned by lot, to be offered. But among the nations of Canaan the victims were peculiarly chosen. Their own children, and whatever was nearest and dearest to them, were deemed the most worthy offering to their god. The Carthaginians, who were a colony from Tyre, carried with them the religion of their mother-coun­try, and instituted the same worship in the parts where they settled. It consisted in the adoration of several deities, but

particularly of Kronus, to whom they offered human sacri­fices, and especially the blood of children. If the parents were not at hand to make an immediate offer, the magis­trates did not fail to make choice of what was most fair and promising, that the god might not be defrauded of his due. Upon a check being received in Sicily, and some other alarming circumstances happening, Hamilcar, without any hesitation, laid hold of a boy, and offered him on the spot to Kronus ; and at the same time he drowned a number of priests, to appease the deity of the sea. The Carthaginians another time, upon a defeat of their army by Agathocles, imputed their miscarriages to the anger of this god, whose services had been neglected. Touched with this, and see­ing the enemy at their gates, they seized at once three hun­dred children of the prime nobility, and offered them in public for a sacrifice. Three hundred more, being persons who were somehow obnoxious, yielded themselves volun­tarily, and were put to death with the others. The neglect of which they accused themselves consisted in sacrificing children purchased of parents among the poorer sort, who reared them for the purpose, and not selecting the most promising and the most honourable, as had been the cus­tom of old. In short, there were particular children brought up for the altar, as sheep are fattened for the shambles ; and they were bought and butchered in the same manner. But this indiscriminate way of proceeding was thought to have given offence. It is remarkable, that the Egyptians looked out for the most specious and handsome person to be sacri­ficed. The Albanians pitched upon the best man of the community, and made him pay for the wickedness of the rest. The Carthaginians chose what they thought the most excellent and at the same time the most dear to them ; which made the lot fall heavy upon their children. This is taken notice of by Silius Italicus in his fourth book. Kronus, to whom these sacrifices were exhibited, was an oriental deity, the god of light and fire ; and therefore al­ways worshipped with some reference to that element.

The Greeks, we find, called the deity to whom these of­ferings were made Agraulos ; and feigned that she was a woman, the daughter of Cecrops. But how came Cecrops to have any connection with Cyprus ? Agraulos is a cor­ruption and transposition of the original name (which should have been rendered *Uk El Aur,* or *Uk El Aurus);* but has, like many other oriental titles and names, been strangely sophisticated, and is here changed to Agraulos. It was in reality the god of light, who was always worshipped with fire. This deity was the Moloch of the Tyrians and Ca- naanites, and the Melech of the East ; that is, the great and principal god, the god of light, of whom fire was esteemed a symbol, and at whose shrine, instead of viler victims, they offered the blood of men.

Such was the Kronus of the Greeks and the Moloch of the Phoenicians. And nothing can appear more shocking than the sacrifices of the Tyrians and Carthaginians, which they performed to this idol. In all emergencies of state, and times of general calamity, they devoted what was most necessary and valuable to them as an offering to the gods, and particularly to Moloch. But besides these undeter­mined times of bloodshed, they had particular and prescribed seasons every year, when children were chosen out of the most noble and reputable families, as before mentioned. If a person had an only child, it was the more liable to be put to death, as being esteemed more acceptable to the deity, and more efficacious for the general good. Those who were sacrificed to Kronus were thrown into the arms of a molten idol, which stood in the midst of a large fire, and was red with heat. The arms of it were stretched out, with the hands turned upwards, as it were to receive them ; yet sloping downwards, so that they dropped from thence into a glowing furnace below. To other gods they were other­wise slaughtered, and, as it implied, by the very hands **of**