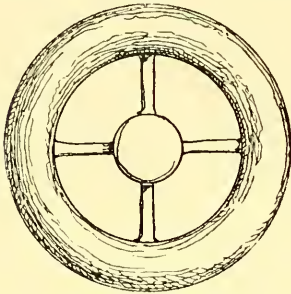


THE WHEEL AND THE CROSS.

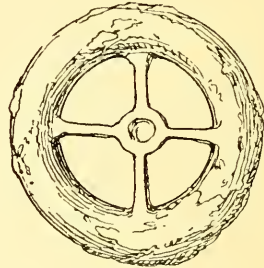
BY THE EDITOR.

THE cross is nearly related to the wheel symbolising the sun, for the oldest sun-wheels possess four spokes only. Many sun-wheel charms worn by the ancient Gauls have been found in France,



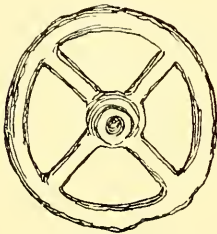
BRONZE WHEEL.

Found at Colchester, now in the British Museum. (Same size as original.)

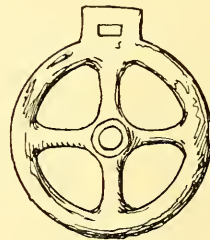


BRONZE WHEEL.

Found in Hounslow, now in the British Museum.



WHEEL AMULET OF LEAD.
Hissarlik.¹



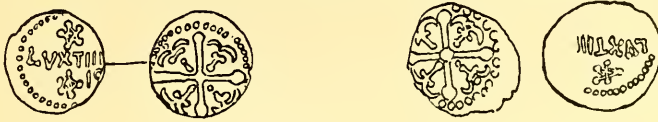
WHEEL AMULET OF
BRONZE, MYCENÆ.²

while others have been discovered in the British Isles. Mycene and Hissarlik too have yielded specimens of the same kind. They are made of gold, silver, bronze, or lead, of the size of an English

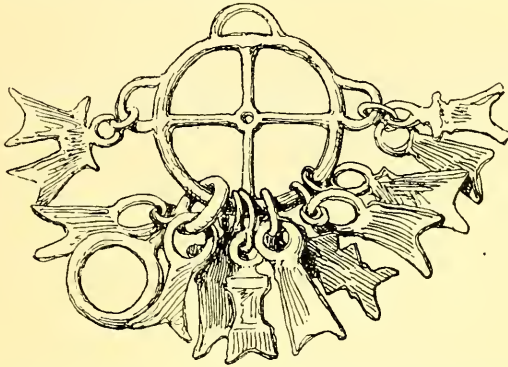
¹ See Schliemann's *Ilios*, fig. 1253, p. 365.

² See Schliemann's *Mycenæ*, p. 74.

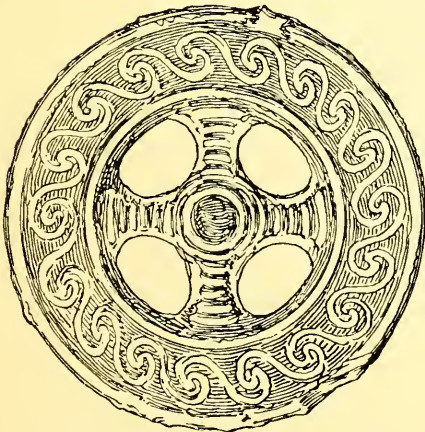
penny; and though the spokes vary in number, the four-spoked wheels are quite common. One of them, taken from the remains of



COINS OF LUCTERIUS THE CARDUCAN, A GALLIC PRINCE WHO FOUGHT AGAINST CÆSAR.¹ (After Gaidoz. From Simpson, *loc. cit.*, p. 238.)



WHEEL WITH CHARMS. Found in Swiss Lake Dwellings.²



GOLDEN WHEEL AMULET OF MYCENÆ. From Schliemann, M. fig. 316, p. 203.



THE BUDDHIST CHAKRA. Borobudur, Pleyte.



INSCRIPTION AT RIMET EL LUHF, THE PROVINCE OF HAMAN.³

a Swiss Lake Dwelling, shows a number of amulets attached to the wheel. Finally we may mention one of Christian origin, for

¹ On this ancient coin of pagan Gaul the cross surrounded by a circle figures as prominently as on the coins of later Christian kings and emperors.

² From Victor Gross, *The Protohelvetes*, pl. xxiii, fig. 33. Cf. W. Simpson, *loc. cit.*, p. 235.

³ Palestine Exploration Fund, 1895, communicated by Rev. W. Ewing.

it is found among the inscriptions of Hauran, where it is associated with the $\Lambda(U)$ and an awkwardly drawn Christogram.

The Hindu sun-wheel, called *chakra*, is also frequently represented as having four spokes. It is used even to-day in Hindu temples and passed from Brahmanism into Buddhism as an emblem of religious significance.



THE BODHISATVA VISITING THE TEMPLE.¹ Sculpture of Borobudur.
(From Pleyte's *Buddha-Legende*, p. 57.)

Capital punishment was commonly regarded as a sacrifice, and the mode of execution depended upon the god to be conciliated. Both crucifixion and the breaking on the wheel were sacrifices offered to the sun god, and that the god could be the sacrifice offered to himself is a notion that prevailed not only in India and Mexico, but also in ancient Germany.



MĀYA DĒVI VISITING SHUDDHODANA.² Sculpture of Borobudur.
(From Pleyte's *Buddha-Legende*, p. 17.)

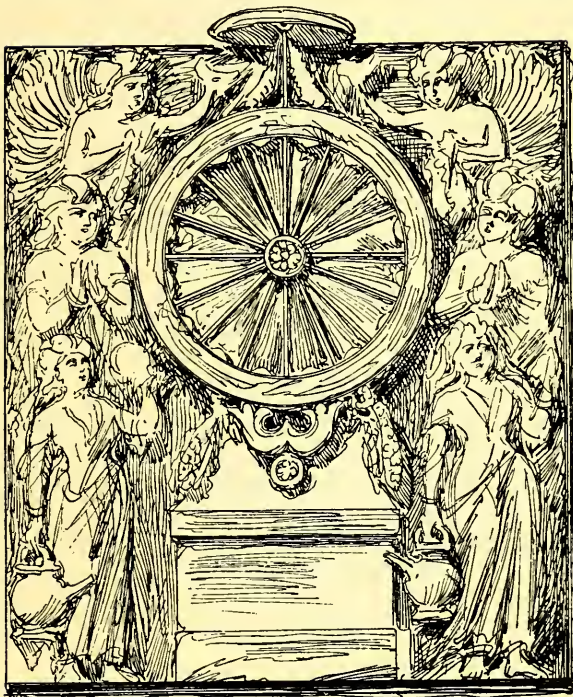
The idea of the identity of the deity in contraries is well delineated by Emerson who echoes the spirit of Brahmanism in his famous hymn on Brahma :

¹ On the approach of Prince Siddhartha, the statues of the gods come off their pedestals and prostrate themselves before Bodhisatva, the Buddha to be. The pinnacle of the temple is decorated with a *chakra* or sun-wheel which here has the ancient and traditional shape of a cross in a circle (\oplus).

² The scene represents the king at the moment of granting the queen's request to preserve her chastity. One of the body-guards carries a cross as a coat-of-arms on his shield. The same emblem appears on the shields of Shakya warriors on other sculptures. Cf. *loc. cit.*, pp. 33 and 37)

"If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

"They reckon ill who leave me out ;
When me they fly I am the wings ;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings."

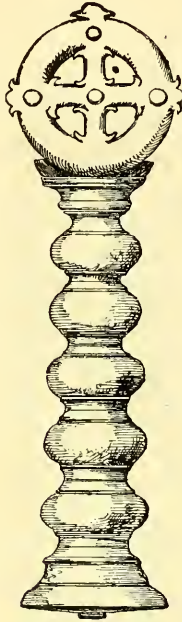


THE WHEEL OF THE LAW ON THE SANCHE TOPE.
(From Simpson, *loc. cit.*, p. 41.)

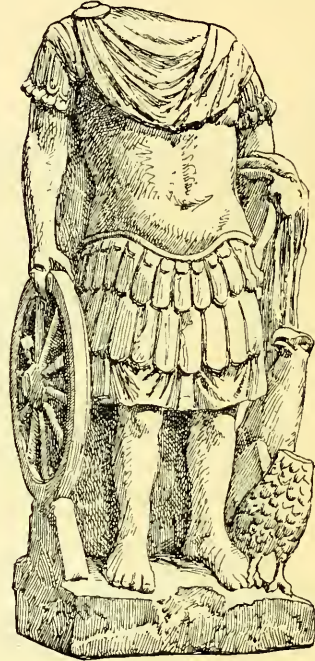
The idea is pantheistic, but it is based upon experience, or rather upon the primitive man's observation of nature. The god of life manifests himself in the exuberant growth of vegetation; he is vegetation. Then he dies in winter, but rises to new life in spring. The fruits of the field are part of his being, and so he offers himself to mankind as food, to nourish them and make them partake of the life that constitutes his being. He is the sacrificer and the sacrifice and also the god to whom the sacrifice is made.

Such is the idea pervading the myth of Thamuz and Adonis, and such the argument of the Mexicans when they immolated their god-incarnation upon the altar of the very same god.

In Norse mythology the world is conceived as a tree called Yggdrasil, the tree of Yggr, i. e., Odhin, and on it Odhin offers



CHAKRA OF
BRASS.¹



COLOSSAL STATUE OF THE
WHEEL-GOD OF GAUL.²

himself as a sacrifice. We read in the *Elder Edda* of the Father of the gods :

I knew that I hung
In the wind-rocked tree
Nine whole nights,
Wounded with a spear ;
And to Odhin offered
Myself to myself,
On that tree
Of which no one knows
From what root it springs.

¹ After Alex. Rea, *South Indian Antiquities, New Imp. Series.* Madras, 1894, p. 42, pl. xxxiii. This chakra was found at Ghautasala, Madras Presidency.

² Found at Séguret, Vaucluse. Now in the Museum at Avignon. After Gaidoz from Simpson, *loc. cit.*, p. 245.

Were the idea not a blossom of polytheism, which blooms shortly before it develops into pantheism, we would be inclined to regard these verses of the *Edda* as a Christian interpolation, so typically Christian is the underlying thought of God's offering himself on the tree unto himself as a sacrifice.

S. Baring Gould mentions the barbarous mode of execution on the wheel in his *Strange Survivals* where he says:

"On the Continent, in Germany, and in France, breaking on the wheel was a customary mode of execution. The victim was stretched on the wheel, and with a bar of iron his limbs were



IXION ON THE FIERY WHEEL.

broken, and then a blow was dealt him across the breast. After that the wheel was set up on a tall pole with the dead man on it, and left to become a prey to the ravens. This was a survival of human sacrifices to the sun-god, as hanging is a survival to the wind-god."

Ixion,¹ according to the Homeric legend, a wretched sufferer on the wheel in Tartarus, is probably an ancient sun-god who with the ascendancy of Zeus was degraded into a demon of the under-

¹ Benseler derives the name Ixion from *ixús*, which is related to *ioxús*, and should mean "the lusty one."

world, and it is noteworthy that his wheel in the antique illustrations still retains the shape of a cross in a circle.

We may here venture a suggestion as to the way in which the idea originated of Ixion becoming a victim of Zeus's wrath. Originally the sun was worshipped as the benefactor. He was the great luminary in the sky, he was the sun-god, he was the sun-wheel. The sun was then supposed to be the god on the wheel, but a distinction began to be made between the god and sun; the god was

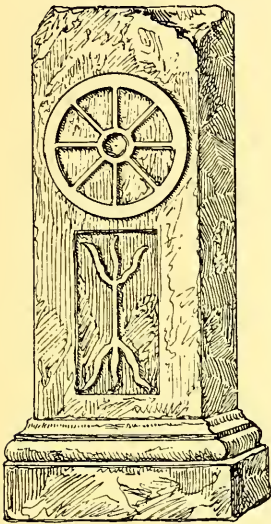


TWO ARCHAIC STATUES OF THE WHEEL-GOD OF GAUL.¹
(After Gaidoz, from Simpson, *loc. cit.*, p. 243.)

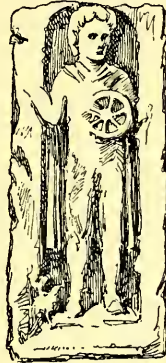
worshipped as an invisible divine presence, while the wheel was identified with the sun rolling through the sky at God's command.

¹ Commenting on the two statues of the wheel-god Mr. William Simpson says (*Buddhist Praying Wheel*, p. 242-243): "The Department of Allier is very nearly in the middle of France, and that region, it appears, was noted at an early age for its pottery, as it supplied the most of the country with its productions, which were numerous, and included sacred as well as profane articles. Amongst the former of these were gods, and the Wheel-God appears to have been included in the works of these workers in terra-cotta. M. Esmonnot of Moulins formed a collection of fragments of these, which are now in the St. Germain Museum. M. Bertrand of Moulins has also made a collection, and has been able to join some of his fragments together, so as to make the complete figures here reproduced. The art is of the crudest kind, but it shows an old man with a beard; his left hand rests on the head of a creature with a human face,—a female with breasts, but apparently with animal extremities. With his left hand he supports a wheel on his shoulder."

The prophets of this higher conception repudiated the old view. To them the personality on the wheel was a false god, and together with the wheel he was subject to the invisible God of light and truth. Now, if we assume that the notion of a personality on the wheel persisted in being painted or believed in, and the fact was still remembered that he was once a rival of the true God, a rebel, a traitor, we can understand how the myth originated that Zeus, the true god, had Ixion (which is a cognomen of a prehistoric sun-god) fastened to the sun-wheel on account of some awful crime or act of treason he was supposed to have committed.



ALTAR OF THE GALLIC
WHEEL-GOD.¹
(Maison Carrée, Nismes.)



ALTAR SCULPTURE OF
THE GALLIC WHEEL-
GOD. Found at The-
ley, district Ottweiler,
preserved in the Mu-
seum at Treves. The
other three sides
show Hygeia, Mi-
nerva, and Hercules.¹



BRONZE FIGURE OF THE
GALLIC WHEEL-GOD.
Of about four inches.
Found at Châtelet,
Haute Marne, pre-
served in the Louvre.¹

Judging from the innumerable statues of a solar deity carrying as his symbol a wheel, which have been found in France, we must assume that the wheel god, by the Romans identified with Zeus, was the main deity of the Gallic Celts.² But the worship of the wheel god—or rather the sun god whose symbol was the wheel—cannot have been limited to Gaul, for the wheel of the same or almost the same shape was worshipped among all the Aryan nations from India to the British Isles.

¹ After Gaidoz, from Simpson, pp. 244, 245, and 252.

² For details compare the interesting work of M. Gaidoz, *Le dieu Gaulois du soleil et le symbolisme de la roue*, which has been much consulted and utilised by William Simpson in his book *The Buddhist Prayer Wheel*. Macmillan & Co., 1896.