

## Juno Covella, Perpetual Calendar of the Fellowship of Isis

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All formatting has been retained from the original.  
Goddesses appear in **BOLD CAPITAL** letters.

### The Month of December

#### DECEMBER 3rd

*Phrygian-Greek:* **CYBELE; RHEA.** (*Perp. Fest. Cal.*) "December 3. Cybele, Rhea, Goddess of Cosmic Life". (*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 3rd: The Goddess Cybele, The Mother".

*Roman:* **BONA DEA.** (*Perp. Fest. Cal.*) "December 3.. Bona Dea, The Good Goddess". (*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 3rd.. Bona Dea, The Good Goddess, The Cosmos".

*Bithynian:* **ST. BARBARA;** *Basque:* **THE LADY OF AMBOTO.** (*Irish Catholic Dir.*) "December 3. S. Barbara, Virgin . . ." (Basque tradition cited by Roslyn Frank, in *LadyUnique*, iv. p. 71) "if the Lady of Amboto is found in her cave on the day of St. Barbara, the following summer will be very good and abundant [in crops, etc.], but if on that day she is out of her cave, the following summer there will be terrible storms and upsets". (Note: Roslyn Frank, *id.*) "Within Basque folk belief, storms were explained as having occurred as a punishment by the Goddess for the immoral conduct or wrongdoing of her flock . . . Within the indigenous cognitive framework, it was always the Goddess who ultimately controlled the forces of nature. "

#### DECEMBER 4th

*Graeco-Roman:* **PALLAS ATHENA, MINERVA.** (*Perp. Fest. Cal.*) "December 4. Pallas Athene, Minerva, Goddess of Wisdom". (*Lux Madriana Cal.*) "Astraea 7 (December 4) Athene's Day". (*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 4th: Pallas Athena, Minerva. Wisdom from experience and study. University courses".

#### DECEMBER 8th

*Jewish:* **THE VIRGIN MARY; Feast of the Immaculate Conception.** (*Irish Catholic Dir.*) "December 8. Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, with Octave. . . Preface of B. V. M. *Et te in Conceptione Immac.* throughout Oct . . . Holiday of Obligation".

Ashe, *The Virgin*, p. 200) "In the second half of the sixth century the Byzantines reached the point of decreeing holy days for Mary alone . . . Her conception by her own legendary mother St. Anne was observed on 9th December, and her birth on 8th September".

Bridgett, (*Our Lady's Dowry*, p. 231) "It is certain that a feast in honour of Mary's Conception was celebrated in the Eastern Church long before the time of St. Anselm . . . there is no doubt that the propagation of the feast through Europe took place especially from the eleventh century, and that the origin of the movement was in England. Nor can there be any question that it was generally attributed to St. Anselm.

" . . . In an old Danish Breviary we read the following lessons for the feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin (ancient Ms. published by James Langebek, at p. 253 of the 3rd. Vol. of his *Scriptores Rerum Danicarum*) " . . . Lectio VIII. "Then the prudent Abbot (i.e. Helsin) said: "How

can I keep the feast, when I know not the day of her conception?" The heavenly messenger replied: "On the sixth of the Ides of December is the day of her revered conception; and the same office which is said on her Nativity will be said on her Conception, the word *Nativitas* being changed, whenever it occurs, into *Conceptio*". Having said this the heavenly messenger disappeared. Then the venerable abbot, on his knees, made a vow to the Blessed Virgin to celebrate the feast of her Conception . . ' The date of this event would be 1067 " .

Mrs. Jameson, *Legends of the Madonna*, p. 44) on the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in the 13th century: "A certain Franciscan friar, Duns Scotus (John Scott of Dunse), entered the lists as champion for the Virgin . .

"During the next two hundred years the belief became more and more general . . The first papal decree touching the 'Immaculate Conception' as an article of faith, was promulgated in the reign of Sixtus IV., who had been a Franciscan friar, and he took the earliest opportunity of giving the solemn sanction of the Church to what had ever been the favourite dogma of his Order. .

"At length, in July 1615, Paul V. formally instituted the office commemorating the Immaculate Conception, and in 1617 issued a bull forbidding anyone to teach or preach a contrary opinion. 'On the publication of this bull, Seville flew into a frenzy of religious joy'. The archbishop performed a solemn service in the Cathedral. Cannon roared . . tournaments and banquets celebrated this triumph of the votaries of the Virgin. Spain and its dependencies were solemnly placed under the protection of the 'Immaculate Conception', thus personifying an abstract idea; and to this day a Spaniard salutes his neighbour with the angelic 'Ave Maria purissima! ' " .

Mosheim, *Eccl. Hist.* Vol. iii. p. 67) "In the year 1476, Sixtus iv., by a special edict, promised remission of sins to those who religiously keep, from year to year, the memorial of the *immaculate conception* of the blessed Virgin."

(*Dict. Univ. Biog.*) "Pius IX . . in 1854 the doctrine of the immaculate conception was announced as a tenet of the church by Pius from his throne in St. Peter's".

Mrs. Jameson, *Legends of the Madonna*, p. 45) on the Immaculate Conception as represented in art: "It is soon after this time (i.e. the bull of 1617) that we first hear of pictures of the Immaculate Conception. Pacheco subsequently became . . inspector of sacred pictures; and in his 'Arte de la Pintura', published in 1649, he laid down those rules which had been generally, though not always, exactly followed.

"It is evident that the idea is taken from the woman in the Apocalypse, ' clothed with sun, having the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars' [*Revelation, xii, I*] The Virgin is to be portrayed in the first spring and bloom of youth as a maiden of about twelve or thirteen years of age . . her features 'with all the beauty painting can express' . . The sun is to be expressed as a flood of light around her. The moon under her feet is to have the horns pointing downwards, because illuminated from above, and the twelve stars are to form a crown over her head . . Round her are to hover Cherubim bearing roses, palms and lilies. . She ought to have the cord of St. Francis as a girdle, because in this guise she appeared to Beatriz de Silva, a noble Franciscan nun, who was favoured by a celestial vision of the Madonna in her beatitude. Perhaps the good services of the Franciscans as champions of the Immaculate Conception procured them the honour of being thus commemorated.

" . . With [Murillo] the crescent moon is sometimes the full moon, or, when a crescent, the horns point upwards instead of downwards . . here all is spotless grace, ethereal delicacy, benignity, refinement . . the very apotheosis of womanhood . . "The beautiful small 'Conception' by Velasquez . . is a departure from the rules laid down by Pacheco . . Here the Virgin is arrayed in a pale violet robe, with a dark blue mantle . . Her long hair flows over her shoulders. The figure is relieved against a bright sun, with fleecy clouds around; and the twelve stars are over her head. She stands on the round moon, of which the upper half is illuminated. Below, on earth,, and

through the deep shadow, are seen several emblems of the Virgin - the fountain, the temple, the olive, the cypress, and the garden enclosed in a treillage of roses . . ."

(*id.* p. 50) on other paintings of this subject by Murillo: "The number of attendant angels varies from one to thirty. They bear the palm, the olive, the rose, the lily, the mirror; sometimes a sceptre and crown . . ."

"There exists, somewhere, a picture of the Conception, by Le Brun, in which the Virgin has no other drapery than a thin transparent gauze, and has the air of a Venus Meretrix".

In the Immaculate Conception the Virgin shares both verbally and visually the attributes of the Goddesses.

The dogma itself is suggestive of the Egyptian belief that the primordial goddesses "proceeded from themselves". As Maspero states: "the epithets applied -to them . . . represent them as having independent creative power by virtue of their own unaided force and energy". (*Dawn of Civil.* p. 144).

There is a particularly close correspondence between the Virgin Mary and the ancient goddess Neith of Sais, described as "the prototype of parthenogenesis". Thus the Marquis de Mirville states: "We Catholics understand also how it is that the famous inscription at Sais should have stated that 'none ever lifted my veil [peplum]', considering that this sentence, literally translated, is the summary of what is sung in the Church on the day of the Immaculate Conception" (cited by Helena Blavatsky *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. 11. p. 108). On this dogma Mme. Blavatsky herself writes (*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II. p. 110): "even this new dogma, which . . . has quasirevolutionized the Christian world, is not original with the Church of Rome. It is but a return to a hardly-remembered *heresy* of the early Christian ages, that-of the Collyridians, so called from their *sacrificing cakes* to the Virgin, whom they claimed to be *Virgin-born*. See King's 'Gnostics', pp. 91, 92; 'The Genealogy of the Blessed Virgin Mary', by Faustus, Bishop of Riez".

In the iconography of the Immaculate Conception there is to be seen, from the Virgin's emblems, an intimate association with the Goddesses. The stars appear on the body of the Egyptian Skygoddess Nut. The solar effulgence radiates from the body of the Japanese Sun-goddess, Ama-Terasu, who is described thus in the *Nihongi* (I. ii): "The resplendent lustre of this child shone throughout all the six quarters (North, South, East, West, Above, Below)". The moon is a characteristic attribute of the Goddess; and in the form of the downwardpointing crescent, later the inverted horns, it is a symbol of Sefekh-Seshat, Egyptian Goddess of History and Literature.

Among the other emblems of the Virgin, the rose is an attribute of Isis (Apuleius), Aphrodite (Seyffert) and Venus (Waite); the palm, of Isis (Apuleius); the lily, of Hera and Juno (Lempriere); the olive, of Athena and Minerva (passim); and the cypress, of the Graeco-Roman Fates and Furies (Lehner). The crown and the sceptre are shown with Hera (Seyffert) and Juno Lempriere); and the mirror with Isis (Apuleius) and, as in Rossetti's painting, with Lilith. The girdle or *cestus* belongs to Aphrodite (Homer) and Venus (Martial). The fountain is presided over by Naiad Nymphs (Lempriere); the "garden enclosed" represents the personified Ecclesia (the usual interpretation of the *Song of Solomon*); and the ideogram for "mansion, temple" (Gardiner) forms part of the hieroglyphs of Hathor and Nephthys.

*Hebrew-Greek:* **THE WOMAN OF THE APOCALYPSE.** See under the Virgin Mary.

*Mexican:* **THE MAYAN MOTHER.** (Kay Turner, in *Lady-Unique*, I. p. 50) "in the image of the Blessed Mother Mary, the inhabitants and visitors of Isla de Mujeres do enjoy some of the benefits of living in the embrace of the ancient Mayan Mother. The *patrona* (female patron saint) of the island is *Purissima Concepcion* (Immaculate Conception). Her feast day is December 8, a great day on which the statue of the Virgin is taken from the church and sailed out to sea. She rides at the prow of the largest island ferry and everyone in town jumps aboard to go out with her. A legion of small boats follows behind as she journeys around the island blessing

the waters, the fruits of which she owns. A silver crescent moon is pinned on her white gown and every island Catholic (and a few non Catholics) will kiss the hem of that garment sometime before the day's end. After the sea journey, a parade moves through the streets with the Virgin leading. She is raised on the shoulders of men from the church. A chorus of women sings a continuous song-chant, *Ave, Ave, Ave Marta, Ave, Ave, Ave Maria*. All afternoon the sense of enchantment grows, until the setting sun reminds people of home. The feast is finished and Mary the Moon Goddess is restored to her hallow in the church wall".

*Japanese:* The Hari no Kuyo. (Chamberlain, *Things Japanese*, p. 161) "Festivals . . . Dec. 8. - The Hari no Kuyo, a festival at which women rest from the constant use of the needle by entertaining the other members of the household, they, and not the men, directing matters".

### **DECEMBER 9th**

*Mexican:* **TONANTZIN; THE VIRGIN OF GUADALUPE.** (Kay . Turner, in *Lady-Unique*, I. p. 47) on the Goddesses of Mexico: "When the Spanish came . . . their (i.e. the old goddesses) power was essentially maintained in the image of a new goddess, the virgin of Guadalupe, Mary. She appeared to . . . Juan Diego on his way to the Franciscan Church at Tlaltelco on December 9, 1531. Her visitation took place on Tepeyak Hill, which, until the conquest, had been the most highly revered shrine of Tonantzin, Mexican goddess of earth and corn, one of the Ix Chel's northern sisters. A church was built on the site of the apparition. According to Juan Diego, the Virgin said she loved the people very much and wanted to protect them. 'For I am the mother of all of you who dwell in this land'. The Virgin of Guadalupe became the patron saint of all Mexico in 1737, the Queen of Mexico in 1895, and Empress of the Americas in 1945. To this day, her feast is the most highly and widely celebrated in all Mexico. Driving from Veracruz to Mexico City on December 9, 1974, we saw hundreds of pilgrims crowding the main roads into the city, pressing shoulder to shoulder, smiling, getting closer, step by step, to the one whose heart is open to them".

(Wilson, *Cosmic Trigger*, p. 67) on the Lady of Guadeloupe: "many archaeologists regard Her as an old Aztec sky-goddess; in slight disguise".

### **DECEMBER 10th**

*French:* **THE GODDESS OF LIBERTY; LUX MUNDI, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.** (Brewer, *Dict.*) "Liberty. The Goddess of Liberty. On December 10th, 1793, Mlle. Malliard, an actress, was selected to personify the 'Goddess of Liberty'. Being brought to Notre Dame she was seated on the altar, and lighted a large candle to signify that Liberty was the 'light of the world' (See Louis Blanc: *History*, ii 365-367)". See also under August 10th and November 10th.

### **DECEMBER 13th**

**ST. LUCY.** (*Irish Catholic Dir.*) "December 13. S. Lucy, Virgin (*Church of England Cal.*) "December 13. Lucy,, Virgin

(Brewer, *Dict.*) "Lucy (St.) Patron saint for those afflicted in the eyes".

*Japanese:* Koto-hajime. (Chamberlain, *Things Japanese*, p. 158) "Festivals. The holidays observed officially are . . . Dec. 13. This day is called *Koto-hajime*, that is, 'the beginning of things,' because such preparations for New Year as housecleaning, decorating, and the pounding of rice for cakes (*mochi*) are then taken in hand . . . Presents of money are made to servants by their masters at this time of year".

*Graeco-Roman: DEMETER, CERES.* (*Perp. Fest. Cal.*) "December 13. Demeter, Ceres, Aspect of the World Mother". (*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 13th. Demeter and Ceres as World Mothers. The Mothers who nurture the seeds in darkness".

**THE EUMENIDES, THE MOERAE, THE PARCAE, THE FATES.** (*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 13th. . The Fates, .The Benevolent Ones, The Eumenides".

### **DECEMBER 14th**

*Roman: BRUMA, Winter.* (Ausonius, *Ecl.* xiv. 5) "For thrice six days and one the new-come winter (bruma) prolongs feasts and cheer ere she summon lingering Janus.

### **DECEMBER 15th**

*Greek: ALCYONE; Halcyon Days begin.* (Graves, *White Goddess*, p. 187) "the halcyon, or kingfisher . . like the wren is associated in Greek myth with the winter solstice. There were fourteen 'halcyon days' in every year, seven of which fell before the winter solstice, seven after: peaceful days when the sea was smooth as a pond and the hen-halcyon built a floating nest: and hatched out her young . .

"Homer connects the halcyon with Alcyone, a title of Meleager's wife Cleopatra (*Iliad*, IX, 562) and with an earlier Alcyone, who was daughter to Aegeale, 'she who wards off the hurricane'".

(Theocritus, *Idylls*, VII) "The halcyons shall calm the ocean's waves". Commentary by Holden: "These birds were supposed to demand a calm from nature for their nesting at the time of the winter solstice". (Varro, *Ling. Lat.* VII. 88) on the kingfisher: "this bird is now called in Greek the *halcyon* and by our fellowcountrymen the *alcedo* 'kingfisher'; because it is said to hatch its young in winter, at a time when the sea is calm, they call these days the *Halcyonia*". Note: Kent, in his commentary on this passage, dates the halcyon days at "two weeks before the winter solstice".

(*Ritual of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids*) from the Winter Solstice ceremony:

"*Presider.* Behold the halcyon bird sits many-coloured upon her floating nest. For fourteen days the seas run calm and she: hatches her egg".

*Roman: FORTUNA REDUX*, Goddess of "happy journeys and prosperous returns". See under October 12th.

*Jewish: THE VIRGIN MARY; Octave of the Immaculate Conception.*

### **DECEMBER 16th**

*Roman: SAPIENTIA, Wisdom.* (*Church of England Cal.*) "December 16. 0 Sapiaentia".

(White, *Dict.*) "sapientia, fern Personified: *Sapiaentia* or *Wisdom*. Afran. ap. Gell. 13,8." Sapientia is also the Roman counterpart of the Hebrew-Greek Sophia. As Sapientia-Sophia she is depicted in a mediaeval manuscript (see Neumann, *The Great Mother*, Pl. 174).

### **DECEMBER 17th**

*Roman: OPS; The Saturnalia, in honour of Saturn and Ops, First Day.* (Seyffert, *Dict.*) "Ops (*abundance, plenty*). The old Italian goddess of fertility, wife of Saturn with whom she shared the temple on the Capitol and the festival of the *SaturnaLia*". (*id.*) "Saturnus . . the *Saturnalia* took place on December 17, and consisted of offerings in the open air in front of the temple and also an outdoor banquet . . The festival was also celebrated in private society; schools had

holidays, law-courts were closed, all work was stopped, war was deferred, and no punishment of criminals took place for seven days from December 17 to 23. During this time there were all kinds of fantastic amusements. The festival was symbolical of a return to the golden age. People gave presents to one another, in particular wax tapers (*cerei*) and dolls (*sigillaria*). They also entertained one another, and amused themselves with social games. Every freedom was given to slaves, and they were first entertained at the banquet and served by their masters, in remembrance that under the rule of Saturnus there had been no differences in social ranks". Note: see below (Silvius).

(Lempriere, *Dict.*) " Saturnalia . . celebrated the 16th or the 17th, or according to others, the 18th of December . . The Saturnalia were originally celebrated only for one day, but afterwards the solemnity continued for 3, 4, 5, and at the last for 7 days . . the priests made their offerings with their heads uncovered, a custom which was never observed at other festivals ".

(Borlase, *Dolmens*, Vol. iii. 9. 828) "It was a priestess who conducted the rites of the Saturnalia at Rome".

(Philocalus, Kal. anno 354) "December 17. *Ludi. Saturnalis.*" (Silvius, Kal. anno 448) "December 17. *Feriae Servorum.*"

(Perp. *Fest. Cal.*) "December 17. Saturnalia (to 21st) in memory of the Golden Age". (*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 17th-21st: The Saturnalia. Atavism. Return to childhood jollity. Relaxation. Conviviality. Release of energy. Respect and love for the Aged. Time".

### **DECEMBER 18th**

*Roman: OPS; The Saturnalia, Second Day.*

### **DECEMBER 19th**

*Roman: OPS; The Opalia; The Saturnalia, Third Day.* (Varro, *Ling. Lat.* VI. 22) on the Saturnalia; "on the second day thereafter [is] the Opalia, the festival of Ops". Note by 'Kent: "December 19".

(Ausonius, Ecl. xxiii. 15) "*On the Roman Festivals* (2nd half of 4th cent.) Or would you have me speak first of the feast of Ops . . ?

(*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 19th; Ops. Wealth. Good Fortune. Success.

### **DECEMBER 20th**

*Roman: OPS; The Saturnalia, Fourth Day.*

### **DECEMBER 21st**

*Roman: ANGERONA, DIVA; The Angeronalia, The Divalia.* (Rose, *O.C.D.*) "Angerona, Diva, a Roman goddess, worshipped on 21 Dec. (Divalia or Angeronalia), in the Curia Acculeia . . or the *sacellum Volupiae*, where there stood on the altar a statue of Angerona (Macrob. *Sat.* 1. 10. 8) . . Mommsen [connects her name] with *angerere*, 'to raise up', sc. the sun after the solstice, on the basis of the *Fasti Praenestini* (see Latte. *RR* 134) ".

(Varro, *Ling. Lat.* VI. 23) "The Angeronalia [is named] from Angerona to whom an offering is made in the Acculeian Curia and of whom this day is a state festival". Angerona, according to Kent's commentary, is connected with Silence.

**OPS; The Saturnalia, Fifth Day.**

*Celtic. (Fell. of Isis Dir.)* "December 21st: Druidic Celebration of the Winter Solstice. Festival of Stars. Mysticism. The Unknown".

## **DECEMBER 22nd**

### **Winter Solstice. Sun enters Capricorn (tropical).**

*Egyptian: ISIS.* (Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 372 c) "at the time of the winter solstice they lead the cow seven times round the temple of Helios and this perambulation is called the seeking for Osiris".

(Esther Harding, *Woman's Myst.* p. 188) "At the Winter Solstice, the goddess in the form of a golden cow, covered by a black veil, was carried round the shrine of the dead Osiris seven times, representing the wanderings of Isis who journeyed over the world mourning for his death and searching for the scattered parts of his body".

*Greek: DEMETER.* (Brewer, *Dict.*) "Yuletide The Greeks celebrated in the winter solstice the birth of Demeter (Ceres) ".

**KORE, PERSEPHONE.** (Neumann, *The Great Mother*, p. 312) "The birth of the divine child, whether he bears the name of Horus, Osiris, Helios, Dionysus or Aeon, was celebrated in the Koreion in Alexandria, in the temple dedicated to Kore, on the day of the winter solstice".

*Roman: OPS; The Saturnalia. Sixth Day.*

*Celtic: Alban Arthuan.* See under March 21st.

*Celtic: Welsh. RHIANNON.* (Graves, *White Goddess*, p. 95) on Pryderi, son of Rhiannon: "This 'son of a virgin mother' is always born on the Winter Solstice."

*Norse-Celtic: SUL, THE SUN.* (*Ritual of Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids*) from the Ceremony for "The Evening of the Winter Solstice":

"Scribe: Sul, the mate and mother of Og, is in a ship in the sky awaiting him".

See also under December 25th.

*General:* (Whistler, *English Fest.*, p. 26) "At Midwinter, when the hours of daylight were fewest, our ancestors, the archaic peoples of Europe and Western Asia, kept festival by lighting bonfires and decorating their buildings with evergreens".

**THE WITCHES; Lesser Sabbat.** See under March 21st.

## **DECEMBER 23rd**

*Roman: ACCA LARENTIA, LAURENTINA; The Lares. The Laurentalia, The Parentalia.* (Lempriere, *Dict.*) "Laurentalia, certain festivals celebrated at Rome,, on the last day of April and the 23rd of December". (Seyffert, *Dict.*) "Acca Larentia . . at the feast of Larentalia (Dec. 23), the flamen of Quirinus and the pontiffs made offering to her . . her name[also] meaning 'mother of the Lares', shows that she was originally a goddess of the earth, to whom men entrusted their seed-corn and their dead".

(Varro, *Ling. Lat.* VI. 23) "The Larentine Festival (note by Kent: 'On December 23'), which certain writers call the Larentalia, was named from Acca Larentia, to whom our priests officially perform ancestor-worship on the sixth day after the Saturnalia, which day is from her called the Day of the Parentalia of Larentine Acca.

"This offering is made in the Velabrium, where it ends in New Street . . because near there the priests make offering to the departed spirits of the slaves".

(Ovid *Fasti*, 111. 57) "Nor would I pass by thee in silence. Larentia, nurse of so great a nation . . . Your honour will find its place when I come to tell of the Larentalia; that festival falls in December, the month dear to the mirthful spirits (*genii*)".

(*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 23rd: Larentalia. Acca Larentia, mother of the Lares. Respect for household deities, and each household object. Hallowing of the home". See also under Larunda.

**LARUNDA, LARA.** (Rose, *O.C.D.*) "Larunda, an extremely obscure Roman goddess said to be Sabine (Varro, V. 74. . .), and generally supposed to be chthonian (Wissowa, *RK* 234). She was honoured . . . on Dec. 23 at an altar in the Velabrium. The quantity of the first syllable (known from Ausonius . . .) suggests a possible connection with Acca Larentia. The ancients equate her with Lara, said by Ovid (*Fasti* 2.599 ff.) to be mother of the Lares". See also under Acca Larentia.

**Roman: OPS; The Saturnalia; Seventh Day.**

**Celtic: Intercalary Day between the Old and New Year.** The ancient Celtic year is variously described as beginning on Brigid's day (Feb. 1), the Spring Equinox, the Autumnal Equinox, Samhain (Nov. 1) and the Winter Solstice.

(O'Connor, *Chr. of Eri*, vol. I.i) The 13 months of the Phoenician-Scythian-Gaelic year are arranged in a circle: "The Ring of Baal: 1 Tionnsnad (about March). 2 Blat. 3 Bael tetgne. 4 Sgit. 5 Tarsgit. 6 Meas. 7 Cruinning. 8 Tirim. 9 Fluicim. 10. Geimia. 11 Sneacda. 12 Siocan. 13 Deirionnae.

(*New Celtic Review*, Brigantia, 1981, p. 3) "Ogham Calendar is based upon the Coligny Tablet which was a Gaulish and Celtic bronze tablet, found in France in 1895, and dating to about 2000 years ago. Calendar started on the last quarter moon, first after Autumn equinox. This version starts the New Year on 31st October. Both this festival and Midwinter Solstice may have been used to start lunar calendars in preRoman Europe and the Greek/Celtic orientated British Isles. (G.S.O. pubns. B 27: *Ogham Calendar*)".

(*Graves, White Goddess*, p. 207) The Tree alphabet and the 13 months are shown to correspond as follows: Beth, *Birch*, begins Dec. 24. Luis, *Quick-beam (Rowan)*, Jan. 21. Nion, *Ash*, Feb. 18. Fearn, *Alder*, March 18. Saille, *Willow*, Apr. 15. Uath, *Hawthorn*, May 13. Duir, *Oak*, June 10. Tinne, *Holly*, July 8. Coll, *Hazel*, Aug. 5. Muin, *Vine*, Sept. 2. Gort, *Ivy*, Sept. 30. Ngetal, *Reed*, Oct. 28. Ruis, *Elder*, Nov. 25. Dec. 23 intercalary. (Ledwich, *Antiq.* p. 328) in this Tree alphabet "Peth-boc" is in the place of "Ngetal". (O'Brien, *Round Towers*, p. 418) The alphabet cited by this author has the following differences: "2 Luis, *Wild Ash* . . . 4 Suil, *Willow*. 5 Fearn, *Alder* . . . 8 Tinne, *Furze* . . . 11 Peth-bhog, (B mollified). "

(*New Celtic Rev.*, Brigantia 1981, p. 3) "Lunar Solar Calendar 1981: Nana (begins Dec. 22). Brigit. Anna. Rhea. Ishtar. Olwyn. Isis. Demeter. Lamia. Circe. Kali. Hecate (last 2 months) ".

## **DECEMBER 24th**

**Roman: The Juvenalia.** (White, *Dict.*) "Juvenalis Dies, A day for the young; the name given by Caligula to the day which he added to the festival of the Saturnalia".

(*Perp. Fest. Cal.*) "December 24 . . . The Juvenalia "(*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 24th: The Juvenalia. For all young creatures. Merry-making".

**Celtic: Oidhche Nodlag, Nodlaig Eve.** See under December 25th.

**Anglo-Saxon: THE MOTHERS; Modraniht, Night of the Mothers.** (Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 93) "as the 25th of December was called by our Pagan Anglo-Saxon ancestors, 'Yuleday', or the 'Child's day', and the night that preceded it, 'MotherNight' (Sharon Turner's *Anglo-Saxons*, Vol. i, p. 219) long before they came in contact with Christianity, that sufficiently proves its real character".



(Hilda Davidson, *Gods, Myths, N. Europe*, p. 112) "Inscriptions are known from Roman times in Germany, Holland and Britain in honour of groups of female beings known generally as 'the mothers' . . . Female deities of this kind seem to have been worshipped by both the Celts and the Germans, and they were evidently associated with fertility and with the protection of hearth and home. In some form they were known to the Anglo-Saxons, for Bede mentions them in *De Temporum Ratione* (13), where he tells us that the night before Christmas was known in heathen times as *Modraniht*, 'the night of the mothers'. There seems little doubt that they were closely connected with the birth of children".

(*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 24 Modraniht, 'The Night of the Mothers' ".

*Scottish: Yule-Even.* See under December 25th.

## **DECEMBER 25th**

*Babylonian: THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN.* (Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 93) on the festivals held on December 25th. "Long before the fourth century, and long before the Christian era itself, a festival was celebrated among the *heathen*, at that precise time of the year, in honour of the birth of the son of the Babylonian queen of heaven. . The same festival was adopted by the Roman Church . . . This tendency on the part of Christians to meet Paganism half-way was very early developed. "

*Semitic (General): THE HEAVENLY VIRGIN, THE HEAVENLY GODDESS; ASTARTE.* (Frazer, *Golden Bough abgd.* p. 358) "No doubt the Virgin who thus conceived and bore a son on the twenty-fifth of December was the great Oriental goddess whom the Semites called the Heavenly Virgin or simply the Heavenly Goddess; in Semitic lands she was a form of Astarte".

*Egyptian: ISIS, NUT.* (Eisler, *Royal Art of Astrol.* p. 270) "the goddess Isis, the Virgo Caelestis, the Egyptian sky-goddess *Nut* [was] believed to give birth to the Sun on the 25th of December".

(*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 25th: Isis and her son Horus. . Festival of children and young animals and birds and other creatures".

*Persian: SPENTA ARMAITI.* (Frazer, *Golden Bough abgd.* p. 358) "Mithra . . . his nativity also fell on the twenty-fifth of December". For Spenta Armaiti as the mother of Mithra see Days of the Month: 25th.

*Cyprian: MYRRHA.* (Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 97) "The mother of Adonis . . . was mystically said to have been changed into a tree, and when in that state to have brought forth her divine son (Ovid, *Metam.* lib. x. v. 500-513) . - And this entirely accounts for the putting of the Yule Log into the fire on Christmas-Eve . . . As Zero-Ashta, 'the seed of the woman', which name also signifies *Ignigena*, or 'born of the fire', he has to enter the fire on 'Mothernight', that he may be born the next day out of it".

*Roman: HIEMS, Winter, The Goddess of Winter.* (*Silvius, Kai.* anno 448) "December 25 *Solstitium et initium hiberni*".

(White, *Dict.*) "hibernus [akin to hiems] . Of, or belonging to winter . . ." (*id.*) "hiems, fern The winter Personified: Hiems or Winter. "

(Ovid. *Metam.* II. 30) The Poet describes the Deities of Time ranged around the Sun: "On either hand were the Days, Months, Years, and Ages, and the Hours plac'd at equal Distances: Here stood the Spring . . . here the Summer . . . Autumn too and icy Winter (Hyems), rough with hoary Hair."

**OPS.** Several of the ceremonies of the Saturnalia (see under December 17th) are continued at the present time during Yuletide. On the decoration of houses and churches Brewer writes (*Dict.* p. 251): "The great feast of Saturn was held in. December, when the people decorated the temples with such green things as they could find". (*id.* p. 614) "Holly used to be employed by the early

Christians at Rome to decorate churches and dwellings at Christmas: it had been previously used in the great festival of the Saturnalia, which occurred at: the same season of the year. The pagan Romans used to send[ to their friends holly-sprigs, during the Saturnalia, with; wishes for their health and well-being".

Similarly the Army custom, by which the officers wait on the men, continues a practice characteristic of the Saturnalia.

For the wearing of fantastic head-dresses and other customs of the Saturnalia see under Yule.

*Celtic: Nodlaig, An Nodlaig, La Nodlag, Nodlaig Day.* (O'Reilly, *Diet.*) "Nodlag, Nollag. [December 25th], Welsh, nadolig".

(O'Brien, *Round Towers*, p. 350) on the *Saturnalia*, as celebrated by the ancient Irish: "The very letters of the epithet . . . show the spirituality of purpose which actuated their zeal. Nullog was that epithet - it is compounded of *nua*, *new*; and *log* (for bullog), a *belly*, meaning *regeneration*, or the putting aside of the old leaven of sin, and the assumption of the new investiture of righteousness, by justification.

"As everything, however, in their religious procedure was transacted by symbols, so, in this instance, they did not content themselves with the *inner consciousness* . of a *new birth* - *This* is the exact rendering of the name by which they called it: viz. *nua vreith*, or *the being born anew* by the operation of grace but they must go through the outer form of it by typification; and for this end it was that they excavated those *apertures* in the bodies of rocks, which I have noticed in page 314 (i.e. called *Cunni*) as calling forth . . . the animadversion of . . . *yonies*, in order that, by *passing themselves through them, they might represent the condition of one issuing, through the womb, to a new scope of life.*

"[Another] method of symbolisation, and confined solely to the *initiated*, was that which characterised the construction of' their subterranean temples. Here the sublimity of their worship breaks out in all the grandeur of majesty and awe. The narrowness of the entrance, never larger than the girth of the ordinary human body, portrayed, as well the *circular Passage* in their regenerating *type*. 'Enter ye in at the *strait gate* . because *strait* is the *gate* and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life .' Matthew vii. 13,14. .

"The . . . temple, at New Grange, is exactly so constructed. After squeezing yourself, with much labour, through a long *emblematic* gallery, you arrive at a *circular room* . . ."

For the symbolically similar custom, the passing through the "Girdle of Brighid", see under February 1st: St. Brighid.

(Brewer, *Dict.*) "Yule . . . Druids held during the winter solstice the festival of Nolahg. (Higgins)". (*The Druids Cal.*) "December 25 . . . From earliest days this time of year has been one of optimistic celebration . . . The Hebrews gave gifts at Hanukkah, the Feast of Lights. In Northern climes, Yuletide served a similar purpose. The use of fir trees, holly, ivy, and bay all go back to druidic practices".

*Jewish THE VIRGIN MARY.* (Frazer, *Golden Bough abgd.* p. 358) on the date of the birth of Jesus: "at the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century the Western Church . . . adopted the twenty-fifth of December as the true date and in time its decision was accepted also by the Eastern Church "

**SALOME.** (*Discourse by Demetrius of Antioch*, p. 653) "At dawn on the 29th of Khoiak (i.e. December 25, according to the fixed Alexandrian calendar), Mary asked Joseph to seek a woman to help her. He found one on the roof of her house, and asked if she knew a midwife. She said: 'Thou art Joseph the husband of Mary', and came down, and put on her finest apparel. Before they reached the caravanserai the child was born. The woman's name was Salome."

*Anglo-Saxon, Norse, etc.* **Yule.** (Dr. Johnson's *Dict.*) "Yule [jul, Su. Goth. *jule*, Dan. *jol*, Icel. *gehul*, *goela*, Saxon. Dr. Jamieson agrees with Mr. Pinkerton in tracing it to one of the three great religious festivals in the year, which the ancient Goths observed; namely Yule, or Jul, celebrated at the time of the wintersolstice, in honour of the sun. See Dr. Jamieson, in V. YULE. Hammond refers it to the Lat. *jubilum*. The Welsh *wyl*, or *gwyl*, it may be added, is a holyday; and the Cimbr. *ol* signifies a feast.] A word adopted, and formerly much in use, for the times of Christmas and Lammas.

"This is the original *yule* - the other the yule of August determinately'. Hammond, Works, i. 660.

"Masks, singing dancing, yule-games'. *Burton, Anat. of Mel.* p. 270.

"The misletoe ceremonial of the *yule* festival continued from the time of the Druids,' *Stukeley, Palaegr, Sacr. p. 10*" . .

(*Enc. Brit.* 1810 ed.) "Jul or Jol, a Gothic word signifying a (sumptuous treat'; and particularly applied to a religious festival first among the heathens . . the month of Januarius by the Saxons was styled *Giuli*, i.e. 'the Festival' . .

"We are indebted to Procopius for the first account of this feast".

(Brewer, *Dict.* 12th ed.) "Yule The word means 'The festival of the Sun', kept at the winter solstice, when the new year sun was ushered in . . (Saxon, *gehul*, 'the Sun-feast'; Danish, *juul*; Swedish *oel*, with the article 'j'; Breton, *heol*, the sun; Welsh, *hal*). ."

(*O.E.D.*) "Yule. [Old Eng. *geol*, *geola* . *Teut. jeul-*, *je hul* . cf. Old Norse *jol*, pl. a heathen feast lasting twelve days; ult. origin obscure . j 1. December or January - Mid. Eng. Yule-Even (Scottish) . ."

(Doreen Valiente, *ABC of Witchcraft*, p. 359) "The word Yule, according to Bede and various other authorities of the olden time, is derived from an old Norse word *Iul*, meaning a wheel. In the old Clog Almanacs, the symbol of a wheel was used to mark Yuletide. The idea behind this is that the year turns like a wheel, the Great Wheel of the Zodiac, the Wheel of Life, of which the spokes are the old ritual occasions, the equinoxes and solstices, and the four 'cross-quarter-days' of Candlemas, May Eve, Lammas and Halloween. The winter solstice, the rebirth of the sun, is a particularly important turning point".

"Hence modern witches celebrate Christmas with a will; only they recognise it as Yule, one of the great Nature festivals of old. .

"The evergreens for Yuletide decorations were holly, ivy, mistletoe, the sweet-smelling bay and rosemary, green branches of the box tree".

(*Old Moore's Almanac*, 1980, p. 71) "Christmas Tree. The first authentic use of it is noted in an old book of Hesse, Germany, in 1608, and its popularity is, indeed, due to the German people, although ancient chronicles say it is a revival of pagan days".

(Whistler, *English Fest.* p. 28) on the Yuletide tree: "in Germany fit] may be no less ancient than the mistletoe bough in Britain. We might see in it a custom of the Saturnalia introduced by the Roman legions, the pine tree hung with little masks of Bacchus: '*Oscilla ex alta suspendent mollia pinu*' ('waving amulets from the tall pine'). Virgil *Georgics*, II, 389". Note: (Hooke, *Bab. and Assyr. Rel.* p. 33) "the cedar in its bravery is the symbol which the goddess (i.e. Ishtar) uses repeatedly to express her own attractiveness as she prepares to meet her risen husband. The sacred pole as the symbol of Ishtar, or Astarte, or any other form of the mother goddess, is everywhere to be found in the ancient near East". See also below: The Goddess of Nature.

(Whistler, *English Fest.* p. 58) on the Yule log: "The log will be chosen and cut beforehand; ash that burns green, and was therefore sacred to the sun . . ash that was believed in Scandinavia to be the wood of the world-tree, Yggdrasil, with its roots knotted in Hell and its boughs supporting

Heaven. The 'log was large, and must now, of necessity, be small. Perhaps the 'ashen faggot' of Devon is more suited to survival. In that county a bundle of ash sticks were bound together with nine ash-bands on Christmas Eve, and brought in on the Day with much rejoicing (Or perhaps more frequently on the Eve itself. .) No less ceremony attended the bringing in of the log in other parts of the island. Sometimes it would be sprinkled with corn, and sometimes it would be dragged in with a girl enthroned upon it (note: see below) . . In any event, a new fire would be made, and the log kindled with the last fragments of the previous log, kept throughout the year for this purpose -a rule that was no pretty fancy, but a profound recognition of continuity. By the time dinner was brought in the symbolic brand would be ablaze".

(*id.* p. 44) "The Kissing Bough or the Kissing Bunch . . hung from the ceiling in a luminous crown: a hemisphere of evergreens marked with a ring of candles above, and with a ring of bright red apples below, curiously hinting at fulfilment in the hour of promise. And all this was but the frame to a bunch of mistletoe, suspended a little below the centre . .

"So well liked was the Kissing Bough that it has never been entirely replaced by the tree . .

"On Christmas Eve those candles were lit in ceremony, and the Kissing Bough became the visible centre of the festival, lit again on the Day, and every evening thereafter till the Twelve Days were out. It hung from the middle of the ceiling, just high enough from the ground for a couple to stand or stoop and kiss beneath it. Every visitor to the house soon found his way to that point . . It was indeed the crown and centre of Christmas ".

(*id.* p. 47) on the "Crown" and "Globe" types of Kissing Bough: "The two kinds of Bough . . [form] a model of the solar system, intended to represent the stations of the sun about the earth in some pre-Copernican cosmography. Nor is the notion so farfetched as its sounds. On the evening of the sun's rebirth it is likely that the glowing apples signified nothing else".

Among other Yule customs are the following: (Whistler, *English Fest.* p. 35) "Santa Claus . . had been, so to speak, one aspect of Woden that escaped canonisation". Some also see in him a representation of Saturn.

(*id.* p. 59) on the Yule feasting: "Master and servant sat down in the great hall to banquet together in genuine though brief equality. The Romans at the Saturnalia had done the same, and the Scandinavians at Yule. . it was common, in this country among others, to give extra food to the cattle and dogs . . and to fix a sheaf or corn to the roof, where of course it attracted a crowd of delighted birds . .

"There will be a cake a cake once again geologically sound, with one stratum of icing, and one of marzipan, the whole superimposed on alluvial darkness".

(Peacock, Coll. Works: *Gryll Grange*, p. 901) "The vast globe of plum-pudding, the true image of the earth, flattened at the poles ".

(Whistler, *English Fest.* p. 62) on other Yule festivities: "There will be red paper crackers by each plate. There will be arms crossed, forming a circle to pull them; and there will be in reward the tin whistle and the flimsy cap of bright-coloured paper, opening into helmet or bonnet or bird. Even so did the Roman Briton put on a fantastic headpiece for the Saturnalia, and the islanders have not forgotten; before the days of paper caps in crackers - and they are recent - the Lord of Misrule was ordering crowns and coxcombs. Evergreen garlands were also very much in use. . (T. G. Crippen, *Christmas and Christmas Lore*, 1923, p. 101)".

**THE GIRL OF THE YULE LOG.** (Whistler, *English Fest.* p. 59) on the yule log: "Sometimes it would be dragged in with a girl enthroned upon it, and then there would be glasses raised to her health".

**THE NORNS: URTH, VERDANDI and SKULD.** The Yule Log is traditionally of ash, the wood of the tree Yggdrasil (see above). Underneath this tree sit the Norns.

(Brewer, *Dict.*) "Nornir or Norns . . . They spin the events of human life sitting under the ash-tree Yggdrasil". (Ernst and Johanna Lehner, *Folklore Symb. of Flowers, Plants, Trees*, p. 21) I The second stem of the Yggdrasil springs up in *Muspellsheim*, the warm South where the three *Norns*: *Urth*, the Past, *Verdandi*, the Present and *Skuld*, the Future dwell".

(*Prose Edda*, sel. p. 45) "It is said further that the Norns who live near the spring of Urd draw water from the spring every day, and along with it the clay that lies round about the spring, and they besprinkle the ash so that its branches shall not wither or decay".

In the ritual of the Yule Log, (see above) several indirect allusions to the Norns are noticeable. Nine, or "thrice three", ash-bands are used; a girl is enthroned upon the log; the log is sprinkled with corn and cider, and remains green while burning.

**SUN, SOL, SUNNE, THE SUN, FRAU SONNE, MISTRESS SUN.** (Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 100) "On Christmas-Day the Continental Saxons offered . . . to the Sun, (*Times*' Berlin Correspondent, December 23, 1853) to propitiate her for the loss of her beloved Adonis. The reader will remember the Sun was a goddess". See also under Moveable Festivals: Easter, and Days of the Week: Sunday.

*Swedish*: **THE LUCIA QUEEN.** (*The Irish Times*, Dec. 1975) "A Swedish 'Lucia' (Queen of Light), Miss Kirstin Book, photographed after she had switched on the lights of a Christmas Tree in O'Connell Street, Dublin. The tree is a present from the city of Gothenburg, Sweden, to the people of Dublin." See also February 2nd.

**THE STAR FAIRY; THE GODDESS OF NATURE.** (Doreen Valiente, *ABC of Witchcraft*, p. 323) on the Yuletide tree: "With its bright, baubles and the star on the top, [it] is a miniature version of World Tree of our pagan ancestors, with its roots deep in earth, the sun, moon and stars hung on its spreading branches, and the Pole Star on its topmost point. Sometimes the star is replaced by a fairy doll, who represents the goddess of Nature ruling over the world".

(*The Coming Age*, No. 13) on the Yule tree: "The fir tree, with its ruler the: Star Fairy, stand always in the heart of the home".

*Indian*: (Brewer, *Dict.*) "Yuletide has been held as a sacred festival by numberless nations . . . India, Numerous Indian tribes keep Yuletide as a religious festival (Monier Williams)".

*French*: DAME ABONDE. See under December 31st.

*General and Greek*: **THE GENIAE; ALETHEA, ATHENE, HEBE, HESTIA and MOIRA; THE GENIAE OF THE SEVEN SPHERES. The Geniad.** (*Lux Madriana Cal.*) "Astraea 28 (December 25). Day of All Geniae. Geniad".

(*The Coming Age*, No. 13) "Geniad. This is the Day of All Geniae, when we remember and pay honour to the pure and perfect children of Heaven, those who are not separated from our Mother. Alethea, Genia of Truth, Athene of Wisdom, Hebe of childhood, Hestia of the Home, Moira of fate, the Geniae of the seven celestial spheres".

## **DECEMBER 26th**

**First of the Twelve Days of Yule.** (Brewer, *Dict.* p. 251) "We are told that the ancient Egyptians, at the Winter Solstice, used a palm branch containing twelve leaves or shoots to symbolise the 'completion of year' ". (*O.E.D.*) "Yule - . a heathen feast lasting twelve days; ult. origin obscure". See also under January 6th.

(Whistler, *English Fest.* p. 65) "December 26th. . . So passed the first of the Twelve Days . . . With the plough under thatch and the shutters up in the workshop window, while the gentry entertained the farmers, and the farmers entertained their men. In eighteenth century Cumberland, during this period, the farmers would be meeting night after night in a different house, every man host in his turn, to sing and play, drink punch and eat good food; and should

there come a knock at the door, the stranger, benighted on the fells and drawn to the promising lights, would find there a northerner's welcome".

**THE WITCHES.** (Frazer, *Golden Bough abgd.* p. 561) "Another witching time is the period of twelve days between Christmas and Epiphany".

**Boxing Day.** (Whistler, *English Fest.* p. 65) "Boxing Day, December 26th . . . Some hold that [the name] alludes to the church alms-box which used to be opened on Boxing Day and the contents given to the poor; others, with greater likelihood, to the earthenware box that the young apprentice brought to the door of each of his master's clients . . .".

**The Beginning of the Pantomime season.** (Whistler, *English Fest.* p. 66) "Until quite recently Boxing Day was notable in the theatre as the beginning of the Pantomime season. - the ancient mythology of Harlequin and Columbine, Clown and Pantaloon adapted itself to a modern audience . Topical songs and other extraneous 'turns' crept in, while the advance in Victorian stagecraft made possible, and then in'dispensable, the breathtaking climax of the transformation scene".

*Italian:* **COLUMBINE.** Columbine figures in the Italian Pantomime or Harlequinade of the *Commedia del Arte*. These performances, enacted in mime by travelling companies, presented ancient symbolic figures. Columbine, traditionally dressed in white, with black pompoms, is believed to be lunar. (Brewer, *Dict.*) "Columbine. The sweetheart of Harlequin, and, like him, supposed to be invisible to mortal eyes. *Columbina* in Italian is a pet-name for a lady-love, and means a little dove, a young coquette".

*Graeco-Roman, etc.:* **ANDROMEDA; ARIADNE; CERES; THE NYMPHS.** (Burckhardt, *Civil. of Renaissance,* p. 214) on Renaissance drama: "The plays acted were mysteries on some ecclesiastical subject; the pantomimes, on the contrary, were mythological. There were represented, Orpheus with the beasts, Perseus and Andromeda, Ceres drawn by dragons, Bacchus and Ariadne by panthers, and finally the education of Achilles. Then followed a ballet of the famous lovers of ancient times, with a troop of Nymphs".

(Danaher, *The Year in Ireland,* p. 257) "Christmas plays were common in medieval towns. For instance in Dublin in 1458 a different play was presented on each day of Christmas week, on a stage erected on Hoggen Green, before the Lord Deputy and the Lord Mayor and bailiffs . . . the vintners showed Bacchus, the bakers, Ceres, and the blacksmiths, Vulcan".

*Egyptian:* **NITOCRIS, RHODOPIS, Queen of Egypt.** (Maspero, *Dawn of Civil.* p. 438) on Nitauqrit (Nitokris) "The Rosy-cheeked Beauty", builder of the Third or Southern Pyramid: "The Greeks . . . for the name of Nitokris substituted the more harmonious name of Rhodopis, which was the exact translation of the characteristic epithet of the Egyptian queen. One day while she was bathing in the river, an eagle stole one of her gilded sandals, carried it off in the direction of Memphis, and let it drop in the lap of the king, who was administering justice in the open air. The king, astonished at the singular occurrence, caused a search to be made throughout the country for the woman to whom it belonged: Rhodopis thus became queen of Egypt, and could build herself a pyramid. (Strabo, xvii. p. 808); this is a form, as has been frequently remarked, of the story of 'Cinderella' ". See also under Hours of the Day: noon.

## **DECEMBER 28th**

*Greek:* **ALCYONE. Halycon days end.** See under December 15th.

## **DECEMBER 29th**

*English:* **JULIAN of Norwich.** (*Perp. Fest. Cal.*) "December 29th. Julian of Norwich, mystic, 6. 1343".

## **DECEMBER 30th**

*English:* **JOSEPHINE BUTLER.** Protagonist of women's rights. (*Church of England Cal.*) "December 30. Josephine Butler, 1907."

## **DECEMBER 31st**

*Egyptian:* **SOKHIT, SEKHMET,** (*The Sallier Papyrus IV*, cited by Maspero *Dawn of Civil.* p. 211) "The 5th of Tybi . . . the goddess Sokhit, mistress of the double white Palace Whatsoever thou seest on this day will be fortunate".

*Graeco-Roman:* **HECATE.** See under January 31st.

*Scottish:* **Hogmanay, New Year's Eve, New Year's Night.** (Brewer, *Dict.*) "Hogmannay, Hogmena, or Hagemna. Holy month. New Year's Eve is called *hogmanny-night* or *hogg-night*, and it is still the custom in parts of Scotland for persons to go from door to door on that night asking in rude rhymes for cakes or money". (*O.E.D.*) "Hogmarmay [App. of French origin. See New Eng. Dict.] The name given, in Scotland, etc., to the last day of the year, also called 'Cake-day'; the gift of an oatmeal cake, or the like, expected by children on that day. . ."

(Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 95) "To show the connection between country and country, and the inveterate endurance of old customs, it is worthy of remark, that Jerome . . . observes that it 'was the custom so late as his time (i.e. 348-420), in all cities especially in Egypt and Alexandria, to set tables, and , furnish them with luxurious articles of food, and with goblets containing a mixture of new wine, on the last day of the month and year, and that people drew omens from them in respect of the fruitfulness of the year'. (Hieronym, vol. ii, p. 217). The Egyptian year began at a different time from ours; but this is as near as possible (only substituting whisky for wine), the way in which Hogmanay is still observed on the *last* day of the *last* month of our year in Scotland . . . everybody in the South of Scotland is personally cognisant of the fact that, on Hogmanay, or the evening before New Year's Day, among those who observe old customs, a table is spread, and while buns and other dainties are provided by those who can afford them oat cakes and cheese are brought forth among those who never see oat cakes but on this occasion, and that strong drink forms an essential article of the provision."

(*The Druids Cal.*) "December 31. *Hogmanay*. Still celebrated in Scotland and some parts of the north of England by the giving of oatmeal cakes to children". (*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 31st . . . Hogmanay. The new is reborn from the old in the year's cycle".

*Norse:* **THE NORNS.** (Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 93) "In Scotland, at least in the Lowlands, the Yule-cakes are also called Nur-cakes (the u being pronounced as the French u). Now in Chaldee Nour signifies 'birth'. Therefore, Nur-cakes are birthcakes. The Scandinavian goddesses, called Norris, who' appointed children their destinies at their *birth*, evidently derived their name from the cognate Chaldee word 'Nor', a child". (*id.* p, 95) on Hogmanay: "the cakes then made are called Nur-Cakes, or *BirthCakes*".

*Anglo-Saxon:* (Brewer, *Dict.*) "Wassail. A salutation used on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day over the spiced-ale cup, hence the 'wassail bowl'. (Anglo-Saxon, *Waes hael*, be whole, be well) "

*Irish:* (Danaher, *The rear in Ireland*, p. 259) "Divination of the future was common on New Year's Eve, especially, the forecasting of weather conditions for the whole of the coming year . . . Indeed, almost anything which happened on New Year's Eve and Day might be ominous of the future, and the nearer to the midnight hour when the year actually began, the more significant".

*French:* **DAME ABONDE.** (Brewer, *Dict.*) "Abonde (*Dame*). The French Santa Claus, the good fairy who comes at night to bring toys to children while they sleep, especially on New Year's Day".

*Welsh:* **THE SPIRIT OF THE VAN.** (Brewer, *Dict.*) "*The Spirit of the Van*. A sort of fairy which haunts the Van Pools in the

mountains of Carmarthen on New Year's Eve. She is dressed in white, girded with a golden girdle; her golden hair is very long, and she sits in a golden boat, which she urges along with a golden oar . . . (*Welsh mythology*)".

*Spanish-French:* The Hados, The fees. (Borlase, *Dolmens*, Vol. II. p. 580) "Along the whole of the Pyrenean range supernatural power is attributed to the fairies who are called *Hados*, and in French *Fees* . . . On the last day of December, which there seems to have been substituted for All-Hallow-E'en, each family awaits with anxiety their arrival, and prepares a feast for them. The offerings made to them consist of thick milk and white bread. If they are not propitiated, wolves devour the flocks. We hear of them making their abode in the centre of the mountains, like the Irish *sidhe*, whom in all their attributes, and in the veneration paid to them, they so closely resemble".

*Japanese:* (Chamberlain: *Things Japanese* p. 158) "On the last night of the old year no one goes to bed, and bells are rung".

*Greek:* **HESTIA** and *Roman:* **VESTA**. (*Lux Madriana Cal.*) "Hestia 6 (December 31) Day of Hestia, Hestiad". (*The Coming Age*, No. 3) "Day of Hestia, 6th Hestia - Hestia is the Genia of the home-fire, and it is traditional on this day to bless the house by making the Pentacle in the four corners Of each room. Ivy is hung on the outer doors to protect the house against evil through the coming year. Hestia is also the Genia of the true home-fire that burns deep within each soul".

(*Fell. of Isis Dir.*) "December 31st: Hestia, Vesta. Everliving flame of the hearth. Life is eternal, and manifests -by rebirth through, the Mothers. Fires and candles re-lighted from past flame. Life renewal".