

FREEMASONRY OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS

TO WHICH IS ADDED AN INTERPRETATION
OF THE CRATA REPOA INITIATION RITE

By

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ILLUSTRATED

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PREFACE



It is now generally acknowledged that the Egyptians, of all the ancient peoples, were the most learned in the Occult Sciences of Nature. The wisest of philosophers from other nations visited Egypt to be initiated in the sacred Mysteries by the priests of Thebes, Memphis, and Hermopolis. Thales, Solon, Pythagoras, and Plato journeyed from Greece to the delta of the Nile in quest of knowledge. Upon returning to their own country, these illumined men acknowledged the Egyptians to be the wisest of mortals and the Egyptian temples to be the repositories of the most sublime doctrines concerning the history of the Gods and the regeneration of men.

The decline of Egypt under the Ptolemies resulted in the dissipation of the sacred arcana and the violation of the sanctuaries of the Hermetic Gods. The priests retired into the deserts and migrated to more hospitable lands. In distant and desolate places the old rites flourished anew, and the Hierophants still delivered judgment with the forty scrolls spread before them on the altar top.

European culture, thwarted by the Dark Ages, languished in the Patristic dungeons, to be freed artistically by the Renaissance and religiously by the Reformation. It was not until the eighteenth century of the Christian era, however, that thought, freed from bondage to sophistry and pedantics, recognized and acknowledged the indebtedness that each generation owes to antiquity. Eighteenth century savants sought valiantly, in the ruin of time, among the battered monuments half buried in Egyptian sand for the lost keys to the sacred sciences. Only scholarship can rebuild and rededicate the ruined and desecrated shrines of the Old Wisdom.

Dimly perceptible in the subtle hints of classical writers, arcanelly intimated in symbol and fable, and thinly veiled by the great institutions of classical philosophy, The Secret Doctrine may yet be recovered to enrich and complete that material knowledge which is the boasted power of modern men.

The fable of Isis and Osiris belongs to the earliest period of Egyptian metaphysical speculation. The myth of the Dying God recurs in most of the great World Religions. The life, death, and resurrection of the immortal-mortal have become the prototype for numerous doctrines of human regeneration.

The *Crata Repoa* Rite, which has been inserted in this book, sets forth the principal elements of the initiatory drama. Restored from ancient authorities, though, of course, incomplete in its esoteric parts, the ritual is faintly reminiscent of the sublime spectacles which transpired in the subterranean chambers and crypts of ancient Egyptian temples.

He who ponders well upon the Mystery may, perchance, discover under the figures and symbols of the old ceremonies allusions to ever living qualities and ever present problems.

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FREEMASONRY OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE



LONG after the military accomplishments of Napoleon Bonaparte are forgotten, the first emperor of the French will be remembered for the impetus which he bestowed upon Egyptian archaeology. The Rosetta Stone was discovered in August of 1799 by a French officer of engineers. According to one account it was lying on the surface of the ground, and according to another, it was built into an old wall which the French soldiers were tearing down in order to lay the foundation for a fortress. The stone derives its name from the town of Rosetta (Arabic, Rashid) on the western delta of the Nile. Napoleon, hearing of the stone, which was covered with strange hieroglyphical figures and many rows of Greek letters, caused it to be placed in the Institute National which he had founded in Cairo. He ordered copies of the stone to be distributed among the learned of Europe, and through this action the lost

language of the ancient Egyptians was rediscovered. Modern interest in the whole subject of Egyptology is largely due to the impulse given to this field of research by the body of learned men whom Napoleon carried with him to Egypt and who published under his patronage a set of massive tomes, magnificently illustrated, setting forth with startling accuracy the art and architecture of the ancient Egyptian empire.

It is now generally accepted that the Rosetta Stone furnished the master key to the secret knowledge so effectively concealed beneath the old Egyptian hieroglyphs. Equipped, from the decipherment of this stone, with the elements of the ancient hieratic alphabet, Egyptologists essayed the task of classifying the literary fragments of this magnificent civilization. Nothing remains of Egypt's ancient glory but crumbling monuments, battered inscriptions, and elaborate mortuary art. The inscrutable stone faces, that have gazed down upon the Nile for these several thousand years, gave back no answer to the queries of science. The lips of Khem are sealed with the dust of time.

An alphabet is not a language, and although much progress has been made in the decipherment of the curious legends which adorn the ancient carvings, the religions and philosophies of the Egyptians have not yet been released from the symbolic characters to which they were entrusted. To express the difficulty in the words of a great Egyptologist, the late Sir P. Le Page Renouf: "The difficulty is not in literally translating the text, but in understanding the meaning which lies concealed beneath familiar words." A great part of Egyptian literature is cryptic; its true significance was probably unknown in the Ptolemaic period even to the Egyptians themselves. We should therefore not be too confident of the ac-

curacy of our translations, realizing that beneath the surface we have lighted with the small ray of our knowledge, is a Stygian darkness deeper than Egypt's night.

Even in Caesar's time the culture of the Egyptians was but a legend, for during the heyday of the haughty Julius, the decadent priesthood of Amen-Ra, Isis and Osiris were strangers to the esoteric lore of their own cults. The pre-dynastic Pharaohs—those heaven-born princes crowned with the plumes of truth and wielding by divine right the sceptres of the three worlds—had departed into the mystery from whence they had come. Rome propped up the crumbling monuments of the double empire, but in vain. One by one the proud Colossi of a vanished greatness pitched forward into the oblivion of the sand. Hermes Trismegistus, the initiated Egyptian priest, painted an extraordinary picture of Egypt's final state in the Asclepian dialogue:

"Then this most holy land, the seat of places consecrated to divinity, and of temples, shall be full of sepulchres and dead bodies. O, Egypt, Egypt, fables alone shall remain of thy religion, and these, such as will be incredible to posterity, and words alone shall be left engraved in stones, narrating thy pious deeds."

In part, at least, the Romans seemed to sense the importance of the philosophical and cultural systems of their North African neighbors, and the pseudo-Egyptologists of Europe, during the Middle Ages, derived their inspiration and data almost exclusively from Latinized versions of Egyptian culture. Since, in his *Commentaries* Cæsar has noted that Mercury had migrated into Gaul and Briton and established his worship among these peoples, why should he not also accept the popular belief that, crossing the Mediterranean, Pluto had estab-

lished, under the name of Serapis, a powerful sect among the Ptolemaic Egyptians? At all events, it requires no greater stretch of the imagination than does the suggestion advanced by Father Kircher, the learned Jesuit Egyptologist, that Osiris and Isis were Adam and Eve, respectively, and that the malevolent Typhon was none other than Cain who had strayed a bit from his Syrian domicile, acquiring the head of an alligator and the body of a hog while en route. Nothing is more pathetic in the history of religion than the ever ready assumption of Christian scholastics that the vices of the heathen are inherent while their virtues are plagiarized from Holy Writ.

Although the descendants of Romulus and Remus evolved a number of theological systems containing certain spectacular elements, nevertheless, when compared to other nations, it can hardly be said that they took their religion very seriously. Cicero and Marcus Aurelius, two outstanding Roman philosophers, were pure eclectics, and the Emperor Julian, the noblest thinker ever to wear the Roman purple, drew his wisdom from the Alexandrian fountainhead of Neo-Platonism. The Roman populace was so obsessed with the exploitation of political viewpoints and territorial expansion that the finer ramifications of rational culture seemingly escaped them. Slowly and painfully, indeed, were the she-wolf's whelps civilized. Chameleon-like, the Roman Legionnaires adopted the theistic system of whatever people they were bringing under subjugation at the moment, apparently viewing every alien pantheon as part of the legitimate loot of conquest. Metaphorically speaking, the very gods of every conquered race stalked in chains behind the victorious Roman general in his triumphal march through the Eternal City.

While the Roman empire was thus dictating the political destinies of the known world, nearly every contemporary re-

ligion had gained a foothold in Rome. It is true that the Latins had drawn an invisible line around the Seven Hills upon which stood their Eternal City and they forbade any alien god to pass that line, but even a cunning Roman prefect could not prevent the entrance of those gods that men smuggled in, in their minds. Temples to Dionysius of Greece, Mithras of Persia, Isis and Serapis of Egypt, and Diana of the Ephesians, shared honors alike with the natal Ares. Rome scrutinized but superficially the gods of her enemies, with the single exception of the Greek deities, for a god not strong enough to withstand the Roman war machine was at best an inferior tutelary. So profound, however, was the system of Greek ethics that the Romans did not dare to ignore it. The metaphysical doctrines of Egypt, however, were so ingeniously concealed that Rome, with little time for anything but the obvious, was content to make treaties and seize plunder.

In Alexandria had blossomed the supernal products of Neo-Pythagorean and Neo-Platonic culture. Ptolemy had imported Eleusinian Initiates, by whose aid the Serapic Rite had been formulated. The Egyptian Platonists were also amazingly lucid. It is highly probable that, in the elements of Greek philosophy, the more highly enlightened of the Egyptian Initiates recognized fragments of their own dead lore, for in the time of Porphyry, Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus and Proclus, the great institutions of Egyptian learning were already but faint memories. The temples that had survived the ravages of time were served by a degenerate priesthood; the secret meanings of the symbols had been lost; the hidden arcana had departed into the Arabian desert, and the elaborate ceremonials of the state religion had lost the name of action.

The bitter animosity between the pagan initiates and the early Christian sects rendered the extinction of the ancient

secret orders inevitable. The victorious cross, however, when metamorphosed into a sword handle, could hardly be considered as having tempered its concept of justice with mercy. The Christian premise was both brief and simple: all gods other than Jehovah and His Son were devils and those who followed after these devils constituted the legion of the damned. The burning of the Serapeum under the edict of Theodosius the Good marked the close of the old era. By this deed of vandalism the early church proclaimed itself the enemy of learning for it willfully destroyed a great library which had housed the accumulated wisdom of ten thousand years. The sad faced Serapis fell, his funeral pyre fed by four hundred thousand blazing parchment scrolls—the secrets of Egypt were lost.

Having obliterated this shrine of knowledge, the Church launched upon a program of internal dissension which lasted for several centuries in a more or less violent form. Christian scholars then inaugurated an elaborate program of archaeological reconstruction. The result was a ridiculous conglomeration of puerility which for several hundred years was palmed off upon a comparatively illiterate world under the name of Egyptology. Every petty European prince became the patron of some lost art, possessing what he pleased to call a "cabinet" i.e. a private museum in which he preserved curious ancient fragments. He frequently settled a pittance upon some rather erudite looking person, possibly a priest, to classify and reclassify this collection and serve in an official capacity half way between a librarian and a curator. Feudal warfare destroyed many of these collections and pecuniary embarrassment (an ailment common to princes) scattered others. Descriptions of the most outlandish character were published regarding these various antiques, not a few of which were

flagrant forgeries. And so things passed until the post-Baconian period when the real classification of knowledge began and the titled dilettante gave place to the seriously minded and duly qualified investigator. Research at first was confined almost entirely to Greek and Latin authorities, for the Egyptian hieroglyphics themselves could not be deciphered although several quaint efforts were made to discover an alphabet among the symbols. Then came Napoleon and the Rosetta Stone.

Archeology must be divided into two schools. The first, composed of strictly materialistically minded men, classifies but never attempts to interpret or apply even, for that matter, to fit together the fragments of old civilizations and cultures. The second is the intuitional school, generally regarded as unorthodox by the fanatics of the first group. The intuitionalists attempt to build some reasonable pattern out of the wreckage. They dare to speculate, using the mind as an instrument of exploration and research. It is this last group that, to some measure, sense the significance of the old metaphysical systems. They realize almost intuitively that a broad learning, at the same time deep and lofty, existed among ancient nations.

But the masters of this old learning have returned to their patron tutelaries. Sophists now sit in the seats of the wise; pettifoggery and pedagogy obscure the issues of the mind. Although science has assumed the habiliments of erudition, there is a shallowness in our attitude towards learning that is disquieting to all but the superficially minded. We realize that the foundation of our present knowledge is inadequate for the structure that has been erected upon it. The builders of the house of modern learning have ignored the dictum of that simple law of architectonics, namely, that to preserve the

integrity of a mighty institution, it is necessary that its base shall be upon bedrock. Limited to the elements contained in modern materialism it is consequently difficult, if not impossible, to adequately interpret any ancient civilization, for with very few exceptions, these older races were steeped in abstractions. Hence their learning only provokes the ridicule of modern archeologists who have no vision beyond the clod. To understand, one must be en rapport with, and understanding waits upon appreciation. To the twentieth century Sophist the elaborate pantheons and far fetched fables of old religions represent a hodgepodge of absurdities. The old gods are rejected instantly and no reason for their rejection is deemed necessary.

Our placid men of letters seemingly never suspect that they may be the self-deluded victims of a colossal hoax. The alacrity with which they underestimate the intelligence of that which has preceded them in time or space is amazing. The mere fact that some person has not basked in the sunlight of contemporaneous opportunity presumes him to have been an ignoramus. Easy believers have lived in every age, but why should we presume the Egyptians en masse to have worshiped a snake with hind legs merely because they occasionally drew pictures of one? The East Indian goddess Kali is pictured with four arms, an indigo colored body and her tongue perpetually sticking out. Although there are temples to this goddess in every part of India before which offerings and libations are made, a great part of the population realizes and actually teaches that this rather violent looking personality is simply the embodiment of an abstract philosophic idea. The sacred books of the Hindus are far older than those of the Egyptians and symbolism we know antedates the most ancient of languages. Nevertheless modern literalists are so delightfully

naive that they do not have even a momentary doubt that the hieroglyphical figures are exact portraits of deities accepted and worshiped by the Egyptians as real beings with precisely those appearances.

Egyptian metaphysics is a field as yet almost untouched. This scarcity of material is due to the surprising fact that in spite of all our discussions, excavations and so forth, we are still for the most part ignorant of the real elements of Egyptian mythology. The diffidence with which such men as Belzoni, Maspero and Massey approach the subject and their resultant confusion when they do attempt an interpretation, furnish adequate proofs of the insufficiency of their knowledge. In his excellent classification of Egyptian gods, A. E. Wallis-Budge, Keeper of Egyptian Antiquities at the British Museum, reveals most of what is known concerning this recalcitrant subject. But even his work presents a frightfully disordered picture. Divinities appear in one place with certain attributes and in another place with almost opposite attributes and every god and goddess of Egypt's forty-two nomes is accredited with being the sole Creator of the universe. We can therefore understand why few Egyptologists essay the role of interpreter.

It is not enough however to know the names of scores of departed celestials. They are of no value unless we can sense the underlying purpose for which the system was created. Some have said that there was no purpose beneath this pantheon and that this confusion of gods represents an increment left by one dying order of belief to its successors. Such an explanation will find wide favor among that class of easy believers who still maintain that the constellations of the heavens were discovered and organized into zodiacal signs by shep-

herds during their spare time. Many centuries of suffering and benightedness have demonstrated the proclivity of mankind to embrace error and reject even a modicum of common sense.

Our purpose in preparing this present writing is to suggest an interpretation of Egyptian metaphysical tradition in harmony with the teachings set forth in what were called the Mysteries. We feel that there is sufficient accumulated evidence set forth in the writings of ancient nations to justify the acceptance of a metaphysical explanation to the old theologies. Alphonse Mariette sets forth the premise from which we are to develop our present treatise:

"To the initiated of the sanctuary, no doubt, was reserved the knowledge of the god in the abstract, the god concealed in the unfathomable depths of his own essence. But for the less refined adoration of the people were presented the endless images of deities sculptured on the walls of the temples."

It would seem that most Egyptologists come under the general heading of the less refined group, for they are content to gaze upon the outer forms of the divinities but have never sought to understand that broad mystical concept of life of which these gods were but the outer semblance and concrete symbol. How can we ignore such a statement as appears on the statue of a high priest which was found in Memphis: "He knew the dispositions of earth and hell; there was nothing hidden from him; he adored God and glorified Him in His designs; he covered with a veil the side of all that he had seen." Such hints as this have meaning. They assure us that the Egyptians themselves were aware of their esoteric tradition. An early Christian father, Origen, who was at heart a pagan philosopher, adds his testimony: "The Egyptian philosophers

have sublime notions with regard to the Divine nature, which they keep secret, and never discover to the people but under a veil of fables and allegories."

We may also borrow a few lines from Lewis Spence: "The purpose of initiation is a conventional attempt to realize man's place in the universe and in the divine scheme of things, and this, I believe, the Egyptian Mystical System achieved for the first time in an orderly and philosophical manner. * * Just as I am well assured that no individual can lead a life of psychic security without at least a minimum of contemplation upon things hidden and divine, so am I equally persuaded that no nation, which in the main ignores them, can be secure in justice and loftiness of ideal. How serene was Egypt in her five thousand years of empire, calm, dignified, aye, and prosperous and happy in her rapt contemplation of the Divine. No people were ever at once so pious and so contented as were her people, and not until a European hegemony of admittedly inferior type, the Ptolemaic, interrupted her visionary quietism was she confounded. Have we no lesson to learn from Egypt? Aye, the greatest in the world, the knowledge of that divine introspection which alone can give man the likeness of the Divine."

Inspired, then, with the desire to rescue from the wisdom of the old Egyptians some small part of their secret doctrine, we shall attempt to piece together a few of the sacred fragments. In the next section we shall classify the origins of our information so that there may be no reasonable doubt as to the foundation upon which we build this interpretation. With the tools that are at hand we shall attempt to rebuild the House of the Mysteries, using in no part of it materials foreign to the original structure. The condition of the ruin renders impossi-

ble the restoration of the edifice to its original grandeur but, if we may perceive even a small part of its beauty, we shall be inspired to further research and greater effort.

EGYPTIAN MAGIC

CHAPTER TWO

Isis was the patroness of the magical arts among the Egyptians. The use to which magic should be put is revealed in the Osirian cycle where Isis applies the most potent of her charms and invocations to accomplish the resurrection of Osiris. In other words, the redemption of the human soul. That the gods of Egypt were elements of a profound magical system and possessed a significance far different from that advanced by modern Egyptologists is certain. The various deities of the Nile valley were elements of an elaborate magical metaphysical system, a kind of ceremonial Cabbala. This cannot be denied. But even when impressed with the reality of this fact, the modern Egyptologist still balks. "Supposing," he asks, "that the Egyptians did possess an elaborate metaphysical doctrine? Of what value is its rediscovery in an age when the natural has been demonstrated to be mediocre and the supernatural non-existent? Even if these extinct persons whose mummies clutter up our museums were the custodians of some mysterious lore, we have simply outgrown it. Let the dead past bury its dead. We prefer to live in an era of enlightenment, an enlightenment which you would blight by asking us to espouse the superstitions of our remote ancestors."

These so-called superstitions, however, it is interesting to note, die hard. In fact they do not die at all, but insinuate

themselves as a discordant note in our matter-of-fact existences. McCall's Magazine published some time ago an article by Edgar Wallace entitled *The Curse of Amen-Ra*, dealing with the phenomena attendant upon the opening of the tomb of the Pharaoh Tutankhamen. After vividly describing the curse of Amen-Ra the author sums up the effect of this curse upon those who came in contact with the tomb or its contents. His statements are in substance as follows: At the time the tomb was opened the party present at the excavations included the Earl of Carnarvon, Howard Carter and his secretary, Dick Bethell, M. Benedite the French archeologist, and M. Pasanova. Of these, only one, Howard Carter, remains alive. Colonel Aubrey Herbert, Carnarvon's half brother, and Evelyn-White who also entered the tomb were both dead within a year, one by suicide. Sir Archibald Douglas Reed, the radiologist who took an X-ray of the mummy, was also dead within twelve months; and Professor Laffleur of McGill university, the first American scientist to examine the death chamber, did not leave Luxor alive. Woolf Joel visited the tomb and was dead within a year. Jay Gould was taken ill within the tomb and died. Attendants whose duty it was to look after the exhibit from the tomb in the Cairo museum also sickened and died. Seven French authors and journalists visited the tomb and six were dead within two years. When they unveiled Tutankhamen they found a mark upon his face, and by a strange coincidence (?) the mark left upon the face of Lord Carnarvon, which presumably caused his death, was in exactly the same spot and of similar appearance. Nor does this list include the numerous native workmen who perished from the curse. Only recently another name was added to the long list associated with the tragedy. Arthur Weigall, after a long and mysterious illness similar to that defined in the curse, is the

most recent victim. The eminent authority on antiquities, Dr. Mardus, said, "The Egyptians for seven thousand years possessed the secret of surrounding their mummies with some dynamic force of which we have only the faintest idea."

Over the entrance to the tomb of Tutankhamen was a magical tablet inscribed with strange hieroglyphics. Dr. Mardus named this tablet the "Stela of Malediction," for it pronounced a fearful curse upon any sacrilegious persons who might violate the sanctuary of the deified dead. The words upon the stela were as follows: "Oh ye Beings from Above, Oh ye Beings from Below! Phantoms riding the breasts of men, ye of the crossroads and the great highways, wanderers beneath the shade of night! And ye from the Abysses of the West, on the fringes of the Twilight, dwellers in the caverns of obscurity, who rouse terrors and shuddering; and ye, walkers by night whom I will not name, friends of the Moon; and ye intangible inhabitants of the world of night, Oh People, Oh Denizens of the Tombs, all of you approach and be my witnesses and my respondents! Let the hand raised against my form be withered! Let them be destroyed who attack my name, my foundation, my effigies, the images like unto me."

Can modern Egyptologists and scientists in all branches and departments view lightly the culture of the Egyptians if their researches into the forces of nature gave them such strange power and enabled them to master natural laws of which modern learning has no knowledge or conception?

Circumstances so extraordinary as the curse of King Tutankhamen simply overtax the theory of mere coincidence. Nor is this an isolated case as those will remember who read the accounts of the Cleopatra mummy curse many years ago. It will also be noted that in this age of moral certitudes

the story of the Tutankhamen curse had no sooner been broadcast than several of our large museums were deluged by gifts of Egyptian antiquities from private individuals who no longer desired to own them. These persons, most of them well educated (as modern education goes), were not superstitious—they were just careful.

The following article appeared in an English newspaper in 1923: "The death of Lord Carnarvon has been followed by a panic among collectors of Egyptian antiquities. All over the country people are sending their treasures to the British Museum, anxious to get rid of them because of the superstition that Lord Carnarvon was killed by the 'ka' or double of the soul of Tutankhamen. These fears are, it is hardly necessary to state, absolutely groundless."

It is also hardly necessary to add that the journalist fails to give his authority for the last sentence. The newspaper article continues:

"An avalanche of parcels containing mummies' shrivelled hands and feet, porcelain and wooden statuettes and other relics from the ancient tombs descended this week on the British Museum. Fear inspires these gifts, brought by every post. The belief that a dead king's curse is potent for evil after thousands of years won thousands of adherents on the day when Lord Carnarvon became ill. * * * Few of the parcels received at the museum bear the sender's name. The owners, in their eagerness to wash their hands of the accursed things, have tried to keep their identity secret. * * * The British Museum is a godsend to the superstitious. It offers a means of shifting the liability to expert shoulders. The museum authorities are used to such liabilities, having harbored the coffin lid of the powerful priestess of Amen-Ra for years, but

they are not at all grateful for the present flood of gifts. The museum weathered a similar storm some years ago when the story of the curse of the priestess of Amen-Ra became public. Sufficient scare gifts were received to fill a large show case. A long chain of fatalities has been attributed to the curse of the priestess. Men who have made fun of the superstitious have died within the year. Another story is that a photographer took pictures of the priestess and placed the plates in his safe. When he went to look at them some weeks later, the glass had become a thin brown powder."

Let us consider the "rational" explanations, so-called, adduced by science in disposing of the superstition of the king's curse. Dr. Frederick H. Cowles, F.R.G.S., famous British scientist, declared in an interview a few years ago that Lord Carnarvon and a number of workmen engaged in excavation met their deaths as the result of a poisonous and almost invisible dust placed there purposely by the wily priests to bring destruction upon the violators of the dead. "This poisonous dust," says Dr. Cowles, "analysis of which has baffled scientists, was scattered about the tomb. * * * Lord Carnarvon was not the only one to note its fatal property, as a number of workmen engaged in the excavation were likewise stricken. Most of these died a lingering death, but others, greatly impaired in health, have recovered." There is nothing in the learned doctor's explanation, however, to account for the fact that Howard Carter did not chance to breathe any of the noxious vapors, although he was more steadily engaged in the work of excavation than even Lord Carnarvon. We also question how much science actually knows about this mysterious dust which defies analysis, for if it cannot be analyzed how can it be

either identified with certainty or proved poisonous. The term "poisonous dust" is evidently the charitable term that covers a multitude of scientific shortcomings.

Though sorcery has been accorded no official recognition by modern science, there is, nevertheless, a certain quasi-official acceptance of the reality of occult phenomena throughout the civilized world. In a newspaper interview Sir Arthur Conan-Doyle illustrates the wide-spread recognition of the idea that the Egyptians knew how to surround their dead with mysterious guardian agencies which throughout the centuries visited their vengeance upon grave-robbers, scientific or otherwise. In discussing with the correspondent of the *Daily Express* the death of a certain Mr. Fletcher who had felt the wrath of Egypt's dead, Conan-Doyle declared that the tragedy was caused by Egyptian "elementals" guarding a female mummy because another student of Egyptology, a Mr. Robinson, had begun an investigation of the stories of the mummy's malevolence. "I warned Mr. Robinson," he says, "against concerning himself with the mummy at the British Museum, he persisted, and his death followed."

Are we to presume, however, that this single phase of ceremonial magic constituted the entire repertoire of the Egyptian thaumaturgists. If they could manifest such surprising power, is it not probable that they possessed a knowledge of other natural hidden forces—forces as yet unknown to the modern world and possibly of inestimable value? We are assured in the "authorized version" of Holy Writ that the magicians of Egypt changed their staves or rods into serpents in the presence of Pharaoh. The modern scientist does not live who can duplicate that phenomenon, yet if he happens to be a good Christian he is in somewhat of a dilemma.

Sir Gaston Maspero in his *New Light on Ancient Egypt*, dwells at some length upon the subject of Egyptian miracles. His description of the talking and moving statues is especially lucid. After explaining that the Egyptians never undertook any important enterprise without consulting the gods, and receiving an answer therefrom, Maspero then explains how the answers were produced. He describes images made of wood "painted or gilded like the ordinary statue, but made of jointed pieces which could be moved. The arm could lift itself as high as the shoulder or elbow, so that the hand could place itself on an object and hold it or let it go. The head moved on the neck, it bent back and fell again into its place." Maspero then explains that certain priests set aside for this duty operated these manikins. He does not believe that these statues were pious frauds but that the consultants were fully aware of the presence of the priests but considered them as sacred and ensouled mediators whose motions of the statues were acceptable to divinity and under its influence. Having thus explained all of the miracles to his satisfaction, Sir Gaston leaves us a little unconvinced when he says of the statues which he has so minutely described, "to my knowledge we do not possess any specimen of them." May we consider his explanation therefore at least mildly "conjectural?"

It is difficult to imagine that Plato or Pythagoras would be deeply impressed by a divinity which squeaked at the joints and delivered revelations with a hinged head. While it is possible that in the decadent period of Egyptian metaphysics, subterfuges may have been used to stimulate the piety of the devout, it is scarcely conceivable that an enlightened order of priestcraft, profoundly versed in the seven liberal sciences, could have taken seriously so childish a method of pronounc-

ing oracles. Certainly they could never have deceived the wise with such toys, and the wise were the ones who most admired the wisdom of the Egyptians.

Into the same classification as the astounding conclusions of Maspero, would naturally fall the opinions of Salverte who believed that the mysterious and terrible occurrences which took place in the mysteries had their origin in magic lanterns and mirrors. The early Christian fathers accused the pagans of using drugs to produce hallucinations, but in this respect the primitive church but condemned itself for it is now rather well known that in early Christian communities the Communion Cup was drugged in order to compete with the pagan Mysteries.

We may pass over these desperate efforts to disprove the magical powers of the Egyptians as arising, not from a mature knowledge, but from a desperate prejudice. Magic is too ancient and too universal to be explained away by mirrors, wires and hinges. In Egypt we are dealing unquestionably with true manifestations of occult power. The learned author of *Art Magic* presents what may be accepted as a reasonably accurate estimation of the priest-magicians of the old Egyptian Mysteries. "They were highly educated, scientific men. They understood the nature of the lodestone, the virtues of mineral and animal magnetism, which, together with the force of psychological impression, constituted a large portion of their theurgic practices. They perfectly understood the art of reading the innermost secrets of the soul, of impressing the susceptible imagination by enchantment and fascination, of sending their own spirits forth from the body, as clairvoyants, under the action of powerful will—in fact, they were masters of the art now known as mesmerism, clairvoyance, electro-biology,

etc. They also realized the virtues of magnets, gums, herbs, drugs, and fumigations, and employed music to admirable effect." (See *Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought*.)

The highly gifted Egyptologist Lenormant acknowledges Egyptian magic as an essential part of their religious philosophy. James Bonwick, F.R.G.S. thus summarizes the powers possessed by Egyptian adepts: "Egyptian mystics could levitate, walk the air, handle fire, live under water, sustain great pressure, harmlessly suffer mutilation, read the past, foretell the future, make themselves invisible, and cure disease."

We can compare this account with some recent news from Tibet, another land long famous for magic. Dr. Alexander Cannon, a distinguished scientist, a Doctor of Medicine, a celebrated psychiatrist, a Master of Arts, and a Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society, has brought back a strange record from the land of the Lamas. He saw a tree withered by a pointed finger, a dead man raised to life, the Grand Lama surrounded by a blue aura three inches thick, and a human being lifted into the air by pure mental effort. The London County Council called upon Dr. Cannon to resign his post, as the head of a noted institution, for his remarks, but later, strangely enough, after further enquiry, withdrew the demand. It would seem that the age of miracles is not dead.

From the writings of Proclus and Iamblichus we can gain a considerable insight into the principles of Egyptian magic. To the old philosophers, even Pythagoras and Plato, magic was no mystery. According to Proclus the initiated priests so fully understood the mutual sympathy between the visible and invisible worlds that they were able to change the course of action and focus divine virtues upon inferior natures. According to Plato the highest form of magic consisted in the

divine worship of the gods, and according to Iamblichus the priests, through sacerdotal theurgy, were able to ascend from a material state of consciousness to a realization of the universal essences, thus coming to an understanding of universal purpose by which the performance of high feats of magic became possible.

It may be proper at this point to establish a clear line of demarcation between magic and sorcery. The term *magic* was not associated with occult jugglery by the Egyptians but arose from a profound understanding of natural law. If we acknowledge the Egyptian Initiates to have possessed some knowledge not common to the so-called educated men of today, we do not necessarily admit belief in superstition. Superstition is closely involved with the supernatural, but magic infers knowledge of the superphysical. We may therefore say, that belief in the supernatural is the basis of superstition; but belief in the superphysical is the basis of all forms of mysticism. To believe in the supernatural is to imply belief in that which is contrary to nature and such belief, by distorting values, rapidly leads to superstition. The Egyptian priests did not acknowledge the supernatural, but they did emphasize the philosophical verity that the visible and the invisible, or the seen and the unseen, together constitute Nature. Nature is as much an invisible world as it is a visible world. In other words, there are many natural truths which lie beyond the physical sense perceptions. To believe in the supernatural is folly, but to believe in the superphysical is wisdom. Every phenomenon, physical and superphysical, is susceptible of analysis and classification. The modern metaphysician does not believe in miracles, nor did the ancient Egyptian priests. Somewhere in nature there is a cause for every effect, but as there

are many effects which baffle our understanding, so there are many causes which elude our perception. Science acknowledges cause and effect on the physical plane of action, but it has not yet rediscovered that all causes are intrinsically superphysical, that is, all causes lie in the moral, mental or psychological field.

Ancient metaphysics was a science dedicated to the perception and classification of such causes as lie entirely in the sphere of spirit or reason. The metaphysician had as his task the discernment and establishment of a concept of the subjective universe sufficient to support and produce the objective universe. It is impossible to imagine the material world suspended from nothing, supported by nothing, and maintained by nothing. As surely as the physical life of man depends upon the presence of a subjective energy, so surely is the physical life of the universe supported by a life invisible and knowable only to the metaphysician.

"Magic," says General Albert Pike, "is the exact and absolute science of nature and its laws." From the knowledge of this absolute science arises occult science. From experience in occult science in turn arises the theurgic art, for as surely as man has adapted his physical universe to his purposes so surely the adept adapts the metaphysical universe to his purposes. To acknowledge that the Egyptians possessed the power of adapting mystical forces to physical ends is to bestow upon them proficiency in the most perfect and difficult of the arts. yet to deny this ability on the part of the Egyptian priests is to deny the evident, and we must resign ourselves to the undeniable fact that they possessed a form of learning which has not been conferred upon this present race.

The realization that the Egyptians were a highly civilized

highly informed and highly gifted people, long trained in the mysteries of the subjective life bestows a new perspective upon the whole vista of their culture. We perceive them developing their physical sciences, manufacturing glass, perfectly imitating precious stones by chemical means, establishing the foundations of music, excelling in dentistry and sufficiently trained in engineering to raise incomparable monuments and to change the course of the Nile river. We also perceive them developing their metaphysical science to the establishment of a magnificent philosophy of conscious immortality and wresting from death its terrifying power. Their inspiration was the impulse to all Western civilization and our debt to them is beyond estimation.

It is well nigh incomprehensible how the modern world can recognize the inherent genius of Plato, Aristotle, Socrates and Euclid and yet reject in toto the religious and philosophical systems of which they were the product. We are admonished to judge a tree by its fruits, but what has the modern world produced in the way of thinkers worthy of comparison with these graduates of the Athenian school. These men believed in metaphysics, they believed in the gods, or at least in the reality of invisible divine beings, they believed in magic and they discoursed upon the constitution and condition of the human soul. Their philosophical and ethical codes were derived from those of the Egyptians, and they have done honor to their teachers through the long ages of the earth's experience. Strange as it may seem, with every so-called new discovery of modern science, our horizon is narrowing. The universe of spirit and the sphere of mind—these have disappeared, and with them also have vanished the orders of the heavenly Hierarchies. To us nothing remains

assured but the physical world which, scarab-like, the modern scientist is trying to roll backwards through space with his hind legs, after having deposited the eggs of his faith therein.

THE OSIRIAN CYCLE

CHAPTER THREE

The fable of Isis and Osiris, as it has descended to us in the account given by Plutarch, has not been greatly amplified by modern research. The Egyptian fragments which have been translated in recent years offer no complete account of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Osiris, nor has any new key been found to unlock this great drama which may well be termed "The Passion Play of Egypt." It is not our intention to perpetuate Plutarch's account merely for its outward appearance but rather, from the same motive that inspired Synesius, Platonic philosopher and Christian bishop, to compile his account of the same fabulous history. Synesius in his treatise *On Providence* thus introduces the Osirian myth:

"This fable is Egyptian. The Egyptians transcend in wisdom. Perhaps therefore this also being a fable, obscurely signifies something more than a fable, because it is Egyptian. If, however, it is not a fable, but a sacred discourse, it will deserve in a still greater degree to be told, and committed to writing."

In presenting a summary of Plutarch's account we have omitted nothing which could in any way be regarded as relevant. We have taken the liberty, however, of somewhat expanding the fable by incorporating therein some small fragments derived from other Greek writers and occasionally a few

words bearing upon the account from fragments of Egyptian religious literature. The story then is in substance as follows:

The goddess Nut, whom Plutarch identifies with Rhea, was the daughter of Shu and Tefnut. She is the wife of Seb (Saturn) and the mother of Ra (Helios). If we are to trust Plutarch, she afterwards becomes the wife of Ra, or the sun. Nut is unfaithful to Ra who, discovering that she is with child by Seb, pronounces a curse upon her that she should not be delivered of her progeny in any *month* or *year*. Thoth (Hermes or Mercury), who is also in love with Nut, comes to her assistance with a stratagem. He plays at tables with the moon-goddess (Selene) and wins from her the seventieth part of each of her illuminations, and joining these parts together he forms of them five days which he adds to the calendar; previous to that time the Egyptian year consisted of three hundred and sixty days. These five days, being not part of any month or year, Ra was outwitted. Upon these days Nut brought forth her five children at different times and different places. Upon the first of these days she brought forth Osiris and the place of his birth, according to Diodorus, was Mount Nissa, in Arabia the Happy. (Mount Nissa is now Mount Sinai.) At the moment of the birth of Osiris a voice sounded throughout the world, saying, "The Lord of all the earth is born." On the second day Nut gave birth to Aroueris, the elder Horus; on the third day, Typhon or Set; on the fourth day, Isis; and on the fifth and last day, Nephthys. The Egyptians, therefore, regard the five days which they term the Epact or super-added, as the birthdays of the gods, especially venerating the fourth of them, upon which the benevolent goddess Isis came into being.

Plutarch further on announces that the five children of Nut were not all of the same father, thus contradicting his earlier

statement. He says that Osiris and the elder Horus were the children of Ra, that Isis was the daughter of Thoth, and only Typhon and Nephthys were actually the offspring of Seb. There is another and even more recondite legend regarding the elder Horus which denies him the fathership of Ra, declaring him to be the offspring of Osiris and Isis while they were still in the womb of Nut. These accounts we shall consider later.

Osiris was given to Pamylen to be educated, and having come to the years of majority, became king of Egypt. In this high capacity Osiris applied himself to the civilizing of his nation, turning the Egyptians from their previously indigent and barbarous course of life to a happy and community existence. He taught them agriculture, compiled for them a body of laws for the regulation of conduct, instructed them in the reverencing and worship of the gods, thus establishing Egypt in all the essentials of truth. Having brought his own nation to prosperity and enlightenment, Osiris travelled over the rest of the world, converting peoples to his disciplines, not by force but the persuasion of reason. Osiris was accompanied on this journey by a procession of nymphs and other superphysical beings who filled the air with music and song.

In the meantime Typhon, brother or half-brother of Osiris, had ambition to usurp the throne, but the vigilant Isis, sister-wife of Osiris, was too watchful. Typhon, however, having persuaded seventy-two other persons to join him in his conspiracy, with the aid of a certain queen in Ethiopia named Aso, perfected a plot against Osiris. He fashioned a chest exactly to the measure of the body of Osiris which chest he caused to be brought into the banquet hall where the princes of Egypt were feasting their king's return. Typhon, simulat-



FROM *Lenoir's La Franche-Maconnerie*.
ISIS THE MOTHER OF THE MYSTERIES

ing jest, promised this elaborately ornamented box to the one whose body, upon trial, most nearly fitted it. Each of the princes in turn lay down in the box, but each was too short or too tall, until last of all Osiris himself lay down in it. Immediately the seventy-two conspirators rushed to the box, clamped the cover upon it, fastened it with nails and poured melted lead over all the cracks and crevices. After this they carried the chest to the bank of the Nile and cast it into the river where it joins the sea. This evil deed was executed upon the seventeenth day of the Egyptian month Athyr when the sun was in Scorpio. According to some it was in the 28th year of the reign of Osiris, and to others in the 28th year of his life.

As soon as Isis received word of this crime she cut off one of the locks of her hair and put on the mourning apparel of widowhood, for which reason the spot, where she did this, was afterwards called Coptos or the city of mourning. After donning the widow's weeds, Isis set forth in search of her husband's body and wandered about all Egypt, asking all with whom she came in contact. Finally some children, who had been at play, told her that they had seen the accomplices of Typhon carrying the chest to the Nile; for that reason Egyptians regard the words of children as oracular and pay great attention to them. While Isis was searching for her husband's body she learned that Nephthys, her sister, had by magic insinuated herself into the presence of Osiris before his death and in the guise of Isis had conceived a son from him. Isis sought out the child which Nephthys had deserted for fear of Typhon's anger, and adopting it, attached it to her person as a constant guard and attendant. This was Anubis, the dog-headed god who appears in the *Book of the Dead*.

At length Isis learned that the chest had been carried by the sea to the coast of Byblos where it had lodged in the branches of a bush of tamarisk which had grown up miraculously about the sacred receptacle and concealed it within its trunk. The king of Byblos, amazed at the miracle, caused the tree to be cut down and from the trunk, containing the box, he made a pillar to support the roof of his palace. By magic Isis discovered this and, traveling immediately to Byblos, attached herself to the suite of the queen as a nurse to her children. At night, when all the palace was asleep, Isis transformed herself into a swallow and fluttered around the column, bemoaning her fate in strange, sad notes. In due time Isis revealed her divine nature and asked that the pillar be cut down; taking therefrom the chest, she departed with it into a desert place where she performed certain magical rites by which the body of Osiris was temporarily animated and by this animation she received from Osiris a son who is called the younger Horus, the child who was conceived of the dead.

There is some confusion in the account at this point. Plutarch says that Isis left the body of Osiris temporarily to visit her son Horus, just mentioned, but the context of the fable would rather call for her departure to a secluded place where the child could be born without the knowledge of Typhon who certainly would have destroyed him. Isis hid the chest in a remote and unfrequented place but Typhon, hunting one night by the light of the moon, chanced upon it. Knowing its contents and realizing Isis to be proficient in magic, he resolved to thwart her purposes, and tearing the body into fourteen parts, he scattered them about Egypt.

From the inscriptions on the Metternich Stele it seems that Set must have imprisoned Isis and her son Horus. The goddess is made to say, "I am Isis, and I came forth from the

house wherein my brother Set had placed me." Thoth, the "Prince of Law," again came to her assistance, and aided Isis to escape from the house (prison?) of Set. Thoth, also, at this time, prophesied that Horus would sit upon the throne of his father and rule the double empire of Egypt. Upon the advice of Thoth, Isis hides the child in a papyrus swamp, thus saving him from the wrath of Set.

Isis, returning, having left her son at Butos, and fashioning a magical boat out of papyrus, traversed the whole of the empire. As she met with the scattered parts of her husband, she buried each one separately, first, however, encasing it in a magical mummy composed of wax, incense and grain seed. She finally recovered all of the parts of Osiris except the phallus which had been thrown into the river and devoured by three fishes. This organ Isis reproduced in gold and having performed all of the ceremonies necessary to insure the life of Osiris in the underworld, she returned to her son Horus and by the theurgic arts, of which she was mistress, saved him from death from the stings of scorpions.

Horus, having grown to man's estate, and having received from his mother the tradition of his father's murder, longed to avenge the evil deed. Osiris appeared to his son in a vision, instructing him in the means by which he could overcome the hosts of Typhon. We are led to infer that Horus gathered about him an army which, meeting the hosts of Typhon, battled with them for many days, achieving victory. Typhon was taken prisoner and turned over to the custody of Isis. She, being his sister, could not put him to death but set him at liberty which so incensed Horus that he laid hands upon his mother and removed from her head the insignia of royalty; thereupon Thoth gave her a new helmet made in the shape of

an ox's head. Typhon next accused Horus of illegitimacy, but Thoth proves his royal descent. Typhon again goes into battle against Horus, in fact, two battles are mentioned in both of which Typhon is worsted, and Horus regains the kingdom of his father and is regarded, to at least a certain degree, as the actual incarnation of Osiris.

After its resurrection in the underworld, the shade of Osiris visits Isis and in consequence thereof she gives birth to another son, as it were, by a Holy Ghost, for she knew no living man. This child is called Harpocrates and Plutarch says of him that he "came into the world before his time, and lame in his lower limbs." Harpocrates is usually depicted as a nude figure, his head adorned with a single curling lock of hair on the right side, this being with the Egyptians a symbol of youth or adolescence. He is sometimes depicted with an elaborate plumed head-dress or wearing the double crown of the northern and southern empires. His finger is placed to his lips which Plutarch interprets as a gesture symbolic of his childish and helpless state. The Greeks and Romans, however, considered this gesture to be a symbol for silence and from this has arisen the custom of placing the finger to the lips as a motion for quietness and secrecy. Statues of the god Harpocrates were placed at the entrances to temples and sacred retreats where the dramas of the Mysteries were performed as a sign that silence and secrecy should be observed in the holy places and that all Initiates were bound by vows of discretion. Harpocrates is sometimes shown standing, and at other times he is depicted seated on the blossom of a lotus. Although he is usually figured with childish immaturity of body, the imperfection of his lower limbs, as described by Plutarch, is not apparent in the Egyptian drawings. It, therefore, seems

that the statements concerning this deformity should be more carefully examined. Samuel Squire, whose translation of Plutarch's *Isis and Osiris*, made in 1744, is still most often quoted by Egyptologists, states definitely, "lame in his lower limbs. G. R. S. Mead translated the same essay much later and gives a slightly different rendering of Plutarch's words. Mr. Mead says: "weak in his limbs from below upwards." This difference in wording, though slight, may have an unexpected significance.

There is some general information contained in Synesius' treatise *On Providence* that should be included in this resume of the Osirian epic. Synesius is of the opinion that Osiris should be regarded as an historical king whose father transcending in wisdom, instructed his benevolent son in all the secrets of the divine science of government. Synesius is moved to this conclusion by a desire to keep all speculation within the sphere of the reasonable. The Platonist bishop seems to have derived much of his account from origins foreign to Plutarch's treatise, or possibly he interpreted differently the restrictions imposed by his vows. Synesius is a prudent and conscientious author, wary of myths and fables, and exhibiting a truly Platonic conservativeness in his handling of subject matter, yet Synesius was beyond question a deeply religious philosopher and an Initiate of pagan Mysteries prior to his conversion to the Christian faith. Thomas Taylor is of the mind that the treatise *On Providence* was written while Synesius was still a votary of pagan Mysteries. If so, the writing is unbiased and trustworthy and presents a fair picture of the mystical traditions of the Egyptians interpreted in terms of Platonic metaphysics.

Synesius inserts into his narrative a considerable description of the virtuous character of Osiris which he sharply contrasts

with the vice-ridden nature of Typhon. He also explains in detail the process of election by which Osiris came to the throne of Egypt. The electional ceremony, as described by Synesius, is evidently itself a fragment from some secret ritual relating to the installation of a hierophant of the Mysteries. Next Osiris receives from his father an elaborate dissertation in the Platonic temper concerning the relative power of good and evil in which he is fully warned against the machinations of Typhon. Possibly the most important sentence in Synesius' treatise occurs in this dissertation. The father of Osiris is made to say to his son: "You also have been initiated in those Mysteries in which there are two pair of eyes, and it is requisite that the pair which are beneath should be closed when the pair that are above them perceive, and when the pair above are closed, those which are beneath should be opened."

These words unquestionably have an arcane meaning and are incorporated into the narrative that the true significance of the whole Osirian cycle might not be entirely obscured. Synesius does not describe the death of Osiris, but merely reports his vanishment and final restoration to the throne. In the latter part of the story there is also introduced "a certain philosopher, who was a stranger in Egypt." This philosopher predicts the fall of Typhon and is an eye-witness to the recrowning of Osiris. Synesius says of this philosopher: "He, likewise, then learned some particulars about Osiris which would shortly happen, and others which would take place at some greater distance of time viz., when the boy Horus would choose as his associate in battle a wolf instead of a lion. But who the wolf is, is a sacred narration, which it is not holy to divulge, even in the form of a fable."

Such is the amazing tradition of the good king Osiris, the first victim, the first mummy, and the first resurrection. He

dies and is born again in three forms. First, as god of the underworld where he rules the justified dead; second, as the younger Horus in whose form he battles for his own honor; and third, as Harpocrates, the silent child. The latter two forms are regarded as incarnations or embodiments of his very self, yet he exists independent of them as the judge of shades and the lord of the resurrection.

THE SECRET DOCTRINE IN EGYPT

CHAPTER FOUR

Nearly all writers attempting an interpretation of the Osirian cycle have recourse to Plutarch. It has seemingly never occurred to Egyptologists that this eminent priest of Delphi might have purposely confused or distorted the fable, or, if not that, might certainly have misdirected the attention of the reader from relevant to irrelevant explanations. Two factors must certainly be taken into consideration when reading Plutarch. First, he was an initiated priest of the Mysteries; of this there can be little doubt for he himself says, "For the mystic symbols are well known to us who belong to the Brotherhood."

It should be evident that, as an Initiate, Plutarch would not have unveiled the secret meaning of the Osirian myth. No man of his priestly station or philosophic mind, who so greatly venerated the gods as to attach himself to their service, would have been guilty of the impiety of profaning their Mysteries. Furthermore, had his treatise actually exposed any of the secrets of the rites, he would most probably have perished miserably or at least been publicly disgraced. These evils, not descending upon him, we must suppose that his book was regarded as harmless and for our purpose, therefore, at least not directly informative.

That Plutarch's *Isis and Osiris* may contain some intimations of the old wisdom is by no means impossible, but we shall certainly find these hints obscurely scattered through the work where they will be evident only to a student already familiar with the principles of the doctrine. The astute reader will probably notice that in no place does Plutarch actually say that any of the interpretations which he gives are those actually affirmed by the initiated priests. He makes such statements as, "There are some who conclude," "There is another interpretation," "There are others who pretend," and so forth. We greatly fear that for several hundred years Egyptologists have permitted themselves to be led astray by Plutarch's "opinions," when in truth the wise old priest actually commits neither himself nor his Brotherhood to any of the interpretations which he advances, unless it be the last one. But even here the matter is set forth so ambiguously that the reader is very apt to be deceived. It is our opinion that while we should examine with assiduous care every word of Plutarch's treatise, we should rather explore into his meanings than accept them upon their face value.

The second factor, which gravitates against the likelihood of Plutarch's interpretations being correct, is the condition of Egyptian metaphysics in the first century after Christ. If, as Budge maintains, the Egyptians themselves were unaware of the meaning of the word "Osiris" long prior to the Christian era, into what decay had the old rites fallen even prior to the Ptolemaic period? If Plutarch based his accounts upon popular traditions, they were most certainly inaccurate and it is not impossible that even the priests themselves were for the most part ignorant of the origins of their doctrine. It should not be inferred from the general literature available concerning

the Mysteries that all of the priests were themselves initiates of a high order. Only a small part of them ever actually received the greater secrets of their order; for the rest, rite and ritual sufficed.

According to James Bonwick, "the Ptolemaic Egyptian writers were a hybrid and conceited set, who, like the jackdaw, stole a stray feather or two from the grand old sacerdotal peacock, and strutted about in mock majesty. As the real and higher secrets of religion were, in all ages, confided only to a few, those hybrids were very unlikely to get these from the initiated." (See *Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought*.)

In the face of these two factors, Plutarch's "explications" lose caste. The probability that they are correct or that they represent the opinion of the informed Egyptian is considerably decreased. The modern Egyptologist however finds Plutarch's work eminently suited to his purposes, or, more correctly, to his conceits. There is a popular prejudice among even the so-called learned that antiquity is synonymous with ignorance. By accepting Plutarch's interpretations it is possible to preserve the traditional superiority of all things modern. By acknowledging Plutarch to have correctly interpreted the fable, they can demonstrate that the Egyptians possessed no sacred knowledge superior to, or even equal to, our own. Plutarch is therefore regarded as an eminently satisfactory authority who explains everything with such a nicety that the whole issue may be regarded as closed.

In order that the reader may be in full possession of Plutarch's interpretations of the Osirian cycle, and may judge for himself as to their adequacy, we shall summarize them briefly in the order set forth by the old priest.

1st: The fables of the gods are derived from the histories of ancient kings, priests and heroes who lived at some ancient time and whose deeds were so illustrious that the men themselves came to be regarded as divine beings. Osiris and the other personalities of his epic were such meritorious persons that the state religion came into existence to perpetuate their glorious deeds. (To digress slightly, the opinions of two Egyptologists on this subject are illustrative of our present confusion. Sir Gardner Wilkinson writes, "No Egyptian deity was supposed to have lived on earth, and to have been deified after death." Maspero's opinion contrasts sharply. He refers to Osiris as, "A god of flesh and blood who lives upon earth.")

2nd: Another interpretation which Plutarch calls "better" describes the personnel of the Osirian myth as beings not human but of a middle distance between gods and men, called Demons or Genii. These heroes, of which order are also the Titans of the Greeks, were stronger and greater than men but less perfect than the abstract divinities, and in a remote period they battled for dominion over the universe. Plato refers to the Demons as "interpreters of the wills of the gods to men, and ministering to their wants; carrying the prayers and supplications of mortals to heaven and bringing down from thence in return, oracles, and all other blessings of life." Two of these Demons, Isis and Osiris, on account of their eminent virtue and their unselfish service of humanity and the gods, were like Hercules and Bacchus finally elevated from the status of Demons to the status of gods, and afterwards proper honors were paid to them by a grateful humanity.

3rd: The next interpretation Plutarch terms "more philosophical" but in our mind it is less so, inasmuch as it departs from universal grandeur and takes upon itself the aspect of a

local fable. In this rendering Osiris is regarded as the Nile, Isis, that part of the country which is overflowed by the Nile during the period of inundation and is thus rendered fertile and produces the little Harpocrates, the sprouting seed. Typhon becomes the sea which swallows up the Nile by accepting its waters and distributing them throughout its deep. It would appear that Plutarch becomes a little ashamed of his own interpretation and seeks to improve upon it by asserting that Osiris signifies not only the waters of the Nile but the principle of moisture in general as the cause of generation; Isis is the whole body of the earth which, accepting this humidity, becomes the mother of all generated beings which are personified as Horus.

4th: His next effort to unveil the Static Isis is addressed to those who are not satisfied "with this physiological interpretation." He has recourse to the assistance of the mathematicians and astronomers, declaring Typhon to signify the Sun and Osiris the moon. According to some, Osiris lived for twenty-eight years, and according to others, he reigned for that length of time. Plutarch sees in this an allusion to the twenty-eight days of the moon, at the end of which time it is swallowed up by the sun. He also attempts to correlate the fourteen pieces into which the body of Osiris was torn with the fourteen days of the waning moon. This interpretation would show that both Osiris and Isis are the moon, the former, its power and influence, the latter, its generative faculty.

5th: Plutarch then develops the astronomical explanation, affirming that certain philosophers regard the whole myth of Osiris as nothing but an enigmatical description of eclipses. When Osiris is said to be shut up in a chest, it is the moon falling into the shadow of the earth. This interpretation makes

Anubis the horizon which divides the invisible world, Nephthys, from the visible world, Isis. Plutarch seemingly thinks so little of this interpretation that he gives little space to it and passes on to the next.

6th: After assuming that these previous interpretations cannot separately contain the true explanation of the Osirian myth, Plutarch hazards the possibility that collectively they may contain the facts of this so-called fabulous history. He suggests that from the conflict of Osiris and Typhon we are to understand the constant warfare between the constructive and destructive principles of nature. To demonstrate his opinion he advances the example of the Persian Magi who taught the constant conflict of a good and evil principle under the names of Ormuzd and Ahriman. We must consider this last explanation, therefore, to be of the nature of a moralism revealing the ultimate victory of good over evil, and Plutarch develops this interpretation according to the precepts of Pythagoras and Plato. Thus Osiris becomes the world idea, Isis, the place or receptacle of generation, and Horus, the offspring, the world itself manifested out of the contendings of the agent and patient. Thus Osiris becomes the prototype of all order, beauty and harmony and Typhon, of disorder, asymmetry and inharmony.

To these interpretations must be added one more, derived also from Plutarch, based upon the sprouting of corn. The burial of Osiris, therefore, is the death of the seed, his resurrection, its rebirth, at which time he appears in the form of his own son, Harpocrates or the first green shoot. Of this interpretation Julius Firmicus writes in his treatise "*On the Falsity of the Pagan Religion*:" "They call the seeds of fruit, Osiris; the earth, Isis; the natural heat, Typhon; and because

the fruits are ripened by the natural heat and collected for the life of man, and are separated from their natural tie to the earth, and are sown again when winter approaches, this they consider is the death of Osiris; but when the fruits, by the genial fostering of the earth, begin again to be generated by a new procreation, this is the finding of Osiris."

While the foregoing interpretations of the Osirian myth are unquestionably ingenious and may have had wide circulation in Egypt at various times, it is evident that none of these interpretations contained any rare or unusual knowledge not available to the uninitiated. There is no mention here of those ancient arts and sciences with which the priests are known to have been familiar. Nor do we find in these renderings the kernel of that universal knowledge which the Egyptians are known to have possessed and from the possession of which they became the founders of arts and sciences. If we assume, and it seems that this assumption is reasonable, that the Osirian cycle was the great initiatory drama of the Egyptians over a vast period of time, it must certainly have ushered the intellect into the contemplation of verities more profound and more practical than those of which Plutarch hints. We must therefore extricate ourselves from the fascination which Plutarch's thesis has stimulated and, disregarding his whole line of reasoning, search for a more essentially Egyptian meaning of the great religious drama. Plutarch approached the Egyptian metaphysics with the eyes and mind of a Greek. He naturally fell into a Grecian mode of interpretation, yet if his vows held, and it seems that they did, he did not tempt fate as Aeschylus had, by divulging the arcana; he remained prudent and Grecian to the end and has seemingly been successful in deceiving the whole illustrious line of Egyptologists who sought to build

substance from the shadow of his words. Of course it is quite possible that the whole metaphysical philosophy of the Egyptians was not entrusted to the Osirian myth, but it is also quite probable that initiated and uninitiated alike would not have revered a fable which was unworthy of the great truths with which it was associated.

Thales, in the advanced years of his life, made a difficult journey to Egypt. Greatly discomfited by physical infirmities he, nevertheless, courageously hazarded comfort and health in the quest of knowledge. Reaching Sais, the Mecca of all Grecian pilgrimage to Egypt, he was instructed there in geometry, according to Laertius, and in philosophy, according to Plutarch. Men who grasp the most abstract aspects of mathematics, as the initiated priests of Egypt are known to have done, would have no time for fables in which a dragon gobbles up the moon each month, especially when these same priests were fully aware of the scientific facts concerning the moon's phases. Minds trained in the mysteries of plain and spherical geometry have long been weaned from ordinary superstition.

Solon, the first of the great Athenian law-givers and one of the noblest thinkers of the Greeks, studied philosophy in Egypt with Psenophis of Heliopolis and Sonches of Sais, these being the most learned of the priests. From them, Plato affirms, Solon was taught the Atlantean language which he afterwards began to explain in verse. On one occasion Solon questioned his Egyptian teachers in matters relating to the antiquities of empires. The elder priest replied to him, "Oh, Solon, Solon, you Greeks are always children, there is not one Greek who is an old man." The inference is inevitable; the Egyptians regarded the Greeks as children in learning. If,

then, the Egyptians were conversant with the Mysteries of Atlantis, did they not know also the origin of their own empire and the source of its theologies and philosophies? Why does Plutarch in his treatise not mention these Mysteries? He either dared not or had not himself received the tradition.

Plato journeyed to Egypt where, after making a general tour of the country, he finally decided to settle at Sais, "learning of the wise men there what they held concerning the universe, whether it had a beginning, and whether it is moved at present, wholly or in part, according to reason." From Pausanius we also gather that it was from the Egyptians that Plato learned the mystery of the immortality of the human soul. Is it possible that the priests of Sais, who recognized, from the inscriptions still preserved, Osiris to be the supreme author of the world, could they, on the one hand describe the eternity of First Cause and the reasonable motion of Being and, on the other hand, accept such doctrines as Plutarch advances that the whole mystery of this god is contained in the germination of corn?

Democritus spent a great part of his life in Egypt and from the priests of that nation he secured the foundation for his celebrated doctrine of atoms, a doctrine which has survived as a scientific fact to this day. From all these different philosophers who visited Egypt we shall secure a better estimation of the profundity of Egyptian learning than from even the Egyptian writings themselves. If we may assume the Pragmatic viewpoint that the substance of a matter is to be determined from its consequences, we must indeed highly reverence the wisdom of the Egyptians for it seems that first among the consequences of that wisdom is civilization itself. Civilization is no fable, nor is it a progeny of myths, but that which

is real and substantial in it bears witness to a profound and superior wisdom which must have existed over a great period of time and have been communicated to at least a privileged few, since the very beginning of man's cultural impulse.

We may also take the example of Pythagoras. This great philosopher while a youth, if we may credit Iamblichus, associated himself with Thales of Miletus from whom he gained a considerable knowledge of the Mysteries. Thales, being at that time of great age and infirm body, apologized for his incomplete understanding of the sacred doctrines and urged Pythagoras to visit Egypt the mother land of wisdom. Iamblichus wrote that Thales confessed that his own reputation for wisdom was derived from the instruction of these priests; but that he was neither naturally, nor by exercise, indued with those excellent prerogatives which were so visibly displayed in the person of Pythagoras. Thales, therefore, gladly announced to Pythagoras, from all these circumstances, that he would become the wisest and most divine of all men, if he associated with these Egyptian priests. Iamblichus then describes the journey which Pythagoras made to Egypt, how en route he was initiated into the Mysteries of several nations and at last arriving at his destination, was received by the Egyptian priests with respect and affection. He associated with the Egyptian philosophers for some time and after demonstrating by his sincerity and consecration that he was worthy to associate with the initiated, he was at last admitted into the secrets of their orders.

"He spent, therefore," observes Iamblichus, "two and twenty years in Egypt, in the adyta of temples, astronomizing and geometrizing, and was initiated, not in a superficial or casual manner, in all the mysteries of the gods."

Pythagoras must be acknowledged among the first of those divine men to whom the race is indebted for the principles of science, art and philosophy; and are we to presume that so noble an intellect could have spent twenty-two years pursuing fabulous shadows in Egyptian crypts? If, as some have asserted, Osiris signified merely the Nile, and Isis, the black earth rendered fertile by its inundation, could such a fable have so greatly stimulated the admiration of Pythagoras that he would have spent a score of years in the assimilation of the idea? Or, again, would he have spent this great length of time, the very best years of his life, in memorizing the myth-encrusted history of an ancient king who at some remote period had reigned in Egypt and whose memory seemed sufficient to inspire a vast civilization for some 6000 years? Or, to approach the matter from another of these "explanations" would Pythagoras have pounded himself for a score of years against the walls of Memphis and find himself fully rewarded by being informed with bated breath by some archi-magus that Isis is the dog-star?

It is not impossible that in the course of its long and illustrious history, Egypt devised many opinions relative to her sacred myths; but no such explanation as involved Egypt alone, her histories, her heroes, or her agricultural problems, could have caused illustrious men from all parts of the world to have visited her in quest of essential wisdom.

The Nile meant nothing to the Greeks who cared little whether it rose or fell. Not Egypt but the umbos of Delphi was the center of their universe, and local fables derived from Egypt's forty-two nomes could never have won for the double Empire its illustrious reputation as patron of all learning, human and divine. We must look deeper. We must not be

deceived by the obvious nor allow ourselves to be misdirected by the evident subterfuges of these ancient priests who so carefully concealed their arcana from the uninitiated world that we at this late time may even doubt its existence. The ignorant, even among the Egyptians, might derive their inspiration from the processions and rituals of the state religion, but those great philosophers who came from afar were in search of the highest form of human knowledge, and could not be satisfied by such outer show. Had these fables been but hollow and unsubstantial forms, Egypt would have been the ridicule of the wise, who would speedily have exposed her sham and reduced her vain pretenses to a humble state. But this did not occur. The initiates of her Mysteries, returning to their own countries, not only felt themselves more than repaid for their hazardous journeys and long vigils, but furthermore, they became founders of distinguished systems of thinking, disseminators of useful knowledge and in all cases bore witness to a broad and deep learning.

Diodorus describes two famous columns erected near Nysa in Arabia, one to Isis and the other to Osiris. The column to Isis bears this inscription: "I am Isis, Queen of this country. I was instructed by Mercury. No one can destroy the laws which I have established. I am the eldest daughter of Saturn, most ancient of the gods. I am the wife and sister of Osiris the king. I first made known to mortals the use of wheat. I am the mother of Horus the king. In my honor was the city of Bubastis built. Rejoice, O Egypt, rejoice, land that gave me birth."

The column to Osiris bore these words: "I am Osiris the king, who led my armies into all parts of the world, to the most thickly inhabited countries of India, the North, the Dan-

ube, and the Ocean. I am the eldest son of Saturn; I was born of a brilliant and magnificent egg, and my substance is of the same nature as that which composes light. There is no place in the Universe where I have not appeared, to bestow my benefits and make known my discoveries." The rest of the inscription has been destroyed.

In examining Plutarch's treatise, the introductory remarks appear of special significance, yet these remarks are wholly ignored by Egyptologists who are content to confine themselves entirely to the fable which constitutes the larger part of the writing. If Plutarch, by any word or symbol, reveals even a small part of the sacred mystery, it is to be found in the following words: "For Isis, according to the Greek interpretation of the word, signifies *knowledge*; as does the name of her professed adversary Typhon, *insolence* and *pride*, a name therefore extremely well adapted to one, who, full of ignorance and error, tears in pieces and conceals that *holy doctrine*, which the Goddess collects, compiles and delivers to those, who aspire after the most perfect participation of the divine nature."

Osiris, the black god of the Nile, must be regarded as the personification of an order of learning, for Plutarch identifies him beyond question with the holy doctrine, or the Mystery tradition. As Thoth personifies the whole sphere of knowledge and it was through his assistance that Osiris came into being, so Osiris embodies the secret and sacred wisdom reserved for those who were proficient in the ancient rites. Unquestionably Osiris was later confused with other members of that vast pantheon of divinities which developed in the decadent period of Egyptian religious culture, but to the elect he represented to the end *primordial knowing*, that utter re-

alization of truth, undefiled by intellection, unlimited by any mortal procedure, uncircumscribed by the limitation of thinking. He signified not only that divine at-one-ment with the Absolute which is the end of all illumination, but by his life, death and resurrection, revealed the means by which mortal consciousness could achieve that end. Thus Osiris becomes a dual symbol, being in the first place the *esoteric wisdom* itself, and in the second place, the composite order of Initiates through whom that tradition was perpetuated. The personality of Osiris thus typifies the institution erected by the ancients to perpetuate the deathless truths of the soul. The living head was crowned with the plumes of wisdom and power, the hands bore the sceptres of the three worlds, but the body was bound with the mummy wrappings of the dead. Here we find spirit, the living head, bound incongruously to matter, the mummified body. The soul was imprisoned in the narrow bonds of flesh. One thing is certain: Osiris represented the Secret Doctrine prior to that time when the omnific Word was lost.

Osiris is the first of the five children of Nut; he therefore corresponds with the first of the five divine kings of China and the five exoterically known Dhyana-Buddhas of Lamaism. The five children of Nut are the five continents which have appeared upon the earth and the five races which have populated these continents. Osiris is the primitive revelation of the first race, but as Isis was born upon the fourth day, we find this tradition coming into Egypt through the Atlantean Mystery School of which Isis is the symbol.

From the reign of Osiris we glean the following philosophical history. There was a time, the Golden Age, when truth and wisdom ruled the earth, and this aristocracy of wis-

dom was a benevolent despotism in which men were led to a nobler state of being by the firm kindly hand of the enlightened sage. This was the divine dynasty of the mythological priest-kings who were qualified to govern humanity by virtue not only temporal but by divine attributes. Through his priests, Osiris, representative of the hidden tradition, ruled the entire world by virtue of the perfection resident in that tradition.

If we concede that Osiris is the positive pole of the universal life agent, then Isis becomes the receptive pole of that activity. He is the doctrine, she is the church. As in Christianity it is customary to refer to the church as the bride of Christ, so in Egypt the institution of the Mysteries was the great Mother, the consort of heaven itself. From this interpretation we gain a deeper insight into the symbolism of the whole Osirian cycle. Isis becomes the temporal order of the priesthood, the accumulative body of Initiates. She is personified as the temple; she is the mother of all good, the protectress of all right, and the patron of all improvement. She insures nobility, inspires virtue and awakens the nobler passions of the soul. As Diana of Ephesus she is the multimammia who feeds all creatures from herself. Like the moon she shines only with the light of her sovereign sun, even as the temple can only be illumined by its indwelling truth.

Typhon is the embodiment of every perversity. He is the negative creation, the Ahriman of Zoroasterism. He is black magic and sorcery—the Black Brotherhood. Nephthys, his wife, is the institution through which he manifests. He is neither a single evil nor even a sequence of ills, but an infinite diversity of them, indescribably insidious, empowered to infect the fabric of church and state. Typhon lured Osiris into the ark of destruction at the time when the sun enters the house of the

Scorpion, hence we know him to be the eternal betrayer, that ageless Judas, who undoes all good things and inevitably pre-sages ruin. He is the power of the physical universe which is constantly seeking to destroy the spiritual values locked within its substances. He strikes in the eighth month, and now it is supposed that a child delivered in the eight month of the prenatal epoch cannot live because of the curse of Typhon. Osiris was born in the seventh month and therefore it may be said of him that he was delivered prior to the rule of Typhon. Of all good things Typhon is the opposer, occupying the position of the eternal negative. This evil monster may well be generalized under the appellation of the Adversary. In the initiation rites he is also the tester or the tryer, "the lord who is against us." He is the personification of ambition, and ambition is the patron of ruin. It was ambition that set Typhon plotting for the throne of Egypt, designing how he should destroy the power of his brother. A learned Jesuit father sees in Typhon, Cain, and in his brother Osiris, Abel. If such a parallel actually exists then the Biblical allegory is susceptible of the same interpretation.

Typhon is the desire of the few pitted against the good of the many. He is the spirit of dissension and discord that breaks up unity of purpose by setting factions against each other so that great issues lose the name of action. The desire for riches, pomp, power and sovereignty by which this evil genius was obsessed, reveals the temptation by which humanity is deflected from its ultimate goal and led into the byways of sorrow and despair. Typhon, the queen of Ethiopia and the seventy-two conspirators represent the three destructive powers, preserved to modern Freemasonry as the murderers of the Master Builder. They are ignorance, superstition and fear, the destroyers of all good things.

The advent of greed and perversion marked the end of the Golden Age—the Osirian Age—and when the good prince Osiris, the deeper truth, returned to his own land, he became the victim of a hideous plot. What is this mysterious chest, so beautiful in its outer appearance but so fatal in its application? Plato, wise in the wisdom of the Egyptians, would have answered that it was the body that lures the soul into the sorrows of generation. If this interpretation be projected into the social sphere, the chest becomes symbolic of material organization. Witness the application of this thought to Christianity where the pomp and glory of the outer show of a vast ecclesiastical mechanism has all but destroyed the simplicity and dignity of the primitive revelation. The murderers rush from the palace with the lead-sealed casket and cast it with its kingly contents into the dark waters of the Nile. Thus are the ideals, which lead men into the paths of truth and righteousness, obscured, and with truth no longer evident, error can rule supreme. Typhon ascended the throne as regent of the world, swinishly gloating over a dejected humanity he had led into dark and devious byways. By the Nile may we not understand the river of generation, in the current of which souls, imprisoned in mortal nature, move helplessly upon the never ceasing current?

With truth dead, or at least exiled to the invisible world, material facts were superseded by opinions; opinions bred hatreds, and men finally fought and died over notions both senseless and soulless. Greed became the dominating impulse, gain the all-absorbing end, and ruthlessness the all-sufficient means. In the dark ages of uncertainty when reality hid its face and no man dared to know, the leering Typhon ruled his ill-gotten world, binding men to himself by breeding a

thousand uncertainties to sap courage and weaken conviction. Men asked, "Why seek to know? Knowledge does not exist. Life is a cruel jest, purposeless and of short duration." Because the human mind demanded intellectual expression, Typhon sowed the seeds of intellectual confusion so that numerous orders of learning appeared which were convincingly plausible but untrue. These various orders of thought survived by catering to the weaknesses and limitations of the flesh. Today our great industrial civilization is feeling the heavy hand of an outraged destiny; the evil genius of our ambitions has again undone us and our follies crumble about us. Typhon rules the world, for the earth today is the arena of the ambitious.

What then of Isis, the mother of the Mysteries? She who was so defiled and desecrated by the profane that her sages and prophets were forced to flee into the wilderness to escape the machinations of the evil one? Is she not the "woman clothed with the sun" of Revelation who flees with her man-child into the wilderness to escape the evil purposes of the great dragon? The glory of Egypt ceased with the death of Osiris. The mighty temples still stood but the god who illuminated them had gone. The priests bowed helplessly before the dead embers of their altars. One by one the sanctuaries crumbled into ruin and the custodians of these ancient truths hid themselves in obscure corners of the earth lest they be hunted down and slain for the sin of dreaming and hoping for a better day. Isis, then, as the scattered but still consecrated body of Initiates, began the great search for the secret that was lost. In all parts of the world the virtuous raised their hands to the heavens, pleading for the restoration of the reign of truth. This congregation of those who prayed, who labored and who waited, the great congregation of a world in anguish

—this is Isis in sackcloth and ashes, searching for the body of her lord.

Searching in all parts of the earth and throughout innumerable ages, inspired men and women, the congregation of the just, at last rediscovered the lost arcana and brought it back with rejoicing to the world over which once it ruled. Isis, by magic—for the initiated priests were all magicians—resurrected the dead god and through union with him brought forth an order of priests under the collective title of Horus, the hawk, the all-seeing bird. These were the Herj Seshta or the companions of Horus, and the chief of these, called by Lewis Spence “the Chief of the Mysteries par excellence,” appears to have worn the dog-headed mask of Anubis. Anubis was the son of Osiris by Nephthys, the material world, therefore represents the divine man or the mortal being who rose to enlightenment.

Ambition, however, personified by Typhon, knowing that temporal power must die if divine power, in the form of truth, be reestablished, put forth all its power again to scatter the doctrine, this time so thoroughly that it should never be rediscovered. If Typhon, as Plutarch has suggested, in one of his manifestations represents the sea, then it appears that this second destruction of Osiris may refer to the Atlantean deluge by which the doctrine was swallowed up or lost and its fragments scattered among all of the existing civilizations of that time. The story continues. The body of Osiris, the Secret Doctrine, is divided into fourteen parts and divided among the parts of the world. We must therefore understand that it was scattered through the seven divine and seven infernal spheres, the lokas and talas of India, or by a different symbolism, through the seven worlds which are without and the

seven worlds which are within. Bacchus was torn into seven pieces by the Titans and Osiris into fourteen pieces. To use the words of Faber, “Both these stories are in substance the same, for the second number is merely the reduplicate of the first. By a variation of much the same nature, the ancient mythologists added seven Titanides and seven Cabiri to the seven Titans.” (See *A Dissertation on the Cabiri.*)

The parts of Osiris were now scattered so hopelessly that ambitious Typhon (the Titans) felt his authority to be secure at last. But wisdom is not thus easily to be cheated. In the dark retreats of Islam, the Sufi explored the depths of nature; among the Jews the learned Rabbins unravelled the intricate skein of Cabbalism; among the Greeks, Initiates rose to life through the nocturnal rituals of Eleusis; in India neophytes were brought to the contemplation of the triple-headed Brahma at Elephanta and Ellora. Through the Middle Ages the alchemists in their retreats explored the infinite chemistry of existence, the Illuminati sought the pearl of great price, and Rosicrucian adepts sought to recast the molten sea. All these together were but Isis, still searching for the members of her lord. At last, according to the tradition, all these parts were restored again but one; but this one could not be returned.

The Egyptian allegory tells us that the phallus of Osiris was swallowed by a fish. This is most significant and we may even infer that mankind itself is the fish, the phallus being the symbol of the vital power and so used in Egyptian hieroglyphics. The phallus, then, is the Lost Word which is not discovered but for which a golden replica is substituted. In the Egyptian hieroglyphics the physical body, after the death of the soul or its departure therefrom, is called the *khat*, and the hieroglyphic for this is a fish. Thus the physical body of man

is definitely tied up in symbolism with the creature which conceived son, Horus, a term concealing the collective body of the perfected adepts who were born again out of the womb swallowed the triple phallus of Osiris—the threefold generative power. This golden phallus is the three-lettered Word of Freemasonry concealed under the letters A-U-M.

Isis, by thus modelling and reproducing the missing member of Osiris, gives the body of the god the appearance of completeness, but the life power is not there. Isis, the priesthood, with their initiatory process, had accomplished all that could be accomplished by natural philosophy. Therefore recourse is again had to magic. The golden phallus is rendered alive by the secret processes rescued from the lost *Book of Thoth*. Thus the divine power of Osiris is restored through the regeneration of man himself and the processes of initiation. In the Greek system man was rendered divine because his composition contained the blood of Bacchus, and in Egypt, because it contained the seminal power of Osiris. The institutions raised in the world to perpetuate the deeper truths of life labored on through the centuries seeking for the lost key (the living Crux Ansata) which, if rediscovered, would enliven and impregnate the whole world and restore the good king Osiris to the throne left empty by his cruel death.

The purpose of the Isiac Rite is, therefore, revealed as twofold. The first motive was the almost hopeless effort made by the bereaved Isis to restore her husband to life. She hovers above his corpse in the form of a bird, trying to restore his breath by the fluttering of her own wings. This ceremony is concealed in the *Book of the Respirations*. The causing of Osiris to breathe again is the great abstract ideal. The second and more imminent motive which actuated Isis was to avenge

herself upon Typhon and to destroy his power over the world. This she determined to accomplish through her immaculately conceived son, Horus, a term concealing the collective body of the perfected adepts who were born again out of the womb of the Mother—Isis, the Mystery School.

We can apply this analogy to a great modern system of initiation, Freemasonry, which has certainly perpetuated at least the outer form of the ancient rites. Freemasonry as an institution is Isis, the mother of Mysteries, from whose dark womb the Initiates are born in the mystery of the second or philosophic birth. Thus all adepts, by virtue of their participation in the rites, are figuratively, at least, the Sons of Isis. As Isis is the widow, seeking to restore her lord, and to avenge his cruel murder, it follows that all Master Masons or Master Builders, are widow's sons. They are the offspring of the institution widowed by the loss of the living Word, and theirs is the eternal quest—they discover by becoming.

In the Egyptian rites Horus is the saviour-avenger, son of Isis, conceived by magic (the ritual) after the brutal murder of Osiris. Hence he is the posthumous redeemer. Freemasons are Hori, they are the eye of Osiris, whose body therefore, is made up of eyes. Each Initiate is a Horus, each is a hawk of the sun, and for one reason is each raised and that is that he may join the army which is to avenge the destruction of wisdom, and restore the reign of the all-seeing lord. Each one is dedicated to the over-throwing of the reign of Typhon. The great battle, in which the sons of the hawk rout the hosts of darkness, is the mysterious Armageddon of Revelation, the Kurukshetra of the Mahabharata, and the Ragnarok of the Eddas. In this battle the hosts of the Adversary shall be routed forever.

The great purposes of the Osirian Rite are thus revealed in an unsuspected clarity. The Hershesti are philosophically opposed to the reign of ambition. It is their duty to reestablish that Golden Age when wisdom, personified as Osiris—and not selfishness, personified by Typhon—shall dictate the whole course of human procedure. The day must ultimately come when the Hori, by virtue of their royal purpose, accomplish the consummation of the Great Work. The missing Word will be found and the golden substitute will be replaced as promised in the ancient rite. Osiris will rise in splendor from the dead and rule the world through those sages and philosophers in whom wisdom has become incarnate.

It should be particularly noted that the Egyptians do not regard Osiris as wholly dead, but view him as continuing to live in the underworld where he superintends the ceremony of the psychostasia. The underworld is not the sphere of the dead alone; it is the world of the Mysteries. He is therefore god of the hidden fane, the temple which is beneath the earth, the house of the low ceiling, the crypts into which the Initiates go in search of truth. He is the Dweller who abides in the darkness of the innermost. His throne is not in the objective world but in that subjective sphere which is the inner life of man. Thus is it arcanelly intimated that while truth may perish from society, it cannot die from the heart which preserves the sacred tradition through that natural inspiration by which all men are gradually moved to truth.

In the meantime the widow, Isis, the Mystery School, continues to produce out of herself the host of potential redeemers. Spiritual education continues from age to age, and though temporarily obscured in this generation or in that, its onward

process is inevitable. Out of the Hidden House, guarded by the silent god, must some day issue the glorious and illumined Horus, the very incarnation of his own father, the personification of the lord of Abydos, the avenger of all evil and the just god in whom there is no death.



A SCENE FROM THE DRAMA OF INITIATION
(FROM CHRISTIAN'S HISTOIRE DE LA MAGIE)

CRATA REPOA

FOREWORD

The second half of the eighteenth century was a period of revival of old beliefs and ancient doctrines. Freemasonry enjoyed unusual privileges in France and Germany; the French people, particularly, sponsored metaphysical speculations, which have always been part of Freemasonic arcana.

Between the years 1750 and 1800, several extraordinary personalities appeared to lend glamour and distinction to French secret societies. The most famous of these, the Comte de St. Germain, practiced strange rites in France, Alsace, and Germany. The Comte Cagliostro restored Egyptian Freemasonry in Paris and included in the membership of his cult many persons of position and distinction. Anton Mesmer, a disciple of St. Germain, practiced magnetic healings and left strange, cryptic records of his discoveries. Benjamin Franklin visited the Court of France in his capacity as American Ambassador and introduced to the French mind his curious speculations on electricity.

Court de Gébélín was the principal Egyptologist of the French Academy. It was this unusual man with his deep knowledge of ancient lore who rescued the subject of the

Tarot cards from oblivion. He advanced the hypothesis that playing cards were the leaves of a sacred book which had descended from ancient Egypt. De Gébelin also tried to explain the meaning of the cards, declaring the pictures to represent symbols of philosophical and metaphysical importance.

Dupuis was writing upon the histories of ancient cults and beliefs; Lenoir was tracing Freemasonic origins to the Rites of Ancient Memphis; and Ragon was explaining the symbolism of the Masonic crafts in terms of Greek, Egyptian, and Hindu metaphysics. In all, the last half of the eighteenth century was the Golden Age of scholarship in continental Freemasonry.

The impulse behind Masonic scholarship in France during the period of the Revolution and immediately thereafter is entirely obscure. It is quite possible that St. Germain, Cagliostro, and Claude Saint-Martin were the moving spirits behind the sudden interest in Egyptian and Oriental metaphysics. Certainly, St. Germain's TRINOSOPHIA and Cagliostro's EGYPTIAN RITES stand out as the ablest products of the French recension.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were bound to theological and classical prejudices to information. Several efforts had been made towards reviving interest in Egyptian mysticism, but small success rewarded the efforts. It remained for a small group of pioneers in the eighteenth century France and Germany, particularly France, to attempt a restoration of certain secret, metaphysical systems not practiced in human society for 1500 years.

Dr. Sigismund Bacstrom, who was initiated into the Society of The Rosicrucians on the Isle of Mauritius on the 12th

of September, 1794, by the mysterious Comte de Chazal, has left extensive manuscripts setting forth his findings and opinions on matters of interest to Rosicrucians and Freemasons. Dr. Bacstrom maintained that Freemasonry as a secular order had its origin in the Sanctuary of the Rosy Cross. He, furthermore, described the transition through which the Ancient Brotherhood of the Unknown Philosophers passed in the process of externalizing certain parts of itself as Freemasonry. The learned Doctor made special point of the activity of the Hermetic adepts in eighteenth century Europe. His conclusions fit very well into the general picture. The considerable body of evidence points to the fact that one definite group of inspired men was behind the numerous philosophical productions ornamenting Masonic literature of the Grand Orient of France.

Crata Repoa belongs to the class of documents which may be said to have the activities of a secret society for their origin. A comparison of the *Crata Repoa* Rite with St. Germain's ritual, the Cagliostro initiation described by de Luchet, the mystical rituals of Martinism, and the Rosicrucian rituals described by Magista Pianco leaves no doubt that all these works are from a common source and are sustained by a common inspiration.

The *Crata Repoa* was translated from the original German edition of 1778 into French by Anton Bailleul, and it will be useful at this time to consider Monsieur Bailleul's own opinions of the work. His preface contains a brief sketch of the origin and purpose of the *Crata Repoa*, in substance as follows:

The *Crata Repoa* appeared for the first time in German in 1770 and was published without either the name of the

author or the name of the printer. The librarian Stahlbaum published a second edition of the Rite in Berlin in 1778, declaring that the author of the work was until that time unknown and that an ineffectual search had been made for him in every corner of Germany. The French translation was as literal as possible and was made by a German-born Mason who knew both German and French thoroughly. This translator, who is referred to as an old gentleman, endeavored to render the meaning word for word, but early training overshadowed purpose, and the translation predominated in "Germanisms." M. Bailleul, in editorial capacity, revised the translation with the greatest care, applying himself particularly to freeing the work from an over-ponderous Teutonic form. He assures the modern reader that he observed with great care the spirit of the original thought and never lost for a moment the fundamental meaning. The student can, therefore, rest assured of the veracity of the work, comfortable in the realization that he is securing the original meaning in every case and that neither opinion nor prejudice has falsified it in any part.

Monsieur Bailleul passes from this brief note to a philosophical disquisition upon the significance of the ritual. The careful reader cannot fail to be impressed by the sincerity of the editor's attitude and the great importance which he bestows upon the book. It appears as though M. Bailleul knows more about the work than he is inclined to reveal. In the Introduction, he stoutly maintains by inference the integrity and genuineness of the *Crata Repoa*. His attitude of veneration, which he does not sustain with any tangible evidence, suggests several possibilities. It appears that M. Bailleul could have been himself a member of some secret society, which

obligated him to silence but still allowed him to manifest certain appreciation of the symbolism of the ritual.

The *Crata Repoa* remained in the French from 1778 to the closing years of the nineteenth century when it was for the first time translated into English by the Masonic scholar, Dr. John Yarker, a high Mason of the Rite of Memphis. Dr. Yarker appends to his translation some footnotes setting forth certain commentary opinions of his own, which in several cases considerably amplify the text. This translation was published in a Masonic Journal, called *The Kneph*, which was discontinued after a few volumes. The magazine itself has become a rarity and is to be found only in some of the larger Masonic libraries. The *Crata Repoa* has not been published in book form in English up to this time.

In the present version Dr. Yarker's English transcript is followed. This has been compared with the French original and the substance of M. Bailleul's commentaries added thereto.

The *Crata Repoa* is a work made up of fragments from many ancient authors. The unknown compiler had as his purpose a restoration of the ancient Mysteries based upon the hints and allusions contained in the classical writings. Most of the great philosophers of antiquity were initiates of State Mysteries. In their writings, these men frequently allude to some fragment of the initiatory rites. These hints have been carefully organized, placed in sequential order, and connected with an editorial tissue. The result is a restoration founded upon the actual words of the initiates themselves.

It is inevitable that the compiler should be present as a quality of interpretation. The German scholarship appears in the sustaining warp of the writing. Occasional German prej-

udices occur, but these, fortunately, are obvious and will be considered in the commentary material.

Charles William Heckethorn in *The Secret Societies of all Ages and Countries* publishes a digest of the *Crata Repoa* with the following remarks:

"The order itself seems not to have been known before the year 1785, when the account the reader has just been perusing was published in a German pamphlet of 32 pages (30 pages text) in 12mo, with no name of place or printer. Ragon, who gives a French translation of the above in his *Franc-Maconnerie: Rituel du Grade de Maitre*, Paris, N. D., calls his translation an extract from a pamphlet of 114 pages in 8 vo, taken from a large German Ms. by Brother Koppen, with an interlinear translation into French, which was purchased by Brother Antoine Bailleul, and in 1821 edited by Brother Ragon. But as Ragon's translation agrees word for word with the German pamphlet, published in 1785, the German Ms. by Brother Koppen was either the original composition or a copy of it. Ragon supposes the *Crata Repoa* to be a concoction by learned Germans of all that is to be found in ancient writers on initiations. And the authorities on which the statements in the German pamphlet of 1785 are founded are given therein, and are: Porphyry, Herodotus, Iamblichus, Apuleius, Cicero, Plutarch, Eusebius, Arnobius, Diodorus Siculus, Tertullian, Heliodorus, Lucian, Rufinus, and some others."

H. P. Blavatsky in *Isis Unveiled* devotes considerable space to Egyptian initiatory rituals. She explains that the same ceremony of judgment which the *Book of the Dead* describes as taking place in the world of spirit was performed by the priests of the temple as a theatrical pageant at the time of the burial of the mummy. Forty-two judges or assessors assembled on

the shore of the sacred lake and judged the departed soul according to its actions when in the body. It was only upon unanimous approval by this post-mortem jury that the boatman, who represented the spirit of death, could convey the body of the justified dead to its last resting place. After the priests had completed the funeral ritual, they returned to the sacred precincts and instructed the neophytes upon the probable solemn drama which was then taking place in the invisible realm whither the departed soul had fled. The immortality of the spirit was strongly inculcated upon the disciples by the Al-om-jah, the Hierophant of the Mysteries.

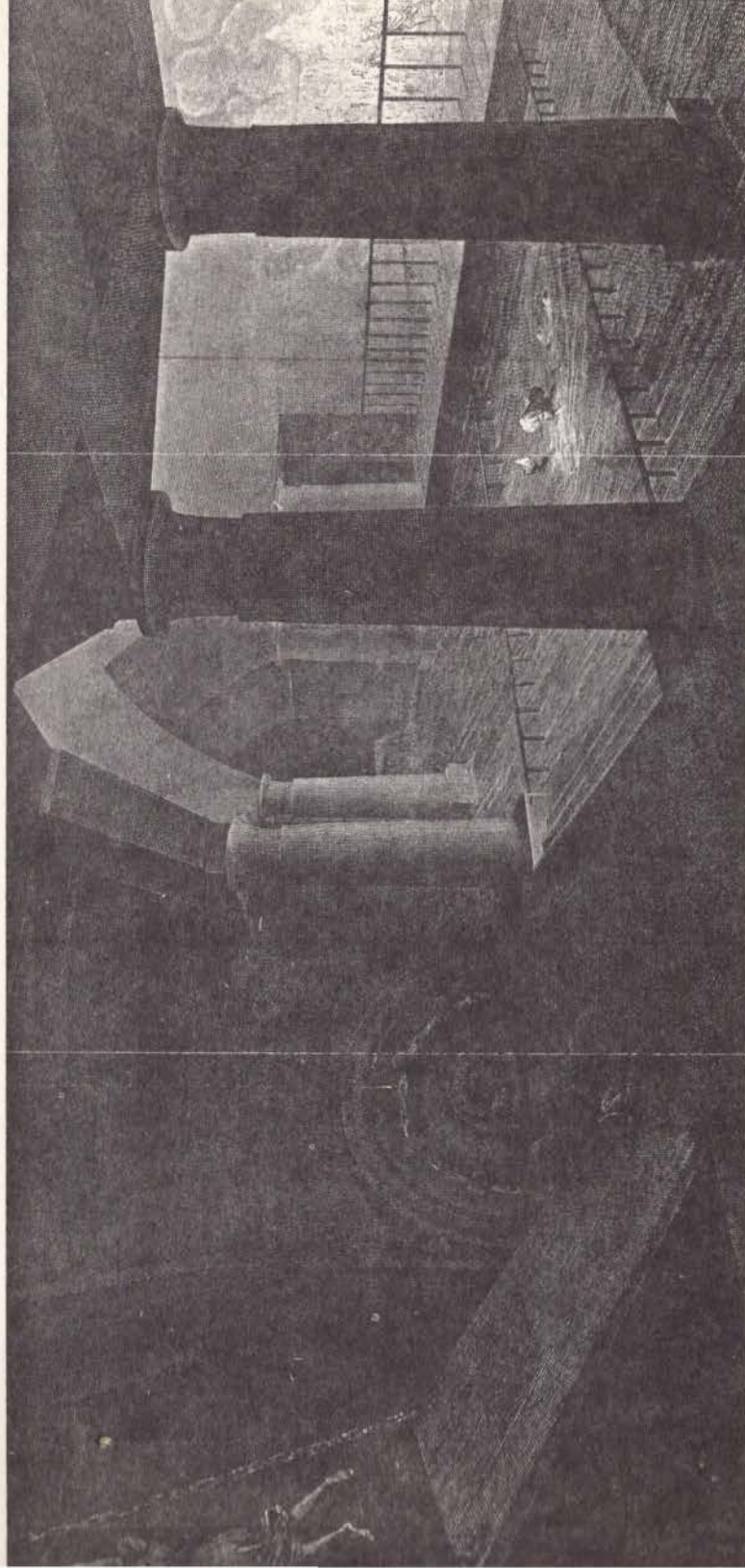
Madame Blavatsky then describes briefly the seven initiations of the *Crata Repoa*, which she compares with the Book of Job, the Jewish poem of initiation *par excellence*. The account given in *Isis Unveiled* indicates that the authoress accepted the antiquity and integrity of the ritual, a point of considerable significance to all students of metaphysical philosophy. From a footnote in *Isis Unveiled*, Volume II, page 365, it would seem that, at least a part of the *Crata Repoa* ritual was derived from a book entitled *The Ritual of Initiations* by Humberto Malhandrini, published in Venice in 1657. Madam Blavatsky notes that the preliminary trials at Thebes were called twelve tortures. She observes also that the Tau Cross with which the initiate was invested in the seventh degree was laid upon his breast at death. The more one considers the details of the ritual, the more important the *Crata Repoa* becomes.

Comte de St. Germain practiced Masonic or Rosicrucian rituals in the palace of Prince Karl of Hesse at Eckernforde between 1780 and 1785. Ragon and Lenoir could well have been his pupils or at least under the influence of his school.

In 1814 Lenoir published *La Franche-Maconnerie*, a most curious work ornamented with astrological symbols, figures of the Egyptian Gods, and scenes from the processions and rites of the Ancient Mysteries. In the present work, three of these plates are reproduced. Lenoir's arguments relating to the Egyptian Masonic rituals were certainly influenced by the *Crata Repoa* and other Higher Grade speculations. It is questionable whether the *Crata Repoa* was actually practiced as a Masonic ritual in the eighteenth century. It appears to belong to the literature and philosophy of the Craft rather than to its working degrees.

Modern Masonic scholars of the caliber of Pike, Mackey, and Oliver are in general agreement as to the probable Egyptian origin of certain parts of Blue Lodge ritualism and symbolism. The third degree work in particular is definitely associated with the Osiris legend. The metaphysical significance of the death and resurrection of the Egyptian demigod has for the most part been lost to the modern Craft. It is, therefore, most interesting and fitting that the old secrets should be revived and Masonry rededicate itself to the high purpose for which it was originally devised.

The reader should always bear in mind that the truly esoteric parts of the Mystery ritual cannot be reduced to print. Therefore, the value of the *Crata Repoa* rests in its allusion to mystical matters rather than to any actual statements concerning them. The thoughtful reader may find these assembled fragments of an Old Wisdom an introduction to a great subject. Nor should the Mysteries be thought of as institutions long vanished into the night of time; rather their reestablishment is to be accepted as inevitable. In years to come a wiser generation will restore the sacred rites indispensable to the spiritual, intellectual, and social security of the race.



FROM LENOIR'S *La Francbe-Maconnerie*

THE INITIATION OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS
(ACCORDING TO THE DOCTRINES OF THE EGYPTIANS)

CRATA REPOA

OR INITIATIONS TO THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES OF
THE PRIESTS OF EGYPT.

Translated from the German, and published by the Bro. Ant. Bailleul. Paris.—At Ant. Bailleul, Editor, Rue Thibautodé 8; Renard, Library, Rue St. Anne, 71; Delaunay, Rue Palais Royal, 5821.

PREPARATION

When an Aspirant desired to enter the Ancient and Mysterious Society of Crata Repoa, he had to be recommended by one of the Initiates. The proposition was ordinarily made by the King himself, who wrot an authorization to the Priests.*

* The government of ancient Egypt was theocratic. While the Pharaoh appeared to be the head of the State, the priests were the actual governors of the empire. The king was placed on his throne by the priests, maintained there by priestly influence, and remained the whole of his life under the guardianship and protection of the priesthood. The temples were the sanctuaries of the Letters and Sciences, and learning in all its branches was cultivated exclusively by the priesthood.

In modern civilization it is regarded as a sacred principle that knowledge be common property; all mankind has a right to participate in knowledge according to the extent of his intellectual capacities. But in ancient Egypt learning was regarded as a high privilege, and education was under the direction of a small number of chosen individuals who were organized into the Mystery Schools or sacred State institutions. The members of these groups were united by bonds, pledges, and vows of secrecy.

Having applied at Heliopolis, the Aspirant was referred to the learned of the Institution at Memphis, and these sent him on to Thebes. (Porphyre—Vie de Pythagore.) Here he was circumcised.* (Herodotus, book 2nd. Clement of Alexandria, Scromat I.) They put him on a particular diet, interdicting him the use of certain foods, such as vegetables and fish, also wine,† but after his initiation this restriction was relaxed. They compelled him to pass several months imprisoned in a subterranean vault,‡ abandoned to his reflections he was allowed to write his thoughts. He was then strictly examined to ascertain the limit of his intelligence. When the time had arrived to quit his prison, they conducted him to a gallery surrounded with the columns of Hermes, upon which were engraven those maxims which he was required to learn by heart. (Jamblique, de Mysteriis. Pausanias, book I, expressly stating that these columns were found in subterraneans near Thebes.) When he had accomplished this an Initiate, termed the *Thesmophores* (Introducer), approached him. He held in his hand a large scourge, with which he kept back the people from the entrance, called the Gate of the Profane. He introduced the Aspirant into a grotto, where they bandaged his eyes, and attached bonds or manacles, of an elastic nature to his hands.

* Bro. Godfrey Higgins suggests that this is the origin of the popular belief that all Freemasons are branded.

† The Druses and other societies known in our 29° follow the same ancient custom.

‡ The Hindu Yoge does the same, but this is to give him the opportunity of adopting hibernating customs, and contribute to the result.

FIRST GRADE—PASTOPHORIS.

The Apprentice was charged to guard the entrance, which conducted to the Gate of Men. The Aspirant having been prepared in the grotto,* the Thesmophores took him by the hand (Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, book 2, and presented him at the Gate of Men. (Ciceron, *de Legibus*, book 2—*Mysteriis ex agresti imanique vita exculti ad humanitatem, et mitigati sumus.*) Upon his arrival the Thesmophores touched the shoulder of the Pastophoris (one of the last apprentices), who was guarding the exterior, and invited him to announce the Aspirant, which he did by knocking at the gate of entrance. (On one of the Pyramids this act is naturally figured.) The Neophyte having satisfied the questions asked of him, the Gate of Men opened and he was admitted.

The Hierophant questioned him anew upon various subjects, and the Neophyte answered categorically. (Plutarch, in *Lacon Apoph. Lysander.*) They then caused him to travel round the Birantha (*Histoire du Ciel*, book 1, page 44), and endeavoured to terrify him by artificial lightning, claps of thunder, hail, rain, and tempest. (Eusebius. *Cæsar, Preparat Evangel.* Clement of Alexandria, *Admonit ad Gent.*)

If he was not, by this, too much discouraged, the Menes, or reader of laws, read to him the constitution of the Society. He promised to conform himself thereto. After this adhesion the Thesmophores conducted him with uncovered head, before the Hierophant, before whom he knelt. They put the

* By this is meant that which was called in Freemasonry of the 18th century a cabinet of reflection, or a room set aside for concentration and meditation.

point of a sword to his throat and caused him to take the oath of fidelity and discretion, invoking sun, moon and stars to witness his sincerity. (Alexander ab Alexandro, Book 5, Chapter 10.) He had then the bandage removed from his eyes and was placed between two square columns named Betilies (Eusebius, *Demonst. Evang.* book 1). Between these two columns was placed a ladder of seven steps, and another allegorical figure with eight doors or gates of different dimensions. (Origene, *Cont. Cels.*—page 34 of Bouchereau's translation). The Hierophant did not at once explain the mysterious sense of these emblems, but addressed him as follows:-

“To you who come hither to acquire the right of listening I address myself: the doors of this Temple are firmly closed to the profane, they cannot enter hither, but you, Menes, Musée, Child of Celestial works and research, listen to my voice, for I am about to disclose unto you great truths. Guard yourself from those prejudices and passions which might draw you from the true road to happiness, fix your thoughts upon the divine being and keep Him ever before your eyes, in order the better to govern your heart and senses. If you earnestly desire to tread the true path to felicity, remember that you are always in the presence of that All-powerful being who governs the universe. This sole being has produced all things, through Him they exist,* and He preserves them; no mortal can behold

* One of the deepest secrets of the metaphysical doctrines of antiquity was belief in one, unique, eternal, and perfect God. The wisest initiates recognized the unity of the divine principle and left to the ignorant and uninformed populace polytheistic theologies. The Greeks, like the Egyptians, recognized one God, whose Mysteries they celebrated with appropriate rituals and rites. The less informed among the Greeks, however, continued to venerate an elaborate pantheon of divinities. The worship of the One God was celebrated by the greatest of the Greek philosophers in the temple of Eleusis under the pretext of venerating the Goddess Ceres.

Him, and nothing can be hid from His sight.” (Eusebius, *Preparat Evangel* 1-13, Clement of Alexandria, *Admonit ad Gent.*)

After this address they caused the apprentice to ascend the steps of the ladder and taught him that it was a symbol of Metempsychosis. They also taught him that the names and attributes of the Gods had a higher signification than was known to the people.

The instruction of this grade was scientific or physical; they explained to the Neophyte the cause of winds, lightning, thunder; they taught anatomy and the healing art, and how to compound drugs. They also taught the symbolical language and the common hieroglyphical writing. (Jamblicus, *Life of Pythagoras.*)

The reception finished, the Hierophant gave the Initiate the word by which they recognized each other. This word was Amoun, and signified, Be discreet. (Plutarch, *Of Isis and Osiris.*) They also taught him the grip of the hand. (Jamblicus, *Life of Pythagoras.*) They clothed him with a sort of hood which terminated in a pyramidal shape, and they placed round his loins an apron termed Xylon. Round his neck he wore a collar with tassels falling on the breast. In other respects he was unclothed. It was his duty in turn to act as Guard of the Gates of Men.

SECOND GRADE.—NEOCORIS.

This degree, and the next, represent similar ceremonies in Craft Masonry, and have also an affinity with two of the higher degrees of the Council Series.

If the *Pastophoris* during the year of his Apprenticeship had given sufficient proofs of his intelligence, they imposed upon

him a severe test to prepare him for the grade of *Neocoris* (Annobius, liv. 5). The year having expired, he was put in an obscure chamber called *Endymion* (Grotto of the Initiates). Here he was served with a delicious repast to animate his failing strength, by beautiful women, who were either the espoused of the Priests, or Virgins dedicated to Diana. They invited him to love by gestures. He must triumph over these difficult tests to prove the command which he had over his passions.*

After this the *Thesmophores* comes to him, and propounds a variety of questions. If the *Neocoris* answers satisfactorily, he introduced him into the assembly. The *Stolista* (or Sprinkler) threw water over him to purify him. They required him to affirm that he had conducted himself with wisdom and chastity. After a satisfactory declaration, the *Thesmophores* runs towards him, having in his hand a living serpent, which he throws over his body, but withdraws with the bottom of his apron. (Julius Firmicus Maternus, Chapter 2, says, it was a gilt artificial serpent).

The chamber appeared to be filled with reptiles, to teach the *Neocoris* to withstand bodily terror.† The greater the courage shewn on this trial, so much the more was he lauded after reception. They then led him towards two high columns, between which was a griffin pushing a wheel. (See representations in the Grand Cabinet Romain). The Columns indicated the East and West. The griffin was the emblem of the sun, and the four spokes of the wheel indicated the four seasons.

* This may be thought by some improbable, but it is nevertheless true. The Druses offer it as the last great trial to the Initiate, and woe to him if he falls from his vows. It precedes the shadowy appearances in what may be called the Hall of Spirits, which they cause the Initiate to see by Mesmeric will, and the day's fasting and trials.

† The Copts possessed the art of depriving them of venom.

They instructed him in the art of calculating the hygrometer, by which they measured the inundations of the Nile; they instructed him in geometry and architecture, and the calculations and graduations of such measures as he had afterwards to use. But these were great secrets, and only revealed to those whose knowledge was far above that of the people.

His Insignia was a baton entwined with a serpent.* (The Caduceus of Mercury, emblem of the movement of the sun round the Elliptic). The word of the grade was Eve, and on this occasion they recounted to him the fall of the human race.†† The sign consisted in crossing the arms on the breast. (Norden gives designs of this sort).

The duty of the *Neocoris* was to wash the columns.

* The Caduceus of Mercury is the emblem of the movement of the sun around the ecliptic (editorial note: the motion of the sun is represented by the snakes, but this is only one of the interpretations of this symbol).

† Clement of Alexandria says something of this kind. It seems also confirmed by recent Assyrian inscription discoveries. Also there yet exist in the Himalayan fastnesses societies of most ancient date, which transmit such information. We may some time give a paper on this subject, and shew the bearing of these societies upon the transmission of the Ancient Mysteries and Modern Freemasonry.

†† As we bring together this particularity with the remark that we find in a celebrated book, one will find without doubt that the resemblance of the systems deserves the concentrated attention of thinking people. We must not forget that the author of Genesis had been brought up at the court of the Egyptian Pharaoh and had been initiated into the Mysteries. In other words, he had delved deeply into the secrets of the temple and had come into the possession of a secret knowledge, the profound significance of which has never been doubted. Moses, likewise, had mastered the principles of religious legislation and he gave proof of this when he became the leader of his people.

THIRD GRADE.—THE GATE OF DEATH.

The Initiate of this Grade received the name of *Melanephoris*. When the *Neocoris* had by intelligence and good conduct merited the degree, they carried him at once for reception.

He was conducted by the *Thesmophores* into a vestibule, above the entrance of which was written "Gate of Death." The place was filled with different species of mummies and coffins, analogous designs ornamenting the walls. As it was the place of the dead the Neophyte found the *Paraskistes*.

Here he also found the *Heroi*, or those who open the corpses occupied in their labours. [See Norden's designs.]

In the midst of the vestibule was placed the coffin of Osiris, and as he was supposed to have been recently assassinated it bore traces of blood. The officials demanded of the Neophyte if he had taken any part in the assassination of his Master. After his reply in the negative, two *Tapixeytes*, or persons who inter the dead, took possession of him. They conducted him into a hall where the other *Melanephoris* were habited in black.

The King, himself, who always assisted at this ceremony, accosted the aspirant with a gracious appearance, and presented a golden crown for his acceptance, enquiring if he considered himself to have sufficient courage to sustain the trials he has to undergo. The aspirant, knowing that he ought to reject this crown, threw it down and trampled it underfoot.* (Tertullien On Baptism, Ch. 5.) Then the king cried out, "Out-

* In the Mythraic Mysteries he replied, "Mythras is my Crown."

rage! Vengeance!" and, seizing the sacrificial axe, he struck the Neophyte (gently) upon the head. [The Emperor Commodus fulfilled this duty for a day, and acquitted himself in such an energetic way that it became tragical.] The two *Tapixeytes* overthrew the aspirant, and the *Paraskistes* enveloped him in mummy bandages: amidst the groans of assistants, they transported him through a door over which was written "Sanctuary of Spirits," and as it opened claps of thunder were heard, with flashes of lightning, and the pretended dead found himself surrounded with fire (Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, liv, 2). Charon took possession of him as a spirit, and he descended amongst the judges of the shades below, where Pluto was seated upon his throne, having Rhadamanthus and Minos at his side, also Alecton, Nictus, Alaster, and Orpheus (Diodorus of Sicily, Orpheus, liv. 4). This redoubtable tribunal addressed to him some severe strictures upon his course of life, and finally condemned him to wander in the subterranean galleries. They then disengaged him of his wrappings and mortuary apparel.

He then received instruction, and was moreover desired:

1. Never to thirst for blood, and to assist members of the society whose life might be endangered.
2. Never to leave a dead body unburied.
3. To await a resurrection of the dead and future judgment.*

The new *Melanephoris* had to study drawing and painting, as it was part of his duties to decorate the coffins and mum-

* The Editor asserts this a mistake, to be attributed to Plato, who had comprehended badly his Egyptian instruction.

mies. He was taught a particular alphabet, named the Hierogrammatical; which was all the more useful to him, as the History of Egypt, its geometry, and the elements of astronomy were in this character. He also received lessons in rhetoric, so that he might know how to give the funeral orations in public.

The sign of recognition consisted in a peculiar embrace, of which the object was to express the power of death. The word was—*Monach Caron Mini*—I count the days of anger.

The *Melanephoris* remained in these subterranean galleries until they could judge of his capabilities for advancing in the higher sciences, or if they could only make of him a *Paraskiste*, or a *Heroi*; for he was obliged to pass the rest of his days in these offices if he attained not to true knowledge.

FOURTH GRADE—CHISTOPHORIS.

Battle of the Shades (Tertullien, de Militis Corona).

The term of anger was ordinarily eighteen months, and when that had passed the *Thesmophores* went to see the Initiate, saluting him graciously, and, after arming him with a sword and buckler, invited him to follow him. They over-ran the sombre galleries, when suddenly some men masked under hideous figures, with flambeaus in their hands and serpents round them, attacked the Initiate, crying—*Panis!*

The *Thesmophores* incited him to confront all dangers and surmount all obstacles. He defended himself with courage, but succumbed to numbers; they then bandaged his eyes and passed a cord round his neck, by which he was led into the hall where he was to receive a new grade. He was then

raised extended and introduced to the assembly, hardly able to sustain himself.

The light was restored to him, and his eyes were dazzled with the brilliancy of the decorations; the hall offered an assemblage of the most gorgeous pictures. The King, himself, was seated beside the *Demiurgos*, or Chief Inspector of the Society. Below these high personages were seated the *Stolista* (Purifier by Water); the *Hierostolista* (Secretary), bearing a plume as his coiffure; the *Zacoris* (Treasurer); and the *Komastis*, or Steward of the Banquets. All wore the *Alydee* [*Aletheia*], truth. It was an Egyptian decoration. Actianus, Var. Hist. liv. 14., chap. 34, speaks in these terms:—"Eum omnium hominum justissimum et tenacissimum oportebat qui circa collum imaginem ex saphiro gemma confectam gestabat."]

The orator or chanter* pronounces a discourse in which he praises the new Chistophoris for his courage and resolution. He urges the neophyte to persevere for the reason that he has only half completed the labors, which he has to endure (perform) to furnish complete proofs (of his integrity).

They presented him with a cup filled with a very bitter drink, which they termed *cice*, which it was necessary he should drain. [This was the veritable beverage which bore the name of *Xuxeon*: Athence, liv. 9]. They invested him

* No one can doubt that the ancient languages were harmonious in their pronunciation. Primitive languages were composed only of consonants. The speaker or reader inserted the vowels according to certain accepted rules. This is one of the principles of the Qabbala. Orators and priests in reciting sacred things expressed themselves in a kind of chant. Poetry is the language of the Gods, and it is natural to bestow a certain rhythm upon the recitation of hymns and sacred poems.

with divers ornaments. He received the buckler of *Isis* (or *Minerva*); they put upon him the buskins of *Anubis* (or *Mercury*); and they covered him with the mantle of *Orci*, ornamented with a hood.

They ordered him to seize upon a scimitar which was presented to him, in order that he might strike off the head of an individual to be found at the bottom of a very deep cavern which he had to penetrate, and bring the head to the King. At the same moment all cried—"Niobe, behold the enemy's cavern!" Entering there, he perceived the figure of a very beautiful woman; it was composed of very fine skin or bladder, and so artistically manufactured that it seemed to be living.*

The new *Chistophoris* approached the figure, took it by the hair, and struck off the head, which he presented to the King and *Demiurgos*. After applauding this heroic action, they informed him that it was the head of the *Gorgo* (*Gorgo*, *Gorgol*, *Gorgone*, are the Egyptian names of *Medusa*), or spouse of *Typhon*, and who was the cause of the assassination of *Osiris*. They seized upon this circumstance to impress upon him that he was to be always the avenger of evil. He then received permission to put on a new clothing which was presented to him. His name was inscribed in a book amongst the other Judges of the land. He rejoiced in free communication with the King, and received his daily nourishment from the Court. (Diodorus of Sicily, liv. 1, de *Judiciis Ægyptiorum*.)

With the code of Laws they gave him a decoration which he could only wear at the reception of a *Chistophoris*, or in the

* The ancients probably knew what we call today goldbeater's skin. It is the epidermis that covers the interior of the dewlap of the ox. It has several uses, the most important is in surgery.

City of Sais. It represented *Isis*, or *Minerva*, under the form of an owl; and the allegory was thus interpreted:—Man at his birth is blind as the owl, and becomes man only by the aid of experience and the light of philosophy. The casque expressed the highest degree of wisdom; the decapitated head the repression of the passions; the buckler a legitimate defence against calumny; the column firmness; the cruse of water a thirst for science; the quiver, garnished with arrows, the power of eloquence; the pike persuasion carried afar, which is to say, that by his reputation one can at a great distance make a profound impression; the palm and olive branches were the symbols of peace. (Grand Cabinet Romain, p. 26.) They further taught him that the name of the great legislator was *Joa*.* (Diodorus of Sicily, liv. 1, De *Egyptiis Legum Latoribus*.) This name was also the word of the Order.

The members held meetings at times, where *Chistophoris* alone could be admitted. The Chapters were called *Pixon* (Source of Justice): and the word in use at these holdings was *Sasychis* (an ancient priest of Egypt).

The Initiate was taught the Ammonitish language. (Ammonitish was a mysterious language; see word of the 1°.) The Aspirant having over-run the *Lesser Mysteries*, the object of which was to prepare him, they instructed him in the human sciences, up to the moment of his being admitted to the *Greater Mysteries*, and to the knowledge of the sacred doctrine called

* The word *Jehovah* expresses without doubt *Joa*. It is significant that this last word is the sacred word of the 88th degree of *Misraim*. It is through an error that it is written as *Zao* in the books of the Rites, and in the *Tuileur de Tous Les Rites*, page 421, though we truly can say that the *J* or *Dja* of the *Hindus* was expressed by the *Z* in certain countries.

the *Grand Manifestation of Light*, when there were no more secrets for him.*)

FIFTH GRADE—BALAHATE.

The *Chistophoris* had the right to demand and the *Demiurgos* could not refuse this Grade. The candidate was conducted to the entrance where the assembly was held, and he was received by all the members. He was then conducted to another Hall, disposed for a theatrical representation, in which he was, in a way, the sole spectator, for each member took a part.

A personage called *Orus* accompanied the several *Balahate* who all bore torches; they marched into the Hall and appeared as if seeking something. *Orus* drew his sword upon arriving at the entrance of a cavern from which flames proceeded; at the bottom of it was the murderer *Typhon* seated with a crest-fallen appearance. As *Orus* approached, *Typhon* raised himself up, having a terrifying appearance, a hundred heads reposed on his shoulders, his whole body was covered with scales, and his arms were of immense length. *Orus* advanced towards the monster without allowing himself to be in the least discouraged by his dreadful aspect, threw him down and overwhelmed him. He then decapitated him, and threw the corpse into a cavern, which still continued to vomit flames. He then in silence exhibited the hideous heads.

* Jamblichus clearly explains what this was. The Priests professed absolutely to exhibit to the *Epotae* the various orders of Spirits. The Hero, or half gods, the elemental potentates, archangels, angels, and tutelary Spirits. Moreover, they described and explained the origin and qualities of these different orders of the upper world, in a clear and precise manner, shewing the great perfection to which the Egyptians had reduced the science of Theology.—JOHN YARKER.

This ceremonial terminated by the instruction which was given to the *Balahate*, and which included the explanation of this allegorical scene. It was explained that *Typhon* symbolized fire, which is one of the most terrible agencies, notwithstanding which nothing in the world can be done without it. *Orus* represented industry and labour, by the aid of which man performed great and useful enterprises in subduing the violence of fire, directing its power, and appropriating its force.

The *Chistophoris* was instructed in Chemistry and the art of decomposing substances and combining metals. He had the assistance of masters when he needed the researches and experience which they had in that science.

The word of the order was *Chymia*.

SIXTH GRADE—ASTRONOMER BEFORE THE GATE OF THE GODS.

The preparations of this degree began by putting the Candidate in irons. The *Thesmophores* conducted him to the *Gate of Death*, which had to be descended by four steps, because the Cavern of reception was that previously used for the third degree, and which was on this occasion filled with water in order to row the Barque of Caron. Some coffins placed here and there struck the eyes of the Candidate. He was informed that they enclosed the remains of those members who had been put to death for betraying the secrets of the society; and they menaced him with a similar fate if he committed the same crimes.

He was then laid into the midst of the assembly in order to take a new oath. After having pronounced it they explained

to him the history of the origin of the Gods, which were the objects of the people's adoration, and by which they amused and directed their credulity; but they indicated to him at the same time the necessity of conserving polytheism for the common people.* They amplified the ideas which had been presented to him in the first degree, upon the doctrine of a sole Being who embraced all time, presided over the union and regularity of the universe, and who, by his nature, was above the comprehension of the human spirit.

The grade was consecrated to the instruction of the Neophyte in the knowledge and practice of astronomy. He was obliged to give the night to observations, and to conform to the labours they exacted. He was advertised to be on his guard against the *Astrologers* and drawers of horoscopes, whom they looked upon as the authors of idolatry and superstition, for this Mysterious Society held them in aversion. These astrologers had chosen the word *Phœnix* for the word of the order, and which the *Astronomers* turned into derision.† (Herodotus, Hist. Aethiop, liv. 3.)

* The traditions of polytheism were not absurd at their origin. These traditions resulted from the invention of ingenious emblems, devised to reveal the principles of life and the workings of universal law. The emblems themselves came to be confused with the principles they represented. Thus for example, the ox was used to symbolize strength, but in the course of ages the true meaning was forgotten and men worshipped the ox not as a figure but as a fact. Heroes were venerated for their prodigious actions, outstanding virtues, art in gratitude for the services they had rendered society. After a time, unimaginative mortals deified these heroes, honoring the men rather than the virtues which they represented. This is how superstition denatures reasonable things, leading the unlearned into error and the abuses which inevitably result from error.

† In those remote times the priests professed the most enlightened and sane doctrines, and were enemies of ignorance, treachery, cheating, and superstition. It is a truth demonstrated by thousands of examples that knowledge develops brains—that the lights of Philosophy, while elevating the soul, spread reason and lead men to ideas that are just, to opinions that are wise, to feelings that are philanthropic, and to actions that are honorable and useful.

After the reception they conducted the Initiate towards the *Gate of the Gods*, and introduced him into the *Pantheon*, where he beheld all the Gods and saw them represented by magnificent paintings. The Demiurgos retraced anew the history, concealing nothing from him.

They placed under his inspection a list of all the *Chief Inspectors* in the chronological order in which they had lived, as also a tabular list of all the members of the society spread over the face of the globe.* They taught him the Priestly dance which figured the course of the stars. (Lucien, De Saltatione).

The word of the degree was *Ibis*, signifying crane, which symbolized vigilance.

SEVENTH GRADE—PROPHET OR SAPHENATH PANCAH.

(*The man who knows the Mysteries—Jamblicque De
Mysteriis Ægypt.*)

This Grade was the last and most eminent. In it they gave a detailed and most complete explanation of all the Mysteries.

* With the decline of the pagan Mysteries, the members of the secret schools separated and, traveling to different parts of the world, they scattered fragments of the old doctrines among many races and peoples. Thus, a portion of the philosophy professed by those who dwelled along the Nile penetrated into the forests of Germany, where it mingled with barbaric practices and lost its purity and sublimity. Religious persecutions in the different eras had expatriated initiates who spread philosophies among foreign nations. It is easy to understand how wise doctrines, disseminated among uncultured peoples, lost the name of action and degraded to theological despotism and fanatical superstition.

Thomas Paine in a pamphlet mentions researches he made into the origin of Freemasonry among the habits and practices of the Druids. Other writers contend that Freemasonry had its origin among the rites practiced in the Pyramids. It would appear that the presence of Freemasonic symbolism among so many different peoples points to a common origin of the symbols, the doctrine, and the interpretation.

The *Astronomer* could not obtain this degree, which established his aptitude in all the functions, public and politic, without the assent of the King and Demiurgos; and at the same time the general consent of the inner members of the Society.

The reception was followed by a public procession to which they gave the name of Pamyloch (Oris circumcisio—circumcision of the tongue).

[This would seem to be a figurative expression, by which they wished to say that the Neophyte had acquired all knowledge which they could give him—his tongue was acute, and he was permitted to speak of all knowledge.]*

They then exhibited to the people the sacred objects.

The procession finished; the Members of the Society departed clandestinely to the city during the night, repairing to an appointed place and reassembling in some houses of a square form, which had several apartments ornamented with admirable pictures, representing human life (voyage of Lucas in Egypt). These houses were called *Maneras* (residence of the Manes), for the people believed that the Initiates held a peculiar commerce with the Manes of the departed; the *Maneras* were ornamented with a great number of columns, between which were some coffins and a sphynx.

On arrival, the new Prophet was presented with a beverage named Oimellas, (veritably oinomeli, composed of wine and

* This is probably a note of the French Brother, who translated the work from the German. It is more probable that the circumcision was real and not figurative. The Hindu practitioner of Hathi Yoge has the tongue cut loose at the underside to enable him to insert the end in the gullet, and so stop breathing.—J. Y.

honey, Athenee, Liv. 9), and they told him he had arrived at the end of all the proofs.*

He was then invested with a cross, of which the signification was peculiar,† and known only to the Initiates, and he was obliged to wear it continually. (Rufin. Liv. 2, Ch. 29).

He was invested with a very beautiful white striped robe, very ample, and called *Etangi*. They shaved his head, and his coiffure was of square form. (Pierius, Liv, 32, Gd. Cabinet Romain, p. 66).

The principal sign was made by carrying the hands crossed in the sleeves of the robe, which were very wide. (Porphyre De Abstinencia).

The word of the order was Adon‡ (Lord, root of Adonis, singular Adonai. Histor. Deor. synt. prim., Lilio Gregor auctore p. 2).

The *Prophet* had permission to read all the mysterious books which were in the Ammonique language, to which they gave him the key, which they called *Poutre Royale*. (Plutarch, De Amore Fraternali. Diodorus of Sicily, in Additionibus). The greatest prerogative of this grade was to contribute his vote in the election of a King. (Synesus, De Providentia). The new

* The account of the beverage of sweet and agreeable liquere that was presented to the new prophet should be understood allegorically. The cup represented knowledge or wisdom from which wise men drink as from a fountain of ever living water.

† The form of the Cross goes back far beyond the origin of Christianity. The Greeks, for example, used cruciform ornaments. Their buildings, consecrated to various religious beliefs, were built in the form of a Cross. This form represents the four corners or angles of the world.

‡ The word Adon means lord and is the root of Adonis, which is the singular of Adonai.

Prophet could, after a time, arrive at the offices of the Society, and even to that of *Demiurgos*.

THE OFFICES AND HABILIMENTS

1°—The *Demiurgos*, Chief Inspector of the Society. He wore a robe of sky blue, sprinkled with embroidered stars, and a yellow *ceinture* (Montfaucon, Liv. 2. p. 102., fig. 1. Ungerus, De Singulis). He wore from his neck a sapphire surrounded with brilliants, and suspended from a golden chain. He was also Supreme Judge of all the land.

2°—The *Hierophant* was clothed nearly the same, except that he wore on his breast a cross.

3°—The *Stolista*, charged with the purification of the Aspirant by water, wore a robe of white stripes and a peculiarly formed foot covering. The guardianship of the vestibule was entrusted to his care.

4°—The *Hierostolista* (Secretary), had a plume for his coiffure, and held in his hand a vase of cylindrical form, called *Canonicon*, for ink.

5°—The *Thesmophores*, was charged with the introduction of Aspirants.

6°—The *Zacoris* fulfilled the functions of Treasurer.

7°—The *Komastis* had charge of the Banquets and controlled the *Pastophores*.

8°—The *Odos* was orator and chanter.

BANQUETS

All the members were obliged to wash themselves before going to table. They were not permitted to use wine, but might have a beverage resembling our modern beer.*

They carried round the table a skeleton, or *Butoi* (*Sarcophagus*, † figure of a coffin). ‡

The *Odos* intoned a hymn called the *Maneros*, which commenced thus: "Oh, death! come at the convenient hour." All the members joined in chorus.

When the repast was finished all retired; some to attend to their occupations, others to give themselves up to meditation; the greater number, according to the hour, to taste the sweets of sleep, with the exception of those whose turn it was to watch in order to introduce by the *Gate of the Gods* (*Biranthia*), the initiates of the 6° who desired to make celestial observations; these were obliged to pass the entire night and even to second, or rather to direct, the astronomical labours.

* The Egyptian priests were very strict in the use of any alcoholic beverage and did not permit wines or strong drink to any of their orders. Mahomet concurred in this attitude and made temperance one of the pillars of Islam.

† It is from here, according to all appearance, that the word *sarcophagus* had its origin.

‡ According to the old traditions, a human skeleton was always seated in a place of honor at elaborate banquets, reminding the guests that even as they feasted and made merry death was never far from them—to use an old adage, live well in this world but never forget that you will soon leave this temporal state.



SPECTRAL FORMS APPROACH THE NEOPHYTE

(FROM CHRISTIAN'S HISTOIRE DE LA MAGIE)

COMMENTARY

BY MANLY P. HALL

PREPARATION

It was customary for the members of initiate bodies to accept candidates of only exceptional distinction. In both Greece and Egypt, the disciples were tested as to their knowledge of the arts and sciences, particularly geometry, astronomy, and music. Initiation was an honor bestowed for unusual merit and integrity. The ancient rule holds good to this day in most occult schools. These institutions accept only such disciples as they themselves choose to accept, nor will applications for membership be considered. Each disciple, according to the ancient rite, had to be sponsored by a member in good standing, who acted as his guardian, guide, and mentor.

Pythagoras is said to have applied in vain for admission into the Egyptian schools. Finally, after many years of waiting and preparation, he was elected into the Mysteries of Isis at Thebes. It is recorded that Plato also received initiation, but only after producing the highest credentials. The Mysteries would initiate no one who was of the status of the slave or had been convicted of any felony. Also, they would accept no one who was not of sound body. All of the rules

and regulations had metaphysical significance. Thus, by a bondsman they meant one enslaved to his animal nature; by a criminal one unable to control his appetites or desires; and by deformity they meant unbalance between the spiritual, intellectual, and material parts.

The use of the term diet signifies not only the food of the body but also all the branches of learning and esthetic culture. The allusions to vegetables, fish, and wine refer to certain practices. The disciple must avoid all contact with the world, all vacillation of mind, and all stimulation of the emotions; but these restrictions were relaxed afterwards because the priests realized the impossibility of living in the world without some involvement in the problems of life.

The imprisonment in the subterranean vault was to remind the disciple that the body is the sepulchre of the soul, that mortal life is lived in a prison of matter in a sublunary sphere, that only initiation can release the soul from darkness. The disciple was allowed to write down his thoughts. Every man reflecting upon truth while imprisoned in the darkness of ignorance is a philosopher searching for reality, even though limited by the inadequacy of environment. Literature is made up of the thoughts of the imprisoned.

After the period of reflection comes examination. The disciple is interrogated as to the motives which lead him from worldliness to the sanctuary of the hidden God. He is also examined as to the fundamental knowledge of the divine sciences so that his fitness to progress may be ascertained.

The examination completed, the disciple is conducted to a large gallery, sometimes circular and domed and other times extending in various directions, lined with columns. The col-

umns represent nature or the universe. Upon the columns, which sustain the dome of heaven and which also represent the laws of life, are inscribed the secrets of Science. They further represent the arts and sciences as well as the arcana of the temple by which society is supported. The roof of the temple represents the cosmic plan, the covering of wisdom that protects the rest. The initiates themselves become pillars in the everlasting house. The maxims and proverbs upon the columns are the truths to be discovered in all aspects of nature, which disciples must learn to recognize and make part of their own spiritual understanding.

It is in this subterranean microcosm or small world that the disciple comes face to face with the Thesmophores, the keeper of the gate. Appropriately, this guardian carries in his hand the scourge or a whip of small cords by which the profane are driven from the steps of the sanctuary. This part of the pageantry is identical in significance with the episode of Jesus' driving the money lenders from the temple of Jerusalem. The Thesmophores is the personification of one of the great laws of occultism, namely, that the spiritual truths of life are their own guardians. He also represents the aspect of universal law which prevents any man from attaining a degree of knowledge greater than his own integrity. The secrets are for the worthy only. The unworthy have no right to participate in the sacred rites. This is another statement of the Biblical truth that—who lives the life shall know the doctrine.

The Thesmophores—nature's law, kind to the wise and cruel to the foolish—leads the disciple into the small room of preparation. This room is the symbol of the inner silence which precedes enlightenment. Man going inwardly in search of the real first enters the small room of his own heart, called

a grotto. The bandaged eyes are symbolic, like the blindness of Homer, of the fact that he who searches for inward things sees not with the eyes of the body, but with the eyes of the soul. It is necessary to discipline or bind the physical senses if superphysical things are to be perceived. The disciple is then bound to represent the limitations which imperfection imposes upon all temporal natures—bound and hoodwinked to signify the limitation of the mortal state. The disciple is led through the gate of the Mysteries. His foot is placed upon the lowest step of the ladder of the divine mysteries, which extending from the mundane sphere below has its uppermost parts in the empyrean of the wise.

FIRST GRADE

The Gate of Men is guarded by the Pastophoris, who is himself an apprentice of the order. This is to remind the seeker that each disciple as he ascends through the various grades of the school becomes the teacher of those directly below himself in attainment. The Gate of Men is the mental nature through which all human beings must pass in their search for truth. Disciples are, therefore, set to work to guard their minds. The first work of the wise man is to discipline his own thinking.

The Pastophoris also guards the temple from without. He represents in this such philosophers as Socrates, who though not an initiate of the school guarded sacred knowledge by demanding high personal standards of integrity from all who desired to participate in the benefits of learning.

The disciple or aspirant waits while the Pastophoris knocks

upon the Gate. In many ancient mystery rituals, the act of knocking on the door beseeching entrance signifies the dedication of the disciple and the performance of such acts of virtue as entitle him to admission to the sanctuary. After the knock a small door opens and a voice interrogates the disciple demanding the reason for his coming. If the neophyte answers all the questions satisfactorily—and he is assisted by the Thesmophores if uncertain in his procedure—the Gate of Men is opened and he is admitted. By this admission is to be understood the acceptance into the state of understanding of the causal secrets of nature, or conscious admission into the adytum, or holy place of the spirit.

Upon entering the birantha or second apartment, the neophyte is again questioned, this time by the Hierophant or high priest of the order. The questions relate to abstract matters, and the neophyte must answer by a clear statement of principles. By this means he shows that he has grasped the significance of those profound and all-embracing causes from which emanate the numerous and diversified effects which together make up the phenomena of the world.

The neophyte is then conducted through various rooms and chambers where mechanical instruments and metaphysical forces are focused upon him to cause fear, doubt, and worry. This process of circumambulation represents the astral plane, the hell of Christian theology. The neophyte is tested as to his emotional poise and is tried as to the courage of his realization. The artificial hazards represent life filled with obstacles and problems, devised primarily to test the integrity of man. He is conducted through these trials blindfolded, by which he is to understand that the various evils which petrify him would lose their power if his eyes were uncovered. In the same way

the problems of life lose their capacity to discomfort if the intelligent human being sees them correctly with the eyes of the mind.

The Menes, or reader of the laws, then declares the constitution of the Society and the neophyte takes his oath of obedience. The laws of the society represent the laws of the universe, which all disciples must vow to obey. The neophyte kneels, representing the subjection of his own will to Universal Will. The Sword of Karma is placed against his throat to remind him that if he breaks the law, he will destroy himself. In his oath, he asks that the sun, the moon, and the stars witness his integrity. The stars represent spirit; the sun, soul; and the moon, body—the three parts of his own nature which he must bind into one obedient wholeness.

The bandages are now removed from the neophyte's eyes and he finds himself standing between two columns, known to Freemasonry as Jachim and Boaz. These represent the equilibrium that sustains the universe. They are the heart and the mind, mysticism and occultism, religion and philosophy. Between these columns is the ladder with its seven steps and the eight doors. These symbols are derived from the Mithraic Rites of the Persians. The seven steps are the seven planets, and the eight doors are the gates of the soul, declared by the Greeks and Egyptians to have had eight parts. The steps show the way of accomplishment, and the open doors show realization, with special secret significance relating to the opening of the psychical centers of the human body.

The words of the Hierophant have passed through the editorial doors of Eusebius, one of the most fanatical and unscrupulous of early Christian apologists. Therefore, we may accept that they have been greatly deleted. The Hierophant

does not fulfill his promise of revealing great truths. From other sources, however, it can be inferred that he described the ineffable nature of the First Cause, That Thrice Deep Darkness from which pour forth all lives, all natures, all forms.

The neophyte then ascends the steps of the ladder, which means that he was taught the secrets of Yoga or the method of forcing the consciousness through the seven steps or stages, called by the Greeks Disciplines. He was also instructed in the mystery of reincarnation and in the secret names of God. He was taught that the divinities are the personifications of the universal creative principles and forces, by which the world was fashioned, is supported, and will in the end be reabsorbed into eternity.

The arcana of this grade was scientific and consisted of advice for perfecting physical knowledge and for ensouling physical knowledge with spiritual enlightenment. By anatomy was implied the structure of the world; by healing, the perfection of all imperfect natures; and by the compounding of drugs, the classification and administration of curative knowledge. The symbolic knowledge is the key to the reading of nature, and the hieroglyphical writing is the method of symbolically setting forth spiritual things in figures suitable for the comprehension of ordinary mortals.

The Hierophant bestows the password, which is really the keynote of the degree—in other words, the spiritual purpose. In this case the word means be discreet. Discretion is moderation not only of action but also of idealism. It warns the neophyte that he shall not cast pearls before swine and should only give spiritual advice to those capable of using it, nor should he at any time reveal knowledge to the profane. He must demand of each with whom he comes in contact that they shall like himself earn the right to know.

The grip of the hand is the symbol of comradeship or understanding, the uniting of separate or different things into one purpose. The robes and garments of the degree represent the changes in the auric colors, resulting from the newly directed spiritual purpose. The pyramidal hood is a symbol of aspiration; the up-pointing triangle, an emblem of fire, which is both light and aspiration. The Masonic apron represents purification, and the collar with its tassels is a figure of the solar system. He may in this grade have no other garments than purity, aspiration, and law. Robed in these, he becomes in his turn a guardian at the Gates of Truth.

SECOND GRADE

Periods of probationship constitute a part of all ancient mystery systems. These probationships were intended to give opportunity for the application of philosophical principles to the problems of living. The disciple had to take his philosophy out into the world and, living among men, still remain true to the spiritual laws of his order. Probationship was also a test of patience. The disciple learned that Truth is not to be quickly attained; also, that the quality of accomplishment was more important than any man made concept of time. In the *Crata Repoa*, period of probationship appears to have been one year, but the term year is to be considered here figuratively to represent any sufficient and complete unit of time.

The Endymion, or a chamber of obscurity, was the theater of temptation. Here the disciple was confronted once more with the insidious forces of worldliness, symbolized by the banquet or feast. Under the most severe tests, he must re-

main firm, uninfluenced by the appetites and instincts—as the Hindu mystic knows, “only one balanced in pain and pleasure is fitted for immortality.” Most ancient rituals were temptations or trials, and the strength which mastered the rituals of the temple also gave courage and integrity to the whole life. The disciple masters the world by mastering the worldliness in himself.

The Thesmophores now reappears, and the disciple is questioned concerning the improvement which has taken place in himself. The initiators discover by adroit interrogation to what degree the neophyte has improved since his first obligations were assumed. The Stolista then sprinkles the neophyte with water, the mystical baptism. This ceremony represents the cleansing of the life by conscious purification. The neophyte then is made to confirm verbally the integrity of his conduct during the year of probationship. He must prove to the assembly that he has been very mindful of the rules and regulations of the fraternity and has done nothing which would disgrace himself or the temple.

If the neophyte satisfactorily accounts for each thought and action, the assembled initiates signify their satisfaction and the ritual proceeds. The Thesmophores runs towards the neophyte bearing in his hand a living serpent. This serpent is drawn through the candidate's robe after being placed upon his breast. In some of the rituals the serpent was a golden effigy, but on at least a few occasions it is known to have been a living poisonous snake.

Eliphas Levi, the French transcendentalist, declares the serpent to be the symbol of the astral light—the psychical currents of nature, the universal energy of magic, and the very essence of illusion. Levi speaks of the astral world as a garden

of beauty filled with glorious flowers, each with a poisonous serpent twined around its stem. The serpent is the deceit of self-knowledge. It is the insidious force of egotism. It is also the mysterious kundalini, the serpent power of the Tantric sorceress, the mysterious psychical energies of the body. In its magical interpretation, the removal of the serpent from the neophyte's robe means that the disciple has freed himself from the illusions of astral light. This is the mastery of false purpose and the perfection of right motive. When the Thesmophores draws the serpent over the body of the neophyte, it is also to be understood that the disciple is instructed in the secret sciences of breath and of the control of the serpent power of himself.

The neophyte next perceives that the chamber in which he stands is filled with serpents, which has two meanings: First, the priests of the serpent power were themselves called serpents, and the assembly of the serpents was the convocation of the adepts. Second, the many serpents in the room signify the subtle influence of temptations which are ever present in life and crawl like serpents into the heart. If the disciple is valiant in the midst of these temptations, he is regarded as possessing self-control and fortitude. The twofold meaning of the snake is most significant: it is both the tempter and the illuminator.

The disciple is then shown the symbol of the griffin pushing the wheel and the two columns. The griffin is Karma, or destiny, turning the wheel of life; man is bound to the wheel of good and evil, or rebirth, until he overcomes the dragon of Karma or the retributive aspects of the Universal Law.

In this degree, the candidate was instructed in the signifi-

cance of the Crux Ansata, the symbol of life and called by the Egyptians the hydrometer, for measuring the inundations of the Nile. The Nile is the river of consciousness, and the cross of life is its symbol. By geometry is to be understood the measuring of the universe; and by architecture, the building of the temple of universal good. By the secrets of the measuring rod, sometimes shown in the hand of Serapis, the thoughtful student will understand the rule or measure of living. The philosophic stick of 24 inches or parts, called the rule of the day, is divided into three parts: eight hours for sleeping and rest, eight hours for labor, and eight hours for thought.

The insignia of the degree was the Caduceus of Hermes, the symbol of regeneration and of the raising of the serpent by the "Moses"—or seer. By Eve is meant nature or matter, the negative pole of life. When it is said that it was the duty of this grade to perform the ceremony of the washing of the columns, it is to be understood as the cleansing of the heart and mind, the two supports of life.

THIRD GRADE

The third grade of the *Crata Repoa* corresponds to the Third Degree of the Blue Lodge, of modern Freemasonry. In this grade the disciple descends into the abode of the dead, or as Apuleius says, "He treads on the threshold of Persephone."

The neophyte ascends through the different degrees of the secret school by the gradual course of merit. Each step forward must be won by increasing intelligence and integrity. He is examined at each gate by a jury of initiators, called in

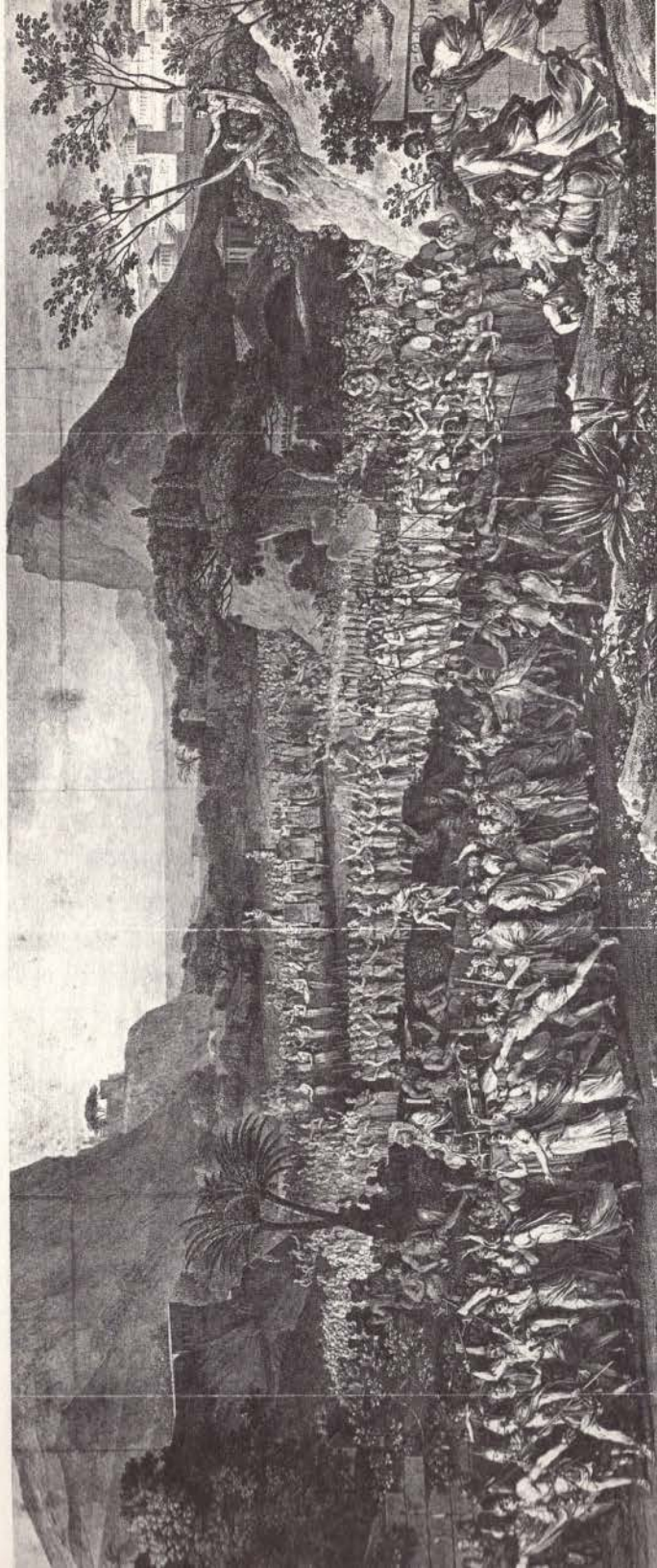
the Book of the Dead, Assessors or Jury in the Hall of the Twin Truths.

Conducted by the Thesmophores, or guide, the neophyte enters into an antechamber, the vestibule to the Gate of Death. The Thesmophores plays the part of the guide in the same way that Virgil does when he leads Dante through the circles of the purgatory and the Cumaean sibyl conducts Aneas through the realms of Hades. In the Grail Mysteries it is Gurnemanz, the aged knight, and in the Ancient Rite of Freemasonry it was the sponsor conductor.

The place in which the disciple finds himself has the appearance of a crypt, and around him the processes of mummification, or the preserving of the bodies of the dead, are being carried on. This is a symbol of physical existence, where men performing their various daily labors are, so to speak, working with the dead and perpetuating dead things by complete addiction to only the physical aspects of nature.

In the midst of the vestibule stands the mummy case of Osiris, whose mythos has been fully considered in the first section of this book. Osiris is the personification of Truth and has been destroyed by evil. The Golden Age was martyr to the Age of Iron, the Typhonic era. Spiritual values are daily compromised in the quest of physical power, wealth, and position. Osiris dead is the nobility of man slain by his own animal nature. The initiators then demand of the neophyte if he has had any part in the assassination of the God King Osiris. Earnestly, he maintains his innocence, by which is intimated that the wise, the purified soul has no part in the baser transactions of life and it is contributing nothing to the fall of ideals.

Having satisfied the assembled initiates that he is innocent



THE PROCESSIONAL OF THE MYSTERIES OF ISIS
(ACCORDING TO THE DESCRIPTION GIVEN BY APULIUS)

FROM LENOIR'S *La Francbe-Maconnerie*.

of the murder of Osiris, the neophyte is given into the keeping of the two Tapixeytes, described as persons who enter the dead. He is conducted by these through the Gate of Death into a great room beyond, where the initiates of the grade in black robes await him. The whole degree is symbolic of the state of man in the material universe, which is the underworld of the classical philosophers. The neophyte must learn to understand the true relationship which exists between the divine universe and the small sphere. Therefore, the material world is depicted as a subterranean crypt filled with dead bodies and as the dwelling place of only such of the living as minister to the last rites of the dead.

According to our description, the Pharaoh himself participated in the ceremony of the third grade. He appears in his robes of state, throned as the prince of the material world. As the neophyte enters, the king meets him graciously and offers the aspirant the royal crown of Egypt. This pantomime suggests that part of the New Testament where Jesus, as the neophyte, is offered the kingdoms of the earth if he will give up his spiritual mission. In the *Trinosophia* manuscript of St. Germain, the king appears in a boat and attempts to discourage the disciple, who is swimming valiantly across the stream that divides the physical and spiritual worlds.

The neophyte takes the crown and, throwing it upon the ground, tramples it under foot. This symbolizes the final conquest of pride, egotism, and the love of power. The initiate refuses the crown of the physical world because his kingdom is not of that world but of the hidden world of spirit. The aspirant has learned not to accept the symbol for the real; he desires a higher crown than any king of earth can give, the Seven-Rayed Crown of Truth.

In the next step of the ceremony the Pharaoh assumes the attitude of great rage. He seizes the sacrificial ax, symbol of temporal power, and strikes the neophyte upon the head, a circumstance which in slightly different form is still preserved in the symbolism of the Third Degree of Freemasonry. The editor of the *Crata Repoa* infers that the neophyte was struck gently and cooperated with the ritual by apparently fainting and shamming death. It is doubtful if in ancient times the blow was so gently given; more likely, the neophyte was knocked unconscious and passed through the actual experience of seeming to die.

The interers of the dead, those concerned with the processes of mummification, then pick up the candidate and carry him into the invisible world amidst natural phenomena, to represent all the strangeness and solemnity of dying. The neophyte is wrapped in bandages until he resembles the mummy of Osiris, thus signifying the hampering agencies of ignorance superstition and fear.

The boatman of the river Styx appears and rows the soul across the river of ether which divides the physical and astral planes. The neophyte descends into the shades until he comes at last into the presence of Pluto, Lord of Death. With Pluto is a jury of infernal spirits, who search in the neophyte for something which binds him to the world of death. If, however, all personality and imperfection have been mastered and the soul is filled with light, the powers of darkness cannot hold the spirit.

However, Pluto does not immediately release the neophyte, but condemns him to wandering in the subterranean galleries, meaning the periodic return to physical life through reincar-

nation. His bandages and wrappings are removed to represent evolution.

He begins the search for truth in the physical universe by wandering through the curious passageways of the labyrinth. The Cretan labyrinth with its bull-headed guardian represents the complexities of mortal existence. He is given the three instructions, which tend towards the development of peace, fraternity, responsibility, patience, and hope. He learns to draw and paint, that is, to reveal through appropriate symbols inner convictions. He must decorate coffins and mummies, signifying that he must perfect bodies and ornament them with virtues. He is taught the hieratic alphabet, the secret language of the priests, and continues his progress in geometry and astronomy. The neophyte masters rhetoric by applying himself to the composition and interpretation of the funeral rituals, which are in reality the laws and doctrines of regeneration composed for the benefit of the physically living, who are regarded as the spiritually dead.

If the disciple could advance no further, he was confined to the subterranean chambers for the rest of his natural life, signifying that there was no escape from physical life except through improvement. If he diligently administered his responsibilities to the dead, he might expect to be advanced to the next grade of the Society.

Further progress depended entirely upon the disciple's capacity to discover the hidden meanings of the lessons revealed in the circumstances of initiation.

FOURTH GRADE

By the "term of anger" is meant the time required to master irascibilities of the animal soul. The eighteen months

is a Qabbalistic allusion—the 18 is composed of 8 plus 1, or 9, the number of human nature or sublunary imagination. After 18 months or mortal states have been successfully passed through, by the neophyte, the Thesmophores visits the initiate in his subterranean abode.

The neophyte, now termed the initiate because he has advanced so far in the Mysteries, receives the Thesmophores and accepts from him a sword and buckler. The sword is will; and the buckler, or shield, is wisdom. Will is the active instrument of spirit, wisdom is the passive instrument. Thus armed, the initiate sallies forth into the labyrinthine galleries, which represents the acts of enlightened living.

Suddenly, armed masked men, bearing torches and regaled in fantastic trappings, spring from the shadows and attack the initiate from all sides. These figures, with their weird and hideous appearances, are the numerous temptations and discordant circumstances of living which attack the courage of integrity. The initiate, striving to live well, finds all the evils of his own nature assailing him simultaneously from their dark recesses in his subjective nature. The cry "panis" is the cry of the nymphs and sprites at the death of Osiris and is the origin of the word panic, meaning confusion.

Not yet able to withstand all the evils of life, the new initiate is finally overcome, surrendering only after valiant struggle. The masked figures then bind his eyes and place a cord about his neck, and so prepared he is led into a large room before an assembly of initiates. His arms and legs are then extended in the form of the spread eagle or phoenix, the posture used in the old rites as a symbol of death and resurrection.

The blindfold is removed, and the initiate beholds a great room filled with splendid symbols and a tableau of extraordinary grandeur. The priests are arranged in a pattern to represent the universe. The Pharaoh himself is present here—representing the spirit or will—and the five accompanying officers are the senses or sensory parts of the soul, the instruments of cognition or knowing. The Hierophant and his assistants all wear the symbols of Truth, and each is robed in the garments and colors of his office.

Most ancient initiation rites included drinking from a cup or crater, a ritual of possibly astronomical origin based upon the Constellation of the Cup, which is placed between Cancer and Leo. In the Gothic Rites, neophytes drank the heavenly mead from a goblet made of a human skull; in the Greek Mysteries there was the Cup of Ganymede and also the Springs of Lethe and Mnemosyne; in the Christian ritual, the Master drinks with his disciples from the Cup of the Sangreal. In each case the drink of immortality—sacred homa or soma of Asia, the Everlasting Waters of Christian mysticism—signifies participation in universal life, the drinking in of Truth or of Spirit, or the partaking of God through the symbolic sacrament.

The buckler of Isis is, of course, wisdom, as has already been noted; the buskins of Anubis represent thought or intelligence, the active intellectual processes; and the mantle of Orus, with its hood, is the protecting garment of virtue.

The next part of the rite represents the slaying of the Gorgon or of the Medusa, who is here called the spouse of Typhon. She represents a consort of evil. Typhon is the principle of destruction, and Gorgon with her serpent heads is the manifestation of this one principle through an infinitude

of evil thoughts, emotions, and actions. The decapitating of Medusa is the cutting off of the head or the source of evil within himself; in a sense, his own body is part of the serpent-headed Gorgon. When he cuts off the evil in himself, he slays a certain part of the evil in the world and also avenges the death of Osiris; but the metaphysician must realize that this symbolical ritual represents the overcoming of evil by the lunar scimitar of right realization.

Having slain Medusa, the initiate receives permission to change his garments. Thus, he takes on, or puts on, a new life having slain the evil in himself. His name is inscribed in the Book of Light. He is a ruler over others, having mastered himself and he enjoys free intercourse with the King, by which is meant that he perceives the spirit within himself and has communion with it. His nourishment comes from the court, that is, he is sustained by the Universal Law.

The symbolism of the owl in the paragraph which follows reveals only part of the actual mystery. The owl is the night-seeing bird, who lives upon rodents and creatures of the earth, which collectively represent Typhon, the lower nature. The initiate was instructed in a secret language, which means that he was given a new key to the interpretation of the Universe. The Lesser Mysteries were completed in this degree. Having perfected himself in the rites of the Chistophoris, the initiate was prepared to continue to those solemn degrees, which are properly called the Greater Mysteries, or the Rites of Causes, whereas the Lesser Mysteries are devoted to the analysis of effects.

FIFTH GRADE

The initiate may demand initiation into the fifth grade. This means that, having completed the cycle of purification, the initiate now begins the positive acquisition of metaphysical knowledge and superphysical power. Having learned how to control the manifestations of universal law, the adept advances under the volition of enlightened will. In the fifth grade the initiate is not a participant but an observer. This is true in life. The adept reaches a degree of enlightenment in which he remains apart from the drama of existence, observing all things but free from the entanglements of participation.

The candidate for this degree is first brought into the presence of the assembly of initiates, where he is received by those who have preceded him on the path. This signifies that he comes into possession of the knowledge and wisdom of all the great teachers of the world, and also enters into a state of fraternity with the enlightened, becoming one of the Hierarchy of the Mystery School.

The initiate is conducted to a room arranged inwardly like a theater, as in the case of the theaters of Dionysus. This room is prepared for the representation of sacred dramas, the showing forth of spiritual Truths by means of theatrical pageantry. In the drama of life, each individual is the only audience—all other human beings are part of the cast. To represent this the candidate remains alone while the priests and initiates assume the roles of actors. For each human being all the rest of the world is a stage, but most human beings cannot escape the entanglements of the drama. They

forget they are actors and accept as real the scenes which constantly shift before them.

Orus, the son of Osiris, accompanied by torch bearers, appears. Orus is truth; the torches represent the occult arts and sciences, the doctrines and dogmas by the light of which Truth is made visible. The procession led by Orus travels about the hall as though seeking someone. At last, they come to the entrance of a cave from which smoke and flames are issuing. Orus immediately draws his sword and approaches the cavern, passing uninjured through the smoke and fire.

In the cavern sits Typhon upon an infernal throne, in a pensive, sorrowful mood. Typhon represents the adversary; he is the same as Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*. The great German poet makes the infernal majesty say, "I am the spirit of negation, part of the power that still works for good whilst ever scheming ill." Orus, the avenger of his father, advances towards many-headed Typhon, whose numerous faces represent the countless aspects of perversion. Orus battles with Typhon, as described in the ancient rites, overcomes the monster, decapitates him, and throws his corpse into the flames of perdition.

Having thus slain evil at its source, having sought out and destroyed the roots of perversion, the initiate exhibits the many heads of the monster, pointing silently to the evidence of victory.

According to the explanation given in the ritual, Typhon is reduced to the estate of being merely a fire symbol. The fire of magic is no earthly flame; but the Luciferian fire Typhon is the flame of passion, the flame of anger, the three fires of desire described by Buddha. Only when these fires

die out can the disciple approach the Nirvanic state. Typhon is the inferior or lower self, the Human Will of Boehme. It



SYMBOLIC DEPICTION OF TYPHON
(FROM KIRCHER'S *ŒDIPUS ÆGYPTIACUS*)

is this lower will that revolts against divine will, and carrying in its train a third of the angels of heaven descends into the

abyss to build there a city that is to stand against the hosts of heaven. It is against this human self will that Michael brings the angelic horde. Michael is the archangel of the Divine Face. His flaming sword is Universal Law, and before him the hosts of darkness fail; and Satan, with all his angels, is hurled into the limbo. This is a very important and beautiful allegory. It explains the meaning of the Biblical statement that he who would save his life must lose it, and he who loses his life for the sake of Truth shall gain back his life more abundantly.

The teaching of the fifth grade specially emphasizes the significance of chemistry. But this is truly alchemy, that mysterious and divine chemistry which transmutes all evil in human nature into perfect gold. The initiate is assisted in his mastery of alchemy by Masters of that science and, having fulfilled his responsibilities, looks forward to acceptance into the next grade.

SIXTH GRADE

The candidate for this degree was laden with irons and thus shackled was conducted by the Thesmophores once more to the Gate of Death. He descended into the lower world by four steps, which represent the four elements—air, fire, water, and earth. In the lower sphere, represented by earth, he sees a number of coffins containing the bodies of the dishonored dead who had betrayed the secrets of the Society.

The candidate was informed by the initiates of the degree that a similar fate would be visited upon him if he broke the vows and obligations of the order. This tableau sets forth

the occult truth that the spiritual powers of the universe cannot be perverted without a fearful compensation inevitably following. Those who take the obligations of the spiritual life must abide by these obligations, or their broken vows will destroy the body and unseat the reason.

In this degree the candidate is instructed as to the origin of the Gods. He is shown that the divine beings are symbols literally accepted by the profane, but mystically understood by the initiate. He is taught that the intelligible Gods are vast beings rooted in eternal principles and sustaining the universe by their emanations. The mysteries of the hierarchies are explained, and the candidate perceives clearly the ladder of concatenated spheres, by which Intelligence must ascend if it seeks to understand the mystery of divine natures.

The merit of monotheism is emphasized. The candidate is instructed in the identity of First Cause and how all the universe is suspended from one, immeasurable and undefinable Principle. He is further informed that he can adore the One by manifesting the beautiful and performing the good. He is also shown the fallacy of theologies and theological procedures. The uninformed worship unknown gods by ineffectual means, but the wise man venerates the True God with appropriate propitiations.

It is said that this degree was particularly concerned with the mysteries of astronomy, the secrets of the sidereal world. Of course, in ancient times astronomy was astrology. No division between these two sciences was recognized in the practical usage prior to the 17th century of the Christian era. The cultivation of theoretical astronomy merely as an abstract science found no place in the ancient curriculum. The motions of the planets were studied for the sake of determining

the results of these motions upon terrestrial affairs. Priest-astronomers sought the will of God in the motion of the heavenly bodies. To them the arrangements of the planets and constellations formed letters of a celestial alphabet, by which they spelled out the warnings of the Eternal from the blazing star groups written on the walls of heaven.

The German compiler of the *Crata Repoa* shows at this point a Teutonic prejudice. We know positively from the records of Clement of Alexandria and the Hermetic fragments that astrology was practiced by the Egyptian priests and that the astrological books were carried in the procession of the Gods. The quotation cited by the unknown compiler of the *Crata Repoa* does not correspond with available translations of the Ethiopian history by Herodotus. Rather the father of history speaks of astrology without slighting comment. As a matter of fact, it was probably true in ancient Egypt as in most civilizations that the occult sciences fell at times into indifferent keeping. A warning might be directed against the professional horoscope monger, but the study of astrology for prophetic purposes was cultivated in Egypt by learned priests and philosophers since the beginning of dynastic history. The difficulty may have been that in some cases the astrologer priest did not sufficiently emphasize the philosophical significance of the subject and was, therefore, criticized for lacking profundity. Astrology is true; but all astrologers are not truthful. But this criticism belongs equally to all branches of learning.

Having completed their instructions, the initiates brought the candidate into a large room where he beheld representations of the Gods. The significance of each of the divinities was carefully explained, and the candidate enjoyed full partici-

pation in intellectual wonders of the divine world of the Society.

The history of the order was also then revealed, and the candidate was instructed in the way by which he should recognize brother members in any part of the world where he might travel. He was also instructed in the sacred dance, which represented the motion of the heavenly bodies and the revolutions of cycles and periods throughout all time. He took part in this dance, and this participation consummated the degree. According to the old writings, Jesus danced with his disciples at the Last Supper. Dances composed of symbolic postures and rhythms form a part of most ancient rituals. The circumambulations of the Caaba at Mecca are still an important ritual in Islam. Pythagoras, Plato, and Socrates danced with their disciples; and Jelal-ud-din, the dancing dervish, sought to whirl his own consciousness into the motion of the spheres.

The new initiate continued his astronomical researches by studying the star courses from towers and observatories connected with the temple. By this means he prepared himself for the last degree.

SEVENTH GRADE

The seventh grade completed the mysteries. The candidate had passed successfully all the tests and trials of the secret path. The grade of preparation represented the Earth; the first grade represented the Moon; the second, Mercury; the third, Venus; the fourth, the Sun; the fifth, Mars; the sixth, Jupiter; and the seventh, Saturn. The candidate had ascended

successfully through the seven parts of his own soul and had arrived at the last or eighth part qualified and prepared for the final rites of emancipation.

The seventh grade was bestowed only at the pleasure of the Pharaoh and the high priest with the assent of all of the members of the Society. The actual ceremony of reception seems to have been a simple gathering of the members of the Society and an acceptance of the candidate into the adytum of the temple.

The neophyte, having mastered the successive trials, had perfected himself in all of the secrets of the order. He was a master of the rituals, symbols, and esoteric lore. His tongue was perfected in right speech; his mind, in right thought; and his heart, in right feeling. A procession followed, and the ceremonial was consummated by the exhibition of sacred relics to the populace of the community. The members of the order then departed quietly to reassemble in specially prepared rooms, adorned with representations of the mysteries of life.

The Table of Cebes depicting the vicissitudes of human action was originally devised to ornament a temple of the mysteries. In the Table the course of life is depicted as a path leading up a mountain. Wayfarers upon the path are performing numerous actions, significant of life and its complexities. On the top of the mountain is the Temple of the Gods, obscured from the sight of men by clouds. As the path ascends, the road becomes ever more steep and difficult, thus appropriately representing the mystery of self-mastery.

The initiates' returning quietly to the House of Manes has special meaning. The Manes were the spirits of the departed who were said to hover around their coffins and gather in

ghostly conclaves among the falling headstones of ancient cemeteries. Of course, the square houses of Manes represent bodies and the term Manes here signifies the superphysical consciousness of the initiates themselves. The ritual of initiation over, the spirits of the adepts returned to their bodies, here called their coffins. This means that the sacred ritual is completed and they return to the worldly life, that is, they gather again in the places of the dead.

The prophet here drinks of the water of remembrance, the ambrosial drink of the Gods. The soul participates again in perfect consciousness or the divine realization, which has been obscured by the mortal state. When descending into incarnation, the entity is said to drink of the water of forgetfulness; but when ascending again into perfect knowing, regains its memory of spiritual origin and divine purpose.

The symbol of the Degree is the Crux Ansata, or the ansated cross, consisting of a T or Tau Cross surmounted by a circle. This was the proper symbol of the Egyptian adept, and means in ancient philosophical language "the life bestowing." This the master must wear constantly upon his heart, the perfect symbol of the perfect man.

The initiate received also a full, white, striped robe, representing the pure (white), disciplined (striped) body and life. It was made large to signify the ampleness of the perfected nature. The master also received the tonsure, a ritual that has been preserved in most mystical orders both pagan and Christian from the most remote times. The part of his hair not shaved was arranged in a square coiffure, and he most frequently wore a beard. The ritual of the tonsure, or the head shaving, was based upon the releasing of the spiritual consciousness through the parietal foramina, two small open-

ings in the crown of the skull. This area was called the Gate of the Gods, and the tonsure came to represent released consciousness or the use of the third eye.

The principal sign made by the master for purposes of recognition was the carrying of the hands crossed in the sleeves, thus making the symbol of completion or an endless circle out of his joined arms. The covering of the hands by the robe also meant the suspension of action and the perfect control of impulse.

It was the duty of the master to read with the secret key all of the books of the order and the scriptures of the world and the priestly writings. It was from the membership of this grade that the officers of the Society were chosen. The political power of the initiates included their vote in the election of rulers. The highest of the initiates was the Demiurgos, or the Hierophant, whose robe was of blue and gold, and who dwelled constantly in the temple seen only by his disciples.