

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER OF THE HIDDEN PLACES

by

W. Marsham Adams

Edited by

E. J. Langford Garstin



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ISIS AND OSIRIS
From the "Papyrus of Ani"

7.95

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER OF THE HIDDEN PLACES

The secret of the unseen world was the reward of initiation into the Egyptian Mysteries. This book reveals an intimate connection between the Great Pyramid and the *Book of the Dead* — the Secret House and the Secret Scroll — and throws light on the deepest secrets of ancient Egypt.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
FOREWORD - - - - -	II
PREFACE - - - - -	23
I. THE PYRAMID OF LIGHT - - - - -	27
II. THE SECRET SCROLL - - - - -	43
III. THE HOUSE OF OSIRIS - - - - -	55
IV. THE TEMPLE OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER - - - - -	69
V. THE HIDDEN GOD - - - - -	79
VI. THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS - - - - -	94
VII. THE MYSTERY OF THE DEPTHS - - - - -	114
VIII. THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT - - - - -	131
IX. THE ILLUMINATION OF THE ADEPT - - - - -	150
NOTES - - - - -	165
APPENDIX - - - - -	184

ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
ISIS AND OSIRIS - - - - -	<i>Frontispiece</i>
SUMMIT OF GREAT PYRAMID. CENTRAL TRANSVERSE SECTION	33
HIEROGLYPH OF THE "HOTEP" - - - - -	33
GATEWAY OF THE DOUBLE ARCH - - - - -	33
INTERIOR OF THE SECRET HOUSE, CALLED BY THE EGYPTIANS OF OLD "THE LIGHT" - - - - -	36
THE "HORIZON OF HEAVEN" - - - - -	52
PYRAMIDAL REGION OF THOTH - - - - -	66
SACRED HIEROGLYPHIC SYMBOL PECULIAR TO THOTH - - - - -	67
TEMPLE OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER—DENDERAH -	<i>facing p.</i> 69
HATHOR WITH THE SPLENDOUR PROCEEDING FROM HER WOMB	74
ROOF OF UPPER HALL - - - - -	90
HIEROGLYPH SYMBOL OF THE NILE - - - - -	90
THRONE AND AXIS - - - - -	90
SYMBOL OF DIVINITY - - - - -	90
TERRITORY OF THE HOLY DEAD - - - - -	90
WELL OF LIFE, PLACE OF INITIATION - - - - -	90
ANKH, SYMBOL OF CREATED LIFE - - - - -	90
OPENING FROM WELL TO CHAMBER OF DIVINE FIRE - - - - -	91
SCEPTRE OF PTAH, SPIRIT OF DIVINE FIRE - - - - -	91
ENTRANCE PASSAGE WITH GATEWAY (PASSAGE OF POLE-STAR)	91
SCEPTRE OF ANUP - - - - -	91
ATF-CROWN OF ILLUMINATION - - - - -	93
ZODIACAL LIGHT OF SUPREME HEAVEN - - - - -	93
THRONES OF ISIS AND OSIRIS - - - - -	106

ILLUSTRATIONS

THE "STONE OF GOD." THRONE IN LUMINOUS HALL OF TRUTH - - - - -	129
THE FIVEFOLD THRONE - - - - -	146
THE ANCHOR AND THE COFFIN OF THE LORD OF EARTH (SARKOPHAGUS AND HIGHEST CHAMBER) - - - - -	146
THE SAIL OF THE FIRMAMENT - - - - -	147
THE CABIN - - - - -	148
CHAMBER OF NEW BIRTH, SURMOUNTED BY THRONE - - - - -	148
THE FORTY-TWO JUDGES OF THE DEAD (FROM THE PAPYRUS OF ANHAI) - - - - -	152
THE GATE OF THE BURNING CROWN - - - - -	158
THE SACRED TAT OR MEASURE OF INUNDATION - - - - -	166
THE POSITION OF THE GREAT PYRAMID WITH RELATION TO THE POLE AND THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH - - - - -	166
GREAT ANGLE, BORNE ALOFT BY AMEN, SOURCE OF LIFE, IN TRINITY OF EGYPT - - - - -	167
GREAT ANGLE OF THE NILE DELTA, SOURCE OF LIFE, IN TRIANGLE OF EGYPT - - - - -	169
THE ORBIT - - - - -	173
THE ROYAL CARTOUCHE - - - - -	173
RESTAU, THE GATE - - - - -	186
THE GODS OF YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY AND THE BENNU - - - - -	187
THE SOUL OF THE DECEASED AS A HUMAN-HEADED BIRD - - - - -	189

FOREWORD

THERE is, perhaps, no ancient civilisation that has given rise to so much speculation as that of ancient Egypt, which has for centuries presented, and in many respects still presents, a number of problems of considerable interest and difficulty.

Until the discovery of the Rosetta stone by M. Bouchard in 1799, which made possible the decipherment of the hieroglyphics, there seemed to be little hope that any of these questions would be solved, and although much progress has since been made, the real nature of the religion of Egypt, her chronology, the extent of her scientific knowledge, the source of her civilisation and the significance of certain of her monuments still seem to be regarded by many authorities as being largely within the domain of theory only. In any event it is apparent that on all these points there exists, even to-day, a considerable divergence of opinion among scholars.

It is now nearly forty years since the late Mr. Marsham Adams first propounded his theory as to the intimate correspondence that exists between the *Book of the Dead*, as it is commonly, though erroneously, called and the passage-chambers of the Great Pyramid. This he did in an article in the *New Review* in 1894, while in the following year he published the first of his two books on the subject, *The House of the Hidden Places* (London: John Murray), which he described as a clue to the mysterious religion of ancient Egypt.

The reception accorded to his work was very encouraging. "Here and there," as he says himself, "some critic, impelled by an unwonted sense of injured omniscience, gave vent to utterances of a dark and oracular character. For

FOREWORD

instance, in one famous weekly review, the writer gave to the public and myself his personal and almost passionate assurance that, no matter what the appearances might indicate, no correspondence was ever intended between the building and the papyrus; as if he had been intimately acquainted with the authors of both, and a few thousand years or so were but an unconsidered trifle in his long and learned existence. But for the most part the book was freely recognised as the first attempt to give some consistent account of the hitherto uncomprehended religion of Egypt, taken solely from Egyptian sources."

He received much encouragement from Sir Gaston Maspéro, who wrote that: "The Pyramids and the *Book of the Dead* reproduce the same original, the one in words, the other in stone," adding that no other Egyptologist had previously dealt with the subject. He also informed Marsham Adams of the prevalence of a tradition among the priests of Memphis supporting his contention "that that Secret House was the scene where the neophyte was initiated into the mysteries of Egypt." This, Marsham Adams felt, lent his theory "a force which only direct evidence could rebut."

Admittedly his theories demand acceptance of the fact that the ancient Egyptians possessed a considerable knowledge of astronomy and were familiar with the proper motions of the solar system and the precession of the equinoxes, but as this is now admitted by all except the die-hard remnants of what Marsham Adams describes as "schoolroom scholarship," no argument can be made out against his case on this ground. In any event he continued to follow up the clue he had discovered to the best of his power, "more particularly by ascertaining the degree of accuracy which may be attached to the astronomical conceptions, which form so large a part of the imagery employed. For the directly religious portion has engaged the attention of many experts in hieroglyphic texts; and our knowledge of the forms in which the divine ideas were conceived among

FOREWORD

that ancient priesthood, if not clear and consistent, is at least free in great measure from the distortion and misrepresentation wherein those ideas were involved, when filtered through the highly imaginative but singularly inobservant intellect of Greece. On the other hand," he continues, "with regard to the scientific principles embodied in the Egyptian conceptions, except for the researches of the late Dr. Brugsch, no writer, so far as I am aware, possessing a moderate knowledge of mathematical astronomy, and at the same time some acquaintance with the hieroglyphic text, has devoted himself specifically to the subject; and hence it has naturally come to pass that an amount of contempt has been poured upon the science of Egypt comparable only to the piles of filth which the ignorant hordes of wandering Arabs heaped upon the majestic monuments and temples themselves. Yet it is surely not a little difficult to understand the position of those who, while recognising with a late astronomer, Professor Proctor, that the temples of that country were erected by 'astronomers for astronomers,' can nevertheless placidly regard those stupendous structures, which for thousands of years seem rather to have defied assaults than to have needed repair from the hand of man, as mere monuments of a folly even more stupendous than themselves. It is fairly amazing to think that while even to this day the grandeur of those marvellous ruins towers above the most finished buildings of later nations, and while modern investigation only brings out more clearly the profound skill and forethought lavished upon their construction, yet even scholars should be content to regard the whole line of Pharaohs as animated by no other spirit than that of Charles Dickens' happy-go-lucky creation, Mr. Wemmick, in *Great Expectations*. 'Hallo!' said that casually minded individual, 'here's a church, let's have a wedding.' 'Hallo!' according to these writers, cries one Egyptian monarch, 'here's a cataract, let's build a temple.' 'Hallo!' cries another, 'here's a pole-star, let's put up a pyramid.' On the

FOREWORD

contrary, as we become more familiar with the Wisdom of Egypt, so do we find that wisdom to justify itself the more clearly to our perception, and the stricter the precision required, the more closely do the scientific conceptions appear to respond. Here then at least we are on firm ground, and can apply the severest tests at each fresh step of seeming advance; while the inner or mystical doctrine conveyed, that is to say, the presentation of the Invisible Light therein shadowed forth, will become far easier both to follow and to check, if we rightly apprehend their mode of regarding the manifestations of the light which is seen."

We are not surprised, then, to learn that before writing his second book he made another visit to Egypt, during which he devoted special attention to both these points. "With the sacred writings in hand I went through the secret places of the Great House; and I greatly doubt whether anyone will do the same, bearing in mind the tradition of the priests, and picturing to himself the midnight watch of the lonely neophyte amid the impenetrable darkness of those solemn chambers, without recognising how apt was that awe-inspiring structure for the initiation into the secrets of the unseen world."

With regard, also, to the scientific aspect, Marsham Adams was at that time able to detect certain points which had up till then escaped attention, and these, he felt, were of considerable value in elucidating the astronomical conceptions involved.

On his return to England he delivered a public lecture at New College, Oxford, on the Scientific Precision of the Astronomy of Early Egypt, and also published a letter in *The Times* on the geographical and astronomical conditions fulfilled by the situations of the principal temples.

He now felt that the time had arrived for him to enlarge somewhat upon his previous work, and to enter with greater freedom into a discussion of the nature of the doctrines inculcated in the sacred writings, and, as a result, in 1898, he

FOREWORD

published his second book on this subject, *The Book of the Master* (London: John Murray. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons).

In the preface to that volume, Marsham Adams explains that he has endeavoured to disencumber the subject from all the symbolism of whatever kind in which it has been enwrapped, so as to throw some portion at least open to all the world. "For they alone, it is true," he writes, "will see the full bearing of such a record upon the development of mankind and the light which it throws upon social problems, who have painfully traced back custom and rite and doctrine and law from age to age and from country to country by the laborious comparison of record and tradition and relic and monument, and can comprehend the almost indestructible tenacity which characterises the grasp of antiquity, and the vitality even now possessed by ideas and creeds long ago to all appearance buried in profound oblivion. But who is there, however careless of such problems, or disinclined for the study of history, who yet does not feel some thrill at the thought of penetrating the very heart and mind of men whose bones were mingled with the dust thousands of years before the sacred plough traced out the walls of Rome, or Abraham went forth from Haran in the faith of the true God? For the earliest-known form of man's spiritual life is fraught with a charm indescribable and incommunicable. We cannot but be touched with some feeling of pathos as we watch those far-off generations looking forward to the mystery of the tomb which they have solved for so many ages, but which, to us, remain enigmas still. We cannot but experience some sense of awe when we find them expecting the same immortality beyond the grave which forms the hope of so many millions among ourselves. And even such details as the construction of the kalendar, or the reckoning of the years, become irradiated with a sudden glow when we recognise that as those long-departed students gazed persistently into Nature's infinite Book of Secrecy, their vision pierced

FOREWORD

beyond the veil of sense; and that for every festival and every cycle, the outward aspect of the earth and heaven imaged to their mind some interior and eternal truth. And that interest quickens with an ever-growing freshness as we pass from the celebration and ceremonies of their common life to the deeper doctrine of the Hidden God, and the Instruction of the Postulant in the secrets of the Eternal Wisdom.”

There is, however, another aspect of his theories, which appealed to Marsham Adams as possessing “an unique and pre-eminent interest.” This is best illustrated in the first instance by a letter received by him from a Roman Catholic professor of theology, to whom he had sent a copy of a review of his first book. It runs as follows :

“ Many thanks for sending me a copy of *The Freemason's* review of your attractive and remarkable book. I, of course, know nothing of Freemasonry (though I have followed what you say easily enough), but I have been greatly struck with the notice in question. For whereas the reviewer, writing evidently as an expert in that subject, strongly commends your book as containing matter of deep interest to his fellow Masons, I, on the other hand, as one whose special avocation is the study of Christian theology, have been surprised beyond measure at the profound doctrines of the Catholic Faith, and the numerous illustrations of our own Scriptures which seem to me, in reading your book, to have been foreshadowed beneath the symbols of that most mysterious religion, almost as though we had in it the very ‘ Word of God ’ of which the Apostle speaks, the ‘ mystery which has been hidden from ages and generations.’ This double significance would be extraordinary enough if your views on the subject were derived either from the teaching of Catholicity or from the secrets of Masonry, but its singularity is enhanced a hundredfold when one

FOREWORD

reflects that they come neither from one source nor the other, but from the records of ancient Egypt."

Now although Marsham Adams explained in both his books that in dealing with the building which was literally the Masonic "Light" of Egypt, his use of such terms and doctrinal allusions as might be current among the Masonic brotherhood of the present day was intended to refer only to the actual masonry of the Pyramid and to the corresponding features of the Ritual, nevertheless, an idea was current in certain quarters that his works were written on masonic lines. This is entirely a misconception except in so far as such phrases and allusions might be in harmony with the doctrines found in the papyri.

On the other hand he felt that an example of the increased force with which a more profound study of Egyptian teaching illustrates the analogy indicated by the Catholic professor would be found in his investigation of the temple of the Virgin Mother Hathor, from whose womb came forth the divine Horus, the second member of the Egyptian Trinity. Not merely is this the case, but the Egyptian theosophy echoes the teaching of our very Gospels even more directly than is the case with the Old Testament. "Thus," he says, "though the Hebrew scriptures reveal many of the names of God, they do not assign to Him the name of Light." This, of course, is true so far as the written Law is concerned, but it is interesting to note that the Oral Law, as embodied in the *Zohar*, repeatedly employs this title in the words *Ain Soph Aur* or *Limitless Light*. "But the Light," Marsham Adams continues, "is the very term by which the mystical Evangelist designates the Second Person; while in the first ages of the Church the *Illuminate* was the title conferred upon those who were permitted to assist at the Christian 'mysteries.' So, also, the title of *Master*, of such great significance in the Ritual of Egypt, is nowhere given in the Old Testament to the

FOREWORD

Almighty, but it is the single title of authority claimed for Himself by the divine Master in the Gospel; and it is twice employed by Him in a mysterious manner when giving commandment for preparing the divine mysteries in the upper chamber. Again, the second birth of the soul is nowhere, by open expression at least, taught in the writings either of Moses or of the prophets; and if those scriptures therefore contained the full teachings revealed to the Jews, why should Nicodemus have been rebuked for ignorance of that doctrine? But Moses, nevertheless, whose skill in all the wisdom of Egypt was famous fifteen hundred years after his death, must have been well acquainted with it, for it formed a most important element in that creed, and was indeed the very act whereby the departed was rendered capable of initiation into the mysteries. And thus we are brought face to face with a most profound and interesting problem, which would solve a thousand anomalies. Was there along with and even before the existence of a recorded revelation an unwritten and inscrutable mystery handed down by the 'Sekhem Ur am Sekhemmu,' the Grand Master among the masters, generation after generation, from the earliest ages to which our own scriptures refer—the time when the prophet Enoch, who foretold the scepticism of the latter days, walked the path of God and was caught up bodily into the hidden Light? To my own apprehension, I confess, there is much to render it far from improbable that such a view may be correct; and that in searching for the key to the *Book of the Master* we may have chanced upon nothing less than the revelation of a revelation. But upon this point, of which all can form their own judgment, I have entered into no discussion, preferring to leave the analogy to speak for itself."

There are many other points of great interest with which Marsham Adams has dealt in these two books, and his remarkable power of vivid description has in many instances enabled him to bring home with considerable force the lofty

FOREWORD

beauty of the ideas with which he deals. His account, for example, of the Equinox as envisaged by the instructed, will undoubtedly render far more intelligible to many readers the reason for the sanctity with which it was regarded by the ancient peoples, while the picture created in the mind by the way in which he describes the laying-out of the temple of Hathor is likely to leave an indelible impression on the mind of the most unimaginative.

He has also dealt with a number of subjects of importance, not directly connected with his main thesis, and these have been incorporated either in the text or in the notes at the end of the book. Among these we might instance his views on the origin of the Egyptian civilisation, a matter which cannot be considered even to-day to have been satisfactorily settled. He adheres to the view that it came from the south. The majority opinion is still against this idea, although it is well known that the Egyptians in all periods regarded the land of Punt as their original home and the source whence they derived their religious beliefs. This would explain why the dynastic Egyptians made the statues of their dead look towards the south, their old home, during the performance of their funerary ceremonies, and why the Pyramid is oriented north and south with regard to the passages, so that the postulant during the initial and final stages of his progress is all the time moving southwards. Maspéro supported the idea of a southern origin and stated that a "more minute examination compels us to recognise that the hypothesis of an Asiatic origin, however attractive it may seem, is somewhat difficult to maintain. The bulk of the Egyptian population presents the characteristics of those white races which have been found established from all antiquity on the Mediterranean slope of the Libyan continent; this population is of African origin, and came to Egypt from the west or south-west,"¹ and he points out the preference of ethnologists and naturalists for this theory.

¹ Maspéro. *The Dawn of Civilization : Egypt and Chaldea*, p. 45.

FOREWORD

In view of Marsham Adams' suggestions regarding the site of the Biblical Garden of Eden, it is interesting to note that a Viennese Egyptologist, Herr Reinisch, even held that not only are the Egyptians of African origin, but that "the human races of the ancient world, of Europe, Asia and Africa, are descended from a single family, whose original seat was on the shores of the great lakes of equatorial Africa,"¹ not that Marsham Adams puts forward any such idea, but that his suggested site of Eden, taken in conjunction with Reinisch's theory, forms a remarkable parallel with Genesis, which probably embodies a far older tradition.

It is very remarkable, especially in view of the widespread interest that has been focussed upon certain explanations of the meaning of the passages and chambers of the Great Pyramid, that more attention has not been paid to the conclusions reached by Marsham Adams, particularly when one reflects on the light they throw upon a variety of problems; and the task of the editor has been to amalgamate his two books into one consecutive whole, omitting all parts that are redundant, and selecting in every case the more striking version where any overlapping occurred. He has carefully refrained from comment, save in one or two isolated cases, but has provided references wherever possible or advisable. The Appendix will be found to contain a selection of texts from the Ritual corroborative of the parallelism indicated by Marsham Adams, and it is hoped that this will prove useful. His sole object in undertaking what has been literally a labour of love, is to bring again to public notice what are, perhaps, the most remarkable works that have been produced during the last half century by any Egyptologist, as these have now been out of print for a number of years, and more or less difficult to obtain.

Some of Marsham Adams' theories will doubtless still not find acceptance in certain quarters, but on one point at least, and that of very great importance, it may confidently be

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 45, note 6.

FOREWORD

affirmed that his conclusions are incontrovertible, namely the definite relationship that he has established between the *Book of the Master*, as he preferred to call it, and the pyramid of Khufu, the "House of the Hidden Places." The evidence which can be adduced in support of this hypothesis is such as to place the matter beyond all reasonable doubt, even in the mind of the most sceptical.

And once this fact is accepted, it is difficult not to go further and to admit that many of the other suggestions put forward possess at least a high degree of probability; for Marsham Adams, in the two works which are here amalgamated, has placed the matter before us in a manner at once so logical, so simple and so straightforward; with such obvious sincerity and with such a vivid power of description, that he carries all but the most prejudiced reader with him.

Marsham Adams' own words may be invoked as a final apologia for the present volume. "I have confined my efforts," he says, "to attempting to express in clear and popular form, which all may easily follow, an outline of those deeply veiled doctrines of which I may have caught a glimpse; and thus to present such an account of the earliest recorded religion as may afford to all some conception of its transcendent majesty and supernal beauty."

E. J. LANGFORD GARSTIN.

London,
January 1933.

PREFACE¹

THE singular correspondence which may be traced between the passage-chambers of the Great Pyramid—called by the Egyptians of old the “Khut,” or “Lights”—and the various stages traversed, according to the creed of that ancient nation, by the holy dead in passing from the light of earth to the light of eternal day, was first pointed out by me last year² in the pages of the *New Review*. Previously to its publication the article was submitted in substance to M. Maspéro and Professor Sayce; and I desire to express my sincere thanks to those eminent authorities for the recognition and encouragement which they afforded me, as well as to Mr. Mengedoht, the hieroglyphic scholar, for the revision of my work. In the present book the same analogy is worked out in much fuller detail—not completely indeed, for that may well be the labour of years; but sufficiently, I would hope, to present a clear basis for further investigation in either direction. In the case of the Ritual, we obtain what appears to me to be a consistent and intelligible analysis of that hitherto impenetrable creed, through the gradual transformation of the faculties in successive stages of illumination. With regard to the Pyramid, we are led to suggest a spiritual and a most far-sighted purpose for its construction. For in that marvellous edifice, the very stones of which in their silent harmony seem to rebuke the idle charges of folly and pride heaped by ignorance upon the architect, we have nothing less than an indestructible and immutable symbol of the national religion.

¹ To *The House of the Hidden Places*.

² 1894.

PREFACE

The value of the general theory here proposed depends, therefore, it is evident, upon the accuracy of the correspondence established, or sought to be established, between the path so jealously concealed within the interior of the Pyramid of Light and the path described textually in the well-known collection of sacred Egyptian writings, which is called by us the *Book of the Dead*, but which claims for its own title *The Book of the Master of the Hidden Places*. But those points of correspondence are so numerous in themselves and form so severe a system of checks upon each other, as to reduce almost to nothing the chance of their arising from mere coincidence; while no amount of ingenuity—the deadliest perhaps of all opponents to truth—could suffice to satisfy the innumerable conditions connected with the worship, the kalendar, and the civil constitution of the country which such a correspondence must fulfil.

Nor let it be supposed that an inquiry of this kind is merely of archæological interest, or that a determination of that early creed can have no greater value than to satisfy an idle curiosity. Very far from it. If there be a fact in the general development of nations which historical research has clearly demonstrated, it is the extreme tenacity of antique belief, and its enduring influence on the organisation of society; since religion, far more than convention, appears to have been the basis of ancient law. Each generation, as it passes, modifies no doubt, but only to a very slight extent, the form of the social bond; and that not for itself, but for the generation which succeeds. If therefore we would trace more clearly the relation of man in his complex individuality to the yet more complex organism of human society, wherein each individual has his particular function, we cannot do better than examine thoroughly the creed of the earliest civilisation on record. And the side-lights which such an investigation will be found to show on the political and social constitution of that remarkable nation, illustrating, in point after point, peculiarities which hitherto have appeared

PREFACE

to be anomalies, appear to me to be strong confirmation of the principle I have set forth. More striking still, the religions of other nations of the ancient world become suddenly luminous when held up to the Light of Egypt. And as chord after chord is struck, the full diapason of the creeds responds.

A singular circumstance, which may illustrate this remark, arises from the necessity of expressing the secret analogies between the references to the Light, which abound in the Ritual, and the Hidden Places of the Great Pyramid, the "Light" of the Egyptian world. For in dealing with the ideas thus masonified, so to speak, in that mysterious structure, I have been led, or rather compelled, to employ phrases and symbols current among the Masonic brotherhood of the present day, such as Grand Arch, Purple Arch, Royal Arch, the Star, the Open Angle (the princes of which as well as the princes of the Circle, are mentioned in the Papyrus of Sinahit, of very high antiquity), and other insignia of the craft. Whenever, therefore, such expressions occur—and they run necessarily through the entire work—it should be remembered that they are here designed to refer to the actual masonry of the Grand Pyramid, and the analogous features of the Ritual of Ancient Egypt. At the same time, whether any vestige of this secret doctrine of the Light may survive in the esoteric doctrine of which those subject to Masonic rules are not permitted to speak, is an interesting question which naturally suggests itself, though it evidently cannot be established by open discussion.

The consideration, however, which to my own mind tends most strongly to confirm the evidence of a connection between Pyramid and Ritual is, I confess, of a somewhat personal character. For in order to detect such an analogy, if it be real, the chief qualification requisite is a certain patience in collating and analysing the results which others have obtained in their respective departments of knowledge. But to call it into existence if not already latent; to con-

PREFACE

struct in imagination the path of the just, and to express it in terms of the motions of light; to portray the mystery of the depths unseen by the mystery of the visible heavens, to shadow forth the features of light in the passages of profoundest darkness, and its motions in a building which for ages has remained immutable, that were an intellectual masterpiece which surely demands nothing less than a creative genius of the very loftiest order. So majestic is the outline of the conception as it rises solemnly on the view, so sublime is every feature of the prospect, now defining, now transcending, the utmost limits of space and time; with such graduated measure, yet such overwhelming splendour, does it illuminate mystery after mystery of the invisible world, that I cannot for a moment believe it to be the offspring of my own imagination. Far more probable does it seem, that though much of the moral and spiritual imagery still remain obscure, yet we have here a genuine clue to the most profound and fascinating enigma of the ancient world; and that the more closely we study the Path of Light in its Masonic form, the more deeply shall we penetrate the earliest wisdom of which man has left record, and understand the Egyptian belief concerning the dark passage of death and the Entrance on Eternal Day.

CHAPTER I

THE PYRAMID OF LIGHT

CLOSE to the verge of the immense desert which stretches its arid wastes across the whole breadth of the continent to the shore of the Western Ocean, just at the apex of the famous delta which marks the meeting-point of Upper and Lower Egypt, at the very spot where the busy life of the earliest civilisation on record was bordered by the vast and barren solitude, stands the most majestic and most mysterious monument ever erected by the hand of man. Of all the other structures which made the marvels of the ancient world, scarcely a vestige is left. Where are the hanging gardens, the boast of the monarch of Babylon? Where is the far-famed Pharos of Alexandria? Centuries have passed since earthquake laid low the Colossus which bestrode the harbour of Rhodes; and a madman's hand reduced to ashes the temple of Artemis, the pride of Ephesus. But the Grand Pyramid of Gizeh still remains undestroyed and indestructible, ages after the lesser marvels have passed away, as it stood ages before ever they came into being. Certainly more than fifty, it may be more than sixty, centuries¹ have gone by since that building, which never since has needed the care of man, first concealed from view its hidden places, those secret chambers of which no other building on the globe contains the like. Upwards of two

¹ Marsham Adams takes the date of the Fourth Dynasty as being approximately that given by Brugsch (about 3700 B.C.), whereas Flinders Petrie fixes it at about 4777 B.C. It will be seen, however, that he modifies his attitude later.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

million times has the sun risen and set upon its mighty walls, since first the pure and unbroken surface of polished casing-stones flashed back the rays like a veil of dazzling lustre, and vindicated its ancient title of *The Light*.

What the concealed significance may be of that secret masonry; by whom, and for what purpose, the complex plan was designed; at what epoch the huge structure was erected, are questions which have perplexed many minds in many lands, and have resulted in a discord more akin to Babel, than to the grandeur of its silent majesty. It was built by the Jews in the days of their captivity, says, or rather said, one school of theorists. It was built by Chemmis, but attributed by Egyptians in hatred of him to the Shepherd Philition, is the account given by Herodotus. It was built by Ibn Salluk, say the Arabs, just before the Flood, to preserve the royal treasures from the predicted inundation. It was built by Melchisedec—or somebody—has been vehemently asserted by a certain professor of astronomy, whose writings have always seemed to suggest a whirlwind of miscellaneous indignation. It was indisputably intended by the founder for his tomb, one party stoutly maintains—a tomb in which he left especial instructions that he should not be buried, and in which nobody could possibly have been buried, replies another. It was an observatory, maintains a third—where every place for observation was carefully closed up, retorts a fourth. It is the “prophetic floor-roll of human history,” screams Professor Smyth—with all the dates gone wrong, softly sneers Mr. Flinders Petrie.¹

Side by side with that masonic mystery, well nigh as impenetrable at the present moment as when the Hir Shesta, or “Master of the Secret,” was an officer of Pharaoh’s household, has come down to us another enigma, the strange collections of sacred writings, or *Ritual*² of Ancient Egypt,

¹ Now, of course, Sir Flinders Petrie.

² Commenting on the term *Ritual*, Marsham Adams says: This title, which was conferred by Champollion, is vehemently repudiated by Budge,

THE PYRAMID OF LIGHT

which modern writers have called the *Book of the Dead*, but which claims for itself the title of the *Book of the Master of the Hidden Places*.¹ Vivid as is the interest now awakened in those writings, little progress has been made in elucidating their meaning. The doctrines inculcated by their religion, the relations of the worshipper to the object or objects worshipped, the signification of the particular symbol under which those relations were at once veiled and expressed, are but little better understood at the present time, notwithstanding our greatly increased knowledge of the sacred writings, than when the hieroglyphs themselves were undeciphered. Yet strange to say, prominently as these mysteries stand out in every matter that relates to ancient Egypt, no one has hitherto thought of collating the masonic secret of the monument with the doctrinal secret contained in the mysterious books of Thoth, to whom the origin of Egyptian wisdom is attributed.² Such an omission is the more singular, because indications are not wanting on either side to hint at the connection. That Khufu (miscalled by the Greeks, Cheops) should have adopted the pyramidal form in the hieroglyph of his name is not surprising, as he was the monarch under whom the building was erected. But it is not

though without any particular reason assigned. But it appears to me to be as good a word as any which can be used as a popular expression; though doubtless the Catholic term, "Office of the Dead," would be preferable if it were sufficiently familiar to our ears. The title *Book of the Dead*, devised by Lepsius, appears to me, I own, singularly unfortunate. For in the first place the papyrus is not a book, but a collection of sacred writings; and in the second, that title appears to refer to the practice of burying copies or parts of the copy with the mummy; so that it gives the idea of regarding the holy departed as dead; whereas the whole conception of the doctrine was the entrance of the departed on life and light.

¹ This is the title used by Marsham Adams in *The House of the Hidden Places*. In *The Book of the Master* he translates: "The Book of the Master of the Secret House." The words are taken from the rubric to Chapter clxiii of the Ritual, and are rendered by Budge "hidden Temple."

² Marsham Adams said that M. Maspéro had courteously informed him that the same idea had occupied himself, but that he had not published.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

perhaps unworthy of notice, that the form of the Pyramid enters into the hieroglyph of the star Sothis, or Sirius.¹ For the Grand Orient, or position of that star when its rising forms the immediate harbinger of dawn on midsummer morning, was, as is well known, the great starting-point for the age-long cycles of the Egyptian reckoning. And whereas the figure usually employed to denote the Pyramid embraces both the edifice and the rocky platform on which it is built,² the form used in the hieroglyph of Sothis consists of the masonic portion alone,³ that is to say, the structure which represented to the Egyptian mind the Eternal Light, apart from its earthly support; while a Papyrus dating from the time of Khufu, the founder of the building, speaks of Isis as the ruler of the Pyramids⁴; and a later inscription, that of Syene, calls her also the "Mother of God," and identifies her with "The Divine Sothis, the Star, the Queen of Heaven."

Yet it is difficult to conceive a greater contrast than is presented by the two forms in which the record of Egyptian doctrine was preserved. The papyri are fragile, numerous, varying in length and order. The monument in stone is unique, solid almost to indestructibility, incapable of variation, and standing unchanged and unchanging regardless of the assaults, whether of time or man.

¹ As Marsham Adams points out, when a star rises, not simultaneously with the sun (in which case the star would be invisible), but just so long before dawn as to appear for a few moments on the horizon before it is swallowed up in the growing light, it is said to rise "heliacally," and "the heliacal rising of Sothis" on the day of the summer Solstice, or midsummer—an event which occurs every 1461 years (viz. four times $365\frac{1}{4}$)—was the epoch of the Egyptian secular cycle.



⁴ In this connection it is interesting to note that Budge translates the title of the book as given in the rubric to Chapter clxiii as "*Book of the Mistress of the Hidden Temple* is its name."

THE PYRAMID OF LIGHT

In external appearance the building erected by Khufu differs only in a single feature from the later pyramids. Like them it is quadrangular in form and oriented towards the four cardinal points of the compass. Like the later pyramids also, within very slight limits of variation, its elevation (as is well known) is such that the perpendicular height of its apex bears the same proportion to the circuit of the base as the radius of a circle bears to its circumference. Like them also, it is constructed exteriorly in courses of huge stones, forming a series of steps, each from two to three feet in height, and level all round the course; these steps being now exposed to view, but originally concealed from top to bottom by perfectly fitting casing stones, which offered no foothold for ascent and gave to Memphis its sacred title of the City of the White Wall. But whereas in the later pyramids the building is carried fully up to the apex (or point to which all the ascending lines converge), in that of Khufu the structure falls short of that point by about twenty courses, the pyramid being truncated and the summit forming a platform about twenty feet square; so that what the Egyptians called the "Benben," or pyramidal crown, is not to be found there. Seen from below, the ascending courses resemble a series of terraces or cliffs, rising majestically to the cloudless heaven. But from this platform they present rather the appearance of four streams of stone descending from a common fount, like the four streams of the celestial Nile given in the vignette of Chapter cx. And the four together encircle the whole building in a cascade of rock, thus illustrating the "Beating Circle of the Waters," which we find inscribed in the same vignette; an illustration, it is to be observed, which could not have been detected by an Egyptian of old (while the casing stones were still unremoved) unless he had been taught the concealed construction of the building.

From the fact that this peculiar feature is confined to the Great Pyramid, or at least for no other apparent reason,

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

modern writers have assumed it to have been originally shaped like the rest, and have attributed the present height to havoc supposed to have been made by the Turks. But though those barbarous destroyers were indeed capable of stripping off the casing stones, many of which still lie in confusion around the foot, while others have been plundered for the buildings of Cairo ; yet to destroy a solid mass of masonry, firmly cemented together, over thirty feet high, with a base of four thousand square inches, and that at an elevation of upwards of four hundred feet from the ground, was a task which would require a very different class of engineer to accomplish. Besides which, we have a direct chain of evidence from three different sources to the contrary, extending back for nearly two thousand years, that is to say, to the time before the destruction had begun. About two hundred and fifty years ago, Professor Greaves, the Oxford astronomer, who visited the pyramid and had left a most interesting volume upon it, gives a drawing of the building which shows the summit shaped just as at present. Four hundred years before his time, Abdallatif, a historian of the twelfth century, tells us that at the top of the Great Pyramid ended in a platform. And fifty years before the Christian era, Diodorus describes the building as " tapering up as far as the summit, which makes each of the sides six cubits."

Equally conclusive is the evidence borne by the building itself, the summit of which betrays no symptom either of incompleteness or destruction, but presents a flat surface, structurally enroofing the Secret House. On the centre of the platform and inseparably affixed to it are some huge blocks arranged in the figure of a rough cross. And on the highest of these stones are sculptured a number of holes, forming a square figure, consisting of seven ranks of seven holes each, exactly similar (except in the number of holes) to the " Hotep " or Table of Offerings, belonging to the time of Thothmes III, which is now to be seen in the

THE PYRAMID OF LIGHT

Museum at Boulaq.¹ In a word, every detail goes to show that the founder never designed to erect the Benben—the image of the Trinity invisible in the supreme height—but raised a “Hotep,” or sacrificial Table of Offering. And agreeably with this, we find in the chapter already quoted



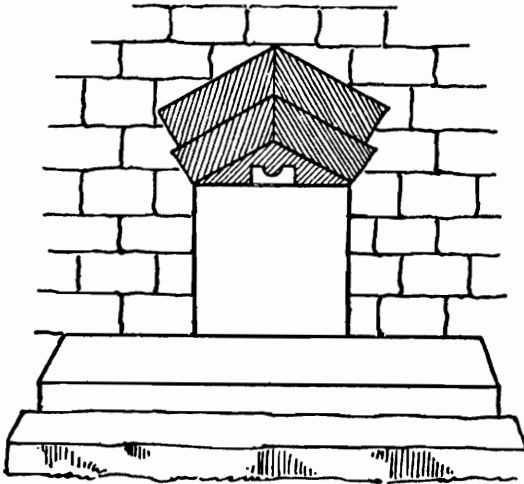
SUMMIT OF GREAT PYRAMID.
CENTRAL TRANSVERSE SECTION.



HIEROGLYPH OF THE
“HOTEP.”

that mention is made of the “Field of the Hotep,” and of the Waters in the Field of the Hotep,² reminding us of the stone cataracts which descend from the summit.

To an observer immediately at the foot, the single



GATEWAY OF THE DOUBLE ARCH.

entrance to the pyramid, opening at the seventeenth course, is hidden from view. But on mounting to the fifteenth step we perceive, two courses yet above us, a low gateway, sur-

¹ See note A, p. 165.

² Cf. also *The Book of Breathings*, Part I, i, 3.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

mounted by a double arch, opening downward to the dark interior; just as the catechumen in the fifteenth chapter approaches the "double-arched gate of the horizon," when he invokes "Haroueris, the great guide of the world, the guide of the souls in their secret places, the Light dwelling in the Horizon." From this point the first veil of secrecy begins. For so effectually was the opening concealed from the uninstructed eye by a revolving stone, that its position once forgotten was almost impossible to recover; and for two hundred years after passing under the barbarous Omar, the building remained impenetrable, until Caliph Al Mamoon, in the ninth century of our era, forced an opening at random through the solid masonry, and hit accidentally upon the entrance passage. Entering by the low gateway thus built in the northern side at a considerable height above the ground, we see before us the grave-like passage gaping downwards and southwards to the depths of darkness and pointing outwards and northwards to the Pole Star, the star of the Purple Arch—that boundary point of mortal vision at which, as at the entrance of the grave, the finite mystery of earth passes into the mystery of the infinite heaven. As we cross the gate on the seventeenth course, we recognise the point where, in the seventeenth chapter, the catechumen is admitted as a postulant and exclaims: "I go from the Gate of Taser (the Ascent). What is the Gate of Taser? It is the Gate where the God Shu (the Light) lifts the disc of heaven. The Gate of the North is the Gate of the Great God," he continues, speaking evidently of the same gate; exactly as in the pyramid the only entrance is the Gate of the Ascent in the seventeenth course of the northern face.¹

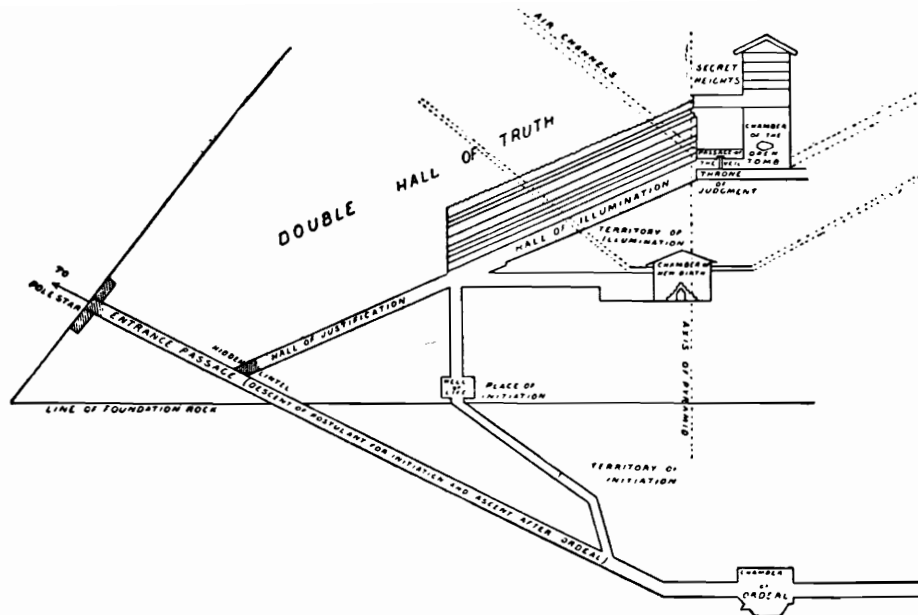
¹ Budge gives Tchesert instead of Taser, which he lists as one of the Gods of the *Book of the Dead*. See *Gods of the Egyptians*, ii, p. 344. It is apparent, however, that the hieroglyphics could well yield Taser as an alternative, and, in view of the context, more probable reading. In any event Tchesert means Holy, and it is to be noted that Dr. Davis gives yet another rendering, namely "the Gate Set," and Set means Mountain. In the Ritual, Chapter xvii, 14, we have Set-Amentet, The Mountain of the Hidden Place.

THE PYRAMID OF LIGHT

Bidding now with him farewell to the light of earthly day, and treading the descending passage, we pass, some little way down, a very fine and beautifully ruled double line,¹ scored perpendicularly on the slanting wall so as to point downwards to the foundation, and separating the upper from the lower section of the passage; corresponding to the point in the Ritual where the departed, hitherto bereft of every faculty except that of motion, begins to have his faculties gradually restored to him. Continuing the long descent, we arrive at an aperture in the western wall, and passing through the opening thus disclosed, mount gently into a kind of grotto at the bottom of a well, or square perpendicular shaft, with footholds cut in the precipitous sides. Into that Chamber of the Deep Waters the postulant descends on the western side, as the sun at the close of day goes down into the western waters, and bursts forth in splendour on the hidden world.

Returning from the bottom of the well to the passage, and pursuing our course still farther downwards, we come, after a short level continuation, to the subterranean chamber, or the Place of Fiery Ordeal, a chamber hewn out of the solid rock, and having an inaccessible floor covered with huge blocks of varying height, resembling a pool of petrified flame, or masses of the mountain chains formed by the action of the earth's central fire; beyond which terrible chamber a small passage leads to nothingness. Resuming our exploration of the edifice and coming forth from the Place of Ordeal or

¹ Marsham Adams says : The detection of this line is connected with a circumstance of a highly singular character, which seemed at one time to lend some appearance of support to the historic theories of Professor Smyth. It was due not to any measurer or observer of the Pyramid, but to a student who had never seen the building, but believed that if the professor's theories were correct, some such special mark would point out that particular spot. Examination being made—for the professor had never noticed it—the prediction proved to be true ; an act of divination which would have been remarkable enough if these theories had been true, but which seems strange indeed when one considers their palpable error.



INTERIOR OF THE SECRET HOUSE
CALLED BY THE EGYPTIANS OF OLD 'THE LIGHT'

'Throughout all the following chapters' constant reference should be made to this diagram

THE PYRAMID OF LIGHT

subterranean chamber we remount the entrance passage until, at a little distance below the scored line, we come to a granite gate, or portcullis, built in the roof. This important gate, which originally was totally hidden by masonry and was only discovered by the falling of a stone when Al Mamoon was forcing his entrance into the Pyramid, stands at the threshold of the Double Hall of Ascent concealed within. Not only was the whole gate carefully hidden, but the lower portion of the passage within was blocked with enormous stones, still unremoved, and perhaps irremovable. So even now the lintel is hidden, and admission is only effected through a hole forced by violence in the wall of the passage above the blocks; while a precisely similar difficulty attends the crossing of the Lintel of Justice in the Ritual before entering the Double Hall of Truth. Creeping with difficulty through the hole, we find ourselves in a small, low corridor, the floor-line of which (about 1,561 inches in total length) slightly projects beyond the gateway at the upper end; the whole corridor being inclined upwards at an elevation slightly less than that of the depression of the entrance passage, and corresponding to the lower portion of the Hall of Truth where the Initiate justifies himself before the forty-two judges of the unseen world, "the Gods of the Horizon and the Gods of the Orbit."

Then, stooping beneath the low gateway, by which it is terminated (but not obstructed) at the top, the "Gateway of the Festival," we stand upon a kind of landing-place, from which the whole system of the interior passages opens out. On every side is "the crossing of the pure roads of life" of which the coffin of Amamu speaks. Straight in front runs a level passage leading direct to the place of the divine birth mentioned in the Ritual, the Chamber of the Moon, the Queen's Chamber, the place of "Isis, the divine mother, the queen of the pyramid," as an ancient papyrus calls her; corresponding to the place where the soul receives its second birth. Within that chamber, on the eastern wall, is sculp-

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

tured a staircase of five ascents, representing the five degrees ascended each month by the moon, wherein, according to Egyptian teaching, Osiris, the divine son of Isis, each month renewed his birth.

On the western side is the opening to the mouth of the well, "The gate of Anruhf" leading down to the "roads of darkness;" and down the ladder of the shaft (as we see in the papyrus of Ani) the regenerate soul, on coming forth from the Chamber of Second Birth, descends to become united with the postulant awaiting it in the Well of Life. Then, when the soul is restored, initiation takes place and strength is given to endure the ordeal.

Before us lie the fields of Aahlu, the blessed country where the justified executes the works, which he is privileged to perform for Osiris. "I have digged in Anruhf," he says later on, "I have drilled the holes," the holes, that is, for the good seed, the corn which grew seven cubits high, the holes which are drilled in the ramps of the Southern Ascending Passage, but to which no significance has yet been attached.¹

And upwards towards the south, above the roof of the passage leading to the Queen's Chamber, runs this upper ascending corridor, called by some writers the Grand Gallery, forming the upper portion of the Hall of Truth, the Grand Lodge, or Luminous Chamber of the Orbit. This remarkable chamber consists of a corridor, about one hundred and fifty-seven feet long and twenty feet high, built entirely on a slope, floor, walls and roof, except a small portion at the southern or upper end. On either side of the sloping floor are twenty-eight ramps, with corresponding depressions; the floor-line at the upper end being closed abruptly, just above the Queen's Chamber, by an immense stone forming a dais, or Throne of Judgment. From the lower entrance of the chamber at the northern end to the

¹ Since the date at which Marsham Adams wrote, an attempted explanation has been put forward by Davidson and Aldersmith in *The Great Pyramid: Its Divine Message*, section 208a, p. 180-1.

THE PYRAMID OF LIGHT

foot of the throne is about 1,816 inches, the height of the throne is 36 inches, and the length of the seat about 61 inches, so that when the darkness is lit up by torches, it forms the most conspicuous and dominating feature of that marvellous chamber. At the back of the throne the gallery is brought to an abrupt termination by the southern wall closing down within a few feet of the seat, and leaving as an exit farther south a narrow and grave-like tunnel. In the sloping roof of the gallery, running downwards from south to north at a somewhat greater inclination than the floor, are thirty-six over-lappings, like the waves of a river of light, and corresponding to the number of decades of days in the orbit of the Egyptian year. On the side wall of the dais at the upper end of the gallery are also seven over-lappings, one above another, arching over to the summit as if representing the orbits of the planets, and having the effect of rays of light petrified in the masonry around the throne. And in the position corresponding to the orbit of our own globe runs a deep groove, or orbit, along its entire length, offering a close connection between the "Orbit" and the "Passage of the Sun in the Double Hall of Truth," in the Ritual. Above the throne rises the habitation of the "seven great spirits in the service of their Lord, the Creator," who, the sacred books tell us, "protect the coffin of Osiris"; while from its loftiest point a passage, inaccessible from below—the "Opening of Hathor," to use the language of the Ritual—leads to the secret heights. In that Hall of Splendour dominated by the throne of Light the Justified receives his Illumination and Investiture.

Now comes the most mysterious portion of the building. Stripped of its noble proportions and reduced to an altitude so low that a man must creep on hand and knee to pass, the passage pierces the southern wall of the upper gallery, and runs straight on, first into the ante-chamber, or "Place of Preparation," and then into the splendid hall called the King's Chamber, in the most secluded portion of the

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

building. In each of these halls is one, and only one, object. In the ante-chamber is a kind of veil of masonry, which no one can pass without bowing the head. In the King's Chamber is a sarkophagus, not closed, but open; while the air-channels, wherewith this deeply buried room is amply ventilated, proclaim that it is not a chamber of the dead, but of the living, corresponding to the place of resurrection where, in the final chapter of the Ritual, Osiris is awakened from his slumbers. In this portion of the building the structure changes its material for granite, forming, as it were, a house by itself within the pyramid; an inner house yet, within the house of Osiris, entered by the low and grave-like passage leading from behind the throne. This is the House of Glory described on the coffin of Amamu already quoted, the house to which the illuminate approaches, after passing the tribunal of Osiris. Here is the "Gate of the Pure Spirits," which they alone can enter who are washed in the waters of life, and radiant with the splendours of the Orbit. And here, too, it would seem, takes place the solemn address, described in the Sai-an-Sinsin, "of the Gods in the House of Osiris," followed by the response of the "Gods in the House of Glory"; the joyous song of the holy departed who stand victorious before the judgment-seat, echoed triumphantly by the inner chorus of their beloved who have gone before them into the fulness of light. Over the chamber of the Open Tomb, are the hidden heights, the secret spaces, the "Secret Places of Heaven," once completely closed and constituting the most secret of the Hidden Places. To them leads the "Empyrean Gate" ("the opening of Hathor," the Queen of Imperishable Beauty, as the Ritual calls it); and the whole is dominated and crowned by a gigantic triangle of granite, immutably expressing the divine Trinity of Egypt.

Such is the complex and hitherto wholly unexplained system of gateways and passages, shafts, channels and chambers; some leading upwards, some leading downwards,

THE PYRAMID OF LIGHT

some level; some rough in the last degree, others exquisitely polished; some magnificent in their proportions, some so low that a man must creep, so narrow that he can with difficulty pass, to be found within the Pyramid of Light. It is absolutely unique; no other building, it may be safely averred (not even among the later pyramids), having contained any structure bearing the least resemblance to the higher chambers. Striking as it is in every feature, the most remarkable circumstance of all is the evident intention of the architect to preserve that secrecy which lends a majesty to the strange theosophy of Egypt.

What then was the design, the secret and jealously guarded design, with which this wondrous edifice was constructed? That its various features are meaningless, or the result of caprice, is a suggestion to which the forethought and lavishness of calculation displayed in every detail unmistakably give the lie. Nor again can we maintain that they are necessary for the purposes of an ordinary tomb. For, in the first place they are not to be found in other pyramids which were used for that purpose; and secondly, if there be any intention which the architect has openly manifested, it is to create such a series of obstructions that no human body could be buried therein.

In truth, the Great Pyramid is the House of a Tomb; but it is not a closed but an open tomb. It is the tomb not of a man, but of a god; not of the dead, but of the risen. It is the tomb of the divine Osiris, whose birth on earth, descent into the underworld, victory over the serpent Apep, resurrection and judgment of the dead, were the most prominent features in the creed of Egypt, and in union with whom the holy departed achieved the path of illumination, and passed in safety the divine tribunal.

Viewed in this light, the practical value of the structure begins to become clear. On that doctrine rested the whole organisation of social life among the ancient Egyptians. The kalendar, the festivals, the duties of the monarch, the

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

rights of the priesthood, the relations of the provinces to their paramount temples, all were illustrated in the Path of Light. Endless confusion, therefore, in the State would result, no less than injury to the religion, from any misconstruction or misrepresentation of doctrine (such as seems to have taken place under Khu en Aten); a circumstance all the more likely to occur on account of the obscurity of the symbols employed.

Now the masonic symbolism of the Great Pyramid affords a simple and practically indestructible means for perpetuating the doctrine of Egyptian wisdom. That expression, once formulated, was never repeated; the other tombs and pyramids of Egypt claiming kinship only by subordinate and particular features with the work of the Grand Master. While, then, the written records of the Ritual, none of which now extant probably possess a higher date than that of Khufu,¹ were liable to change and error, no lapse of time could impair, no variations could affect in the secret places, the masonry of the Pyramid of Light. This embodiment, at once secret and unalterable, forming literally a Masonic Ritual of the whole doctrine of Light, accounts for the singularly piecemeal fashion in which the sacred words were committed to writing.

¹ Cf., however, note 1, p. 48.

CHAPTER II

THE SECRET SCROLL

“ THIS Book is the Greatest of Mysteries. Do not let the eye of anyone look upon it—that were abomination. *The Book of the Master of the Secret House* is its name.”¹ So runs the emphatic declaration in the great papyrus of which we have made such frequent mention; and the whole contents are in harmony with it. For throughout there is scarcely a paragraph the expression of which is not studiously obscure and difficult of interpretation. Yet recondite as are both subject and form, we find in it a clue, in some degree at least, to penetrate the mystical teaching of the Egyptian priesthood, that is to say, the doctrines which they taught not merely as to the nature of the Creator and his original relation to the creature, but also as to the means whereby the creature is admitted to participate in the mysteries of the Creator.

The papyrus in question, which was found in the coffin of a priest named Auf Ankh, is now preserved at Turin. And a facsimile of it was published by Lepsius in A.D. 1842. That distinguished Egyptologist thought good to call it the *Book of the Dead*; a title which usage has rendered almost too familiar to disturb, but which, in itself, is by no means happy, for it gives the idea of regarding the holy departed as

¹ This is the end of the Rubric to Chapter clxiii. Budge renders it as follows: “ This is a composition of exceedingly great mystery. Let not the eye of any man whatsoever see it, for it is an abominable thing for (every man) to know it; therefore hide it. *Book of the Mistress of the Hidden Temple* is its name.” Cf. note 4, p. 30, also note 1, p. 29.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

dead, whereas the whole conception of the doctrine was the instruction in Life and Light.¹ A much better description is that given by Champollion, who called it the *Funereal Ritual*; and although Dr. Budge vehemently controverts that title, his objections are urged with more warmth than force.² But neither one term nor the other can, it is clear, compete in authority with that which the papyrus claims for itself, namely the *Book or Scroll of the Master of the Secret House*.

The whole history of the sacred writings among which this papyrus is perhaps the most important yet discovered, is by no means free from difficulty. They are made up of a great number of chapters, composed at various periods extending over several centuries, and they occur sometimes carved on the walls of the tombs, but more often written on papyrus and hidden in the grave-clothes of the mummy. Frequently only one chapter is employed, but often also a considerable number, though no papyrus has yet been discovered containing in one the whole series of chapters. These sacred writings are usually divided by Egyptologists into four collections, according to the different periods to which they belong. The first is that of the ancient empire, written in hieroglyphics, to which the important inscription on the coffin of Amamu belongs. Then comes the Theban recension, also in hieroglyphics, of which the papyri have been with great labour collated and published by M. Naville; followed during the succeeding (twentieth) Dynasty

¹ An exactly similar purpose informs the Thibetan *Bardo*, which has been called *The Thibetan Book of the Dead*. See the excellent translation edited by Mr. Evans Wentz. Cf. also the text of Unas (I, 206 f.): "Thou hast not gone dying, O Unas, but living hast thou gone to sit upon the throne of Osiris."

² Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, however, is emphatic that the title *Book of the Dead* is unsatisfactory and inappropriate. He would prefer to use REU NU PERT EM HRU, as he transliterates the hieroglyphics, which he renders "Chapters of Coming Forth by Day."

THE SECRET SCROLL

by another written in hieratic or priestly characters. And last of all we have the recensions of the (twenty-sixth) Saite Dynasty, to which the *Book of the Master* is due.

During the later ages, at least, there can be little doubt that papyri were prepared for sale with a blank left for the name of the mummy, to be filled up before placing in the the coffin. But it does not follow that this was the custom in earlier ages, and the rarity of inscription on the tombs of that period tends to contradict the probability. Neither is it likely that every chapter of the Ritual was open to every purchaser. On the contrary, it is by no means improbable that, as the whole country of Egypt represented various stages in the path of the deceased, so the chapters employed in the various localities may have varied also either in their order or in a portion of their wording. And this latter supposition would account for the different readings which we find introduced, especially in the *Book of the Master*; implying not (as we with the characteristic carelessness of modern times suppose) an ignorance or indifference on the part of the priests, but a collection of texts, to be duly chosen, one or other, according to circumstances. Moreover, from several allusions in the writings, we find that the efficacy attached to them arose from the deceased having been permitted to become acquainted with them during lifetime, so that the papyrus attested the instruction in Wisdom of which the deceased was possessed at death. Now the object with which that instruction was conferred was the union of the departed with Osiris, the Creator, in virtue of which union we find the title of the Osiris prefixed in the papyri to the name of the departed, somewhat as we ourselves prefix the title of saint to the names of those who shine like the light, and as the stars for ever and ever. And this again agrees with the direction given, for instance in the *Book of the Master*, that the recitation is to commence on the day of the funeral, and accounts for the frequent commencement of the chapters with the words, "Saith the Osiris Auf

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

Ankh ”; implying that the whole Ritual was recited by the departed through the mouth of the priest.

The chief difficulty in understanding that book of mystery arises not merely from the great variety of the imagery, but much more from the complexity of its application. For the figures which are drawn from all kinds of familiar objects are rarely or never employed singly, so as to present a definite image whereby the signification might perhaps be detected; but parts of two or three are always used together, so as to present no meaning except to the instructed. Thus, for example, we find the holy departed addressed as “ Osiris the Bull of the West,”¹ meaning the Strong One of heaven; the union of Osiris being assumed as begun, and the image being taken partly from the generative power of the bull and partly from the setting sun, which goes down into the west to illuminate the unseen world. Occasionally, also, the image of the doctrine signified is itself conveyed by another image. Thus Professor Renouf has shown how the partial eclipse of the sun, which is caused by the intervention of a planet, was represented by the Egyptians under the form of a tortoise crawling across the disc, and that the image of the tortoise is applied in the papyri to the partial obscuration of Osiris’ Godhead by his temporary death.²

Among the different images, however, there is one class which in this papyrus occurs with a frequency unsurpassed except by those of light, namely, those which relate to some form of building. Such allusions become vocal only when applied to the Pyramid of Light. To this class belong the festivals of the “ Northern Passage ” and of the “ Southern Passage,” that of the “ Hidden Lintel,” that of “ Osiris who dwells in the Roofed House ” and in the “ Pool of the

¹ “ Bull of the West ” was one of the commonest names of Osiris. Cf. also the Papyrus of Ani, Chapter i (4) where the departed addresses Osiris as “ O Bull of Amentet.”

² The phrase “ The Tortoise dies, Ra Lives ” is employed four times in Chapter clxi.

THE SECRET SCROLL

Great House.”¹ So in the kalendar of Esne we read of the “ Festival of the Sockets,” and again of the “ Opening of the Doors,” which is closely connected in the Ritual with the “ Chapter of the Orientation ” and the raising of Osiris from the Open Tomb. The whole progress of the departed seems, in fact, to take place in some kind of house. The Ritual is full of references to his “ Going in ” and “ Coming out,” to “ Going in after coming out,” to passing gates and gateways, and doors and staircases. And though no doubt the secret places there mentioned have also a mystical significance, and refer to those secret places of the universe wherein, according to Egyptian belief, man, when set free from the flesh, was initiated into the mysteries of creation, yet inasmuch as that doctrine was to be learned while still on earth, so it was necessary that there should be a house on earth wherein those places should be illustrated. Indeed the very titles employed, whether in the written or the masonic record, point directly, though secretly, to each other. And where else shall we look for such a building if not in that great house wherein, according to the Egyptian tradition, the Secret Wisdom was imparted to the postulant; that house, the hidden places of which claimed for their Master the Master of the Secret Scroll; that house whereof every feature and every proportion speak of the measurement of the universe ?

Again, it was during the time of the Saite Dynasty that the order of the chapters is said to have been fixed for the first time. What canon, then, or standard of order did the revisers employ ? It certainly was not the relative antiquity of the chapters, for the only one which claims to remount to the First Dynasty stands one hundred and thirtieth in the

¹ Marsham Adams' allusion is to the Pool of the Maati, which he places at the bottom of the well. Whether there is not a more literal interpretation than this is, however, an interesting speculation. According to Herodotus there should be an island beneath the pyramid, surrounded by waters from the Nile introduced by means of an artificial duct.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

papyrus; while that which is attributed in it to the Fourth Dynasty, and which is entitled the "Entrance on Light in One Chapter," as though it had once been the single chapter in use, comes sixty-fourth.¹ But while the written records were liable to variability and error, no change could affect, no lapse of time could impair, the record erected in stone three thousand years before by the astronomer-architect Khufu. And thus as early as the Twelfth Dynasty,² the inscription on the coffin of Amamu, buried in the sacred city of Abydos, shows that the secret places determine the order of the Ritual. "*Thou hast not gone dying,*" we read, "*thou hast gone living to Osiris. Now thou hast found the words of order, the Mystery of the Secret Places.*"³ What sudden significance, then, attaches to the title "Ta Khut," "The Light," whereby the Great Pyramid, that monument of flame, was known to the Pharaohs, when, turning to the sacred papyri, we find the title of the opening chapter to be Pir M Hru, or Entrance on Light⁴—that is, not the light of common day, which the deceased was quitting, but, as is shown by the image of the setting sun, wherewith the descent of the tomb was always associated, of the Invisible Light of the Unseen World, renewed forever in the splendour of Osiris.⁵ For the doctrine contained in those mystic writings was nothing else than an account of the Path pursued by the Just when, the bonds of the flesh being loosed, he passed through stage after stage of spiritual growth—the

¹ It is impossible to assign a date for the introduction of the Ritual into Egypt, but it is generally admitted that it was well known before the First Dynasty. Although Marsham Adams alludes to only one chapter as claiming to remount to the First Dynasty, namely the one hundred and thirtieth, Budge also assigns the sixty-fourth thereto and says of it that "judging from the title it would seem that as early as Senti's time these Chapters had become so numerous that it was all-important to compose, or edit one of the chapters which then existed, in such a way that it should contain all the knowledge necessary to the dead for their salvation." *The Book of the Dead*, Vol. i, p. xxxvi.

² Budge gives Eleventh.

³ Cf. note 1, p. 44.

⁴ Cf. note 2, p. 44.

⁵ Cf. Chapter clxiv.

THE SECRET SCROLL

Entrance on Light, the Instruction in Wisdom, the Second Birth of the Soul, the Initiation in the Well of Life, the Ordeal of Fire, and the Justification in Judgment; until, illumined in the secret Truth and adorned with the jewels of Immortality, he became indissolubly united with Him whose name, says the Egyptian Ritual,¹ "is Light, Great Creator." And that secret doctrine which the Ritual gives in writing, the Secret House materialises in its immutable masonry. And so closely does the path embodied in that masonry correspond with the Path as described in the sacred writings, that the traveller who to-day penetrates those mysterious recesses may follow almost step by step the mystical progress of the holy departed through the grace and gate of death to the final resurrection of the Open Tomb.

In short, in the double symbolism of the Pyramid and Ritual lie both the chief difficulties of decipherment and the strongest evidence of their correspondence. For as the departed in his progress was to become, as we have already indicated, united in the fulness of intimacy with his Creator, so it was necessary that he should progress in the knowledge of the mysteries which envelop alike the spiritual and the material creation. To know Osiris in his forms of manifestation was the secret of power, to "understand Osiris in all his names, Osiris in all his places," conferred the crown of illumination. But in the attainment of the infinite knowledge there were many stages which must be traversed by the finite mortal, many grades which must be achieved by the holy departed, when the mouth of the tomb, the portal of Eternal Day, had been opened for him, and the Catechumen of the Divine Wisdom had been admitted as the Postulant of Immortality. The "inner man" or "person" of the deceased, the "Ka" (or postulant with the upraised arms,²) must be re-created in incorruption, the soul must be born anew, before that postulant could be initiated into things

¹ Cf. Chapter clxiv.

² 

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

divine; the Initiate must pass the fiery ordeal, and become approved as Adept; the Adept must be justified in the Tribunal of Truth, before he could emerge from the shadow of the Halls of Death into the immediate presence of the Source of Light. The Justified must become the Illuminate, the Illuminate must be consummated as Master, before he could attain the innermost mansion of the divine house of Osiris. For each of such grades, according to the creed of Egypt, the Creator has assigned a distinct locality in the great exterior manifestation of Himself, the universe of space; and each of these localities is described symbolically in the books of the mystical Ritual, and inscribed masonically in the features and the dimensions of the Hidden Places of the Pyramid.

Not to every one, therefore, did that house lie open, nor could there be a more unpardonable offence than the profanation of its secrets.¹ So, too, the secrecy enjoined by the Ritual was enforced by the structure of the building; nor was it ever violated so long as Egypt remained Egyptian. And as it was the characteristic of that religion to be concealed, and as the manifestation of the Creator is deeper and more secret yet than the knowledge of His works, so it was essential that the symbols relating to Him, and to the connection of man with Him, should not betray their deepest mysteries even to the Initiate; but should reserve their more secret meaning for the Illuminate after full probation. Here, then, was the problem which lay before the first Hir Shesta, the "Master of the Secret," the originator of the "wisdom of the Egyptians"; to express, but in expressing to conceal, to veil, but with a veil of light, the mysteries of the Deity; to choose such symbols as would, without betraying their nature, convey their living energy, their illuminative power, and, above all, their clear illimitable endurance. No ordinary image, it is clear, no mineral, no animal, no plant, no man, could suffice for an expression such as this. Only the orbs of heaven, obeying in their

¹ See the beginning of this chapter and note 1, p. 43.

THE SECRET SCROLL

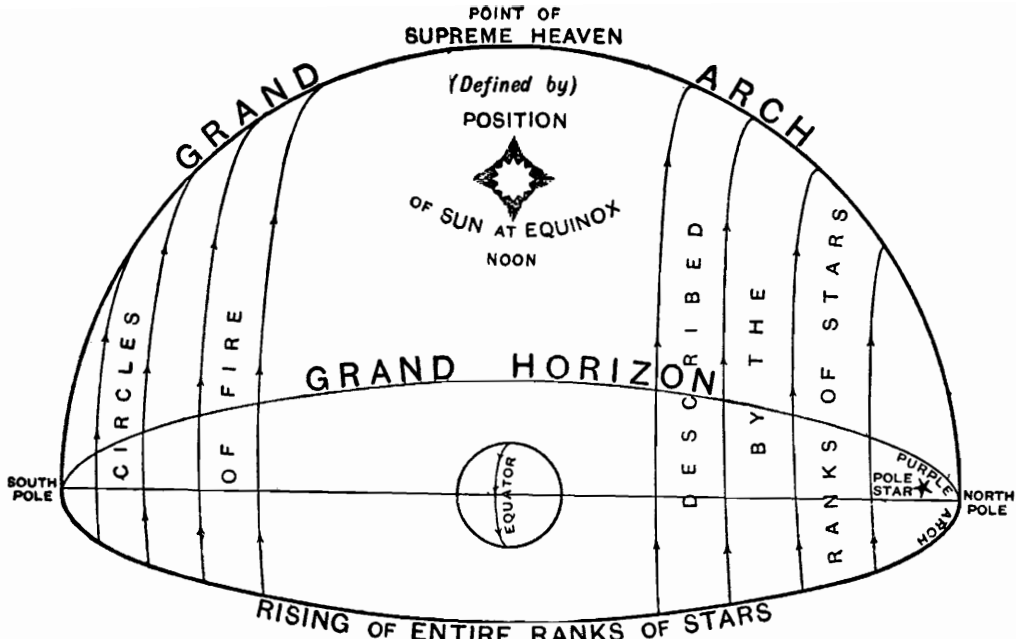
lustrous course the laws that know no change, could fulfil the required conditions. Alike in the pictured and the masonic record the path of the just is traced amid the shining worlds, and his progress measured in the terms of celestial motion.

A remarkable instance is that of the orbit of the earth, involving a knowledge of the rotation of the earth on its axis, and its revolution around the sun, on which rested the ancient kalendar of Egypt. The " Lord of the Orbit " (Neb Sennen) was a title of the Egyptian monarch. And in the Pyramid we find the orbit, together with many other phenomena, masonically expressed on the walls of the magnificent and unique upper Chamber of Ascent. Similarly, another great astronomical conception, namely the horizon, runs not only through the *Book of the Dead*, but through all the funereal imagery of the country, as in the *Sai-an-Sinsin*, or *Book of the Migration of the Soul*¹; and in that of Queen Anchnes-ra-neferab² and other papyri. What horizon then is the " horizon of heaven," to which such mystery attaches, and what is its apex, the Grand Zenith of the celestial dome? We have no such general conception, and consequently our ideas of the celestial mechanism lack something of simplicity. But suppose that on the day of Equinox, the equal division of light and darkness, we are standing on the Equator, the equal divider of the earth into the hemispheres of north and south, and that we take up our position, say at the point where it is cut by the meridian of Memphis, close to the lake from whence flow the waters of the life-giving river. At our feet is spread the great plane passing through the celestial poles, and bounded by the Purple Arch which encircles the floor of the starry dome. From the midst of our horizon on that day rises the sun right upwards,³ and at the

¹ Otherwise rendered the *Book of Breathings*.

² Queen of Ahmes II, circa 564-526 B.C.

³ Marsham Adams points out that the conception here described, though not explicitly defined by our astronomers, is implicitly contained in the terms Right (or direct) Ascension, the mounting straight upwards of the stars; and Declination, or the falling off on either side from the equinoctial plane.



AS SEEN ONLY FROM EQUATOR ON NIGHT OF EQUINOX
"They whirl in Fire behind Him"
 THE "HORIZON OF HEAVEN."

THE SECRET SCROLL

summit of his course, where day by day he equally divides the heaven east and west, on that day alone he equally divides also the Grand Arch, or Grand Meridian, which rises transverse from the same horizon, and stretches from pole to pole of the azure depths. Then we shall have marked out the four cardinal points of the universal sphere—the four points whereby the sides of the Pyramid of Light were defined; the fiery seats, according to the Egyptian theosophy, of the four “Sons of Light,” whereof the most famous was Hapi, the presiding Spirit of the Nile. Into that Grand Horizon too, when the equal day is done, the sun passes beneath the western waters. And out of it, the whole host of stars, from pole to pole, in serried array, each preserving his appointed distance from the solar path, follow him through the silent night—the “night of reckoning the spirits”; one-half springing into light as their leader disappears, the rest completing their numbers, just in time to herald his return from the eastern point of the same Grand Horizon. “The road is of Fire,” says the Ritual; “they whirl in fire behind him.”


Now this horizon seems strikingly indicated by the entrance passage of the Great Pyramid, which, as is well known, may be defined by reference to the position of the Pole Star. For taking as the date of the Fourth Dynasty that given by Dr. Brugsch (about 3700 B.C.),¹ we find that about two hundred and sixty years later (3440 B.C.), the Pole Star of the period (Alpha Draconis) occupied, as Professor Smyth has pointed out, just that position; so that it would shine right down the passage. And thus the disciples of the

¹ Marsham Adams here states that “in deference to the very high authority of Dr. Brugsch, on all matters connected with Egyptian history, I have adopted, and still adhere to the date which he estimated for the Great Pyramid. The recent discoveries of Flinders Petrie may perhaps point to an earlier date; and the question cannot be considered as settled; but on such a point the general harmony with other historical records is the supreme test: and of that knowledge none was more skilled than the great master whom we have recently lost.” Cf. note 1, p. 27.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

Master of the Secret, who in successive generations must have watched for more than two centuries the approach of the star, would receive in its final co-ordination the most convincing proof of the truth of those astronomical relations, wherein their mystical religion was embodied.¹ Hence when we read in the Ritual, of the " Good Paddle of the North, the Opener of the Disc," we recall at once the narrow paddle-shaped passage widened at the entrance towards the north, which opens the sacred interior to the outer universe; the pointer of the dial which sweeps through space, indicating perennially the position occupied by each successive star, which for a brief period of centuries keeps watch before the pole.

Nobly indeed does this stupendous monument respond to the mystic title which once it bore. Surrounded by darkness as profound as that which the Almighty has made His secret place; in the midst of scenery invisible to the eye, but faithfully portraying the glories of the celestial expanse, the Grand Architect has set up the throne which the lapse of ages has no power to impair, and has indelibly inscribed in its secret places the immutable path of the just in characters of light, embodied in the unvarying motions of the heavenly orbs.

¹ Marsham Adams says : During my late visit to Egypt, one of my principal objects was to test this relation ; and I confess that the confirmation I obtained afforded me nothing less than amazement. For, in common with the rest of the world, I had always believed that no single hieroglyphic is to be found on the exterior of the building. But on arriving at the fifteenth step, the very step I had specially mentioned, where the entrance shaft, hidden from an observer standing immediately below, lies fully exposed to view, I saw a single immense hieroglyph, deeply sculptured, immediately above the entrance ; and that hieroglyph was no other than the hieroglyph of the " Horizon of Heaven." Had the founder of the building  desired to confirm my views by a single stroke, in his own silent and absolute fashion, he could not have adopted a more efficacious plan than by placing that particular hieroglyph in that particular position.

CHAPTER III

THE HOUSE OF OSIRIS

AMONG the innumerable transformations witnessed by the present century of revolution,¹ none has a more startling character than that of the resurrection of primæval Egypt. For more than a thousand years from the day when the barbarous Omar celebrated the funeral rites of the ancient learning in the flames of the great Library at Alexandria, to the day when Champollion, like another Sothis, heralded the dawn of a new era of Egyptian brilliance, an ever-growing obscurity buried the entire land. Less than a century has elapsed since the most appalling penalties, in this world and the next, were fulminated by the Sultan against an official who should dare to allow a Christian "to approach the sacred port of Suez, the starting-point of the holy Haj." To-day that port is the crowded entrance of the most cosmopolitan highway of the globe. For centuries Egypt, as it was the earliest, so it was the most jealously guarded seat of Moslem law. To-day its courts recognise a multiplex jurisdiction of alien nations, for which no precedent exists in the history of any other state.² Within living memory its hieroglyphs were an enigma hopelessly abandoned; its

¹ Marsham Adams' two books were published in 1895 and 1898 respectively.

² Marsham Adams says : The case of the Holy Roman Empire may perhaps suggest itself as a precedent ; for foreign princes undoubtedly sat in the Diet. But these princes had jurisdiction not by virtue of treaties or in right of their foreign kingdoms, but of the Imperial principalities of which they happened to be possessed.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

temples hidden beneath the accumulated filth of generations of Arabs; the very age of its ruins unguessed within thousands of years. To-day the mighty buildings stand forth to attest their pristine majesty; the canons of the kings may be consulted in their original records; and the errors made by careless scribes, who thought no mortal eye would ever look upon the papyri concealed within the breast of the mummy, stand detected by the hieroglyphic scholarship of Europe.

A peculiar fascination surrounds every detail of life in early Egypt. For all other empires can be assigned with more or less certainty some point of historic origin. For China, for Assyria, for even Babylonia, we can dimly discern the traces of rude beginnings. The days of Romulus or of Kekrops are but the Middle Ages of history when compared with the days of Khufu or of Mena. India does not claim for her earliest Vedas an antiquity exceeding four thousand years. The sacred writings of China count less than a thousand years more; the beginning of Babylonia about a thousand still beyond. On the banks of the Nile alone do we find, centuries before the date of the Accadian Sargon, a settled monarchy and a constituted state, an elaborate Ritual and organic hierarchy, a specific architecture and a copious alphabet. Hence it is that the principal anomaly which usually blurs our conception of antiquity, namely, the interference of an element alien to the environment in the formation of the customs of a race, more particularly when that race has been transplanted from some wholly diverse soil, is absent from the horizon of Egypt; and the picture which we may draw of Egyptian civilisation has its course, its development, and its consummation in the conditions of Egypt alone. No feature of attraction is wanting in that remarkable scene. The stately river, the source of perennial life and freshness to the entire land, the long line of majestic temples crowning the banks, the laughing population crowding its waters, the dances, the games, the songs, the wrestlings, the perpetual feats, the boats of pleasure jostling

THE HOUSE OF OSIRIS

with the sacred boats of the dead, all these things make up a picture, which set in the dazzling clearness of the cloudless sky leaves a charm that can neither be rivalled nor forgotten.

That picture, too, demands no painful effort of the imagination to fill up for ourselves from broken and disjointed details. We are not called upon to piece out, into such consistency as we may, the fragmentary hints of social life laboriously gathered from chance allusions hidden in a score of different writers. Nor need we content ourselves with descriptions of events written centuries after their occurrence. We can go straight to the fountain-head and consult the original records. On the huge propylæa of the temples, on the walls, on the enormous sarkophagi, on the architraves, on the pillars of the immense buildings, we find the deeds of the princes set out in the sacred hieroglyphs. For the battle of Lake Regillus we must trust to the traditions preserved by Livy; for that first great battle of Megiddo, which took place hundreds of years before Josiah lost his life upon the same plain, long before ever Regillus was fought, we have the contemporaneous account of the conqueror Thothmes, and the lists of the spoils drawn up by royal officers. Nay more, the monuments of Egypt give us not descriptions alone, but actual representations of the scenes. Of the triumphs celebrated by the renowned Julius, what trace is left for posterity to gaze upon? But the triumphs of Rameses, and of Seti, which took place well-nigh as long before the time of Cæsar as Cæsar's day was before our own time, live yet in every detail. The garments, the ornaments, the countenances, even the colour of the hair of the different races which took part in these processions, all may be seen to-day upon the walls of the palaces which witnessed them. Of Moses and of Solomon, of the founder of Rome, nay, of the great apostle of the Gentiles, we possess not even a traditional likeness. But the features of Pharaoh may be as familiar to us as they were to his adoring subjects. A triple enclosure formed by massive columns, of infinite

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

pathos in their lonely grandeur, is all that is left to tell us how the earth-shaking Poseidon was worshipped in his home at Pæstum. But every feature of the procession which trod the long aisles of Karnak, the vessel of purification, the wings on the sacred scribe, the company of the singers, the quadruple ranks of priests, the sacred ark borne upon their shoulders, the cherubim with outstretched wings shadowing the Deity enthroned between, have all been preserved for our inspection, no less than the words of the solemn litany which the worshippers addressed to Ra, the unseen Light.

Two marked peculiarities characterise the records of the earliest times. Nothing is more striking than the knowledge of science which the priests of Egypt are more and more generally admitted to have possessed, in proportion as the facts are more carefully investigated. What architect of the present day would undertake to erect a building, more than four hundred feet high, full of chambers of the most elaborate description, which should never need repair for five thousand years? What other nation not only discovered the transcendental relation between the radius and circumference—the foundation of all curvilinear measurement—but utilised it as a principle of architectural construction? What other building is oriented with such perfect accuracy that, if Flinders Petrie be correct, the minute displacement wrought in the course of ages represents (and consequently measures) the secular variation due to a recondite cosmical force? Where else shall we find expressed in masonic form the different proportions of the surface of the earth, given according to the various methods of calculation, as, according to the same authority, the architect of the Great Pyramid has expressed them in the area of its pavement at the different levels? Where else shall we find an antique kalendar based on the periodic motion of the earth? What other people knew, as Dr. Brugsch and M. Maspéro aver, the proper motion of the sun in space; or who possessed the lovely Sothiac cycle, the Cycle of Grand Orient, which measured

THE HOUSE OF OSIRIS

whole ages by the herald star, as it dawned for a moment on the eastern horizon ?

Equally striking, and even more distinct perhaps, is the perpetual presence of the life-giving river. From end to end of its territory, from age to age of its history, in the religion, in the commerce, in the honours to the dead, wherever we may turn, and on whatsoever object we may fix our eyes, we never for a moment lose sight of the blue waters of the Nile. That beautiful stream, flowing tranquilly for hundreds of miles beneath the serene sky, alone gave verdure and plenty to the long and narrow strip of fertile soil which lines its borders, cut off by deserts on either hand, and alone permits the very existence of an Egyptian people.

According to ancient tradition, and agreeably also to the records, the ancestors of the race in very remote times were not of northern but of southern¹ extraction, being originally natives of Poont, situated near the equatorial sources of the Nile. In harmony with this tradition, we find that the central point of the Egyptian universe, the horizon of which traces out, as we saw, the sacred Horizon of the Ritual, determined by the Pole Star and defined by the Pyramid, was the Aptu, or southern "Apex of the Earth," mentioned by Dr. Brugsch in *The Holy Land of Khent*, situated in that immediate neighbourhood. For our point of reference was demarcated by the intersection of the Equator with the grand meridian of Memphis; and that intersection takes

¹ Marsham Adams says : As a contrary opinion is still held by some Egyptologists, and was sanctioned by Dr. Brugsch himself, I may be permitted to quote the opinion of a very distinguished authority in support. M. Maspéro, when I put the question to him, most courteously informed me that though years ago he had held the opinion then prevalent of a northern origin, he had changed his views in further research, and now believes the Egyptians to have come from the south. If this view be correct—and many facts seem to support it—endless difficulties are resolved, or rather do not arise to require solution, which have resulted from a belief in the famous "prehistoric Asiatic family"; that is to say, in a family of the existence of which no record can be produced.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

place just by the western shore of the great equatorial lake from which the famous river derives its life-giving streams: hence on the day of Equinox, an observer standing at the fount of the river in the patriarchal land of Egyptian tradition, would witness that grand "Passage of the Sun," and march of the universal hosts of space, which solemnises the day of the "Reckoning of the Spirits." From that point of origin, we marked out the four cardinal points of the universal sphere, the thrones of the four Egyptian spirits of the Light, with Hapi in their midst, protecting the southern fountains of the Nile. These four bright spirits, the guardians of the heavenly dome, were imaged to the Egyptians under the form of the cynocephalous ape, the creature which bears the closest resemblance to humanity; and from them, as the four living creatures before the throne of Ra, assistance was invoked by the Justified in the Ritual at the moment when the full splendour of the Orbit was bursting upon his illumined sight.¹ Thus the whole system of Egyptian astronomy, in its scientific delineation no less than its mystical significance, would seem to have been devised originally, not with any reference to the later settlement of the race upon the lower streams of the Nile, but to their original dwelling-place among the sunny fountains of the south; while the Grand Meridian appears to have been defined, not by its local relation to Memphis, but from its passing through the apex of the earth, beneath the Grand Arch of the universe and the apex of the celestial dome over the point of origination.

Yet, remarkable as is this primæval locality when viewed in the light of Egyptian tradition, its interest is increased tenfold when we regard it in combination with the other features of the great watershed of which it forms an essential part, and which reminds us irresistibly of the famous watershed described in our own Scriptures as forming the primæval dwelling-place of man. There are—not the full

¹ Chapter cxxvi.

THE HOUSE OF OSIRIS

streams but—as in Genesis, the “ heads ” of the four rivers, which go “ forth to water the whole country.” There, beyond the Zambesi, lies the land of gold, with its mines of unknown antiquity: while the odorous herb of which the hieroglyphic name is Betru (or Bedru) suggests the original of the Hebrew Betelu (the L being in Egyptian identical with R), converted by the Greeks into Bdelium. There is the fountain of the Niger, which encompasses in its windings the whole land of the Blacks. There is the source of the inundating Nei-los, in Egyptian “ the Boundary Burster ”; of which the Hebrew word Hiddekel, signifying “ Violent,” is but a pale reflection. And there is the Congo, the river of “ Life,” corresponding precisely with the Hebrew Perith (fruitful), transformed by the Greeks into Euphrates. More striking still, in the eastward portion of the great basin lies the wonderful garden, or Paradise, three thousand miles in extent, so glowingly described by Stanley, and full of animal life, the sceptre of which was one of the insignia (the “ Tad ”) borne by the great Deity Amen; while from that garden flows the single river, the Shari, exactly as in our scriptural account the single river flowed in the midst to water the garden which was placed in the eastward¹ part of the immense watershed of Eden. And as, according to the same account, the first traces of the never-ceasing current of human wandering commenced on the eastward of the garden, so does the stream of the infant Nile, which takes its rise near this point, tend eastward of the grand meridian before bending southward towards the lake which still bears the patriarchal name of the Egyptian Nou²; and below it, to

¹ As Marsham Adams points out, in the innumerable attempts at the identification of the birthplace of man, as recorded in Scripture—attempts which may be counted literally by the hundred, and which have gone far towards rendering any true exposition of human development an almost hopeless achievement—the garden is constantly confused with the watershed, and the “ heads ” of the river with their full courses, while the single river is omitted altogether.

² See note B, p. 165.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

the ruins of Assur, discovered by Caillaud on the banks of hoary Meroe.

From that country their course appears to have been effected by a two-fold route. In part, according to a very ancient tradition, mentioned by Dr. Brugsch, they proceeded along the banks of the river, sojourning for a while, it would seem, in the island of Meroe, where the hoary temple of Amen and the ruins of Assur, mentioned above, mark their ancient presence; while others appear to have come down by the Red Sea, as Petrie's discoveries indicate, and thence to have crossed the desert to Coptos. From this most important circumstance, it is essential to bear in mind that to the Egyptian the south was the "Great Quarter," to which especial reverence was due. Hence it was that every year the sacred images were carried into the ancestral country; an echo of which tradition is found in the visits of the Gods of Homer to the "blameless Ethiopians." Hence, in the ancient inscription on the coffin of Amamu, we are told how the holy dead, "after flying over the whole face of heaven," is "established among the blessed company in the south." And in the same archaic papyrus we read of the celestial land of Khent, or Khent-Amenti, the habitation of the Hidden God, imaged on earth by the "Holy Land of Khent" at the Aputu or southern apex of the earth. Hence also the most sacred portion of the temple was placed towards the same quarter; and the Great Pyramid, from the entrance to the innermost chamber, was oriented north and south.¹

In truth, to the mind of the Egyptian, the whole bed of the immense river was but the sacred image of the unseen land watered by the "celestial Nile" of which the Ritual speaks; "The Nuter Khart," or Holy Land of the Dead, with its triple division into Rusta (or Restau), the territory of Initiation; Aahlu, the district of illumination; and Amenti, the secret home of the hidden God.²

¹ The deceased was also always faced to the south for the ceremony of the Opening of the Mouth.

² Cf. note 1, p. 34.

THE HOUSE OF OSIRIS

Far towards the south, beyond the alternate reaches of stream and desert, lay the patriarchal land of Poont, like Amenti, the distant home of the unseen Father. At the tropical extremity of Egypt, immediately below the celestial or tropical arch traversed by the sun at the summer solstice (at that epoch about 24°N. , the inclination of the earth's axis to the plane of its orbit, being at that time about half a degree greater than at present), was the cataract or "Gate of the Nile," through which the ancestors of the race entered the country. That cataract or throne of the life-giving waters, situated beneath the Royal Arch of the solstitial throne, marks the point attained by the Illuminate in the Ritual, when he has achieved, in Aahlu, the "passage of the sun," and "opens the gate of the Nile," the cataract of heavenly light.

As the deceased, in making that ascent, entered into the presence of the forty-two judges of the dead (the Gods of the Horizon and the Gods of the Orbit), each judge supreme in his particular province; so was all the land of Egypt parcelled out into forty-two nomes or districts, twenty nomes in the lower and twenty-two nomes in the upper country. To each nome was assigned a great temple as capital, with a specific function and priesthood. And as the temple formed the vast enclosure of the shrine, so also did the district become the vast enclosure of the temple. Nor were the temples dedicated to sacred things alone, but the structures of daily life shared the divine significance. And for every division of the country, as De Rougé has shown, the palace and the canal, no less than the temple and the district, bore a name of mystery and reflected the region of the holy dead.

All along the valley of the river, as it descends northwards; at Thebes, at Abydos, at Tentera, were the great shrines sanctified by manifestations of the Deity. At the northern extremity, where the ocean formed the boundary of the country, was the mouth of Rosetta, or Rusta, imaging, as we learn from the Papyrus of Khufu, the mouth of the

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

tomb, and looking towards the Pole Star, the never-fading light of the depths, that pointed for the Egyptians the path to the hidden life. In the midst of the land where the Nile branched out into the great angle of the delta, the dominating angle in the conformation of the valley, stood Memphis (or Mennofer), the "Holy Place"; the seat of the double government of Egypt, with its palace dedicated to the Creator-spirit Ptah, its cemetery bearing the title of "Blessed Immortality," like our own "God's Acre," and its canal called after the Voyage of the Unseen Waters. There, too, was the territory of "Sochet Ra," the Fields of the Sun. And close to the sacred city, on the western bank of the river, rose the "Pyramid of Light," built upon a lonely rock, which faces the great quarter of the south, the house of Osiris,¹ to which, says the papyrus of Amen Hotep, "Thoth," the Eternal Wisdom, "conducts the Illuminate." Distinctive, too, as is the situation of this building with reference to the conformation of the country, it is equally remarkable in its relation to the two principal points to which all human measurements of space must be primarily referred, namely, the centre and the pole of the earth; since its distance from the centre is just equal to its distance from the pole.²

A degree of sanctity, peculiar even in that land of reverence, enveloped the mysterious building. "A sense of enchantment," we read in another papyrus, pervaded the whole territory surrounding the Great House; and even the hurried traveller to-day can with difficulty resist the spell, as he gazes on the solemn walls. But for the initiated of old, the supreme end of their existence, the order of their festivals, the purity of their religion, the stability of their monarchy were concentrated in the awful masonry. As the territorial constitution of the country, with its forty-two provinces of the lower and upper kingdoms, corresponded interiorly with the forty-two provinces of the Judges of the Dead, the Upper Gods of the Orbit and the Lower Gods of

¹ Pir aa Aausar.

² See note C, p. 166.

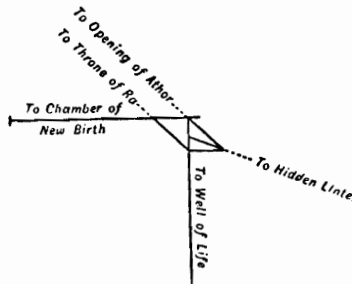
THE HOUSE OF OSIRIS

the Horizon, the political framework being the envelope of the spiritual theosophy; so was it with the exterior and interior of the Great House. For from the point where the adept appears before the forty-two judges in the Double Hall of Truth, on surmounting the blocks at the lower end of the Chamber of the Shadow, to the throne at the upper end of the Chamber of Splendour, where he received the crown of illumination, there are exteriorly forty-two courses; so that they form the envelope of the Double Hall of inner Truth. And as the lucid river itself imaged the stream of the "celestial Nile," so also was the course of that river imaged masonically in the hidden places of the House of Osiris. Upon the walls of the Chamber of the Splendour was sculptured the orbit of our planet among the sevenfold company around the solar throne, the orbit which measures the rise and fall of the life-giving waters of the Nile. Along the roof descends the stream of sculptured rays, thirty-six in number, corresponding to the thirty-six decades of days in the orbit of the Egyptian year. At the upper or southern end of the chamber, as at the upper or southern end of the kingdom, beneath the Royal Arch of the Sevenfold Ascent, or "Burning Crown,"¹ as the Ritual calls it, is the Throne of the Cataract. Behind it, the low gate leads through the narrow channels to the chambers of the south with the hidden chambers in the height, crowned by the Grand Arch which dominates the whole interior of the building; as the gate of the Nile leads beyond the cataract to the southern land of Poont and the long-hidden source of the river, where the land of Khent, beneath the southern apex, imaged the celestial land of Khent, or Khent-Amenti, mentioned in the Papyrus of Amamu, the Interior Habitation of God in the supreme heaven. At the junction of the upper and lower chambers is the upper mouth of the Well, forming a key to the secret interior, just as the city of Memphis with the house of Osiris itself was the secret key to the constitution of

¹ See page 158.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

the double kingdom. There, too, the lesser passage from the secret Chamber of Divine Birth, the "Chamber of Isis," "the Light of the Hidden Nile," unites with the main current of the masonic river; just as in the vignette of the Celestial Nile, a branch of the stream pours into the main current, from "Annu (or On) the secret birthplace of the Gods." From that point the masonic stream, like the Nile at the same point, forks out into a delta, one branch leading down to the Hidden Lintel, the other forming the Well of Life, in the territory of Rusta, wherein, as we learn from



PYRAMIDAL REGION OF THOTH

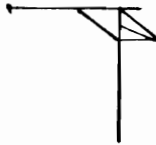
another papyrus, was the tree of immortality. And in the rock which bounds the Chamber of the Horizon, and upon which the house of Osiris is built, we recognise the "Rock of the Horizon of Heaven" of which the Ritual speaks.

Again, the very form of some of the hieroglyphs betrays a pyramidal origin. Thus if we outline the junction of the upper and lower chamber, by tracing the roof-line of the well below the roof-line of the gallery, with the three rampstones in front, and the projections of the upper and lower galleries at the place, we shall have the hieroglyph pronounced "Tau,"¹ which is well known to mean Upper and Lower Egypt, though no explanation of the form has hitherto been suggested. Similarly, suppose that we

¹

THE HOUSE OF OSIRIS

delineate the Double Hall of Truth (from the Hidden Lintel to the Empyrean Gate at the southern end of the roof above the throne), together with the Chamber of New Birth and the Head of the Well, we shall have the portion of the structure more particularly subject to the dominion of Thoth: the divine person, by whom the initiation is effected. Then if we form a cypher of that region, by tracing a line plan indicating only the direction of those parts in relation to the Head of the Well, where, as we shall presently see, the rite of initiation is accomplished, we shall have the sacred symbol reserved to that deity alone. And as by the power of



SACRED HIEROGLYPHIC SYMBOL PECULIAR TO THOTH

Thoth the adept, after passing his ordeal, is introduced into the presence of the forty-two judges in the Double Hall, corresponding to the forty-two nomes or provinces of Egypt, so also does that symbol of Thoth enter into the Hieroglyphic names of every one of the nomes with but a single exception.¹

Upon the same harmony between the celestial and the terrestrial country embodied in the masonry of the Pyramid of Light, depended also the order of the princes of Egypt. For as the Great House itself, the Place of Osiris, the universal God, was represented in its totality in the person of the supreme Monarch; so also the two great divisions of that House, the territory of initiation with its directing angle at the Hidden Lintel, and the territory of illumination with its Sculptured Orbit in the Grand Gallery, the places respectively of the Gods of the Horizon and the Gods of the Orbit, were represented in the two great divisions of the Egyptian Court, the princes of the Angle² and the princes of

¹ Cf. Budge *The Mummy*, pp. 3-6. ² See note D, p. 167.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

the Circle. And so also was that sevenfold celestial company, the ranks of which were sculptured above the throne in the Chamber of the Splendour, represented in the sevenfold ranks of the "Companions of the King," which immediately surrounded the person of Pharaoh. Thus the Great House with the Double Hall of Truth within, formed a masonic organisation not only of the religious, but of the political constitution of the kingdom; with ascending grades from the Purple Arch of the Star defining the Sacred Horizon of Rusta (or Rosetta) to the Royal Arch of the solstice or limit of the solar seat above the water throne of the cataract, and beyond again along the Grand Arch of the Celestial Meridian to the culminating point of the sun at Equinox above the source of the river, in the primæval land of Poont.

As we stand before the portal of the "Great House," the "Pir Aa," while we recall the familiar title which the Pharaohs thence derived, and as we contemplate the heaven reflected in the blue waters of the river as it flows without, and its image masonically expressed in the path within, "the disc" seems lifted "from the tomb," and we gaze upon the unseen world. Egypt, for so many centuries the land of the buried, has suddenly become the land of the risen dead. And the message which the long-silenced voice proclaims as with a tongue of fire, is the primitive belief in the divine origin and end of man. It is not the Ritual nor the Pyramid of Light alone, which speak to us of the eternal day. Everywhere and always throughout ancient Egypt the same doctrine is proclaimed. From the orbit of the earth, from the Pole Star of the heavens, from the dawning of Sothis, from the radiance of the sun, from the waters of the river, from the palaces, from the temples, from the tombs, from the very bowels of the rifled dead, comes forth a voice which for ages has been hushed in the grave; and that voice with startling clearness bears testimony to a judgment beyond the tomb, and the fatherhood of the unseen God.



TEMPLE OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER—DENDERAH

CHAPTER IV

THE TEMPLE OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER

SOME four hundred miles from the apex of the Delta, higher up along the Nile, lies the city of Annu, or Denderah, wherein was situated the temple dedicated to Hathor, identified with Isis, the Queen of Heaven, whose most ancient and distinctive title was the Virgin Mother. This latter name¹ still bears the trace of its original meaning, being a corruption of the words Ta M Ta Rer or "Place of the Orbit."² And the name becomes highly significant in itself, and throws no little light on the title which the Pharaohs bore of "Lord of the Orbit," when we observe that the length of the river in its course through Upper Egypt is just one-millionth part of the orbit of the earth,³ and that Denderah is little more than two degrees from the tropical boundary, where the plane of our orbit intersects the Nile. That the design of this temple was of very ancient date the records leave no manner of doubt. It is probable indeed (although some of the evidence adduced is not very convincing⁴) that

¹ See note E, p. 172. ² Denderah.

³ Marsham Adams points out that he here reckons the earth's orbit (or in other words the distance of the sun) to be between $92\frac{1}{2}$ and 93 million miles.

⁴ For instance, says Marsham Adams, a considerable amount of argument in support of a date not anterior to the time of the Romans has been expended on the presence of a certain Greek inscription, which states that in the time of the Emperor Tiberius a portion of this temple (there called after the Greek fashion the Pro-Naos) was dedicated to a Greek Goddess. With equal justice might one of our own grand mediæval churches be ascribed to the close of the eighteenth century, on the strength of an inscription recording in gilt letters the important circumstances of its whitewashing by the churchwardens.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

the structure as it now stands is due to a comparatively late epoch, some authorities maintaining that it was not completed until the Christian era had begun. But of the antiquity of the original building there can be no question. For while, as Professor Dumichen has observed, the religious ceremonies depicted on the walls belong to a very remote period, the inscriptions recount how Thothmes III (more than 1500 years before the time of Christ) gave the command to rebuild the temple according to its ancient design, so that at that period the plan was already reckoned as antique. Further, the same records tell us how that original building was erected by Pepi, a monarch of the Sixth Dynasty, who reigned nineteen centuries before the time of Thothmes, and how even that was not the farthest point to which the history of the structure ascended. For the plan upon which Pepi religiously carried out the ancient design did not originate in his own mind, but was brought to light by him from a crypt, or secret chamber, being written "in archaic characters," says the records, by Khufu himself, the astronomer-architect of the Fourth Dynasty, and buried by him on the spot eight hundred years before the days of Pepi.

In this temple of the great Mother of God, structure and situation alike appear designed to illustrate that starry universe of which she was the queen. Thus the fundamental principle of precession stands out with great clearness when we examine the position of the temple. For, since the locality is close to the verge of the tropics, where the plane of our orbit (or, which is the same thing, of the ecliptic) passes perpendicularly upwards through the surface of the earth, the sun at midsummer would occupy nearly the zenith of the place. If, then, an observer at Denderah should stand with his face towards the north, as the temple records inform us that the founder stood when on the night of midsummer he laid the foundation-stone of the building, he would have the plane of our orbit rising immediately in front of him, while the pole of the ecliptic would lie at his feet at

THE TEMPLE OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER

the farthest verge of the celestial horizon. Now it is around that pole of the ecliptic that (in the course of about 25,800 years) the celestial axis describes the precessional circle. Hence, then, alike to the builder of the temple, and to the long line of pontiffs who took up their position, year after year, and generation after generation, to celebrate the chief festival of the temple, the stars in their nightly revolutions around the axis of that horizon would trace out the same circle as in the mightier movement of precession; while the gradual change in the hours of their rising and setting, as the centuries passed away, would measure the age-long hours, each spanning over a thousand years, of a single circuit of the axis—the vast precessional day. Now, that this relation was essential to the plan is evident from the prominence given in the inscriptions to the pole of the ecliptic, or “Turning-point (in Egyptian Akh) of the Circles of Light,” as it is there called; and again from the emphatic stress laid in another part of the records upon the same central point. “He saw the Akh as the Akh, which is in the heaven of Hathor, the Lady of Annu,” say the records, speaking of the founder. That is to say, he saw the pole of the earth’s orbit as the turning-point round which during his midnight watch he beheld the heavens revolve, exactly as an observer standing in the same position would behold at the present day.

Another illustration, or rather application of the same principle becomes evident when we compare the temple and the Great Pyramid—those twin buildings of mystery due to the same primæval astronomer, Khufu, the one erected by him, the other only designed, but left to his successor, eight hundred years later, for accomplishment. For the position of the Pole Star which, we saw, was indicated by the entrance-shaft of the Great Pyramid, was $26^{\circ}7'$ above the horizon of that building; and $26^{\circ}7'$ is the latitude of Denderah, that is to say, its distance measured along a meridian from the Equator. But in that position the star’s true distance from the pole was $3^{\circ}53'$; and $3^{\circ}53'$ is the

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

meridional distance between the temple of Denderah and the Great Pyramid. Thus while the celestial relation between the star and the horizon of the Great Pyramid measures the terrestrial relation between the Equator and the temple of the heavens, the terrestrial relation between the temple and the Pyramid measures the celestial relation between the star and the heavenly pole. The same relation, moreover, suggests a singular connection between the position of the star and the erection of the temple. For the date at which the star occupied the position thus indicated was about the year 3440 B.C., that is to say, not in the time of Khufu but of Pepi. Eight centuries, therefore, it would seem, after the epoch when Khufu secretly designed the celestial plan of the universal temple, his royal successor, Pepi, who himself bore the title of Grand Master (Sechem Ur), recognised that the hour had arrived for the manifestation of that design, when the star which indicated the celestial pole illuminated the dark masonry of the twin building, and he saw the "point shining in the great house of watching," as it says in another part of the inscription. Until that hour should come, the Grand Architect concealed the design for the temple of the universe; when the predetermined measure of time was accomplished, the Grand Master erected the building on the spot measured by the star and the pole of the heavens.

From that same measure also arises another relation illustrating at once the connection of the temple with the precessional motion, and the meaning of various expressions in the temple records. For that measure ($3^{\circ}53'$) is within a few seconds just the sixth part of the space contained between the Equator and the ecliptic, and conveniently divides it therefore into six equal parts on either side of the Equator; and that is the space through which, owing to the effect of precession, the heavenly sphere appears to be shifted, once northward and once southward in the course of the vast cycle. Hence, then, we have the meaning of a remarkably

THE TEMPLE OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER

beautiful image contained in the records, describing the temple as "The Seat of the Heavenly Dances in the Six Heights of Osiris," that is to say, of the space-sweeping motions of the starry host through these six heights of the tropical heaven, as now advancing, now receding, they weave their never-ending measures, led by the star that marks the heavenly pole.¹

A similar reference to the structure of the heavens is manifested everywhere throughout the temple. On one side of the vast entrance-hall, or "Khent," the walls are covered with a representation of the fourteen ascents of the moon, leading up on the fifteenth to the throne of Thoth, the Lord of Measurement, and corresponding to the number of days between new and full moon. On the opposite side are depicted eighteen boats, each led by a solar serpent or spiral, representing the eighteen decades which made up the half orbit. And in the area of the same entrance-hall rise eighteen enormous columns, dividing into three rows, each containing six columns, corresponding with the number of decades of days. To these columns, therefore, in the "Habitation of Horus," and to the foundation of the building at midnight, as the records relate, it would seem that allusion is made when we read in the papyrus of Ani, of "the night of setting up the columns of Horus and making him to be established as heir to the things which belonged to his father."² And again in the *Book of the Master* we read that Horus himself gave the command, "Let the pillars be here"; that is, in his own Habitation.

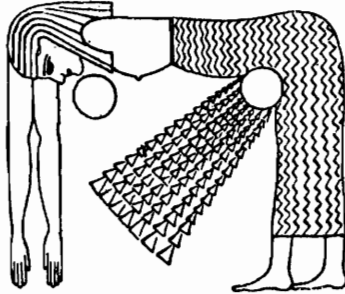
In the centre of the temple is the hall of the Aitar, with entrances opening east and west; and beyond it lies the great hall of the temple, entitled the "Hall of the Child in his Cradle," from whence access is obtained to the secret and concealed shrine entered once a year by the high priest on the night of midsummer. From that shrine the image of the Holy Mother was on that night conveyed by the priests in

¹ See note F, p. 173.

² Chapter xviii.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

procession up a secret staircase to an open chamber on the roof, there to hold communion with her divine father Ra. And upon the walls is depicted the figure of the Virgin Mother with the rays of the divine splendour streaming from the circle of her womb, forcibly recalling the striking vision of the prophet Ezekiel, when he beheld a great cloud coming up from the north," and the "splendour within the circle," and the "fire enwrapping," and the "amber in the midst of the fire"—the sacred Mother retaining her virgin



HATHOR WITH THE SPLENDOUR PROCEEDING FROM HER WOMB

purity, transparent as amber, in the midst of her fiery espousals, and surrounded by the great cloud of the heavenly host coming up from Nazareth in the north of the Holy Land to the place of birth, bearing the Eternal Splendour in her womb.

But of all the astronomical features presented by this deeply interesting building, by far the most remarkable is the celebrated wall-painting which was transferred bodily, early in the present¹ century, from the temple at Denderah to Paris, where it formed the subject of the liveliest and most prolonged discussion among the scholars, and where it may still be seen. The subject of this picture is somewhat difficult to convey, but its appearance may be described as follows. Suppose a panther's hide to be cut square, the spots to be filled up with sacred symbols, interspersed with stars, and the figures to be grouped into a kind of spiral which,

¹ Marsham Adams is of course speaking of the nineteenth century.

THE TEMPLE OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER

opening out from the centre, gradually widens into a circle surrounded by a square border, then we shall have a general conception of the form of the picture. In the space between the circle and the square rim is depicted at each of the four principal points, in a double form, the divine Horus, the child of Hathor, Queen of the starry Universe, to whom the temple was dedicated. The two forms, precisely similar, face each other, at each of the four points of the orbit, thus representing the equalisation of light and darkness all over the earth at the two equinoxes, and at the poles for each half of the year. Midway between each quarter is the figure of the Holy Mother, under the form of Nut, the mistress who presided over the waters, the celestial giver of those heaven-descended rains which fed their life-giving river. And the whole is enclosed by a hieroglyphic inscription which runs round the border.¹

To this representation, sometimes most inaccurately called a "Zodiac," the scientific writers in the *Description de l'Egypte* assign the more correct title of a Planisphere. Astronomically speaking, in fact, it represents the aspect of the heaven as it would revolve before the eyes of the monarch as he stood with his face to the north on the night of the foundation of the temple; while an examination of the mystical figures and symbols thereon inscribed shows immediately their intimate connection with the celestial path of the holy departed. For, numerous as they are, there is scarcely one which does not appear in the vignettes and illustrate the text of the sacred papyri; and most particularly of the *Book of the Master*, that most jealously guarded papyrus wherein the Divine Wisdom set forth at large the path of the holy dead on their entrance into light. In a word, the picture affords a representation of the visible heaven as seen from the dwelling-place of the Virgin Mother, whose very name Hat-Hor implies that she herself was the Habitation of the incarnate Horus; while the mystical

¹ See note G, p. 174.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

symbols representing the starry groups, image forth the supernal powers and spirits which the holy departed, according to the creed of Egypt, encountered in his progress through the heights as he mounted from the plane of earth to the burning throne of Ra.

To effect a comparison between the different parts of the planisphere, and through them with the constellations of the heavens, is not a difficult task. For, as in other great temples, the various halls and chambers in that of Hathor had each a distinctive name, and sometimes a good many names, bearing reference, for the most part, to the mysteries of the Light and of a divine Birth. The "Hall of the Golden Rays" was the title of one of the great halls. The Chamber of Gold, the Chamber of Frankincense, the Chamber of Birth, the Place of the Altar, the Dwelling of the Golden One, the Chamber of Flames, and the Throne-room of Ra, are among the hieroglyphic titles attaching to the various portions of the Temple. Now, as the planisphere contains the hieroglyphs which indicate the northern and southern points, we are enabled to correlate the parts of the temple, and thereby to discover a striking correspondence between the different parts of the inscription and the titles of the chambers and halls occupying the same relative positions. Commencing with the northern entrance leading to the Hall of the Golden Rays, we read "Head of the Circles of Annu" (or Denderah), "Horus the Entrance of the Golden Heaven." Opposite the two openings, one towards the rising, the other towards the setting sun, we have the hieroglyph (Khut Su) signifying "Horizon of Light." By the Chamber of Incense, we read "Palace Chamber of Holy Adoration" (Tuat), "Palace Chamber of Supreme Light" (Tes Su). By the Chamber of Birth, we find mention of the "Head of the Nurse of Ra, Meeting-place of the Region of the Gods." In the same way, by the Chamber of Flames, we have "Heavenly Flame of Burning Gold," and by the Chamber of Gold, the "Golden Heaven of Isis." And as

THE TEMPLE OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER

the chief hall of the temple was the Hall of the Child in his Cradle, so the chief representation on the planisphere is the Holy Mother with the Divine Child in her arms.¹

Conceive now that the monarch, standing with his face to the north and keeping watch from midnight to midnight, should project upon the surface of the heaven that sacred design. Then every portion of the celestial surface before him will be divided into groups of stars or constellations corresponding to the sacred images depicted upon the planisphere, and consequently with the various chambers of the temple to which those images themselves correspond. Thus the whole field of the watcher's view would be marked out with precision into well-defined groups or constellations, each represented by its distinctive symbol, immediately recognisable by those, and those alone, who should understand the nature of the temple plan and should be acquainted with the temple structure. And as each midsummer came round, opening a fresh Egyptian year, the hosts of highest heaven gathered around the "Child in his Cradle," and the festival of the starry universe was fitly celebrated in the temple of Hathor, the Mother of God, herself the "Habitation" of the Holy Light.

Deeply solemn must have been the scene surrounding the Grand Master Pepi, on that memorable night when, obedient to the star-given command of his long-departed predecessor, he stood and measured the earth. Every detail, every feature, every ornament, speaks with a silent eloquence which echoes through space and time. There lay before the monarch the archaic design, traced out in characters telling of an age already bygone, and, itself new risen from the tomb, giving expression to the eternal destiny of man beyond the grave. In his hand was the royal "Khus," the masonic rule of ancient Egypt. Upon his head sparkled the luminous tiara of Hathor, figuring forth the supernal beauty wherewith the Illuminate should be crowned in the day of immor-

¹ See note H, p. 175.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

tality. Far in the northern horizon the Pole Star shone before his feet, proclaiming the advent of the long-appointed hour. All round, throughout the immensity of the illimitable vault, burned amid the profound stillness of the night the countless multitudes of infinitely distant suns, recalling the sublime passage in the *Book of the Master*: "I make the shining circles of the years; and billions are my measurement." Upward from out the darkling depths of the unfathomable abyss, stretching like boundless wings on either hand, and high aloft by the zenith of the translucent dome, rose invisible to the common eye but present ever to the mind of the astronomer, the plane of our planet's orbit—that celestial plane of man's earthly course—girt by the Zodiac, like an azure belt of gleaming gems,

"Those lights most lustrous of the firmament
Which through the heaven lead the gliding year."

Then when the circuit was accomplished, and the surface of the heaven grouped into constellations according to the sacred plan, the monarch gave the signal for laying the foundation of the temple, and, fixing his eyes upon the northern centre of the revolving heaven, commanded the attendant ministers to stretch out the measuring cord in the predetermined direction, which he as Grand Master, and he alone, foreknew.

From that mysterious temple of the Holy Mother, with its shrine of secret birth, wherein the relations between the heavens and the earth are so sedulously embodied yet so jealously concealed, we proceed to contemplate the deeply veiled teaching of the Egyptian priesthood as to the universal fatherhood of the Hidden God.

CHAPTER V

THE HIDDEN GOD

DEEPLY embedded in the heart of some ancient forest, we find here and there a massive and hoary boulder, its antiquity far exceeding that of the venerable trees, and its whole appearance telling of a distant soil and a bygone day. As we sit upon the granite block with the branches waving high above our heads, our wonder at its presence is deepened by the quiet scene. For countless ages that great stone has lain motionless, lifeless, changeless, amid all the infinite movement of changing life around it. No human power brought that huge mass where it lies, no eye can trace the path along which it was driven by the forces of nature. And not until we have traced the mighty variations and convulsions which, in the recesses of time, our whole globe has undergone, and have looked back far beyond the earliest seed-time of the forest, to the days when the surrounding country for hundreds of miles formed the bottom of an immense ocean, through which the icebergs bore the huge rocks torn from its frozen shores, can we understand the position of that primæval stone.

Something of a similar character may not infrequently be discerned in regard to the religious belief and worship of a nation, when a tradition or custom survives the convulsions and changes of centuries and remains firmly embedded in the national life, though every trace of significance is long buried in the past. Most superstitions, it is probable, had once an intelligible meaning, even if that meaning were founded on a mistaken belief ; but such

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

survivals are by no means due to superstition alone. Who, for instance, can explain the Latin titles used for the psalms in the Prayer Book of the Church of England, without going back more than three hundred years to the time when England used the same language in her public worship as the rest of Christendom? So in the Latin Mass the Kyrie Eleison betrays its connection with the Greek, and the word Hosanna, in the office for Palm Sunday, carries us back to the Hebrew.

But there is one word in particular which is employed, not on any special occasion, but in every service; not once or twice, but after every petition; not as a portion of the prayer, but as its summary and its seal. If a stranger stand outside the closed doors of a church while the service is going on, there is one word, and probably but one, which he would hear distinctly repeated again and again. "Amen," "Amen," "Amen," that is the aspiration which, time after time, comes rolling forth with the full strength of choir and congregation. That is the word by which the apostle denotes the absolute nature of the Deity as compared with created matter. "In Him all things are Amen." Amen is the single word which the seer of the Apocalypse heard the Four Living Creatures utter before the throne in response to the chorus of universal adoration. And that is the title under which the same writer invokes the advent of his Divine Master at the conclusion of the vision: "Amen, Veni Domine Jesu." That, too, is the name which the Master assumed to Himself: "Amen I say to you." And that is the name by which the Egyptian of old addressed the secret Deity—Amen, that is to say in English, "The Hidden One."

That the existence of the one God was widely known, by some classes of men at least, among the nations of antiquity there can be little doubt. Among the Chinese, according to the eminent authority, Dr. Legge, the word *Ti* represented the same idea as we express by the word God; and its

THE HIDDEN GOD

assumption as a title by the earliest dynasty of the Emperors of China would be quite in accordance with the ancient belief that the monarch ruled as the divine representative. So, in the sacred books of India, when the disciples of Manu approached the sage to beg for instruction in the wisdom which afterwards formed the foundation of Indian law, they addressed him as follows: "For thou, O Lord, alone knowest the purport (or rites) and the knowledge taught in the whole ordinance of the Self-Existent (Svayam bhū), which is unknowable and unfathomable." And their master, in his reply, laid down the principle of the one uncreated God, the Giver of Light. "The Divine Self-Existent," he said, "indiscernible, making the elements and the rest discernible, appeared with creative force, dispelling the darkness."

Again in the *Mahabharata*, the earliest production of post-Vedic literature, a translation of which, as well as the laws of Manu, is given in the magnificent series of the *Sacred Books of the East*, the most enduring monument to its illustrious editor, a similar doctrine is ascribed to Vyasa. "In the commencement was Brahman, without beginning or end, unborn, luminous, free from decay, immutable, eternal, unfathomable, not to be fully known."

Equally explicit are the utterances of some of the Greek poets.

"One Self-begotten, from whom all things sprang," is one of the lines attributed to the famous Orpheus.

"To God all things are easy, nought impossible." so sang Linus, a brother of the same bright band. A fuller but not less accurate description is given by Xenophanes:

"One God there is, greatest 'mongst gods and men;
Not like to mortals, or in form or thought.
In full he sees, he hears, in full he knows,
And without labour doth his mind move all."

Another poet, Cleanthes, strikes at the root of the exclusiveness arising from the characteristic principle of

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

ancient idolatry, that a deity listens to no prayers except from his own descendants, by proclaiming that all men are the offspring of God, and that consequently the right of prayer to him is universal:

“ O thou most glorious and immortal one,
O many-titled, O Omnipotent,
Zeus, Lord of Nature, ruling all by law,
Hail, whom to worship is the right of all,
Since all of us are of thee.”

So Aratus, whom St. Paul quotes in his famous speech to the Athenians. “ God is the source of our song and God is the beginning of all things. We, too, are the offspring of God.”

A similar passage, though capable of a more pantheistic interpretation, is contained in the *Orphica*.

“ God first; and God the Lord of Thunder last;
God head, God midst and all things are of God;
God male and God immortal Womanhood.
God the great stay of earth and starry Heaven,
God breath of all, God fire’s unwearied rush,
God Ocean’s root and God the Sun and Moon.
God King Himself the Patriarch supreme
One strength, one Lord, one generator of all,
One King, one mould the base of every form.
Fire, Water, Earth and Air and Night and Day
And Wisdom Firstborn and Exhaustless Love
All have their Being in the Godhead vast.”

Even the Roman mind, dim-eyed as it was for the invisible world, was not altogether without a glimpse of this truth, to which Horace has given expression when speaking of the supreme Deity:

“ From Whom none greater than Himself is born ;
Nor doth His equal or His second live.”

But the truths which sparkle here and there in the teachings of India, China or of Greece, fade and vanish before the blaze of Egyptian theosophy. Take, for example, the following extract given by Budge from the hymn

THE HIDDEN GOD

to Amen-Ra, the hidden Deity, the self-existent Light:

“Hail to thee, Ra, Lord of Law, whose shrine is hidden; Master of the Gods, the God Kheper Ra (Self-Existent Light) in his boat; by the sending forth of his Word the gods sprang into existence. Hail, God Atmu (Light), Maker of Mortals. However many are their forms, he causes them to live; he makes different the colour of one man from another. He hears the prayer of him that is oppressed; he is kind of heart to him that calls unto him; he delivers him that is afraid from him that is strong of heart; he judges between the mighty and the weak.

“O Form, One, Creator of all things. O One, Only Maker of existence. Men came forth from his two eyes, the gods sprang into existence at the utterance of his mouth. He maketh the green herb to make the cattle live and the staff of life for the (use of) man. He maketh the fish to live in the rivers, the winged fowl in the sky; he giveth the breath of life to the germ in the egg; he maketh birds of all kinds to live, and likewise the reptiles that creep and fly; he causeth the rats to live in their holes and the birds that are on every green twig. Hail to thee, O Maker of all these things, thou Only One.”

Nor was the unity the only truth concerning the Godhead known to the priesthood of Egypt. Throughout the extent of the kingdom, at Thebes, at Ombos, at Denderah, at Memphis, at Annu (or On), a Triune God—of whom some knowledge seems to have been attained by Greece—invoked by many names, but everywhere consisting of three persons, consubstantial and co-eternal, was worshipped as supreme. “I am Tmu in the morning,” says the Creator, in a well-known passage, “Ra at noon and Harmachis in the evening”; that is to say, as the dawn, the noon and the sunset are three distinct forms co-existing perpetually and co-equally in the substance of the sun, so also did the three divine persons co-exist perpetually and co-equally in the substance of the Uncreated Light. Thus after declaring the

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

sacred Unity in the most emphatic and explicit terms, the hymn already quoted proceeds to invoke the three persons by name, using, nevertheless, the singular pronoun for the collective three.

“ He is of many forms,” so the hymn proceeds. “ O Amen, establisher of all things, Atmu and Harmachis, all people adore thee, saying, Praise to thee because of thy resting among us, homage to thee because thou has created us. All creatures say Hail to thee, and all lands praise thee. From the height of the sky to the breadth of the earth and to the depths of the sea art thou praised.”

Thus as the whole body of Egyptian temples prove upon inspection to form a definite and co-ordinated system based upon astronomical relations, so also does the worship of Egypt, when seen in the light of the universal fatherhood, reveal itself with a majestic unity not unworthy of its unrivalled shrines. Had the case been otherwise indeed; had the real objects of Egyptian worship been a mass of deities local and unrelated, then, inasmuch as the form of government was well-nigh a pure theocracy, the authority of the monarch being derived not merely from his descent but from his personal union with Ra, and inasmuch as heresy was punished with excommunication and even, as M. Maspéro states, with death by fire, it would have been inevitable that each successive dynasty, as it proceeded now from This, now from Memphis, now from Thebes, now from Sais, should have torn up by the root the religion established by its predecessors; and the annals of Egypt would have been as full of religious discord and confusion as those of our Tudor princes.

History, however, has produced, so far, but one instance of an endeavour on the part of the king to introduce novelty into the religion. Amenoph IV, who married a foreign princess, adopted the title of Khu-en-Aten,¹ or “ Illuminate

¹ Marsham Adams says : I have adopted the translation of the word Khou, given by M. Devira in the passage above quoted, the hieroglyphs being

THE HIDDEN GOD

of the Disc"—a title which, as we may see, clearly outrages the Ritual which we have seen embodied in the masonry. For as the disc of the sun is but its visible surface, so the "disc" of the tomb was but its entrance gate which was lifted by Shu (the Light)¹ "when the sun sets from the world of life": and to place the illumination therefore at that point was to ignore all the grades of the Postulant, the Initiate, and the Adept, and to destroy the most essential conditions of illumination. In the same way the expression "Living in Truth," which, as Petrie points out, was constantly employed by Khuenaten, indicates, when applied to the disc, the same degraded and idolatrous conception, since it substitutes a material and visible object for that Truth which in the older worship was spiritual, interior and unseen. And thus, under the succeeding monarch, while the word Aten was preserved, the offending title, Khu, was sedulously obliterated.

If the divine Trinity, however, were the only secret of the Ritual, there would not be so great a difficulty in following its symbols. But there is a depth of mystery beyond, a mystery the greater because manifested in a visible form. Throughout the sacred writings of Egypt, there is no doctrine of which more frequent mention is made than that of a divine birth. "I am thy nurse, thy dandler," says Isis

identical; but the name, according to Flinders Petrie, is more correctly pronounced Akhenaten. That diligent explorer, in his interesting work on Tel-el-Amarna, the site of the palace built by Khuenaten, on the borders of Middle and Upper Egypt, has abundantly illustrated the theory that the monarch's object was to substitute the solar disc (Aten) as an object of worship for the personal Deity—Ra, the Hidden God and Uncreated Light, Amen—previously worshipped under various symbols. This attempt, as well as the distinction between the disc and the rays—which he also considers Khuenaten to have introduced—Petrie characterises as a striking advance in philosophical truth: though it is difficult to understand in what way the adoration of a material object in place of a Personal and Unseen God can be philosophically regarded as an advance.

¹ See page 34, *ante*.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

to the divine Horus in the inscription on the coffin of the queen who bore the name of Ankh Nes Ra Nefer Ab (signifying "Her Life is the sacred Heart of God").¹ And the figure portrayed upon that coffin six and twenty centuries ago, and now to be seen in the British Museum, with its sacred seals impressed upon the secret parts of the body, its incision in the womb, and the rays descending upon the head, proclaims unmistakably the birth from a virgin mother beneath the overshadowing of the supernal light. And nowhere is that celestial birth more vividly expressed than in the temple of Hathor, the great hall of which speaks of the Holy Child in his Cradle, in the midst of the vast company of the heavenly hosts. Nor do we read in the Ritual only of an incarnate, but of a suffering and a dying God. We are confronted with the tears of Isis, and with the agony of Osiris. Moreover, not only is the twofold action of the same sacred person as man and God recognised, but it is embodied in an animal symbolism; just as among Christians the symbol of the lamb is used for the divine person, the calf and the eagle² for the evangelists. Take, for example, the vignette of the Ritual representing the resurrection of Osiris as taking place in the presence of the Egyptian Trinity. The human form being the highest available, is required by the supreme three; and in order to represent the lower nature, or divine humanity, it is necessary to take a lower creature whose characteristic should indicate that of the divine person represented. Of such a nature was the cat, whose eyes, varying in form like the sun with the period of the day, imaged to the Egyptian the splendour of the light. And thus we have the cat cutting off the head of the serpent of darkness, in the presence of the sacred three. And when the original meaning of that symbolism was no longer retained in their science, it would naturally give rise to the foolishness of animal worship.

No less profound was the relation between the Creator


¹ See Budge's translation, verse 438, p. liii.

² Also the lion.

THE HIDDEN GOD

and his works, as intimated in their well-known symbol for created life, called the Ankh,¹ or sacred mirror, wherein every great deity contemplates perpetually his own image; but which is rarely grasped in the hand of any except Amen. But how should the universe be represented by a mirror, and, if it be, why should the heavenly powers behold themselves reflected in it? Since Egypt gives only the symbols but affords no clue to the connection, and since that profound relation is not affected by the lapse of ages, let us hear the great master of mediæval philosophy. According to the teachings of Aquinas, the universe exists in a twofold manner, first ideally in the mind of God, and secondly materially, externally to him, so that in creation the Almighty contemplates his own mind as in a mirror. As a dramatist, before he gives living expression to his characters, conceives in his own mind their forms, their countenances, their actions, passions and conditions of life, with all the details of their environment, and as his work reflects the image of the author's mind, so in the theosophy of Egypt did the entire cosmos, embracing all space, all time, and all orders of created being, reflect a single thought in the mind of the Creator. Man himself, therefore, had a double or a counterpart in the divine idea, the sacred "type," the festival of which is celebrated in the Ritual, and is masonically expressed within the niche of the Chamber of New Birth. Hence it was that the ideal counterpart possessed such sanctity that the monarch himself is represented as sacrificing to his own "double."

Thus in the theosophy of Egypt the divine relations of the invisible creation were made manifest by those of their visible counterpart. And the same relation of the material

¹  Another signification, that of a fisherman's knot, has of late been adopted by some authorities, says Marsham Adams, and adds: But the shape of the knot differs essentially from that of the Ankh, the head of the latter being upright upon the stem. And again, how should a fisherman's knot stand upright upon the knees of the gods? And if it could, why should it?

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

to the immaterial world will be found to underlie our own scientific conceptions, wherein the expressed form is ever the counterpart of the impressed force. For can any mathematician define the very nature of force otherwise than as that which sets matter in motion ?¹ But if force be that which sets matter in motion, it cannot itself be material, if the fundamental law of motion be true that matter at rest remains at rest. Unless, therefore, our whole conception of dynamical science is wrong from the beginning, the motions of the material universe (and it is of the motions of the heavenly bodies, and not merely of their existence, that the Ritual speaks) must be the result of an immaterial force impressing itself upon the material world, the mind of the Creator giving form to his creation. And it is in the perception of that action that the supreme gift of the human mind, the imaginative faculty of genius, is most fully exercised; for genius is the power of giving expression to the unexhausted forms of creation potentially existing in the mind of the Creator.

Pursue Egyptian theosophy in which direction we may, the things of time speak ever of eternity, the self-existent Deity is always secretly reflected in his creatures. Accordingly each phenomenon of nature conveyed to them a corresponding manifestation of the divine personality, and according to the Ritual it was the Deity indwelling in the soul, which confers upon the man the power of perceiving these relations. " I am perception," we read, " the imperishable soul." In the noonday glow of the sun they beheld the splendour of Ra; in his setting, the death of Osiris; in the new dawn, his resurrection as the incarnate Horus; in the glowing fire, the creator-spirit, Ptah; in the harmonious proportions of the universe, the Eternal Wisdom, Thoth, " the mind and will of God "; in the starry firmament,

¹ The physicist of to-day would undoubtedly not accept this as in any way a complete or satisfactory definition of what he would prefer to term " energy," yet the most modern concepts of the universe are far from being essentially at variance with the ideas that Marsham Adams puts before us.

THE HIDDEN GOD

crowned by Alcyone and the Pleiades (the sacred bull and attendant cows), the ineffable beauty of Athor,¹ the living tabernacle of the Sacred Light.

Bearing now carefully in mind the extreme complexity of this secret parallelism, and the strict analogy between the visible and invisible worlds which constitutes the basis of the political organism, we have little difficulty in perceiving the importance of the function in regard to the Hidden God, discharged by the House of Osiris, and can see that in this masonic record we have a key to the whole politico-religious constitution of the country—a key which none could imitate, none could alter, none destroy; which no man could comprehend unless initiated, nor any forget or mistake, who had once received illumination. Accordingly, in that masonry we find the originals of many of the mystic symbols, whereby the priests so expressed the divine and the royal authority as to be intelligible to those and those alone who had been initiated masonically. Thus, if we draw the groove of the orbit in the Chamber of Splendour, with “The Wall of Earth” at the northern end separating the Orbit from the Shadow, we shall have the hieroglyph for the orbit “Sennen,” which is identical with the cartouche,² surrounding the title of the monarch. That familiar symbol, by the aid of which Champollion first divined the secret of the writing, is therefore nothing else than a masonic sign, signifying that not the circumference, but the immensely more extensive orbit of the earth is the limit of royal authority; and indicating thereby (since the orbit implies renewal from age to age) its endurance no less than its universality. Again, if we represent the course traced by the overlappings of the rays in the roof of the Upper Hall of Truth, we have a representation of the Celestial Nile as depicted in the Vignettes of the

¹ As Marsham Adams points out, this is properly Hat-hor, The House of Horus, the Risen God of Light.



THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

Ritual and the hieroglyph of its earthly counterpart, while if we draw the great throne in the Double Hall of Truth with



ROOF OF UPPER HALL.



HIEROGLYPH SYMBOL OF THE NILE.

the central line of the light running down to the depths of the rock on which it is built, we obtain the hieroglyph denoting Divinity.¹ And if we add to this the lower portion



THRONE AND
AXIS.



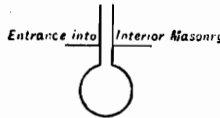
SYMBOL OF
DIVINITY.



TERRITORY OF
THE HOLY DEAD.

of the building, or territory of Initiation, there results the hieroglyph for the territory of the Holy Dead.

Again, suppose that we represent the same place interiorly by drawing the Well, where the reborn soul is reunited to the postulant, together with the line where the interior



WELL OF LIFE, PLACE OF INITIATION.

masonry is bounded by the natural rock through which entrance or initiation into the interior masonry is obtained from below—the entrance impassable by the postulant until the soul is restored to him. Then, if we indicate the image of the Well itself, shining in its own living but invisible waters, as seen by the soul from above, just as the Creator



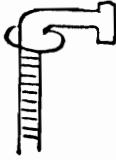
ANKH, SYMBOL OF CREATED LIFE.

looks down on His own image in the universe, we obtain the symbol of the "Ankh," or mirror of Life. So, too, if we

¹ Nuter.

THE HIDDEN GOD

represent the descent traversed by the Initiate from the Head of the Well to the opening into Chamber of the Fiery Ordeal, we have the Sceptre of Ptah, the Spirit of Divine

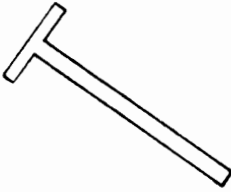


OPENING FROM WELL
TO CHAMBER OF DIVINE FIRE.

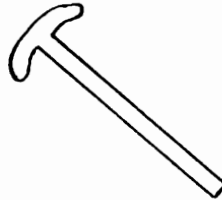


SCEPTRE OF PTAH
SPIRIT OF DIVINE FIRE.


Fire. And if we represent the passage of the horizon together with the masonry of the entrance, we have the sceptre of Anup, the Guide of the Soul.



PASSAGE OF POLE-STAR.



SCEPTRE OF ANUP.

Sometimes the whole hieroglyphic name receives illustration at least, if not origination, from the same pyramidal source; as, for instance, in the name of Hapi, the radiant guardian of the Nile. For if we draw the Grand Arch of the highest chamber, imaging the Grand Arch of the universe, the seat of that luminous spirit, we shall produce the initial of that word. And if we add the Entrance Gate (itself surmounted by the Double Arch), together with the scored line in the passage of the Horizon, pointing downward to the foundation of the rock, we shall have the  complete set of hieroglyphs which compose his name, and thus masonically indicate his office as protector of the rock, the mouth, and fount of the River of Light.

But by far the most important expression of these truths

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

is contained in the kalendar, or recurrent series of festivals, which reflected on earth the rejoicings of heaven; and a full understanding of which was one of the glories reserved in the Ritual for the Illuminate. By means of the kalendar the "Mystery-Teachers of the Heavens" co-ordinated not only the political but the social life of the nation with the theosophy of The Light, while through its masonic expression the divine attributes of the Hidden Deity were at once communicated to the instructed and protected from the profane. To their sense indeed of the divine personality, far more probably than to any artificial pretension to a supposed exclusiveness which does not seem to have had any real existence, may be ascribed the mystery enshrouding their religion. For mystery is to God only what privacy is to man, our sense of which deepens with deepening intimacy. And though three hundred years of continuous wrangling over the secret truths which most profoundly affect the heart and mind have gone far to coarsen and deaden our spiritual sense, the soul still resents, as the most unpardonable offence, the profanation of a vulgar touch. For whether we acknowledge it or not, the springs of our entire existence are hidden. From the darkness of the womb to the darkness of the tomb, the source of our every action is veiled from us. Mystery is the beginning; mystery is the ending; mystery is the whole body of our life. We cannot breathe, nor sleep, nor eat, nor move, far less think or speak, without exercising powers which to us are inconceivable, by means of processes which to us are inscrutable. Who is so ignorant as not to know these things; who so learned as to make them clear?

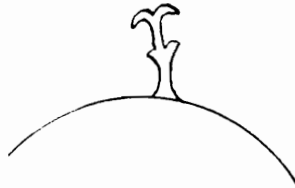
Most powerful and most hidden of all motives is the passion which grows the more reticent as it is enduring, the passion which dominates at once the senses and the spirit, the master-mystery of love. But Love himself was none other than the hidden God. In Greece, where some rays of Egyptian wisdom penetrated with a brightness unknown to more distant lands, this truth was not unknown. Love was

THE HIDDEN GOD

the third in the Trinity of Hesiod. And in Parmenides we read how strife has entered into the deepest places, "but in the centre Love stands calm." But in the teaching of Egypt, the Creator's love, so conspicuous in the sublime hymn already quoted, is the motive power of the universe. "I am the Inundation," says the Creator in the Ritual—"the fulness of the torrent of life." And again, "I am the Fount of Joy," the inexhaustible source of happiness to the soul. Most striking, too, is the allusion which occurs in another hymn to Amen, where it speaks of the crown of illumination,



"ATF," CROWN OF SUPREME LIGHT, CROWN OF ILLUMINATE IN BURNING CIRCLE OF THE ORBIT.



LIGHT OF SUPREME HEAVEN, CROWN OF BURNING CIRCLE OF ZODIAC.

or "Atf" crown of the monarchs fashioned after the form of the zodiacal light which sometimes crowns the Zodiac, the Burning Circle of supreme heaven before the summer dawn. That crown we learn from the Ritual was placed upon the head of the Illuminate on his accomplishing the "Passage of the Sun," in the ascent of "the orbit," and the hymn proclaims that "North and South of that crown is love." That love it was, wherein the catechumen of the Egyptian Wisdom was instructed from the Secret Scroll, and into the mysteries of which he was initiated and illuminated by the Master of the Secret House. So that when, Illuminate in the masonic Light, after ascending the Chamber of the Orbit, stood before the throne at its higher end, northward and southward of him was Love—to the northward, the Love manifested in the starry guide which led him to the knowledge of truth in its splendour, and before him was the Love concealed in the heights of heaven, the Secret Places of the Hidden God.

CHAPTER VI

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

TIME, the most powerful factor in the determination of human affairs, is also the most impalpable. Of everything else which forms the subject of measurement, for instance the velocity of the wind or the extension of space we can conceive, by analogy at least, some kind of mental picture; but of time we find it equally hard to pronounce whether it have or have not any distinctive existence. If there be any one mental fact which man accepts for himself as unquestionable, it is that we know our past and are ignorant of our future, yet between past and future who shall define the point of separation? So subtle, so imperceptible is that infinitesimal and ever-moving barrier between the two limitless expanses, that atom of existence which we call the present moment, that it eludes even the grasp of thought.

If a man says "I am"—the simple declaration of his own existence, and as short a sentence as he can well utter—when he has pronounced the word "I," the word "am" is in the future; when he says "am," the word "I" is in the past. Yet alike from the moment which has just gone by, and from that which is even now at hand, we are separated by a gulf as absolutely impassable as that which divides us from the days of the Pharaohs, or from the future of a thousand years to come. "God himself cannot undo the past," says Pindar. "Shadow forever veiled, forever near, Thou who art called To-morrow," cries the French poet in a well-known ode. "I am Yesterday," says Osiris in the Egyptian Ritual, signifying that he for whom the past is still in existence is

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

freed from the conditions of time which limit the mortal intellect.

But time, though in itself inconceivable, produces effects which are both palpable and universal; for none can overlook the changes which time works on all visible things, and more particularly in the two most potent forms of change, namely those of growth and motion. Wherever either the increase in magnitude or the change in position in any given body during a given period can be measured, there it is evident that time can be measured along with it. Thus the varying aspect of the flowers or the direction of the falling shadows marks the passing hour. The recurrence of certain well-known scents and sounds proclaims the advent and departure of seasons. The gradual alteration in ourselves or in our friends tells us of the lapse of years, nor can we measure time except by change.

How then to find a definite and constant standard, never altering and never ceasing, whereto we may refer this most fugitive and elusive element? In the mechanism of the heavens alone—that is to say, in the relative changes of the celestial bodies, constantly varying yet ever renewed after fixed intervals of time—can such a measure be found, which will continue to recur unfailingly though ages pass away. Chief among such periods is that of the orbit of our own planet, the motion of which gives the key to all the varying aspects of the universe. From that orbit, the line of the Pharaohs derived one of their proudest titles, “Neb Sennen,” Lord of the Orbit, proclaiming at once the universality and the endurance of their dominion; and from it the Initiate in the Egyptian Ritual obtained his Illumination in celestial things. That motion also is invested in no slight degree with the serenity of the heavens; and no natural image is fraught with greater radiance or tranquillity than that of the rolling year as it circles perpetually about the feet of God. Even in the midst of cloud and fog, the mere striking of a clock, that record of planetary motion, serves to

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

remind us how circumscribed is the surrounding gloom, and how the dull earth beneath our feet is, even as we gaze upon it, shining to its companions in the fields of light, as that lustrous orbit is woven, revolution after revolution with never-failing beauty, cycle after cycle of age-long periods, like golden serpents, twine themselves around it, and span the gulfs of time with the years of the Most High.

Such a system of harmonious periods and of measured intervals, corresponding to universal, not arbitrary standards, was a natural, and indeed an essential, element in the theosophy of a priesthood whose religious teaching was intentionally veiled under the analogies of astronomy. In examining, therefore, the astronomical science of the "Mystery-Teachers of the Heavens,"¹ to use the official title employed in the Court of Pharaoh, we may not unreasonably expect to trace the origin and signification of various familiar measures, of which the use is widely diffused, but the fundamental conception unknown. Nor shall we be altogether disappointed in this respect; while a sudden and vivid interest will be found to attach to the common units of time and space, when we perceive that they are not the fruit of any arbitrary arrangement, however ingenious, but are the products of universal concords, and represent, so to speak, the beats and bars of the music of the spheres.

That the moon was the sacred and, at least in early times, the secret standard of Egyptian science, there seems little doubt. Thoth, the Great Lord of Wisdom and of Measure, the divine recorder, before whom stood the Balance of Justice, wherein the light and darkness of man's mortal life were weighed, was lord, not of the sun, but of the moon; and so to that latter orb we are indebted for our fundamental standards both of space and time, as we may easily see,

¹ Marsham Adams says : For most of the facts here stated with regard to Egyptian Astronomy, I am indebted to the invaluable researches of the late lamented Dr. Brugsch upon the Kalendar, as I am also to his history for quotations from the papyri, and allusions to the customs of the country.

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

remembering always that we are dealing with approximate measures, and “mean,” or average motions. For the position of a heavenly body is, in general, not the same to an observer on the earth’s surface as it would be if he were stationed at its centre, which is the chief point of astronomic reference. This difference, or parallax, must therefore be always taken into consideration; and in the case of the moon, when on the horizon, it is found to be about¹ the three hundred and sixtieth part of the circle of the heavens—that is a degree; and conversely, therefore, the fundamental measure of the circle is given by the difference between the moon’s apparent position on rising at any place as seen by an observer at the earth’s surface, and the position in which it would appear at the same moment if viewed by an observer at the centre of the earth. Equally simple is the fundamental measure of time, namely the hour or period required by the moon in her orbit, relatively to the sun, to traverse a space equal to her own disc; and this measure was peculiarly sacred in Egypt, each hour of the twenty-four which elapse during a single rotation of the earth² being consecrated to its own particular deity, twelve of light and twelve of darkness. “Explain the God in the Hour” is the demand made of the adept in the Hall of Justification. And that God in the Hour, we learn, was Thoth, the Lord of the Moon and the “Reckoner of the Earth.”

A singular relation of a similar kind exists between the lunar period and the risings of the stars, which was also utilised by the Egyptian astronomers. For whereas in regard to the apparent position of the sun, relatively to the rest of the heavens, the motion of the earth in her orbit has a perceptible effect; in regard to the stars, the distances are

¹ Marsham Adams points out that it falls short by not quite three (circular) minutes, or rather less than a seven-thousandth part of the circumference.

² Marsham Adams makes it clear that the word “rotation” is always applied in this work to the motion of a body about its own axis; “revolution,” to its motion around another body.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

so enormous that the orbit of the earth shrinks into insignificance. The time therefore which elapses between any two successive risings of the same star at any given place will, on the average, be a little less than that between any two successive risings of the sun at that place; since in the first case the time depends only upon the complete rotation of the place round the centre of the earth, whereas in the latter, the motion of the earth's centre during the interval must be taken into account. This difference is, on the average, about four minutes in every twenty-four hours, and will, therefore, in fifteen days, amount to an hour. Accordingly we learn from a most interesting paper published by Professor Renouf on a kalendar of the Nineteenth Dynasty, the observations of the stars were taken every fifteenth day, thus correlating the sidereal period with the domestic period of the hour.

Again, the interval which on the average elapses between the moments in which the moon successively comes to the full (always in relation to a given place such as Memphis), that is to say a lunar month or "lunation," is about $29\frac{1}{2}$ solar days. Suppose now we take as a unit of time thirty such solar days; then each lunar month would fall short of that period by half a day or one-sixtieth part, and the lunar year, consisting of twelve such periods, would fall short by six days, so that all the measures would be proportionate. Here, then, we possess the key to a most singular correlation between the lunar motions and the solar months (consisting of thirty solar days), which Dr. Brugsch has pointed out in the Table of Edfu; which was published in the days of the Ptolemies, but never, apparently, while a native monarch reigned. On the first day was celebrated the "conception of the moon," when that orb was on the meridian at noon (while still invisible to the observer)—a refinement unknown to our kalendar; on the second day its birth, or first appearance, and so on throughout the month of thirty days. During the first month, therefore, the lunar intervals would of course

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

correspond more or less precisely with the solar days. But whereas the two sets would grow progressively asunder, the lunar names remained affixed to the same solar days. Thus the first day of each solar month was called the conception of the moon, and the second new moon, although neither phenomenon might have taken place anywhere near the time—a method of expression necessitating, it would seem, a double form of register, and simple enough to those who held the clue, but to a stranger hopelessly misleading.

Turning now to the motions of our own planet we find, as Dr. Brugsch has shown, that the Egyptian division of the solar, or to speak more correctly, of the terrestrial year, depended upon a knowledge of the $265\frac{1}{4}$ rotations performed by the earth while completing (approximately) one revolution around the sun—an extra day being intercalated every fourth or “grand” year. But this method of regarding the matter arises out of our own slovenly method of expressing astronomical ideas, and our habitual employment of language embodying the confused and confusing conceptions of the Greeks; and it by no means does justice to the Egyptian exactness. The truth is that a single year or revolution of the earth is marked by no cosmic or universal correspondence. Only in the fourth or “grand” year, as it was termed, is a harmony established by the simultaneous (or nearly simultaneous) completion of the rotary and revolutionary motions; while at the same time the sun himself, drawing with him the whole planetary system, completes an arc of his own mighty orbit, about equal to the whole circuit of the course of the earth. Accordingly, every year appears to have included (as it does in reality) the three hundred and sixty-sixth day. But adhering strictly to fact, the last solar day of the old year was identical with the first of the new, the day of “completion-beginning”; except in every fourth or grand year, when the earth’s revolution being completed simultaneously, or very nearly simultaneously, with a rotation, the two festivals became distinct. Moreover, since four minutes (of time)

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

a day amounts in the course of a year to the time occupied by a complete rotation of the earth, it follows that the number of such rotations or sidereal days in each year exceeds by one the solar days; the difference being due to the fact that the change in the earth's position every twenty-four hours, owing to its orbital motion, must be taken into consideration in regard to the sun, but is imperceptible when compared with the distance of the stars. By the method of reckoning, therefore, above described, the solar or apparent days are harmonised with the number of earth's true rotations. This being the principle, every year admitted of division into two portions, one consisting of an orbit of three hundred and sixty days, of which the lunar year fell short by the same number of days as the solar year exceeded it; the other, that of the sacred interval or "panegyric," as Dr. Brugsch applies the term, consisting of six days, each being a festival of special sanctity.

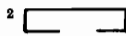
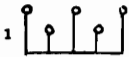
That orbit again of three hundred and sixty days, was itself divided not only into twelve equal solar months,¹ but also into three equal seasons (each of one hundred and twenty days), corresponding, as Dr. Brugsch has shown, to the three great physical divisions of the Egyptian year—the season of the inundation ("Se"), commencing with the rise of the Nile, about the time of the new moon nearest the summer solstice; the season of winter ("Pir"), and the season of heat ("Semou"), answering more or less to our spring. Hence in every year the period of three hundred and sixty days was divided either into three equal seasons, each containing twelve decades of days, or into twelve equal months, each containing three decades of days; while the sacred interval bore the same ratio to that whole period (one-sixtieth) as a minute (or circular arc) bears to a degree; and the excess quarter of a day upon which the whole arrangement depended bore the same ratio to the sacred interval (one twenty-fourth) as the solar hour to the complete

¹ See note J, p. 176.

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

day. It is not unworthy of remark also, that whereas in the order of the seasons, as corrected by Dr. Brugsch, their hieroglyphs have no correspondence with the physical year (as Champollion believed to be the case), and appear therefore to be arbitrary and unmeaning; yet when we refer to the course of the soul in the Ritual, we find them to symbolise three successive stages of its progress; the fields of Aahlu,¹ into which it comes forth from the Chamber of New Birth; the Enclosure² of the Hidden Lintel of Justice, the beginning of Justification; and the source of the Celestial Nile,³ where it receives the crown of illumination.

For ordinary purposes and comparatively short periods the reckoning of the Grand Cycle suffices; but for long intervals the correspondence is not sufficiently exact; the real difference each year falling short of a quarter of a day by nearly twelve minutes, or the fifth part of an hour (less a certain number of seconds). But the fifth part of an hour will, it is obvious, in thirty years itself amount to six hours, that is, to a quarter of a day; and accordingly every thirty years we find a special festival or Jubilee celebrated in the Kalendar of Egypt; thus commemorating the period said to have been occupied in building the Pyramid of Light. And in five hundred years, or the Egyptian Cycle of the Phœnix, the same difference will amount to between four and five days, that is, very nearly to the sacred interval; so that if that interval be omitted, the orbit of the coming year joins the orbit of the departing, and every five hundred years the Phœnix renews itself. All these cycles, therefore, centre round the adjustment of the quarter of a day; and so essential an element was that quarter in all calculations relating to the Kalendar, that every fourth year, if we may trust Horapollo, the festival was celebrated by the addition of a quarter of an acre to the land belonging to the temples.



THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

Of the three seasons, that of the inundation was the first and principal; and the flood of the Nile ran like a sparkling current through the religion of the country. "I am the Inundation," says the Creator in the sixty-fourth chapter, said to be the oldest on the Ritual,¹ "the Light of the Second Birth." Every stage in the annual flood of the life-giving river was the subject of a special festival. Some little time before the summer solstice, the first symptom of the coming rise was given by the waters in Upper Egypt becoming suffused with a crimson colour. Of this singular phenomenon, which goes by the name of "Red Nile," Herodotus has left a very fine account; and it is curious to note, as an instance of strong accord between ancient and modern travellers, that his description is quoted at great length by the eminent Egyptologist, Professor Maspéro. The Red Nile is remarkable in every way; but in none perhaps more than in the fact that the waters are at that time peculiarly sweet, while at "Green Nile," as another period is called, the reverse is the case. To the former condition, in connection with the midsummer sun, allusion seems to be made in the "Eye filled with blood," mentioned in the Ritual; and to the latter in the "intolerable stench" made by Osiris in the river. About the period corresponding to our month of July, the waters begin to rise; and the "Sailing of the Bark of Ra" was celebrated, together with the birthday of Osiris. A few days later was held the great Assembly at the Nilometer, or sacred "Tat," the most venerable symbol known to their worship; and the first proclamation of the rise was made. Towards the middle of August took place the cutting of the Grand Dyke, whereby the risen stream was permitted to overflow into private channels; a ceremony celebrated in more modern times as the "Marriage of the Nile," but known to the ancient world as the festival of the "Digging of the Earth." No less a sanctity, in short, attached to every phase of that stream of

¹ Cf. Note 1, p. 48.

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

life than to the "Celestial Nile" itself, of which the earthly river was the image and counterpart.

It may now be not uninteresting or uninteresting to compare for a moment the system of Egypt with our own Leap Year, for which we are, in fact, indebted to that country, through the astronomer Sosigenes, who was imported by Julius Cæsar from Alexandria, to remedy in some degree the confusion of the Roman Kalendar. That famous Greek appears to have performed his task very much after a fashion not unknown to adopters. He cared—perhaps he knew—very little about the astronomical principle involved in the Egyptian reckoning, and nothing at all about the niceties of further adjustment which it demanded; indeed, before half a century had passed, his own corrections required to be corrected. He took no heed of standard or of measure, of orbit or of sacred interval. But first he cut up the year into twelve unequal and unmeaning bits—to say he divided it into portions is far too scientific an expression—which rags bore indeed the name of the insulted moon, but of which that mighty measurer condescended to make no sort of recognition. And then he threw the "odd day" in along with the "odd month"; much as a child, who has broken his toy horse, glues a bit of tail to the shortest of the legs, and calls aloud on creation to admire his handiwork.

Nor is the difference between the Egyptian and the alien treatment of the kalendar accidental or unimportant. On the contrary, it suggests the key to its use in the ancient country, as the great politico-religious instrument whereby the social economy of the nation was co-ordinated with the theosophy of the priesthood. Among modern nations monotony of recurrence seems to be the single object desired, so as to offer every facility for the arrangements of business or pleasure, and to confine within the strictest limits the diminutive period allotted to the life to come. Any system, therefore, which breaks the regular routine, more particularly if it be connected, as in ancient Egypt, with the

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

commemoration of sacred events, provokes impatience much more than admiration. And the various adjustments of the kalendar appear to be regarded as if they were odds and ends of time left littering about the heavens by the sun and moon, and requiring an ingenious astronomer—like Sosigenes—to fold together and put away tidily.

Very different from this narrow and ungracious spirit was the joyous temper wherewith the Egyptian "Mystery-Teachers of the Heavens" regarded these sacred intervals. Throughout the symbology of that country, life was the centre, the circumference, the totality of good. Life was the sceptre in the hand of Amen; life was the richest "gift of Osiris." "Be not ungrateful to thy Creator," says the sage Ptah-Hotep, in what is perhaps the oldest document in existence; "for he has given thee life." "I am the Fount of Light," says the Creator in the Ritual. "I pierce the darkness. I make clear the path for all; the Lord of Joy." By them, therefore, the intervals were gratefully accepted as a kind of breathing-space, wherein time, like the sun at the solstice, appears for a while to rest, and man, like the immortals, might enjoy, without impairing, the treasure of life. Accordingly the panegyric, or time of praise, separating, or rather uniting year with year, took place not in the gloom of winter as with us, but in the full height and glow of summer; at the period at once of accomplishment and renovation, when the sun was in his fullest strength, and the rising of the waters of the Nile began to renew their life-giving floods. On the first day of the sacred interval of continuous praise was celebrated the birth of Osiris, the Lord of Light, Prime Mover of Creation. On the second, Horus; God of God; Light of Light; the eldest of creation, to use the expression of the Egyptian Ritual. On the third, Seb, Creator of earth. On the fourth, Isis, with her double relation of human and divine motherhood. On the fifth, Neith, from whose divine personality gushed the stream of life eternal, who "gave to every mummy the draught for

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

which he thirsted, that his soul might be separated from him no more for ever." And on the sixth day was celebrated the feast of "Hep-Tep," the crowning festival of "Completion-Beginning."

Such was the symphony of light and joy which, for the Egyptian, preluded the glowing year; and such also was its masonic expression, wherein was struck the full diapason of lunar and solar, of terrestrial and celestial, of temporal and spiritual harmony. As the Lunar Chamber of New Birth, the Habitation of Isis, "the Mother of God" and the "Queen of the Pyramid,"¹ was originally closed up, thus forming the trebly veiled and most secret portion of the Hidden Places, so in the eastern staircase of that chamber²



we seem to discover the most secret masonic key, both to the astronomical form and the spiritual signification—the exterior and the interior light. For in its fivefold gradation we have the correlation of the lunar motion with the sun, in the five degrees of the moon's ascent and descent each month from the ecliptic. Again, since the sacred quarter of a day whereby the earth's rotation was harmonised with its revolution exceeds the true period by (very nearly) twelve minutes; so in five years does that annual excess make up ($5 \times 12 =$) 60 minutes, the lunar measure of the hour. And thus we read in the Ritual of the "Chamber of the Hour of Rusta," the territory both of death and birth. In the same staircase, around the niche or "type," wherein the regenerate soul is formed—the image of the Queen of the Pyramid—we have the fivefold regeneration of the senses; and in it, too, we may recognise, in such a form as to preserve but not to betray this trebly hidden masonic key, the double

¹ Cf. note 4, p. 30.

² The figure is sculptured on the eastern wall of the Queen's Chamber in the Great Pyramid.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

throne of Isis and Osiris, pointing not improbably to a yet more secret staircase within.

Even this does not exhaust the fulness of this prolific symbol; but it gives a clue beyond its own immediate



THRONES OF ISIS AND OSIRIS.

recess, and connects the Chamber of New Birth with the luni-solar Chamber of the Orbit, just as the New Birth itself connects Rusta with Aahlu; the place of Initiation with that of Illumination. For in the same ascent in the Chamber of Divine Birth, we have the five divine birthdays, which make up the solar year. Immediately above is the great throne, crowning the lunar chamber, and masonically expressing the Egyptian "Hep-Tep," or crowning festival of completion-beginning; as the chamber which it surmounts represents the territory of both Death and Birth—the "Completion-Beginning" of mortal Immortality. By the overlappings of the roof are formed thirty-six rays or indentations, marking the thirty-six decades of the luni-solar orbit. The southern wall, impending about one degree north, points to the northern boundary of the zodiacal belt; the lower line of overlapping wall to its southern boundary and between are the seven planetary spaces, with the groove of the luni-solar-orbit running down the space corresponding to that of the earth.

Still further illustrations of the relations between our planet and her luminous assistant, as together they describe the doubly ruled Orbit of Light, are to be found in this extraordinary Chamber of the Splendour. As the wall points secretly to the northern, and the inclined floor to the southern boundary of the Burning Circle of the Zodiac (about 89° and 152° of North Polar Distance) respectively; so does the inclination of the roof to the level passage¹ (about $28^{\circ}30'$)

¹ Leading to the Queen's Chamber.

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

secretly define the limiting inclination of the lunar orbit (about $28^{\circ}30'$) to the sacred plane of the equinox. And the fifty-six ramp-stones, twenty-eight on either side, give masonic expression to the fifty-six alternations of light and darkness which take place approximately in the period of the moon's rotation, twenty-eight of the ascent and twenty-eight of the descent; the double position of the stones, partly horizontal, partly sloping, corresponding with the double attraction of the moon to the earth and the sun; and the holes in their centres, with the crosses marked above them, indicating the lunar transits over the Grand Meridian of the House of Osiris.

Recurring once more to the Kalendar, it is evident that a system combining so wonderful a harmony with such perfect simplicity could never have been constructed without some definite starting-point in time, a Grand Epoch absolutely defined by some singular conjunction of the heavenly bodies, and occurring only after long and clearly measured intervals. Such an interval is afforded by the famous Cycle of Sothis, of high antiquity in Egypt, and peculiar to that country, the principle of which, being dependent upon the relative rates of the earth's rotation and revolution respectively, has by no means always been thoroughly understood.¹

Since the average interval between two successive risings of a given star at a particular place is determined only by the period of the earth's rotation, whereas in the case of the sun a period of about four minutes must be added, on account of the motion of revolution in her orbit during that period, it follows, as we have seen, that the star will on the average rise at that place about four minutes earlier every day, making the round of the twenty-four hours every year. Consequently there will be in each year one day when that star will rise at that place "heliacally," that is to say just so long before the

¹ As for instance, as Marsham Adams points out, by the famous scholar Scaliger, whose misunderstanding was exposed by Professor Graves, the Oxford Astronomer, in A.D. 1640.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

dawn as to be visible for a few moments before vanishing in the increasing splendour. The position of the star relatively to the earth and sun at the moment of heliacal rising we may call its orient; and when the position is such as to coincide with the summer solstice, we may express that position as the Grand Orient of the star. Now the number of degrees by which the sun is below the horizon when the heliacal rising of a star takes place, is not fully determined, and varies to some extent with the locality; but ten degrees below is usually taken as the sun's position when the star is lost in dawn, so that the time would be about forty minutes before full sunrise.

Let us now consider the interval between two such risings of some particular star; and for that purpose let us choose, like the Egyptians, Sirius or Sothis, the most brilliant of the distant suns, the flaming sentinel to us of the fiery hosts of space. Suppose, then, that on some particular day (such as that of summer solstice) Sothis is on the horizon of Memphis when the sun is eleven degrees below it, that is one degree below the point of dawn. On that day Sothis will rise heliacally, and will remain visible on the horizon for about four minutes (while the earth rotates through one degree), after which it will be lost in the break of dawn. On the anniversary of that day it will again be on the horizon, when the earth completes her two hundred and sixty-fifth rotation; that is, when our planet is a quarter of a degree less advanced in her orbit, since the full revolution takes $265\frac{1}{4}$ rotations. Hence, since the earth *rotates* through a quarter of a degree in a minute (of time), there will be the difference of a minute in the corresponding rising each year, and therefore of four minutes in each grand cycle. But since four minutes makes the difference of a day in the star's first appearance, there will be for every grand cycle a difference of a day in the heliacal rising of the star; and consequently in $4 \times 365\frac{1}{4}$ (or 1,461) years the whole orbit will be traversed. That lovely cycle, with its tetrachord of starry

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

light, just gleaming on the horizon and then vanishing, lost in the growing splendour, appears from the allusions to the dawn to have had its spiritual analogue in the festival of the "Shapes," or divine forms of beauty; when the departed re-created in the divine image rose gloriously from the grave, and shone for a while amid the company of starry spirits, before merging his lustre, though not his existence, in the splendour of the manifested Godhead.

From this highly important cycle we may draw some conclusion as to the grand epoch of the Egyptian Kalendar; the date, that is to say, when mere tradition came to an end, and systematic records, organised upon astronomical principles, began to be preserved. Since in the course of the cycle, the heliacal risings take place on each day of the entire year, they will run during the first half of the cycle in one direction (relatively to the earth's orbit) and in the latter half in the opposite. And since there is also a corresponding series of settings, subject to a similar change of direction, the two series would in each cycle make up a double reversal, interchanging positions not once but twice. When therefore Herodotus tells us in a well-known passage (*Euterp.* 143), how, according to the Egyptian records, the risings and settings had been out of their order four times since their reckoning commences; "the risings twice taking the place of the settings, and the settings twice taking the place of the risings," the meaning becomes perfectly clear if referred (as Rawlinson suggests) to the heliacal risings and settings of Sothis, the determinator of the Kalendar. And the very circumstance that Herodotus himself in all probability did not understand—and was not intended to understand—the drift of the extract, strongly corroborates its authenticity and his statement that it was not his own, but was read to him from the sacred books. Indeed it is very difficult to conceive that a person, ignorant of astronomy, should so misrepresent a statement made to him by astronomers, as to blunder by accident into the correct exposition of a different and highly

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

complex astronomical relation. We learn, therefore, that two Sothic cycles (four reversals) had been completed since the institution of the scientific Kalendar; so that the cycle then current in the time of Herodotus would be the third. And as there is evidence that that cycle was completed in A.D. 139, and therefore commenced in 1322 B.C.; at which epoch Sothis rose heliacally at Memphis about a week before the solstice, and the Rising of the river was heralded by the Orient of the star. Hence, therefore, we conclude that the commencement of the first Sothic cycle and the institution of the scientific Kalendar took place ($2 \times 1,461$ years previously, i.e.) at the summer solstice of 4244 B.C.—a few years before the reign of the astronomer-architect Khufu, the most famous monarch of antiquity—the moment of commencement being marked by the heliacal rising of Sothis. In Chapter lxiv, which describes the new birth of the soul, and thus supplies the key to the whole creed, or in its own words gives “The Entrance on Light in One Chapter,” a passage occurs which appears to refer to this dawning of another age. “The twenty-four are passing,” it says, “until the sixth. He remains in the Gate.” In the sixth hour that is to say, reckoning from midnight (as Professor Renouf has shown to have been the custom), the march of the stars is stayed, and the sun enters the Gate of a new cycle; in the same way as for the regenerate soul the night is past, and he enters the Gate of Everlasting Day.

That the date in question was the true epoch of the institution of the Kalendar, to which all astronomical allusions are to be referred whether in the Ritual or in the Pyramid of Light, is confirmed by a simple explanation which is thus afforded of a very marked peculiarity (and apparent anomaly) in its use. As is well known, the “node” or point where the earth at Equinox cuts the plane of the Equator and consequently the point of solstice (which is always 90° from that of Equinox), is not invariable, but year after year falls a little short of (or precedes) its previous

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

position, so as to shift round in a direction opposite to the earth's revolution. In other words, this motion, which affects the entire orbit and which we find more especially illustrated by the position and design of one famous temple, is the extremely slow revolution performed by the axis of the celestial sphere around the axis of the Ecliptic in about 26,000 years, which is called the cycle of precession.¹ That this cycle was familiar to the astronomers of early Egypt,² is, I think, sufficiently clear from the following solution afforded by it of the anomaly mentioned at the beginning of the previous paragraph, which Dr. Brugsch, the eminent authority on the hieroglyphic kalendar, has plainly stated, but without attempting to explain. Dr. Brugsch has drawn attention to the circumstance that during the later dynasties, a double series of months was employed, wherein, for instance, "The First of Thoth," that is, the first day of the first month, is given in the time of Thothmes III (about 1600 B.C.) both on the day corresponding to our July 20th, and on August 27th, and similarly with the rest.

Suppose now that in addition to the current date of the solstice the archaic date was also preserved—a suggestion entirely in agreement with Egyptian custom and mode of thought—that is to say, that a record was kept of the day of the Grand Epoch on which the earth arrived at the point in her orbit which she had reached when the kalendar was defined, then the peculiarity could be explained. For since the date of Equinox, and therefore of course of solstice, falls a little earlier relatively to the orbit every year, the archaic date will fall a little later. And as in twenty-six thousand years its traverses the circle of the year, and falls again on the anniversary; in two thousand six hundred and fifty years the archaic date would be thirty-seven or thirty-eight days later; so that if the kalendar were founded at the epoch

¹ The actual rate at which precession takes place is about 50 seconds per annum.

² See note K, p. 176.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

assigned, the difference between the current and the archaic date in the days of Thothmes III would just correspond to the difference which we find. Again, at the commencement of the third Sothiac cycle, in 1322 B.C., the archaic date would be later still, on August the 29th or 30th. And this appears to have been adopted in the later times as the fixed archaic date, without further variation in the Alexandrine Kalendar.

By a similar reference to the archaic date, we may throw some light on the peculiar sanctity attaching to certain days of the month, for which it is otherwise difficult to account. For instance, in the Kalendars of the third Sothiac cycle, the fifteenth and the sixth of the month appear to be peculiarly sacred; and in the Turin Papyrus of *The Book of the Dead* (the allusions in which would probably not go back so far as the first cycle, but might refer either to the second or third), command is given no less than three times that the most important festival of the year, the Birthday of Osiris, should be celebrated on the fifteenth of the month. But the Birthday of Osiris was, as we have seen, the first festival of the New Year, and what connection could such a day have with any particular day of any month whatsoever? A very close connection if the archaic day is to be taken into consideration. At the commencement of the second Sothiac cycle the archaic date of Osiris' Birthday would fall twenty or twenty-one days later than at the foundation of the kalendar; and, remembering the five days of the sacred interval, we reach the fifteenth day of the first month; while a similar calculation, allowing in all forty-one days, brings us in the third Sothiac cycle to the sixth of the succeeding month. For a similar reason another great festival, that of the Bark of Ra, is ordered to be celebrated on the Birthday of Osiris, since at the foundation of the Kalendar that day coincided with the rising of the sacred Nile, the waters of which represent new life.

Hence, in order to preserve a true record of time, it is

THE MYSTERY OF THE HEAVENS

necessary to note the motion of the earth with reference to four, and only four, different standards; that is to say, in regard to the stars, to the moon, to the sun and to Equinox, the other relative motions of the earth having no perceptible effect upon our reckoning of time. All these standards, with their respective measures and harmonies, were known, as we have seen, to the Egyptians; and this accounts for the circumstance that Dr. Brugsch has remarked, that at a very early date the Kalendar of Egypt was kept upon four different reckonings. All these standards also, each with its spiritual significance corresponding with the Ritual, we have seen expressed in the masonry of the Great Pyramid. For to the architect of the Egyptian Light, there was no celestial truth which was not manifested in the motions of the celestial orbs; nor was there any chamber among the Hidden Places of the Great House which did not secretly reflect the path of the just in the mystery of the heavens.

CHAPTER VII

THE MYSTERY OF THE DEPTHS

LIGHT is the first principle of created life. There is no growth without light. Colour, perfume, savour, every varied object of sense vanishes if light be absent. Each beam is a separate celestial gift, direct from the hand of the Creator; as in the bas-relief on the tomb at Thebes, discovered by Mr. Villiers Stuart, where the diverging rays form a pyramid of light, and to each ray is attached a hand of blessing.

Universal, too, as is the necessity for light in living nature, equally extended is its manifestation in the form of motion. Wherever life exists, in man or bird, or beast or fish, there also is that power which is denied to inanimate matter—the power to originate motion. To live and move and have our being are three states inseparably connected with each other. Mathematician and poet alike acknowledge the universality of motion in living form. “Motion, fount of beauty,” exclaims Pindar in one of his loftiest odes. “All nature is in motion,” says Professor Price in his lucid treatise on infinitesimals. So, too, the unfailing harmonies of the heavenly bodies express themselves in the periods of their orbits. And through the correlations of those luminous circuits, as through a veil of glory, the correlations of interior truth were shadowed forth by the Egyptian “Mystery-Teachers of the Depths.” Depth beyond Depth, space beyond space, height beyond height, from the company of the planets around our sun, to where the “clusters of countless stars are but a faint nebulous gleam,” Light is every-

THE MYSTERY OF THE DEPTHS

where the Omnipotent Creator, the laws of Light the expression of infallible truth.¹

But how to seize with material grasp the intellectual relations of the most ethereal element known to man ? How imprison in stable form the flashes of the fiery spark as it darts with inconceivable speed from space to furthest space ? How render palpable to the direct touch the distant courses of those flying orbs ? In a word, how shall we build up the manifestation of Light, and find masonic expressions for the Mystery of the Depths ? Light itself gives us a reply. For if, as in the bas-relief at Thebes, the diverging flood of rays be represented as it pours down at noon on the day of summer solstice, the opening day of the Egyptian year, we shall have one face of the Pyramid of Light. Suppose now that a quadrangular pyramid be erected with four such sides facing respectively the cardinal points of the heavens. Then since each revolution of the earth is completed by one quarter of a rotation later than the preceding, it follows that every fourth or grand year the same face will be turned towards the sun when the revolution of the earth is accomplished; and thus the Egyptian Grand Cycle (of four years) will be masonically expressed. Just such a form is found in the quadrangular Pyramid of Light, its sides so oriented as to have originally faced the cardinal points, and its summit so truncated as to permit the sun on one day in the year to rest upon it "with all its rays," so that the building "devours its own shadow."

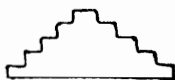
The general form determined, what proportions shall the dimensions assume, or in other words, at what angle shall

¹ Marsham Adams points out that in the same way Moses, who never claims for himself direct revelation in regard to any matter contained in Genesis (though in subsequent books that claim is repeated again and again), and whose fame as an expert in Egyptian science was quoted hundreds of years after his death by St. Stephen in his address to his countrymen, commences his exposition of the Mystery of the Depths by the initiation of Light and Motion. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep. And God said, Let there be Light; and there was Light."

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

the sides converge towards the invisible vertex ? The earth in her orbit gives reply. For as that planet moves around the sun in an (approximately) circular path, while each ray travels towards it in a direct line, the relation between the illuminating force and the illuminated body may be expressed by the relation between the radius and the circumference of a circle. But this relation is such that the altitude of a pyramid when bearing the same ratio to its base-circuit subtends an angle of about $51^{\circ}50'$. And that is the Angle of Elevation of the Great Pyramid. Nor is this most important, and indeed dominating, measure due to accident; since the angle in question is the most marked, and almost the only feature, which the lesser and later pyramids share with the Pyramid of Light, so that it forms the masonic sign whereby the inferior buildings tacitly asserted their kinship with the Great House.

Although, however, these general aspects of the radiance suffice to determine the general aspect of the building, yet a closer investigation of the light will disclose a more intimate relation. For since our atmosphere may be conceived as divided into successive layers of air, increasing in density as they approach the earth, each ray as it travels will be slightly deflected or refracted as it passes from a finer to a denser ring, the refraction being greatest when the body is on the horizon, and imperceptible when it is near the zenith. Conversely, if on any given day the position of the sun be observed at equal intervals from rising to noon and from noon to sunset, the apparent place of the sun will,



owing to refraction, be slightly different from its true position at any observation; and a diagram representing their mutual relations will offer the appearance of a house having many stories, with a small platform at the summit, since near the zenith the true and apparent positions are

THE MYSTERY OF THE DEPTHS

identical (and the only motion is that of transit)—that is to say, we shall have the appearance of the Great Pyramid when the casing-stones are removed.

If, then, on the first day of the (Egyptian) new year—when the sun is about fourteen hours visible above the horizon at Memphis—an observation be taken every two minutes (four observations for the period occupied by any ray in reaching the earth from the sun) there will be altogether about four hundred and forty observations, making two hundred and twenty courses of ascent and descent, of which a certain number will be wanting at the top since at the zenith there is no refraction. But this is precisely the case in the Pyramid of Light; the number of existing courses being about two hundred, and the number required to complete it being reckoned at about twenty more. Further, since the moon in every two minutes of time completes a (circular) minute of her circuit relatively to the sun, and since at the commencement of every Sothiac Cycle she commences a new lunation and comes (invisibly) to the meridian at the same time with the sun at noon, it follows that these unit-intervals of observation correspond with the minute-intervals of her motion; and each course of the Great Pyramid corresponds to the change in the altitude of the sun for one circular minute of the moon's position relatively to that body.

The true and apparent forms of the Great Pyramid being thus determined by the true and apparent motions of light, we have now to inquire with what scale we are to build up the chambers of the house. The rolling earth once more suggests the standard. The cosmic unit of space—the Sceptre of Anup, the Guide of the Horizon of Heaven—must be clearly defined, and incapable of confusion; it must be self-evolved, and yet immutable; it must be within man's power to compass, but not within his grasp to alter. Now these conditions are fulfilled by one line, and one only known to man, the polar axis of the earth—the line, that is

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

to say, about which takes place the earth's daily rotation, while itself performs the annual circuit of the sun. Let that line be carried far as the eye can follow or thought can reach, the depths through which it pierces remain for us ever at rest. That is the line which directs the axis of the Sacred Horizon of the Point of Equinox, and which indicated to the mind of Egypt the entrance path for the holy departed as they passed from the created to the Uncreated Light. A beautiful allusion is made in the Ritual to the illuminative action of the sun in reference to this double motion of the axis, as the earth, the vessel of God, performs her daily and annual course in the heavens. For we read there how the holy departed "has appeared in the Bark of Ra in the course of every day"; and how Thoth, the Divine Wisdom, "clothes the spirits of the justified a million times in a garment of true linen"; of that substance, that is to say, which by its purity and brilliance reminds us of the mantle woven out of rays of light wherewith the sun enwraps the earth afresh each day she rotates before him, just as the soul of man is invested with new radiance each time that he turns to the presence of his Creator.

How, then, shall we avail ourselves of this mighty measure, this rule of light and standard of space? This time the building itself answers through its familiar title. According to Brugsch, the term Pir-am-us in Egyptian signifies EDGE; and on examining the base-circuit of the building, we find it to be composed of casing-stones with a bevelled horizontal edge, so exquisitely finished that according to Flinders Petrie, it is equal "to the finest work of the optician." On the occasion of the visit of the Empress Eugénie to Egypt, in 1869, one of these casing-stones was measured *in situ* by Mr. W. Dixon, and found to contain just 25.025 British inches. But the relation of this length to the polar radius (or semi-axis) of the earth is of the very last importance in universal measurement. Several years

THE MYSTERY OF THE DEPTHS

ago Sir John Herschel pointed out that our inch is contained in the earth's polar radius just 250,250,000 times; so that if that unit be increased by its thousandth part (less than the fineness of the finest hair) it will be contained in the polar radius just two hundred and fifty million times. Since therefore this stone contains twenty-five inches so increased, it measures the earth's polar radius exactly ten million times; and as the Egyptians were certainly familiar with the decimal system, expressing units, tens, hundreds, thousands and millions by distinct hieroglyphs, this stone in the base circuit of the Great House supplies a simple masonic unit of cosmic length, a standard of universal measurement.

That this length was a standard measure among the builders of the early dynasties is shown by the discovery of Flinders Petrie, who found at Gizeh, in the neighbourhood of the pyramids, two specimens of twenty-five inches (within a small decimal)¹ belonging to the time of Khufu.

Were this ratio an isolated instance, some question might not unnaturally arise as to the accidental nature of the connection; but the intention of the architect is strongly confirmed by the kindred discovery due to Flinders Petrie. That acute observer has pointed out that the length of the raised pavement was a simple measure (one-twentieth) of a geographical mile. And since a geographical mile is a measure of the earth's circumference at the Equator, a knowledge of it implies a knowledge of the measurement of the polar radius.

Striking, however, as is the ratio which this stone bears to the cosmic standard, its relation to the Pyramidal Edge, of which it forms a part, is no less prolific of universal

¹ Petrie maintains this twenty-five-inch cubit to be "evidently an Egyptian edition of the royal twenty-five-inch cubit of Persia." But, as Marsham Adams says, why a Persian cubit should be employed at Gizeh, or what we know of Persia some thousands of years before the time of Darius, he does not tell us. It is difficult to see why he might not with equal reason pronounce the Capitol of Romulus to be "evidently an Italian edition of the Capitol at Washington."

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

results. For taking as the length of that base-line, the average of the results obtained by the principal surveys¹ executed since the great Napoleon opened the dull eyes of Europe to the inexhaustible treasures of ancient Egypt, we find that the casing-stone is contained in the line so measured just 265.25 times, and consequently in the entire circuit ($4 \times 365\frac{1}{4}$) 1461 times. Hence, as the form suggests the Grand Cycle, so does the measure of the base-circuit; the number of times the cosmic unit is repeated in that circuit, defining the number of days in the Grand Cycle, and consequently also the number of the solar years in the cycle of Sothis.

It seems, therefore, not unreasonable to conceive that before the casing-stones finally shut up the secret, the relations of the sun and moon to the position of Sothis and of the Pole Star should have been correlated with the courses of the Pyramid in the manner above described; and thus a starting-point for all the motions of the earth, whether in relation to the moon, the sun, the equinox or the stars, have been registered unalterably in the masonic light.

To measure the motions of the earth, however, is the

¹ These results are as follows, expressed in our inches :

French Commission	...	...	...	...	...	9,163
Colonel Howard Vyse	...	...	...	...	...	9,168
Piazzi Smyth	...	...	...	...	...	9,110
Royal Engineers, 1st Survey	...	...	...	...	...	9,130
Royal Engineers, 2nd Survey	...	...	...	...	...	9,140
Flinders Petrie	...	...	...	...	...	9,126
						<hr style="width: 100%;"/>
Mean	...	...	...	...	...	9,140
						<hr style="width: 100%;"/>

This length differs, therefore, from that obtained by Flinders Petrie. But, as for some reason, which is not very clear, Petrie allows no less than $4\frac{1}{8}$ inches for each socket to "play," a most extraordinary condition, surely, in the case of workmanship "equal to the finest work of the optician," it is difficult to place our usual reliance on his accuracy. The average here taken, it will be observed, of the whole results coincides precisely with one of the measurements, and also with the mean of the greatest and least.

THE MYSTERY OF THE DEPTHS

commencement, but only the commencement, of the universal scale. That which we need for the Mystery of the Depths is nothing less than the span of solar or measurable space. In other words, we require to define the extreme limits on either hand within which no fount of original light is found except our own sun, since the distances of the stars are beyond accurate measurement. But the distance of the limiting point of solar or measurable space, or rather the radius of the limiting horizon (since the distance will be the same in every direction) is about twenty-five hundred million times the length of the earth's polar axis; so that that axis is contained in the radius of measurable space two hundred and fifty times as often as itself contains the edge of the casing-stone. Now if that casing-stone be divided into twenty-five equal parts, each of such parts will, as we have seen, contain our own inch increased by its thousandth part. This unit, therefore, which we may call the polar inch, measures not only the axis of the earth, but of the depths of solar or measurable space, being contained in the former two hundred and fifty million times, and in the latter two hundred and fifty thousand billion times. But in that ancient chapter of the Ritual¹ which claims to have been revealed in the days of the Fourth Dynasty,² we read that the Creator, when revealing Himself to the new-born soul as the Measurer of space, employs this very ratio as standard. " ' I who know the Depths ' is my Name," so runs the text of this sublime chapter; " I make the cycles of the shining millions of years; and billions are My measurement."³

That the inch, whether in our own or any other form, was

¹ lxiv.

² In the rubric to this chapter as found in the Papyrus of Mes-em-neter, we are informed that the chapter was discovered " in the foundations of the shrine of the divine Henu boat " by the chief mason in the time of Senti-Hesep-ti, *i.e.*, about 4266 B.C. (Budge).

³ Of this version Marsham Adams says : " In the original : Ari Kherti Khuu aha pu tefnut pu krastuf. The translation above given differs slightly both from the version of Birch and that of Pierret."

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

not an open and recognised Egyptian measure there can be little doubt. But the mention of these cycles of the shining years suggests a principle of singular beauty, involving the use of that polar unit as the secret key to the architectural standards of ancient Egypt. Among the many valuable results due to the industry of Flinders Petrie is a collection of cubits of various lengths, employed by the architects of the Fourth and Eleventh Dynasties. These architectural units are very numerous, and, unless referred to cosmic principles, quite miscellaneous, having no apparent co-ordination either among themselves or with anything else. When, however, taking as our unit the polar inch,¹ we compare them with the measures of light, as expressed in the shining circuits and radii of the celestial periods—remembering always that the radii and semi-radii of the cycles of years are both consonant with the angular construction of the Pyramid and are secretly involved in the analogy of Illumination—we find a most remarkable correspondence in measure after measure, not absolute indeed, but different only by decimals of an inch.

Take, for example, the number of polar inches into which the casing-stone is divided, when considered as a measure of space, namely twenty-five; a close approximation to which is found in two specimens² belonging to the Fourth Dynasty, which were discovered at Gizeh—that is to say, which were employed in the neighbourhood of the Great Pyramid about the time of its erection. Again, taking as unit the semi-radius of the cycle of Equinox, the radius of which is about 4,122 years, and expressing an inch to a century, the half of it gives as the cubit of 20·6 inches; and this measure is

¹ As Marsham Adams says, this inch is, of course, the same as that adopted by Piazza Smyth, and called by him the "Pyramid Inch"; but he has so inextricably associated that name with views directly opposed to Egyptological research, that I prefer to use an expression which denotes an undoubted relation, first pointed out by Sir John Herschel.

² See p. 120, *ante*, and note 1.

THE MYSTERY OF THE DEPTHS

the more common form of the Egyptian cubit, the standard employed for the sacred "Tat," or Nilometer, which measured the waters of life, the symbol regarded as the highest expression of sanctity, and the final ornament placed upon the holy dead. From the moon also we (approximately) obtain two standards of Egyptian measure. For the number of days in a lunar month gives us closely, at an inch for a day, the 29·3-inch cubit of the Fourth Dynasty. And, at an inch for a year, the number of years (about 18·6) in the cycle of the lunar nodes—(that is, the interval which elapses between two successive crossings of the equinoctial plane by the moon at precisely the same point of her orbit)—yields (very nearly) the 18·7-inch cubit of the Twelfth Dynasty. And, once more, since the orbit of the earth is not strictly a circle but an ellipse with the sun in one focus, there will always be a point in the orbit which will be in "perihelion," that is, nearer the sun than any other. And this point is not stationary, but makes a circuit of the earth's orbit in about 114,000 years; whereof the half-circuit gives us the fifty-seven-inch cubit of the Eleventh Dynasty (at an inch to ten thousand years), and the quarter radius, the forty-five-inch cubit of the Fourth Dynasty (at an inch to a thousand years). It would seem, therefore, that a table of the cubits employed by the architects of those early times would represent a general system of cosmic measures, the scale being marked off upon the axis of the earth, the sole standard of immutable space, and the ratios of the different cubits being proportional to the immutable time-periods of the heavenly bodies. And thus, when the film is brushed away, which the dust of ages has cast over these relics of antique science, their aspect remains no longer lifeless and repulsive; but we recognise in them the glowing insignia of universal truth, the gems from the azure depths, sparkling with the lustre of intrinsic light.

No sooner do we apply this key to the *Book of the Master*, than a series of concealed significations begin to unclose.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

The famous Uræus, or symbol of the snake—connected in some not very definite manner with solar phenomena—has always been intimately associated with the royalty of Egypt. But it appears to have escaped attention that in the Ritual are to be found several serpentine forms of various lengths, and—what is most striking in itself, but easily explained by the results already attained—that when those several lengths are expressed in inches, they prove to be proportional to the measures of the various serpentine curves traced by the motion of the earth and moon. For instance, in Chapter cxxx, we read of “a snake seventy cubits in his coil.” But taking the well-known cubit of 20·6 inches and repeating it seventy times, we obtain one thousand four hundred and forty-two inches; which is proportional (within the seven-hundredth part) to the number of minutes of time (24×60) in the average daily rotation of the Equator or coil of the snake; so that it expresses our own division of the heavens into twenty-four hour-circles, each divided again into sixty equal parts or minutes of time; both of which measures, we have already seen, were familiar to the Egyptians. Moreover, the number of the sun’s rotations about his own axis is, approximately, one hundred and forty-four in a period of ten years, so that the snake expresses an axial motion common to both the sun and its satellite; and appears, therefore, to be “the chief Uræus, gleaming and guiding millions of years,” of which we read in Chapter xxxiv. On the other hand, in another passage of the chapter previously mentioned, an extent of seven cubits gives the length—not of the snake’s coil but—of his back: and this length (one hundred and forty-four inches) just gives the back of the tropical snake, or spiral, that is, the distance of the sun at solstice from the Equator, at that epoch about twenty-four degrees, or one hundred and forty-four decades of circular minutes. Other examples of a more complex character might be adduced, but these must be sufficient to show that in the inch we

THE MYSTERY OF THE DEPTHS

possess a clue to the secret significance of numerous symbols; and that for that very reason it was not openly set forth as the standard, but its place was supplied by the cubit, which betrays no meaning except to one already so far initiated in the Mysteries of the Depths.

Turning now to the Pyramid of Light, to the Secret House itself, to the Master of which the Secret Papyrus belonged, we find the same principle conspicuous throughout the building; the lengths of its various passages and chambers, when expressed in polar inches, being apparently proportional to the radii (or semi-radii) of the celestial periods corresponding respectively to the stages in the progress of the departed. And so strongly marked is the prevalence of this principle, that while a mere knowledge of the measures, however exact, suggests nothing of the spiritual meaning, the insight which we have already attained into the co-ordination of the building with the Ritual enables us to determine for ourselves the dimensions of many of the parts. For throughout the teaching of Egypt progress in Light is effected by increased instruction and experience of Truth; and in the Wisdom of that ancient country, the measures of Truth were the years of the Most High.

At the very point of entrance, indicating the sacred horizon of the Pole Star (as the hieroglyph of the star signifies the invisible world), we find that a consideration of the particular position occupied by the star, when in conjunction, so to speak, with the Pyramid, widens and elevates our view from an earthly to a celestial plane. For to a dweller on our globe the great plane of reference is the plane passing through the celestial poles and containing the horizon of the point of Equinox; yet when we proceed to regard our companion orbs, circling around the same parent luminary, and when we take into account the influence which those members of the same luminous family exert upon each other, we are compelled to recognise what

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

is called the Invariable Plane of the Planetary System, the plane, that is to say, about which, as La Place demonstrates, certain highly important relations between the masses and the motions of the planets are always fulfilled. Now this plane has never a greater inclination than about $3^{\circ}6'$ to the apparent ecliptic, that is to the plane of the orbit of the earth. But that arc ($3^{\circ}6'$) measures within a few minutes the distance of the pole from the Pole Star when in conjunction, so to speak, with the Great Pyramid. When, therefore, the Pole Star shines down the entrance passage, its position in regard to the pole (due allowance being made for corrections), defines the limiting position of the invariable plane to the plane of the orbit.

Similarly in regard to the inconceivably slow variation¹ in the inclination of the axis to the ecliptic, a variation which while never exceeding $2\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ on either side, requires no less than thirty thousand years to accomplish. And from this majestic depression and elevation of the polar axis in its course around the sun—the inexpressibly stately obeisance made by the sceptre of Anup before the throne of Ra—we may determine relatively to each other the inclinations of the interior passages. The difference between the limits of the solstices (calculated at about $2^{\circ}22'$) gives the difference between the inclination of the roof and of the floor-line of the Grand Gallery, or Chamber of the Orbit, while the inclination of that roof to the level passage leading to the Lunar Chamber of New Birth ($28^{\circ}30'$), defines, as we have already seen, the limiting inclination of the moon to the Equator. The variation during one Sothic cycle corresponds with the difference between the floor-lines of the upper and lower galleries. And if we may place the completion of the building at 3732 B.C. (only a generation earlier than the estimate of Dr. Brugsch, which is not designed to be exact), then, since it occupies thirty years

¹ See the table and memoir published by the Smithsonian Institute of Washington. W. M. A.

THE MYSTERY OF THE DEPTHS

building, the number of years from the foundation of the Kalendar to the foundation of the Pyramid will be about four hundred and eighty-two; that is, it will correspond with the number of inches between the entrance and the scored line which points to the foundation; while the interval between the foundation of the Kalendar and the co-ordination of the Pyramid with the Pole Star (namely about eight hundred years), is indicated by the number of inches from the scored line to the Hidden Lintel. The difference during the inclination (about 4'), corresponds closely with the difference between the inclinations of the Lower Ascending Gallery and the Passage of the Pole Star; so that to such as understand the meaning of that inclination, the periods of the star's co-ordination with the entrance would be foreknown. If this were the principle employed—and considering the difficulty of obtaining exact measurements, the points of correspondence are surprisingly close—none could understand the relation of the star to the building without first understanding the masonic relation embodied in the edifice, between the standard of space, as represented in the entrance passage, and the solar throne at the head of the Grand Gallery or Chamber of the Orbit. Nor could anyone be instructed in that secret by the Master without acquiring masonic evidence of its truth, in the Path of the Horizon of Heaven, and its orientation with the hidden interior—the beginning and the ending of the Ritual of Light.

Penetrating now to the innermost recesses of the Hidden Places, let us review the celestial significance which we have attached to the various chambers, and (remembering always that we are dealing with approximations) let us note the proportion of their measures to the corresponding celestial periods; the celestial unit varying in each case according to the nature of the celestial cycle (and demanding in each case, therefore, a knowledge of the connection of the Ritual with the particular chamber); while the masonic unit throughout

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

is the polar inch, the twenty-fifth part of the Pir-am-us, or edge of the base-circuit casing-stone, the twenty-fifth ten-millionth part of the polar radius of the earth, and the twenty-fifth thousandth-billionth part of the radius of solar space. "For millions and billions are the measure of things."

Commencing with the highest and most secret source of life and light, the Eternal and Self-Begotten Energy of the Hidden God, we find it illustrated in the never-ceasing rotation of the sun about its own axis, the energy of which we know not the origin, and to which we attribute the birth of the planets.¹ Of such rotations about two thousand five hundred and twenty-five are performed by the sun while the earth is performing one thousand similar rotations, and that number gives the number of polar inches in the height of the extreme point of the huge granite triangle which dominates the secret places of the interior.² Descending thence to the King's Chamber, where the birth of the Eternal Day is celebrated in the open tomb of Osiris, we have recourse to the measure of light, not in its interior energy, but in its emission; and we find that the cubit proportional to the radius of the cycle of equal Light and Darkness (20·6 inches) is a measure of that chamber, as it is also of the Chamber of the New Birth of the Soul.

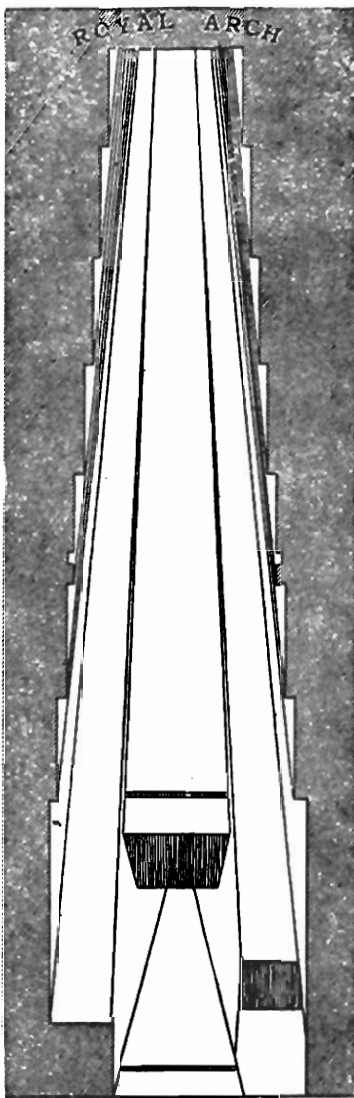
As we proceed towards the outer portion, the manifestation of the splendour defines the proportions of the Chamber of the Orbit, the Upper Hall of Truth, where so many lunar and solar phenomena have already been noticed. At the head of that chamber is the great throne, "the stone of God," to use the expression of the Ritual, surrounded on every side by masonified radiance. The seat of that throne (about

¹ It must be remembered that astronomical theory has developed very considerably since 1895, when these lines were written.

² This is, as Marsham Adams points out, the number given in British inches. He adds that the correction for their conversion into polar inches will about be counterbalanced by the thickness of the granite apex.

THE MYSTERY OF THE DEPTHS

61·3 inches) measures the number of times the radius of the earth is contained in the radius of the orbit of the moon; while its height is proportioned to the number of decades in the orbit of the Egyptian year, the five divine birthdays being expressed in the Chamber of New Birth immediately beneath. Above that throne, at the higher end of the chamber, rises the seven-pointed arch of the planetary heavens, its boundary lines defining the flaming belt of the zodiac. And from its foot runs downwards the floor-line ascended by the Illuminate, and measured by the radius of the cycle of perihelion, or Cycle of Nearest Approach, formed by "the Assembly of Ministers of Truth," but along the midst of which none might pass save the Illuminate alone. And if we may estimate the distance of Sothis (whose chamber lies beyond) to be 1,374,000 instead of 1,375,000 times the distance of the sun, the number of thousands of hours occupied by light in reaching us from that star (between 1,881 and 1,882), will be defined by the number of polar inches in the continuous



THE "STONE OF GOD."
THRONE IN LUMINOUS HALL OF TRUTH

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

floor-line of the Grand Gallery (1,881-2) ascended by the Illuminate before passing to Sothis; while the integral years (21) in the same period gives the number of the Gates of Aahlu corresponding to the (21) Stages of Judgment traversed by him in ascending the same Chamber of the Splendour.

As we descend yet further towards the outer world, the Chamber of the Shadow, where Truth is manifested in darkness, with its Seven Halls of Death leading upwards from the Hidden Lintel, and its final projection into the Place of Light (1,561 inches), is measured by the number of lunations in seven cycles of eclipse ($7 \times 223 = 1,561$). And finally, as the Horizon of the Point of Equinox determines the entrance for the departed to the path of light; so does the radius of the equinoctial cycle (about 4,122 years) determine the descent of the entrance passage (about 4,122 polar inches) on the side of the west, where "the sun sets from the land of life."

With this brief survey¹ of the celestial periods and their masonic analogues, we take up once more the *Book of the Master*, and approach the House of the Hidden Places, wherein are concealed the Mystery of the Heavens and the Mystery of the Depths. In every standard, every unit, angle, ratio and multiple employed by the great Architect of the Masonic Light, we have seen reflected the proportions of the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, the house which the divine Horus built for his father Osiris; the "House of the Great God," to which, as the papyrus of Amen-Hotep tells us, Thoth, the Eternal Wisdom, conducts the Illuminate. And as we gaze around in silent contemplation, from every corner of the universe the profound words of the Ritual come echoing back to us: "Millions and billions are my measurements. 'I who know the Depths' is my name."

¹ See note L, p. 177.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT

As the created light is the primary force manifested in the system of creation, so also is the Uncreate, or Self-Begotten Light (Kheper-Ra) the prime mover and creator whether of the visible or of the unseen universe. "Light Great Creator is his Name," we read in one of the chapters¹ added to the Egyptian Ritual at the Saite recension. And again in another ancient papyrus: "The God of the Universe is in the light above the firmament; and His symbols are upon the earth." Now it was with that Divine Light, immortal, invisible, intolerable to mortal eye, the Light which none may look upon in the flesh and live, that in the ancient creed of Egypt, as in that of Christendom, the holy dead was to be at last united, person with person, in an indissoluble bond. No language less universal than that of faith can enable us to express that sublime belief. For in no other creed do we find that man never loses his individuality, which yet becomes united personally with the Deity in so intimate a union, that in the Ritual the Osiris-soul can with difficulty be distinguished from the Osiris-Godhead. "The sun is worshipping thy face," says Osiris, in the Ritual, to the soul new-born into the divine existence; that is to say, the very splendour of creation, the source of light and life to the visible world, bows down in worship before him who has become a participator in the divinity of its creator. "He is I, I am he," the soul responds, almost in the actual words of the Gospel.

¹ clxiv.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

Long and manifold was the process whereby, in the teaching of Egypt, the human nature became united with the divine—a union effected, through the god-man Osiris, not as in the gross and distorted myths of the classic nations, by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the interior taking of the manhood into God. Without and within the transformation was complete. The soul, instantly illumined by the fulness of the Godhead, became forthwith capable of corresponding with the divine Energy. The senses, restored to incorruption, were gradually fashioned into instruments capable of expressing the soul's assimilation to that condition of infinite power, for which the bounds of space and time exist not, but past and future alike stand open in an endless present—that transcendent freedom, wherein Act is coincident with Will and Will commensurate with Thought.

In order, then, that the senses may be so quickened and irradiated as to perceive the action of the creative mind in the exterior universe, that progress must be made by the departed person which, while still unreleased from subjection to the senses, the student of science makes dimly through the intellect. For whoever would understand the framework of the heavens, the structure of man's sacred dwelling-place, must commence by tracing out the horizon of the point of Equinox, which equally divides the light from the darkness, the horizon marked by the star which indicates the pole, and must apprehend how the axis of the earth is for man the prime measure of space and the standard rule of the Depths. If he would learn the secret of living form, the ocean will be his teacher, as he passes from shore to profoundest depths and fathoms the secret places of the teeming waters. The measure of the celestial orbits will be revealed to him by the moon, as from that companion orb he watches the rotation and the revolution of our planet. To understand not merely the motion but the evolution of our globe, he must dare the place of the earth's central fire, undismayed by the

THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT

cavernous gloom of the lurid abysses. And there, gazing backwards for uncounted ages, he will trace, amid convulsions and cataclysms inconceivable, the " Lord of Law " and the " Words of Order," as the huge mountain chains rise higher and higher from the chaos to prepare the surface of the globe for the dwelling-place of man. Before him next stretches the shadow of the earth, that dim and vast expanse where the majesty of the open heaven is enshrouded in night; and he perceives how the conjunctions of eclipse are due to the same power as the orbits of illumination, and that the hour of darkness is measured by the giver of light. That shadow traversed, a yet more awful vision, the terrible splendour of the solar fount in all its fulness, bursts upon his sight; and as he mounts the sevenfold ascent of the planetary spheres, he gazes undazzled on the stupendous jets and sprays of flame that dart thousands and myriads of miles on high. Then, far beyond in the infinite depths of space, his eyes, now radiant as " the eyes of Hathor," seek out the well-beloved Sothis, the harbinger of the dawn, the portal of the illimitable heavens, " that land of a million fortresses." And in anticipation of each successive stage of this amazing progress, this reconquest of the senses to the dominion of the reason, we may watch the course of the postulant accepted by the " Master of the Secret," as he is inducted, chamber by chamber, into the Hidden Places of the Pyramid of Light of the Egyptian Ritual.

Yet though a man understand the material forces of the universe, though he know all the phenomena of the heavens, and the composition of the most distant suns; nay, though he wield with so masterly a grasp the wand of science as to evolve at will an organic world from the atoms of the abysmal depths, all this, in the mind of Egypt, was not sufficient, even for initiation into the inner mysteries of divine realities. No mere extension of the intellect, however pure and lofty; not even the scientific definition of absolute truth, could suffice to open the secret things of God, any more than the

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

most exact acquaintance with the features and the proportions of the Secret House would disclose their interior signification, without the teaching of the hidden Wisdom. And hence, at the commencement of the Ritual, in the heading of the first chapter, before a word of doctrine has been revealed, we are told how it proceeds from Thoth, "The Mind and Will of God," as the inscription of Hermopolis entitles him.

Now there are three modes in which such knowledge may be communicated to those prepared to receive it—namely by simple instruction, by distant vision, or by personal participation. Each of these modes is, it is evident, an advance upon that which precedes, a preparation for that which follows it. No man can become a participator in the Divine Nature who has not been illuminated by its contemplation. No man can contemplate the Deity who has not been instructed in Truth; nor can any receive that initiation until he be dead to the flesh. As, therefore, in his induction in the Secret House the catechumen could ascend but a few steps in the light of common day, and passes, when the disc of the starry heaven was opened by the Master of the Secret, into the profound darkness of the descending passage; so, too, when the great preparation of death had been accomplished, when soul and spirit had been released from the dominion of the senses, when, by the sacred purification of embalment, the corruptible body had put on incorruption, then, "on the day of the funeral," we read, the Unseen Master commenced to instruct the catechumen in the stages which must be undergone preparatory to his initiation. And so closely does the masonic path in the Pyramid correspond with the path of the departed in the Ritual, that the traveller to-day who penetrates the recesses of the mysterious building may follow, well-nigh step by step, the mystical progress of the departed through the unseen world. For to the Egyptian of old, to have become acquainted with the secret of the House of the Hidden Places was to have mastered the Secret of the Tomb. For him the grave had no darkness,

THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT

death held no terror; for he knew beforehand the starry path, wherein each step brought him nearer to the Creator-Light.

Ritual in hand, let us now take up our position once more at the foot of the exterior ascent, beneath the entrance of the star, along with the catechumen of the Secret; and with him let us forecast the time when, bereft of speech, of will, of life, he will go forth, dumb and helpless, to the mouth of the tomb, and commence the "Entrance on Light"¹ while "borne to the land of the holy dead." The very first words are a welcome addressed by Thoth, the Eternal Wisdom, *not to Osiris himself, but to the departed, who bears, we must remember, the title of "Osiris."* "'Hail, Osiris, strong one of heaven,' says the Divine Wisdom, King of Eternity"—so runs the opening chapter when divested of the enshrouding imagery. "I am the great God near the divine vessel, I have fought for thee, I am he among the divine beings who causes the Osiris to be justified before his enemies, the day of weighing the words of thy accusers. O Osiris!"—so the Teacher continues to the departed, with striking significance when we reflect that according to Catholic teaching also, the Divine Wisdom is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Child of Mary—"O Osiris! I am One among the Divine Persons, the Child of the holy Mother." And again: "O ye that cause the soul to enter perfect into the house of Osiris, let the soul of the departed enter the house, justified with you! May he see as ye see. Hail, openers of the roads. Hail guides of the paths, guides of the soul established in the house of Osiris. Open ye the roads, make ye straight the paths of the departed triumphant with ye." "If this scroll be known on earth," so the chapter concludes, "write it upon his bandages. It is that by which he cometh forth in full splendour² according to his desire, and goeth to his

¹ Chapter i.

² Ra Neb: "Full Splendour." Marsham Adams points out that this expression is usually translated "Every Day"; but Ra undoubtedly means "Noonday lustre," and Neb used as an adjective signifies "All."

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

house." Then, reciting chapter by chapter as we mount step by step, we become informed, in the course of that brief but steep ascent,¹ of the preparation which awaits him when the last glimpse of earth is hidden from his sight. Thus we learn how,² after death, the departed comes forth into the light of immortality, even as the sun, when he sets, bursts forth in radiance on the world which is hidden from our view. Then, since the departed cannot yet bear the judgment of interior justice, he is warned beforehand³ that when he has commenced the descent he must "pass the road above the earth," the ascending passage concealed by the Hidden Portcullis, behind the fourth exterior course. And behind that secret portal we descry in the vignette illustrating the chapter, the face of the Unseen Teacher—that countenance on which the holy dead, when Initiation has begun, shall presently be strengthened to gaze in distant but unveiled vision. Before that lintel can be passed, and the road above the earth be traversed, many trials, he now learns, are waiting for him. There are the tasks of justice to be fulfilled, if he omitted those good works on earth, the memorials of which may be his sponsors ("Ushabti"),⁴ Apep, too, the dark serpent that devours the hidden Light, as the winding darkness of the autumnal equinox devours the light of the year, lies in wait⁵ to crush him in its multitudinous folds, while he treads the path where Light and Darkness balance. Still mounting upward, and at each step approaching nearer the gate of the grave, the catechumen is instructed how, when that serpent shall be passed his foes shall be repelled and his senses restored in the fulness of eternal beauty. Then the Gate of the West,⁶ the aperture of the western wall, will

¹ ii-xv.

² ii, iii. Marsham Adams points out that if these numbers be placed on a print of the interior of the Pyramid, in the order here indicated, they will show how the titles here assigned to the different parts are obtained from the Ritual.

³ iv.

⁴ v, vi.

⁵ vii.

⁶ viii, ix.

THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT

conduct him into the Well, or Chamber of the deep Waters, as the setting sun goes down into the deep waters of the Western Ocean and comes forth in triumph.¹ Passing in silence over that which shall happen to him in the Well, the territory of "the Lord of the West," since that knowledge cannot yet be imparted, the Divine Teacher directs him, when the mystery of new life is accomplished, to retrace his steps to the Passage of the Heavenly Horizon; and, after entering and coming forth from² the Chamber of Ordeal, to approach once more the Lintel of Justice. For then, and then only, can he set foot upon the threshold of justification, when "the stains have been burnt from his heart" by the raging fire.³

On the fifteenth course, now high above the horizon of the earth, our eyes (two courses higher than our feet) already face the double-arched gateway defined by the Pole Star, whereon the symbol of the horizon is inscribed; the outer entrance of the secret places, revealing the path of the Horizon of Heaven. And similarly in Chapter xv, the departed comes towards the land of Eternity. "May I proceed," he continues, "as thou dost, without halt, like thy holiness, Ra, thou who hast no master, great traverser of waters, with whom millions of years are but a moment." Then, as he bends his head towards the entrance of the Pyramid, and gazes on the dark passage now open within, which points towards the Pole Star, "I proceed to heaven," he says; "I kneel among the stars." And at the conclusion of the chapter he learns the words to recite when his sun is setting, and he kneels with his hand towards the land (of the unseen), "O height of Love, thou openest the double Gate of the Horizon."

With these sublime words of thanksgiving, the instruction of the catechumen comes to a close; sufficient knowledge having been imparted to direct his course as postulant to the places of Initiation and Ordeal, until which point be passed he can look no further into the mysteries. In the following

¹ x, xi.

² xii, xiii.

³ xiv.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

chapter,¹ as we ascend the last course before quitting the outer light, the divine voice is for a season hushed; and the Ritual silently offers three pictures for our contemplation. On one of these the sole object presented is the sacred Scarab, a symbol of the Eternal One, the Self-Created Being who knows no beginning and no end. On the second is the figure of the departed standing before Amen, the Hidden Deity. The third contains simply a blank stele or Egyptian form of tombstone. And that stele, as we learn from the very ancient papyrus of Unas, the "prophet of the Pyramid," was fashioned in the form of a false door for the pyramidal entrance, the entrance, that is to say, which lies on the seventeenth course of the northward face, and which is oriented by the Northern star.

In that moment of silence the departed is alone. The friends have left him. The sun of earth, which from his earliest years has greeted him, is for ever hidden. The "Gate of the Earth" is passed²; and the Catechumen of Wisdom has been accepted as the Postulant of Immortality. Silence inconceivable to mortal ear reigns around him; darkness unimaginable to mortal eye lies before him. But under the direction of Anup, the guide of souls, he passes on beyond that Gate of the Ascent, where the divine light lifts the disc of the tomb. "It is the region of his father Shu" (the Light), the Ritual continues: "he effaces his sins, he destroys his stains." Then as the departed advances through the darkness, and fearlessly commences the descending path, the inner Light, unseen by mortal eye, reveals itself in vision. He beholds the lower world,³ the territory of Initiation, the entry of the Hidden Places, concerning which the divine Wisdom has instructed him, the place "wherein he must enter and from whence he must come forth," the transformations which he must desire to make, that he may be transformed into the likeness of God, the good works which he must do, the "throne" of the regenerate soul and the

¹ xvi.

² xvii.

³ xvii.

THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT

blessed company of Osiris after the body has been laid to rest. In that same vision, too, he not only sees the entrance of the underworld, or Rusta, and learns that it is the northern door of the tomb of Osiris, as the sole entrance of the pyramid is the gate of the north, but he perceives the whole lower world, the " Angle of Fire "; and the " Pool " or Well of Life, with its summit opening into the Double Hall of Truth.¹

With the eighteenth chapter begins the *Book of Performing the Days*, that is, the period of preparation for Initiation and Ordeal, the due performance of which enables him to pass " the road above the earth,"² there to receive the Crown of Justification³ when his victory is assured. He utters a prayer to the divine Wisdom for justification against the enemy through the heavenly circles of the guardian spirits. As he pursues the descending Passage of the Heavenly Horizon, the reconstruction of the inner man, the new creation to life immortal, slowly commences.⁴ One by one his faculties are reawakened to spiritual life; his mouth⁵ is opened that he may respond to the teaching of the divine voice; the germ or " egg " of the illuminative life; his mind and name are restored⁶; his heart⁷ is given back to him and he knows no more the icy numbness of the paralysed affections. Gradually the new-formed body gathers force and substance; that is to say, not the natural body, which never bursts its sacred swaddling bands till awakened in the last chapter of the Ritual, and the last chamber of the building by the Grand Orient of the open tomb, but the spiritual or astral body (called by the Egyptians the " Sahu "), wherewith the man, already raised in incorruption yet still awaiting the open manifestation of Osiris' resurrection, converses with the " Starry Spirits," the intelligences of the transcendent spheres. With the new life commences the attack of his spiritual enemies, now rendered palpable to his sight,⁸ the

¹ xvii.

² xviii.

³ xix, xx.

⁴ xx.

⁵ xxii.

⁶ xxiv, xxv.

⁷ xxvi.

⁸ xxvii-xxxiii.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

dread inhabitants of the underworld, that wage in man the great battle of contending light and darkness. Sloth, the great tortoise, strives to delay his steps; the asps put forth their venom; crawling reptiles infest his path. From every side the raging passions, the devouring crocodiles which inhabit the waters of life, rush furiously to the attack; but he repels all those creatures of darkness by the astral brightness of his starry nature. "Back Crocodile of the South," he cries; "I am Sothis"—the Star of the Eternal Dawn. "Back!" he exclaims again to the serpent; "thou art overwhelmed by the waters of heaven. Depart from the place where Ra gives renewal of life." His foes defeated by the divine protection,¹ the body raised in incorruption² acquires in every limb and every feature the seal of God. His hair, from which the light glows forth in streams, is as "the hair of Nu," the sacred Nile, glowing with the streams of life; his countenance, shining as the sun, is radiant as the face of Ra; his eyes, glorious as are the eyes of Hathor, gleam with immortal beauty; his fingers are as the Uraei, the sacred serpents, the insignia of the royal power; his feet burn with the fire of the Creator-Spirit, Ptah; his humanity is as the humanity of Osiris, the incarnate God. "There is not a member of him," says the Ritual, "which is not divine."

Resplendently beautiful as is the astral body assumed by the new being, he is not yet prepared for Initiation, but fresh trials await him as he approaches the granite block which obstructs the descending passage. His self-dominion, the head of his glory, may be taken from him; he may incur the second death of defilement from the creatures of darkness.³ But still, by the same guidance avoiding all these dangers, he comes forth as the day through the Gate of the West, to the passage which conducts him to the Well of Life; and as he passes that threshold, he is fed with the celestial food which they may not eat who are partakers of defilement.⁴ "The enemies do not eat of my body," says

¹ xxxiii-xli.

² xlii.

³ xlili-li.

⁴ li, lii.

THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT

Osiris, in another part of the Ritual. Avoiding defilement through the strength of that food¹ he receives the breath of the Creator-Spirit Ptah,² and drawing near to the Well of Life is granted a first draught of its refreshing streams.³ In the depths of that Well, wherein, as the Sai-an-Sinsin tells us, approach is made to Osiris, shall presently take place the regeneration of the renewed man (or "Ka"), by reunion with the new-born soul amid the living waters. "I give the waters of life to every mummy," says the goddess Nout, who presides over the waters, in the inscription on the vase of Osur-Ur (given in *Records of the Past*), "to reunite it with the soul, that it may henceforth be separated from it no more for ever. The Resident of the West has established thy person amid the sages of the divine Lower Region. He giveth stability to thy body, and causeth thy soul not to distance itself from thee. He keepeth remembrance of thy person, and saveth thy body now and forever."

During this arduous preparation, while the departed passes from earth in absolute weakness to wage the prolonged conflict of light and darkness, the imperishable soul, restored to her native element, is born a second time in the Chamber of the Queen of the Pyramid, as Osiris was born of Isis, being at once her son, her maker and her spouse. "I am Yesterday," says Osiris in the sixty-fourth chapter, said to be almost co-eval with the Pyramid of Light; that is, "I am He who was before time began," since however far back in time a day may be, yesterday was always before it. "I am the Dawn," he continues, "the Light of the Second Birth, the Mystery of the Soul, Maker of the Gods, by whom are fed the hidden ones of heaven." So in the inscription on the coffin of Ankhnes-Ra-Neferab—that is, of her "whose life was the Sacred Heart of Ra"—we read concerning Isis that it is she "who opens for thee the secret places by those mighty names of thine. Thy name is Infant and Old Man, Germ and Growth, Son of Heaven, who makes the road for

¹ lii, liii.

² liv-lviii.

³ lix-lxiii.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

thee according to his word. Thy name is Everlasting, Self-Begotten, the Dawn, the Day, the Evening, the Night, the Darkness. Thy name is the Moon, the Heart of Silence, the Lord of the Unseen World."¹ And on another part of the coffin of the same holy queen, the spirits of Annu, called in the Ritual the "secret birth-place of the gods," are invoked as those "who preside over the sacred birth."

With the new birth of the soul comes also the restoration of power in its original divine image. For as in the condition which is subject to decay the corruptible senses dominate and inform the soul, so, according to the theosophy of Egypt, in the condition of immortality does the illuminate spirit inform and dominate the regenerate senses. While we are subject to the flesh, the external universe impresses itself continually upon the mind, dimming and imprisoning the original "type" or image of the Deity, which feebly struggles to express itself in the masterpieces of poet or artist. But when the soul is born into new life, it regains that Creative Image and is endowed with power of co-operating with the divine Energy. For, as we learn from an exquisite chapter in the Ritual, it is the fragrance of Innocence which perfumes the breath of the Creative Beauty. Hence in the masonry on the eastern wall of that most secret Chamber of New Birth, we find expressed the fivefold dominion informed by the soul, new-born in the sacred type of the image of the Queen. Now thus the senses themselves become so essentially divine that the departed pays worship to his own faculties. "I have adored Touch and Taste," he says later on; for touch and taste are the channels whereby is communicated to man the food of immortality. From that Secret Chamber, the regenerate soul comes forth glorious as the day,² and "opening the door,"³ once so carefully concealed, comes forth in full radiance to the fields of Aahlu,⁴ the territory of illumination, to take its seat⁵ upon the lower

¹ Cf. Budge, *Sarcophagus of Anchnesraneferab*, xlvi, 386-390.

² lxxv, lxxvi.

³ lxxvii.

⁴ lxxviii-lxxii.

⁵ lxxv.

THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT

throne above the head of the Well, between the Chamber of the Orbit and the Chamber of the Shadow. "The gates of heaven open to me," he says; "the gates of earth open to me."¹

That solemn enthronisation being witnessed by the postulant in the depths below, he remembers that the time of ordeal draws near, and after praying, as instructed beforehand, that his sins may be rubbed out, he celebrates the "festival of the soul passing to his body." But not immediately may that passage be accomplished. Raised though he be in incorruption, glowing as he is in every member with the immortal light, he cannot yet bear unveiled the overwhelming glory of the soul. Therefore, in the teaching of Egypt, around the radiant being, which, in its regenerate life, could assimilate itself to the glory of the Godhead, was formed the "Khaibit," or luminous atmosphere, consisting of a series of ethereal envelopes, at once shading and diffusing its flaming lustre, as the earth's atmosphere shades and diffuses the solar rays. And at each successive transformation² it descended nearer to the moral conditions of humanity. From the form of the golden hawk,³ the semblance of the absolute divine substance of the One Eternal, Self-Existing Being, it passes to the "Lord of Time," the image of the Creator, since with creation time began. Presently it assumes the form of a lily,⁴ the vignette in the Ritual representing the head of Osiris enshrined in that flower; the Godhead manifested in the flesh coming forth from immaculate purity. "I am the pure lily," we read, "coming forth from the lily of light. I am the source of illumination and the channel of the breath of immortal beauty (the nostril of Hathor). I bring the messages (of heaven); Horus (the Eternal Son) accomplishes them." Later the soul passes into the form of the Uræus, "the soul of the earth,"⁵ the serpentine path traced year by year upon the earth along the path immediately irradiated by the

¹ lxxviii.

² lxxvii-lxxxvii.

³ lxxvii.

⁴ lxxxix (a).

⁵ lxxxvii. The Serpent Sata.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

vertical sun, as the senses are irradiated by the supreme illumination of the soul.

And finally it assumes the semblance of a crocodile,¹ becoming subject, that is, to the passions of humanity. For the human passions, being part of the nature wherein man was originally created, are not intrinsically evil, but only become evil when insubordinate to the soul. And thus the crocodile, which attacked the departed before new birth, is rendered divine in the regenerate form. Therefore it was, that the crocodile was held in high reverence by the Egyptians, for it spoke to them of the time when man should regain the mastery of his passions, and when the last barrier between himself and his glorious soul should be removed for ever.

Immeasurable as is the distance which thus separates the two beings which make up the perfect manhood, there is no hesitation or delay on the part of the soul. That radiant creature in its glory has not forgotten the frail companion in union with whom it dwelt during the days of its humiliation. Restored to its native purity, welcomed by the Almighty to a participation in his own energy, enthroned on its seat of absolute dominion, yet such is the ardour with which that soul returns the love of man, that, like the Creator Himself, it cannot rest satisfied with its own inexhaustible bliss, but hastens to come down from its seat of power, that it may raise and glorify expectant humanity. And thus the vignette shows us the winged creature flying towards the postulant.² Meanwhile the latter, from below, watching its flight, prays in an ecstasy for the reunion. "O bringer," he cries, "O runner in his hall!"—the Hall of Truth, where the throne of the soul is erected. "Great God, let my soul go where it desires. O conductors of the bark of millions of years, led through the gateway, clearing the path of heaven and earth, accompany ye the souls to the holy dead."³

The prayer is granted.⁴ Leaving its throne on high⁵ and

¹ lxxxviii.

² lxxxix.

³ lxxxix.

⁴ xci-xciii.

⁵ An inspection of the lower portion of the Upper Hall of Truth just by

THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT

passing through its various transformations, the soul descends the ladder of the Well, as in the papyrus of Ani.¹ Then the divine protection is obtained²; and amid the living waters in the pool of the Persea, the Tree of Immortality (as the Ritual elsewhere calls it), the earnest desire of the postulant is fulfilled, and he is reunited with his living soul³; "My soul is from the beginning," he says, "from the commencement of time (reckoning of years). The eye of Horus (the Divine Son) made me for my soul, preparing its substance. The darkness is before them; the arms of Osiris hold them. Open the path to my soul and my shadow (Khaibit) and my spirit, to see the great God within his sepulchre the day of the making up the souls." If that knowledge is possessed, the Ritual adds, he enters on Light; he is not detained in the lower world.

That priceless gift conceded, the postulant, though he cannot yet participate in the divine splendour until his ordeal be passed, yet can he behold it openly from afar, and enter on his initiation into the sacred mysteries. Ascending, in the strength imparted to him by the soul, the ladder of the well, he offers a prayer to the Divine Teacher,⁴ and, "holding in his hand the Sacred Mysteries," he turns his opened eyes successively in the three directions⁵ which we saw indicated by the hieroglyph of the divine Initiator Thoth. First he gazes down "the opening where Thoth is," the Chamber of the Shadow, now no longer closed to his view, though not yet accessible to his person; and he beholds the Secret Wisdom which gives to Truth its splendour,⁶ the countenance of the Divine Teacher, whose voice instructed the head of the Well (where the postulant is waiting) will disclose the Throne of the Soul formed in the masonry by the abrupt termination of the lower part of the floor-line, and exactly corresponding to the Throne of Judgment at the head of the same ascent.

¹ A vignette of the Ladder is given in the Papyrus of Ani (second edition, plate 22) between chapter vxxxiv and the second copy of chapter xviii. Cf. also the vignette to chapter xcii Papyrus of Khari.

² xci.

³ xciii.

⁴ xciv.

⁵ xcv-xcvi.

⁶ xcv-xcvi.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

the catechumen, and whose power answered the postulant. Then, as his eyes grow clearer, he offers a prayer to Anup,¹ the starry guide, who has led him thus far towards his heart's desire, and, turning towards the Chamber of the New Birth, he discerns the Bark of Ra,² the vessel of God, foretold to him before his entry on the path by the Divine Teacher—the vessel which shall bear him safely across the Deep Waters. And in the vignettes of the Ritual, we see the vessel bearing upon it at one time a fivefold, at another time



THE FIVEFOLD THRONE

a sevenfold staircase, the fivefold dominion of the regenerate senses, the sevenfold elevation of the illuminate intellect. And even while he looks, the whole interior of the building is lit with a sudden glow; and the masonry, portraying each portion of the sacred vessel, reveals their mystical significance, which the initiate must know before permission can be granted to embark. Within the Inner House the vast granite Triangle dominating the secret heights assumes for him the form of an “Anchor,” with its central axis indicated, but not delineated, by the equality of the members, as we



THE ANCHOR AND THE COFFIN OF THE LORD OF EARTH
(SARKOPHAGUS AND HIGHEST CHAMBER)

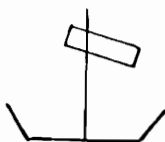
saw the central mystery of the Supreme Secret, the Unity of the Divine Substance to be indicated but not defined by the equality of the persons in the Egyptian Trinity. And that

¹ xcvi.

² xcvi-cii.

THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT

“ anchor ” firmly fixed, not in the depths, but in the heights above the open sarkophagus, speaks to him of Osiris, “ the Lord of the earth in his coffin ”; the vision which a while ago he prayed that he might behold on the Great Day of Reckoning. At the head of the Grand Gallery is the “ seat ” of the “ Dweller in Space ”; the radiant throne at the top of the long incline to which the Initiate now lifts his eyes. Right through the midst of the throne rises unseen the Axis of the Great House, the Central Ray of the Grand Light of Egypt, like a huge but impalpable mast towering from foundation to summit of the vessel of Light. That axis passes through the Chamber of New Birth below, and separates the Outer from the Inner House which lies beyond the throne, as the central but impalpable truth of Death separates the glory which now is from the glory which lies beyond. And in the truth of Death, to the Egyptian the “ Completion-Beginning ” of the New Birth, the Initiate discerns “ the great bringer and taker away,” as the Ritual calls the mast of the vessel of Ra. Aloft upon the same axis, above the solar throne, the roof of the lustrous chamber, with its starry rays, images to him whose eyes are opened, the “ Sail of the Firmament,” which, by its starry grandeur draws the soul

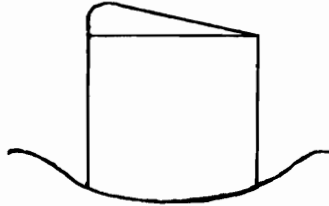


THE SAIL OF THE FIRMAMENT

irresistibly to God. The Well reflects to him the “ Paddle ” shining in the invisible waters, as the image of the Creator shines invisibly in the Waters of Life. The “ Planks ” the rungs of the ladder whereby the soul came down to visit him, each guarded by a spirit of celestial intelligence. In the subterranean chamber he discerns the “ hold ” of “ darkness,” and in the Chamber of New Birth the Cabin, or Secret

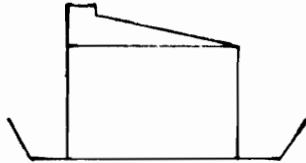
THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

Place of the Divine Cessel. A remarkable instance of pyramidal allusion is supplied by the form of the cabin. For the roof proper was surmounted by another roof of the singular and apparently unmeaning shape given in the text.



THE CABIN

But if above the Chamber of New Birth we indicate the throne of Ra, which immediately surmounts it, we shall have the shape in question; so that the form implies the enthronisation of the Uncreated Light upon the Mystery of the Divine Mother, Isis. Upon that bark of safety take place



CHAMBER OF NEW BIRTH, SURMOUNTED BY THRONE

both his present Initiation and the Illumination which is to come; and each of these ascents finds its appropriate expression in the masonry, the one in the place of New Birth, the other in the Chamber of the Splendour.

Yet one more vision opens out to the Initiate. As he raises his eyes more upward yet to the extreme height of the Chamber of the Splendour, far removed from the head of the Well, yet forming part of the same divine structure, he discerns the "opening where Hathor is,"¹ the azure depths of ethereal loveliness leading to the Secret Heights above the Chamber of Grand Orient. For a moment he gazes in silent rapture on the far-off opening of the unimaginable vision,

¹ ciii.

THE INITIATION OF THE POSTULANT

and then calls to his aid "the Opener of the Great Sanctuary."¹ "Oh assistant!—oh assistant!" he exclaims, "I am among the servants of Immortal Beauty."²

Fortified then by that enduring remembrance—the far-off vision of the divine Wisdom, Holiness and Beauty which is granted to him who has received the waters of life and is initiated into the divine mysteries—the departed turns from the scenes of future Illumination and descends towards the place of the impending trial.³ Around him stand revealed the "Gods of the Western Gate,"⁴ the Western opening to the Well of Life, where dwell the spirits who came unseen to his assistance at the hour when the sun of earthly life went down into the West. From the Chamber of the Waters of Heaven flows down the torrent of the "Celestial Nile,"⁵ and mingles at his side with the stream from the "Chamber of the Birthplace of the Gods"—that stream which waters the fields of Aahlu, the home of the regenerate. And high above, as far as his quickened eyes can pierce, are assembled the bright companies of starry spirits from every quarter⁶ to assist at his victory, his judgment and his coronation. In the memory of that unfading vision, and the strength of those protecting spirits, the Initiate enters and comes forth⁷ from the subterranean Chamber of the Fiery Ordeal.

¹ cv, cvi.

² In some of the papyri this is Chapter ciii.

³ cvii-cxvi.

⁴ cvii.

⁵ cx.

⁶ cxi-cxiv.

⁷ cxvi.

CHAPTER IX

THE ILLUMINATION OF THE ADEPT

INITIATION achieved and the Ordeal undergone, the character both of the doctrine and the scene in which it was imparted appears to undergo a transformation. Not that the air of mystery is in any way lessened, rather it deepens, if possible, as we penetrate into the more secret parts. But, the period of weakness and expectancy once passed, a sense of power and triumph grows more and more distinctly perceptible as we enter the secret places of absolute "Truth."¹ Turning back with the Initiate, now become the Adept, from the "Meskwa," or Place of Ordeal, we retrace our steps upwards under the direction of the celestial guide who conducts us to the "Gate on the Hill,"² the lintel hidden in the roof far up along the Passage of the Star. In remounting the ascent the adept once more "enters and comes forth"³ from the Gateway of the Well, that he may again receive strength for the coming judgment. And as he approaches the hidden portcullis, which now he is called upon to pass, behind which sits the Eternal Wisdom, he recites for himself⁴ the unforgotten words wherein the Divine Teacher warned him of the hour now drawing near of entering into judgment⁵ and of issuing from thence. Arrived at the hidden portcullis⁶ carefully concealed within the roof, that arduous "Gateway reserved for the Gods," the divine Osiris-souls, the gateway which none can enter, except after "coming out" from the place of initiation, obstruction meets him at every step. Alike in the Ritual and in the building, each

¹ cxvii-cxxv. ² cxvii. ³ cxx. ⁴ cxxi. ⁵ xiii. ⁶ cxxii, cxxiii.

THE ILLUMINATION OF THE ADEPT

portion of that most mysterious gateway, the secret of whose masonry still remains undisclosed, refuses entrance to the upward path except to the adept.¹ “ ‘ I will not let you go over me,’ says the sill, ‘ unless you tell me my name.’ ‘ The weight in the right place is thy name,’ ” is the profound reply of the adept. For, as the raising of the portcullis depends upon the true adjustment of the weight, so also is justice the virtue without which the path on high remains for ever closed. “ ‘ I will not let thee pass me,’ says the Left Lintel ”—so continues this strange dialogue—“ ‘ unless you tell me my name.’ ‘ Return of the True is thy name.’ ‘ I will not let thee pass me,’ says the Right Lintel, ‘ unless you tell me my name.’ ‘ Return of Judged Hearts is thy name.’ ” For without truth and without self-judgment no step can be taken of progress in the Path of Truth.² With that doctrine we may compare the “ Golden Words ” of Pythagoras, himself a pupil of the priests of Egypt:

“ Do innocence; take heed before thou act;
Nor let soft sleep upon thy eyelids fall,
Ere the day’s actions thou hast three times scanned,
What have I done, where erred, what left unwrought ?
Go through the whole account, and if the sum
Be evil, chide thee; but if good, rejoice.
This do, this meditate, this ever love,
And it shall guide thee into virtue’s path.”

But to him who has learned of wisdom, however long, however arduous the search, the entrance into Truth cannot finally be denied. The Hidden Lintel is crossed; and the memory of that passage is forever kept sacred by the grateful departed. “ I have come through the Hidden Lintel,” he cries, triumphantly, later on; “ I have come like the sun through the gate of the festival.” The lintel crossed, the Person of the Divine Teacher is disclosed, having before him the true Balance of Light and Darkness.³ The “ secret

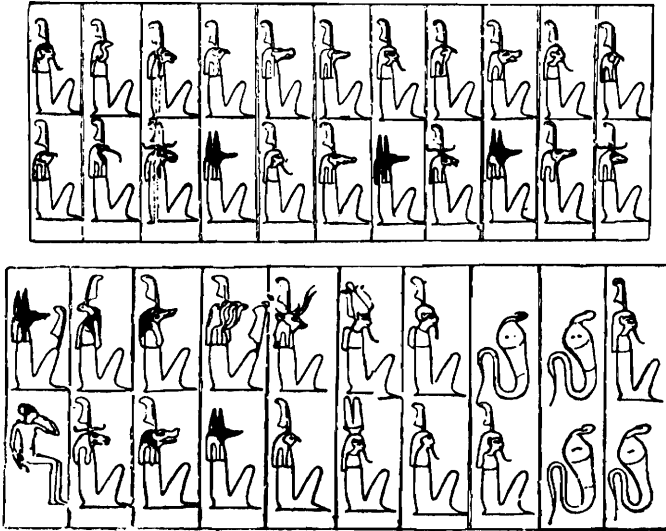
¹ CXXV.

² CXXV.

³ CXXV.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

faces at the gate " unveil themselves; and the adept stands within the Double Hall of Truth—of Truth in Death and Truth in Life, of Truth in Justice and Truth in Mercy, of Truth in Darkness and Truth in Splendour. Then, as he surmounts each obstacle besetting the entrance to the path which leads on high, and achieves the triumph over Death,



THE FORTY-TWO JUDGES OF THE DEAD.

From the Papyrus of Anhai.

he beholds the long array of the Judges of the Dead, the celestial powers who take account of the moral actions of mankind, each supreme in his own province of the holy land, each bearing on his head the Plume of Truth. And to each in turn the adept, whose stains have been washed from his heart in the furnace of the ordeal, pleads his innocence of the sin of which that power is the special avenger. Very terrible are the images under which those heart-searching spirits are presented—terrible as the moral effects of our own transgression, when viewed by the inner light of Truth. The "Eyes of Fire," the passion which shrivels the intellect; the "Face of Smoke," the pride that clouds judgment; the

THE ILLUMINATION OF THE ADEPT

“Crackler of Bones,” the sin which corrodes the entire manhood; these and such as these are the fearful insignia of the supernal powers. Most terrible of all is the spirit “whose mouth is twisted when he speaks, because his face is behind him,” the spirit of conscience, which keeps its dread eyes inexorably on our past, and speaks to us with mouth contorted in the agony of self-condemnation—like the cry of the penitent, which echoes as bitterly now as when uttered three thousand years ago, “My sin is ever before me.”

Undeterred by that august tribunal, which, as we learn at the threshold, none can endure but he who has truly judged himself, the departed, protected by the Divine Guardian, ascends the Passage of the Shadow where the light is eclipsed, and achieves through Truth his victory over Death.¹ Gradually, as he draws near the low but unobstructed gateway, the glow of the splendour begins to appear; and he sees before him the Sacred Orbit of the circling earth defined by the four burning points of Solstice and Equinox, like a basin of fire surrounded by four jets of flame.² In front of each of those cardinal points of the heaven, are seated four divine spirits having the semblance of an ape, the form nearest akin to humanity. To these four universal guardians and heralds of truth, the justified prays that he may be purified yet further from transgressions. “O ye,” he says, “who send forth truth to the universal Lord, nurtured without fraud, who abominate wickedness, extract all the evil from me! Obliterate my faults and annihilate my sins.” “Thou mayest go,” is the gracious reply of the four heavenly teachers; “we obliterate all thy faults and annihilate all thy sins.” In this manner, as the Ritual declares, is separation from his sins effected “after he has seen the faces of the Gods.” From henceforth death has no more power over him, and in rapture he returns thanksgiving to the supreme judges, the Gods of the Orbit, towards whom he now advances, and to Osiris on his throne.³

¹ cxxvi-cxxx.

² cxxvi.

³ cxxvii, cxxviii.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

As he stands at the entrance of the upper chamber, where the slight projection of the lower floor bears witness to the passage from death to life, the divine voice, which has been silent till the first lesson is exhausted, recommences his illumination, and he is "instructed"¹ how "to stand at the Bark of Ra"—no longer in the lower portion of the vessel, but free of every part. Obedient to the divine command, he passes the "Gate of the Gateway,"² and celebrates the Birthday of Osiris, the Opening of the Eternal Year. Then as he advances a step and stands within the hall upon the slight projection, he beholds the whole building before him, the vast universe of space, in its immeasurable grandeur, now free to his immaculate spirit. And as at the Lintel of Justice all is barred, so here every part lies open. "The heaven opens," we read³—the Chamber of the Splendour, with its sevenfold rays around the solar throne; "the earth opens," the Chamber of the Shadow; "the North opens" to the Chamber of the Pole Star; "the South opens," to the Chamber of Grand Orient; "the West opens," to the Entrance of the Well; "the East opens," to the Chamber of New Birth, with its fivefold eastern ascent of the regenerate senses; "the Northern and Southern Chapels open," the Ante-chamber and the Place of Grand Orient or Chamber of Resurrection, the Northern and Southern Chapels of the inner house. Here, too, is the "crossing of the pure roads of life," of which the coffin of Amamu speaks. Behind are "the roads of darkness," which the departed in the Ritual once prayed so earnestly that he might pass. In front lie the fields of Aahlu, the blessed country where the justified executes the works which he is privileged to do for Osiris.

A burst of triumph greets the justified when, having accomplished the Passage of the Sun, he enters the Chamber of the Orbit, the Hall of Illumination. "The deceased," we read, "passes through the Gate of the Gateway. Prepare ye his Hall when he comes. Justify his words against the

¹ cxxix.

² cxxx.

³ cxxx.

THE ILLUMINATION OF THE ADEPT

accusers. There is given to him the food of the gods of the Gate. There has been made for him the crown which belongs to him as the dweller in the Secret Place." In another place the justified himself exclaims: "I have opened the gate of heaven and earth" (at the junction of the Halls of the Orbit and the Shadow). "The soul of Osiris rests there. I cross through the halls. No defect or evil is found in me." And once more the deceased prays that he may pass this hall. "Place me before thee, O Lord of Eternity. Hail Dweller of the West, good Being, Lord of Abydos. Let me pass the roads of darkness; let me follow thy servants in the gate."

A similar note of exultation marks the passage in the Sai-an-Sinsin, where we read of the great tribunal and the House of Light. "Thou comest into the House of God with much purity," exclaim the mourners, addressing the departed. "The gods have abundantly purified thee in the great tribunal. Thou art not shut out of heaven; thy body is renewed in the presence of Osiris. Thou hast not been shut out from the House of Glory. Thou seest the Path of Beauty, completing every transformation which thou desirest." And the ancient coffin of Amamu bore on the outside this inscription, full of desire and hope: "An act of homage to Anup, who passes the deceased over the distant paths, the fairest of the Karneter"—that is, the land of the holy dead. "Thine eyes," say our own sacred writings, "shall see the King in his Beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off."

The gateway passed,¹ the divine voice resumes its instruction; and teaches the justified of "going to the heaven where Osiris is;" of being "received into the Sacred Heart of Ra," the fount of life,² of "the adoration which he must render," of the vessel of eternity in which holy souls for ever move, of the rejoicings of heaven³ in the manifestations of the Godhead to man, and of the names and places wherein those manifestations are made.

¹ cxxx.

² cxxi-cxxiii.

³ cxxxiv-cxxxvi.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

And now the justified stands within the full glory of the Orbit, and looks forth, not with the vision of mortal seer, but as the deathless spirits who encircle the throne. While he stands gazing, splendour after splendour, revelation beyond revelation, bursts upon his sight. Down from the radiant throne of the burning sun, along the limitless floor of space, along the sevenfold wall of the planetary heights, along the over-arching roof of the celestial vault, streams, rivers, floods of light come sweeping down on him whose eyes are opened like the torrent of the summer rays, like the inundation of the overwhelming Nile, each orb, each satellite, each distant luminary mingling its unveiled lustre in a glory beyond thought. But the justified Illuminate breathes freely the air of opened heaven. His senses "for ever vivified" pierce through the utmost bounds of space; his quickened intellect grasps each starry law and harmony; his purified spirit, undazzled by the blinding radiance, discerns the Hidden Love that occupies the throne. No longer as a stranger, or at a distance, but as a prince admitted to the highest honours of the court, the justified takes his place in the very line of direct approach; while around and above him the measureless expanse is filled with rank beyond rank of spirit-ministers. "He has passed his billions," we read, "the circle of flaming ministers is around him. His blessings follow him. 'Come,' says Truth, and he approaches her Lord."¹

At that gracious word of Truth, the abysses of mystery reveal their most secret depths. First, the Chamber of the Shadow is lit by the irradiating brightness; and the Illuminate discerns the nature of sin viewed in the light of truth.* The Seven Halls of Death,* each measured by its cycle of eclipse, lie open to him who has looked upon the face of God; and each name of mystery betrays the form of darkness. "Babbling" Malice, that delights in "overthrow"; "Fire-faced" Anger, "leaping on a sudden to the front";

¹ cxxxi.

* cxliv-cl.

* cxliv. The Seven Arits.

THE ILLUMINATION OF THE ADEPT

Envy, the "Eater of Dirt"; Hatred, silent and "vigilant"; Lust, "the consumer, the overthrower in a moment," that "lives off reptiles"; Pride, with its "face of stone"; Sloth, that hardens irretrievably the heart, the "final stopper of the rejected"; all these betray their nature to him over whom death has power no longer. And he discerns (as in the vignette of the Ritual) the seven avenging spirits, each armed with the two swords of physical and spiritual destruction.

Mounting then the steep ascent, he beholds the mystery of judgment disclose itself in successive stages as the twenty-one Gates of Aahlu¹—those gates of the divine being whose "Heart is Beauty"—their spaces measured by the years of Light, as it speeds from Sothis, the gates which only open to "the meek-hearted"² unfold before him. At each of the first ten portals flows a celestial stream of sparkling waters, which shed their undying lustre over the person of the Illuminate. Ascending still towards the throne of Ra, at the nineteenth portal he is clothed with robes of power; and at "the Gate of the Burning Crown," he stands beneath the sevenfold Royal Arch of the Planetary Spheres. Immediately beyond is the "Stone of God," where he receives from the Occupant a "Crown of Illumination," the "Atf"-crown of Egypt, fashioned after the zodiacal light of highest heaven. And behind the throne rises the final "Gate of Peace," the End of the Course, with its seven crowns of joy.

"I have finished the course," he cries,³ "I am the Lord of the Resurrection, the Avenger of his Father the heir to his Father the Holy One. I am come. I execute for my Father the throwing down of all his foes. I come full of splendour with all the truth of the word. The Master of Devotion in the dwelling of my Father. I come full of splendour into the temple to offer the incense. I distribute the sacred garments. I receive at my rising the diadem and crown myself with it on my throne in the dwelling of my Father, and the princes of

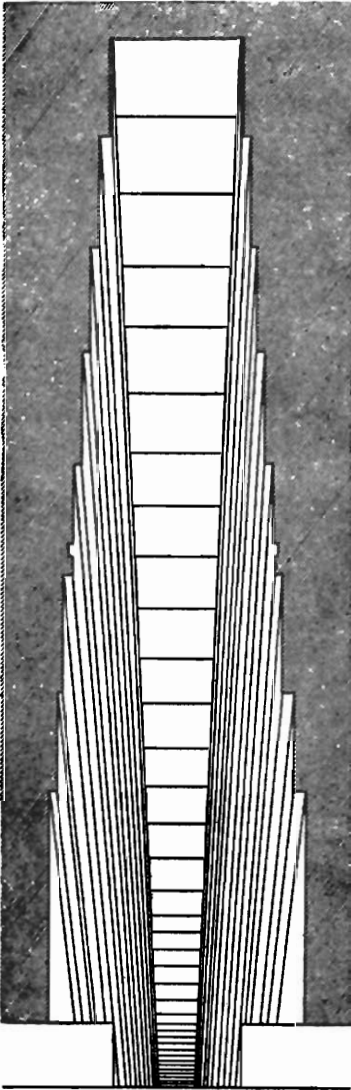
¹ cxlv, cxlvi.

² cxlvi.

³ cxlv.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

heaven." And again in the following chapter: " O Masters of the Altars, I have made my ways, I am Horus the son of



THE GATE OF THE BURNING CROWN

Osiris. My Mother, Isis, protects me. I come. I come full splendour to the gate of the recess, and I know the mysteries that are in it. I come full splendour to the gate of the Master of the Height. O Lords of Eternity, I have performed my course, I am Horus the Son of Osiris, the Heir of the Holy One."

But not as yet can the Illuminate attain the infinite serenity which lies beyond that gate. Death and judgment are not the only secrets to be disclosed when the eye of faith becomes the eye of sight. The place of the divine birth, the chamber in the "Fields of Aahlu," must be visited before the Illuminate become the Master of the Secret. And as he passes portal after portal of the fields,¹ he recites the titles of her whose habitation he now approaches: the "Mistress of Holy Awe," the "Mistress of Heaven," the "Regent of the Earth," the "Help of the Meek-hearted," the "Mistress of Prayer," the "Light of the Secret River." Then, having

¹ cxlvii.

THE ILLUMINATION OF THE ADEPT

learnt the majesty of its queen, he scans the sevenfold arch, the Mystery of the Transcendent Heaven,¹ to hold converse with the seven Supreme Intelligences who over-arch the Splendour of Creation.

And now the "writing which confers perfection" is delivered to him,² the scroll which none but the king and the chief priest may look upon, and from it he learns the prayer "for the food and drink of the dwellers in the house." Yet once again, in the strength of that divine refreshment, must the Depths be sounded and the Secret Places be traversed, before the Illuminate can pass as master through the Gate of Peace.³ One secret of death still remains, most terrible and inscrutable of all. While we are yet imperfect, we can gain some knowledge of the effect of moral death upon ourselves, and even form a faint adumbration of its nature when viewed in the light of absolute truth. But the mystery of its divine permission, who can penetrate? If the Omnipotent be all good, why did He ever allow of evil? If He be all-merciful, why does He permit His creatures to suffer? How can our actions be justly "balanced"⁴ when the forces which produced them were not of our own creation? Why are we to be made parties to the battle of light and darkness, when no choice was given whether we would exist or not? Why are the souls of just men secretly snared and overthrown? Whence comes the "foul flux" which is purged from man and causes all living creatures to shudder? Such questions as these we ask, and ask in vain. Yet if that darkest shadow, that horror which forms the depth of human agony, the enshrouding of the Eternal Justice in the blackness of utter eclipse, is still liable to arise and overpower the soul, how can man ever repose in safety? But that it, too, is destined to pass away in light, when the secrets are revealed, and illumination is transformed into union, who can doubt? So at least we read in the creed of Ancient Egypt; where, when the other mys-

¹ cxlviii.

² cxlviii.

³ cli-clxii.

⁴ cli.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

teries of death and judgment have been disclosed to the Illuminate; when he has entered into the secrets of the new birth, and conversed with the Supreme Intelligences who “watch before the tomb of Osiris”; when time exists for him no more, and he understands the design of the Eternal House, from foundation to consummation, he makes a final circuit of its Secret Places. Clothed in power, and crowned with light, he traverses the “Abodes”¹ or scenes of his former weakness; there to discern, by his own enlightened perception, how it is “Osiris who satisfies the balance of him who rules the heavens”; to exert in its supernal freedom his creative will, now the lord, not the slave, of the senses; and to rejoice in the just suffering which wrought his illumination and emancipation.

Finally, when that grand progress through the Habitations of Humanity has been completed, the Master returns in majesty to the celestial company assembled in their ranks in the Grand Lodge of the Solar Throne. Mounting beneath the Royal Arch of the Burning Crown, he treads the Stone of God itself, and passes through the Gate of Peace, with its seven crowns and titles of Victory. Then, outstripping in his flight the power of mortal thought, he passes beyond the shining orbit of the earth, beyond the vast expanse of solar glory, across the awful chasms of the unfathomable depths, to the far-off Sothis, the land of Eternal Dawn, the ante-chamber of the infinite morning. He “has his star established to him in Sothis,” says the Ritual. And here the Illuminate, now become a Master, is instructed in the last Mysteries which precede the universal glory; the mysteries of the divine sorrow, the “tears of Isis,”² whence comes the source of the celestial Nile, the fount of illumination to man.

Here he passes within the triple veil, and is invested with the imperishable jewels of supernal lustre.³

One chapter and one chamber yet remain—the chapter of Orientation and the Chamber of Grand Orient beneath

¹ cli.

² clii.

³ cliii-clxi.

THE ILLUMINATION OF THE ADEPT

the Secret Places of the Most High. Here comes the final mystery when the tomb is opened and the body is raised in immortality. "Hail thou, my Father of Light," we read in a previous chapter¹ which tells us how the body of the holy one shall not see corruption. "I come having this my flesh freed from decay; I am whole as my Father the self-begotten God, whose image is in the incorruptible body. Do thou establish me. Do thou perfect me as the Master of the Grave. This," so the chapter proceeds, "is the mystery of the change, in the body, of the life that comes from the destruction of life." And as we read we cannot but recall the words of the Apostle; "Behold I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, for the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed." So, too, in the final chapter² of this book we hear the resurrection proclaimed as with a trumpet blast, as in the innermost chamber of the House we find the Open Tomb. "Awake, awake, Osiris!" so sing the mourners to the beloved departed, now glorious in the House of Light, and united indissolubly with the Divine Being; "awake! see what thy son Horus hath done for thee. See what thy father Seb hath done for thee. Raised is the Osiris." "I have opened the doors," replies the Osiris-soul, "I have opened the doors. . . . Well is the Great One who is in the Coffin. For all the dead shall have passages made to him through their embalming," when their body in the flesh shall be raised in incorruption. Again and again is celebrated the Mystery of the Open Tomb. As the Eclipsing planet which moves nearest to the sun crawls like a tortoise across the face of that orb, defacing it for a moment by its own darkness, and then is swallowed in the radiance, so also death, that dark spot which crawls across the vision of the eternal splendour, is swallowed in the resurrection of Osiris-Ra, the Uncreated Light. Four times is that Gospel of ancient Egypt proclaimed in the final chapter—which bears the title of the

¹ clii.

² clxi.

THE BOOK OF THE MASTER

Orient.¹ "The tortoise dies; Ra lives!" Death is swallowed in Light; God lives for evermore. "O Amen, Amen," so continues that chapter of mystery, "Amen, who art in heaven, give thy face to the body of the Son. Make him well in Hades. It is finished."²

Thus ends the strange and solemn dirge of ancient Egypt. Once perceived, the intimate connection between the secret doctrine of Egypt's most venerated books and the secret significance of her most venerable monument seems impossible to dis sever, and each form illustrates and interpenetrates the other. As we peruse the dark utterances and recognise the mystic allusions of the Book, we seem to stand amid the profound darkness enwrapping the whole interior of the building. All around are assembled the spirits and the powers that make the mystery of the unseen world: the "Secret Faces at the Gate," the "Gods of the Horizon and of the Orbit." And dimly before our eyes, age after age, the sacred procession of the Egyptian dead moves silently along, as they pass the "Gate of the Hill" to the tribunal of Osiris. In vain do we attempt to trace their footsteps till we enter with them into the Hidden Places and penetrate the secret of the House of Light. But no sooner do we approach the passage and tread the chambers of the mysterious Pyramid than the teaching of the Sacred Book seems lit up as with a tongue of flame. The luminous veil itself melts away, disclosing the Path of Illumination and the Splendours of the Orbit; the celestial Powers and Intelligences shine forth from beneath their enshrouding symbols; the spirits of the just grow lustrous with the rays that proceed from beneath the tribulan. For though none may look upon these things unveiled till the Guardian of the Starry Gate has opened for him the Portal of the Light, yet for the adept who has been mysteriously initiated in the deep waters, and illuminated

¹ It bears no title in *The Book of the Master*, says Marsham Adams, but is elsewhere so called.

² See the rubric to this chapter.

THE ILLUMINATION OF THE ADEPT¹

by the sevenfold Beauty, the invisible things become manifest by the visible creation. And a Light which is not of earth reveals in its divine unity the full secret of the Hidden Places; the Entrance to the Path of Heaven; the Well of Life; the Place of New Birth; the Ordeal of Fire; the Lintel of Justice; the Victory over Death; the Judgment of Truth; the Splendour of Illumination; the Throne of Radiance; the Veil of Perfection; and the Grand Orient of the Open Tomb, beneath the secret chambers of the Height, crowned by the Grand Arch of the Supreme Trinity.

Thus only, according to that primæval creed, could man fulfil his marvellous destiny; and thus only can that destiny accomplish his heart's desire. If it be true, as some have held, that

“ Veil after veil shall lift—but there must be
Veil after veil behind ”;

that man, throughout all eternity, shall never know, even as he is known, then is his creation vain and his resurrection a mockery. No skill in the secrets of the material universe, no dominion over the forces of life and death, no power to pierce the veil which hangs before the unseen world and to hold communication with the spiritual intelligences, will satisfy his secret aspirations. For the soul of man—so every form of creed declares—can know no rest, nor can his spirit ever be satisfied, so long as the thinnest film remains to interrupt the unclouded vision of the Hidden Love; until he stand face to face and eye to eye with “ Him who knows the Depths.”

We quit that solemn monument of primæval mystery; and as we turn a farewell glance upon the Gate of Heaven, the veil of the majestic masonry once more hides from view the interior splendour, and enwraps the Secret Places of the Hidden God.



NOTES*

NOTE A

TABLE OF OFFERINGS. Page 33

In his interesting work *Noemi*, Mr. Baring-Gould speaks of an archaic relic near Sarlat in the Dordogne, which is evidently a Table of Offerings. He describes it as a dolmen, or sepulchral chamber, roofed by a flat stone having a number of holes scooped in the centre; and he mentions that the market women lay their fish upon it for luck; a most singular survival of the ancient custom, since fish, as may be seen in the vignettes of the *Book of the Master*, formed a principal portion of the offerings. Indeed the burial customs of the most widely scattered nations receive singular illustration when compared with the religion of the dwellers on the Nile, the seat of the earliest records and the cradle of civilisation.

NOTE B

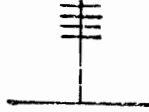
THE DELUGE. Page 61

From the same source a good deal of light may, I think, be thrown upon the scriptural account of the Deluge, regarded as a phenomenal inundation of the Nile valley, the dwelling-place of the primæval family, as I have endeavoured to show elsewhere; and this, again, will be found to react upon various questions connected with the early settlement of Egypt; the worship of Nou, the deity of the water; the sacred ark of Amen, the prototype of the ark of Moses; the especial reverence paid to the Nilometer, or "tat," the symbol of the divine Nou, with its threefold measure of the inundation; the sudden immergence of that lonely yet majestic civilisation; the dim tradition of bygone generations; the intense reverence paid to the patriarchal monarchs; the universal jurisdiction claimed by the divine royalty of Egypt; and, above all, the serene contemplation of death as the

* These notes, except where indicated, are by Mr. Marsham Adams.—Ed.

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luminous entrance to the fields of light. The Babylonian tradition also given in the Deluge tablet, translated in *Records of the Past*, is in agreement with the same view; for according to that tradition, the



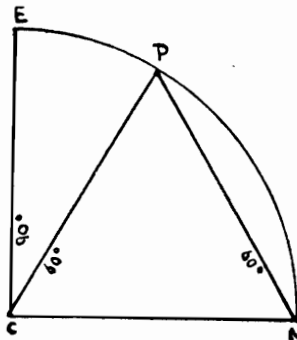
THE SACRED TAT OR MEASURE OF THE INUNDATION

theatre of the cataclysm was certainly not Babylonia, since the hero declares positively that he had crossed the sea. In fact, so far as I have been able to trace, there is no nation from India and China in the east, to Mexico and Peru in the furthest west, whose native traditions and archæological relics are in discord either with the Egyptian tradition of the primæval land of Poont, or with the scriptural description of the primæval watershed, if we are content to read, by the light of Egyptian tradition, the account handed down to us by Moses, whom those Scriptures expressly characterise as pre-eminent in Egyptian knowledge.

NOTE C

DISTANCE FROM POLE IS EQUAL TO DISTANCE FROM CENTRE. Page 64

This property may perhaps be clear from the following considerations. Suppose C to be the centre of the earth, P the situation of the Great Pyramid, N the North Pole, and E the point where the



meridian of the building cuts the Equator, then ECP will be the

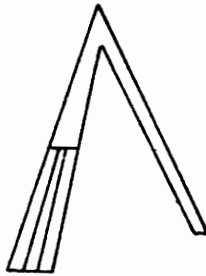
NOTES

latitude of the building, namely 30° , whence it will be seen at once that the triangle CNP will be equilateral, since the angle at C is 60° , and the radii CN and CP will be equal to each other, assuming the earth to be a sphere. Hence therefore, PN, the distance from the Pyramid to the North Pole, will be equal to PC, the distance to the centre of the earth.

NOTE D

THE SACRED ANGLE. Page 67

Among the jewels placed as the last ornaments upon the sacred mummy, was sometimes included the Golden Angle; one of the most obscure, but at the same time the most interesting symbols employed by the Egyptians. The Angle is found, not held in the hand, but borne aloft upon the arm of the great Deity, "Amen the Eternal Father," and is also one of the sceptres carried by Ptah, the Creator-Spirit. What is more singular, the well-known image called the Pataikos, which was carried by the ships of Phœnicia, has been identified very clearly by Champollion with the same God Ptah; and the meaning of Pat-Aik in Egyptian is the Dedication of the Angle. The same figure is also found among the rock sculptures on the coast of Asia Minor.



GREAT ANGLE, BORNE ALOFT BY AMEN, SOURCE OF LIFE, IN TRINITY OF EGYPT

While the sacred symbol of the Angle was thus widely diffused, the name itself (disguised to us in various languages) seems to have been borne by several races of the Levant. About the central or narrower part of the Mediterranean, just where the Italian peninsula juts out towards the projecting promontory of Africa, we meet the name of Angle in the important island of Sikelia or Sicily, a country which,

NOTES

have already spoken; but there is another Angle which still remains for consideration, namely that between the two branches of the



GREAT ANGLE OF THE NILE DELTA, SOURCE OF LIFE, IN TRIANGLE OF EGYPT

Delta into which the river forks at Memphis below the Great House. Now this Angle supplies a simple key to a very curious problem in cosmography. Upon examining the well-known triple division of the ancient world, it is somewhat difficult to perceive upon what principle it was effected. Russia can even now be scarcely considered as forming, either by race or by conformation, a portion of Europe proper; while as Scythia, it seems to have been regarded as entirely separate. Asia Minor, on the other hand, possesses a shore-line almost continuous with that of Greece; and her population, at least upon the coasts, seem to have derived in great measure from kindred sources. Nor is it easy to find the central point from which the three dividing lines branch out. It cannot, for instance, be situated in Babylonia, where some might be inclined to place it, because Syria lies to the West; neither again can it be in Armenia, where others might look for it, since a considerable space divides that country from Africa. If, however, we take up our stand in front of the Great House at Memphis, the masonic record of primæval science, the entrance to which indicates the principal division of the universal sphere, and look abroad upon the great river which we have seen represented within, we shall find that the form which that river assumes at the spot suggests three divisions of the entire hemisphere. Behind us, towards the south, stretches the long valley leading up to the hidden sources of the far-distant primæval land; indicating the huge peninsula of Africa enclosed between the seas, and constituting also the southern boundary of the vast Mediterranean basin. And right along that valley, above the Great House, through the whole kingdom of Upper Egypt, stretches the Grand Meridian, tracing out upon the earth the Grand Arch of the Universe, and traversing their ancient home beneath the supreme dome of highest heaven. Next, if the lines of the northern

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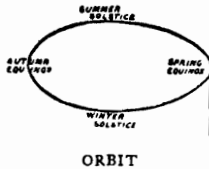
source. According to tradition, he was acquainted in some measure with the process of embalment, and he claimed to know the secret of the sacred writing, while his followers were distinguished by the winged headdress which was borne by the sacred scribe of Egypt, as representing the dominion of east and west bestowed by Ra upon Thoth, the Lord of Wisdom. So with the funeral feasts, the elaborate ceremonies and the intercourse with the dead which had so rooted a hold in the hearts of our Scandinavian forefathers. The Asars, or holy ancestors whom they worshipped, were the very counterpart both in name and in attributes with the holy souls of Egypt who had become united with Osiris (more properly Aasar or Ausar), and were themselves described by his name. The title of Hersir, or Leader of the Host, which, as Du Chaillu has pointed out in his valuable work, was older than that of the king, bears in the hieroglyphic (her-ser) the identical signification of Chief Organiser. The land of Kent (Khent)¹ was a territory of the holy dead, and its hieroglyph was a sail. Nay, there is scarcely a feature in the strange mythology of Scandinavia which does not reflect an image more or less distorted of some portion of the Egyptian Ritual. Or, to give one more illustration of a different but equally curious character, our national shout of "Hip, Hip, Hurrah!" which rises spontaneously though unmeaningly to our lips, and which is said to be the shout also of the Cossack dwellers by our ancient home upon the Black Sea, conveys in the hieroglyphic (Hep, Hep, Hura), "On, on to plunder," the significant cry of our pirate ancestors, at the moment of accomplishment. Strangest of all it is to think that the last of the Hidden Places of the earth to be opened to civilised man should have been the traditional scene of his earliest dwelling-place; that the source of the historic river which, by its mighty Angle, traces out the lines of the first settlement of the globe, should to-day be the centre of its latest division by the world-dividing nation of Angles; and that while the vast lake which marks the ancient "apex of the earth" bears the name of the monarch of that race, the Egyptian kingdom itself should be ruled at the dictation of her ministers.

It is true that these traditions, like those of other nations also, are entirely at variance with the remarkable adventures of the famous

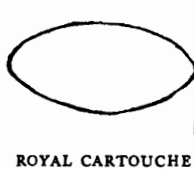
¹ Pierret, in his Hieroglyphic Lexicon, states that Khent means always to ascend the Nile towards the south, and that the sail is always deployed; thus answering, in the Path of Light, to the ascent of the Orbit by the Illuminate beneath the open sail of the firmament.

NOTES

of the year at which they were attained six thousand years ago (or about the time of which we speak) took place about the times of the



equinox. Hence if we represent the orbit in its true elliptic form, the tangent at the extremity of the major axis will define both the point of equinox, through which it passes, and the direction of the minor axis, or line of solstice, to which it will be parallel, thus indicating the



relations of the universe. And the figure thus described exactly gives us the royal cartouche always encircling the names of the Egyptian kings; which thus images forth the celestial foundation and universal jurisdiction of that monarchy so long as the earth preserves its divinely appointed course.

NOTE F

NORTH IN THE HIEROGLYPHIC RECORDS. Page 73

From the foregoing considerations, when bearing in mind the archaic date of the erection, and the celestial bearings of the temple at the epoch, we may clear up a peculiarity of some difficulty on the records, which M. Mariette, the famous authority on this temple, has pointed out but left without any solution. It is beyond dispute, says that eminent writer, that when the records speak of the north they mean the east, a peculiarity, however, which he seems to regard as a mere Egyptian eccentricity, scarcely needing discussion. And he then proceeds to point out that "the north of the hieroglyphic records" is just 75° to the westward of what he calls "true north," that is to say,

NOTES

ordinarily portrayed in the sacred pictures. And of different figures here depicted the following may be more particularly mentioned. The Thigh and the Knife, both well-known Egyptian constellations, are found, respectively, in the vignettes of Chapters xv and l; the sacred Ankh or symbol of life in Chapter xli; the Lotus in Chapter lxxxix and again in Chapter clxii; the Plough in Chapter cx; the Balance in Chapter cxxv; and the deity with the Uræus head in Chapter cxlv; all these with others being in the *Book of the Master*, which contains also a great number of allusions in the body of the text. Another of the sacred writings to which we have also referred, the inscription on the coffin of Queen Ankhnes-Ra-Nefer-Ab, possesses no vignettes, but contains several allusions which are illustrated by the planisphere, as, e.g. the "Ram," the "Four Heads on One Neck,"¹ and the repeated allusions to the "Eight."²

NOTE H

THE SACRED IMAGES IN THE TEMPLE OF INCARNATE LIGHT. Page 77

While there is nothing much to surprise us—when once we have brushed aside the schoolboy scholarship so predominant at our universities, which cannot imagine any conception of antiquity originating except in Greece—in finding the sacred images employed in this mystical temple of incarnate Light repeated again and again in the mystical writings, we may well be astonished to find that this same planisphere illustrates also nearly all the images employed in one of the most familiar passages of the prophet Isaiah (Chapter xi)—that which relates to the Rod from the Stem of Jesse. There is the "Rod" itself,

¹ The Ram of Mendes is sometimes spoken of as the Ram with "Four Faces on One Neck." This is in allusion to the fact that the Ram of Mendes (Ba-Neb-Tettu), originally a local form of Ra, was later considered as embracing within him not merely the Soul of Ra, but also those of Osiris, Seb and Shu. The allusion to which Marsham Adams refers will be found in line 463 of Budge's translation of the text inscribed on the coffin of this Queen, to which allusion has previously been made. See note 2, p. 51, and note 1, p. 142. Ed.

² *Op. cit.* lines 431, 432, 434, 435, 437, 438. Ed.

NOTES

identified by Professor Renouf with our own constellation of the same name. In making this and similar calculations, I have taken $50''.2$ for the yearly precessional motion, and half a minute of arc per century for the variation in the obliquity. The formulæ for finding the day of orient or heliacal rising (when the right ascension and declination of the star have been determined for the required epoch), are given, I may observe, in Maddy's *Astronomy*.

Before quitting this subject, it is worth noticing how many classical names of stars and constellations, meaningless in the Greek and Latin, acquire a significance when referred to the Egyptian tongue. Thus Ur Oon (Great Being) gives us Orion; Kas Pehu (Lake of Inundation), Cassiopeia; Ark Ter (Shrine of Meeting), Arkturus; and Kha Nub (Place of Gold), Canopus. Some names indeed are scarcely distinguishable from the Egyptian words, so slight is the change in pronunciation when compared with the immense difference in time and place, such as the star Khaph in the constellation Cassiopeia, signifying in Egyptian, Power; Scheat (Schete) in Pegasus, Secret; and Nath (Nut) in Taurus, meaning the heaven.

NOTE L

NOTE ON CERTAIN MEASURES IN BABYLONIA AND EARLY CHINA.

Page 130

Since, supposing the views put forward in the previous chapters to be correct, the Egyptian measures of time and space are certainly the oldest on record, it may not be amiss if, before passing to the inner mysteries, we compare them with two other famous systems of antiquity, and observe how certain anomalies which have hitherto been incapable of explanation, become simple and intelligible when regarded as misconceptions of the Egyptian reckoning. Take, for example, that of Chaldea. That the Babylonian astronomers measured their time by periods of 60, of 600 and of 3,600 years (the *soos*, the *ner* and the *sar*) is well known, and that they also divided the circle into degrees, and again into sixty and sixty times sixty measures. But upon what principle they chose the sexagesimal measure, and whether they regarded the two sets of multiples as possessing any connection with each other is not so clear. According to Lenormant, they calculated their periods "on the great astronomical cycle of 43,200 solar years, representing, according to their calculations, the total period of the

NOTES

tively correct, are all shifted through one-eighth of a circle, their south being really south-west. And this, it will be easily seen, is precisely what would be done by any one who, having obtained his notion of the cardinal points in Egypt without understanding the principle, should imagine them to be fixed, and should use the Egyptian points while dwelling in Babylonia.

Such an origin is quite in agreement with other points connected with Babylonian civilisation. That certain of their principal measures, such as the standard of Telloh, were derived from Egypt is undoubted. And their tradition that the elements of their civilisation were imparted by Oannes, half man and half fish, who retired every night into the sea, just answers the description of an immigrant sailing up the Persian Gulf from the eastern coast of Egypt, and retiring to his ship each night; while such a course itself would be a natural continuation of the course pursued by the ancestors of the Egyptians in their emigration from Poont in the south.

Far to the eastward again, a problem, or rather a whole set of problems, given up for many centuries by the native archæologists, receive simple solution when we apply the same principle to the ancient Kalendar of China. From a highly interesting paper read in the Victoria Institute by the Rev. Dr. Legge, University Professor of Chinese at Oxford, and prince of Sinologists, we find that after the ninth century before the Christian era, the Chinese year was divided into periods of sixty days. These days were expressed in writing by means of two classes of characters, called respectively the ten heavenly stems and the twelve earthly branches, which were taken together in pairs, each branch being taken with a stem, but the stem always preceding, never following, the branch; whereby each day of the cycle was represented by a different pair. And he observes that the sexagesimal cycle was of extreme antiquity, and that "how it arose is a mystery; but that he would make little account of that if could tell from whence the inventors got their component parts, the ten stems and the twelve branches." But a reference to the far more ancient Egyptian Kalendar naturally suggests the sexagesimal measure; while sixty alternations of light and darkness which constituted the Egyptian month easily resolve themselves in foreign hands into a period of sixty days. Again, the two hieroglyphs which express the year, the stem ("Se") for its totality, and the branch ("Apu-ter") for its commencement, supply the titles of the characters; while the number of

NOTES

what did it equalise ? We know, indeed, of one-quarter—a quarter of a day by which in the older country the rotations of the earth were equalised or harmonised with its revolutions, and which served as a standard for all manner of periods and measures. And this very quarter suggests at once a connection with the Standard Stone, since that stone itself, the throne of Ra in the house of Osiris, crowning the Chamber of the five Divine Birthdays, and containing the measure of the thirty-six sacred decades, represented the “Hep-Tep” or sacred Festival of Completion-Beginning, involving the secret of the Grand Cycle and the equalising quarter of a day.

That such a quarter had been lost we have proof from another part of the same sacred books of China. About twenty-two or twenty-three centuries before the Christian era, and some fourteen or fifteen hundred years before the earliest extant trace of the Chinese Kalendar, the Emperor of China was seized with a fit of archæological fervour, and instituted the first historical records of that country of which many traces remain. One result of his researches had an unfortunate effect upon certain of his subjects. Filled as he felt himself to be with the ancient wisdom, he summoned his astronomers and laid down to them the broad and simple principle that every year consists of three hundred and sixty-six days—a statement which is, as we have seen, more strictly correct than three hundred and sixty-five days if understood properly as the Egyptians understood it; but which, without the secret of the sidereal day or of the Grand Cycle, inevitably leads to calculations which events would refuse to verify. Accordingly it is not surprising that the unlucky astronomers when next engaged in predicting an eclipse went altogether wide of the mark. But the Emperor rose to the occasion. He had been, he said, “searching into antiquity,” and had no doubt what was due to so gross an ignorance of their office. Everything, he observed severely, “had been done which ought to have been done. The tom-toms were beaten; the petty officers galloped; the inhabitants ran about the streets.” And yet when the sun took no notice of these proceedings the astronomers sat like a log and did nothing! It was disgraceful. However, the law was clear on the matter. If the astronomers predicted the eclipse too soon, off with their heads; if too late, off with their heads. And as in this case it must have been either too soon or too late, their heads went off accordingly. No wonder the Chinese men of science lamented the loss of the Equalising Quarter.

NOTES

to correspond, will enable the reader to judge for himself how far the Egyptian key avails to open the Chinese lock which for fifteen hundred years has been given up by the Chinese experts.

Titles employed by Szema Ch'ien	Egyptian Phonetic Equivalent	Signification of Egyptian Equivalent	Corresponding Egyptian Festival or Doctrine
Yu Chao Chiang Wu	Ioh-Khaou Chinka-Oue	Moon-Day Separation	Birth of Moon. Separation (celebrated twice a month).
Chu-Li	Khouo-Lai	Abundant rejoicing	Great Festival (Kalendar).
Shun-Hang	Sheu-N-Ankh	Altar of Life	Fire Altar (Ritual).
Sheh-ti-Ko	Sheu-Ti-Koi	Altar of the Fields of God	Fields of Aahlu (Paradise).
Chao Yang Tan-eh	Khao-Ch'ink' Tanghe	Separation of Day Preservation	Burial of Osiris. One of the stages in the Path of Light.
Chih-Hsu	Khi-Shu	Dart of Shu	Dart of Shu (turn of the year).
Ta Mang-Lo	Taia-Maein-Laou	Panegyric of the Sail	Sail of the Bark of Ra (Ritual).
Ch'ih-Fun-Jo	Khi-Foon-Ioh	Dart of Hairs of Moon	Locks of Athor.
Kwan-tu	Koun-Tou	Within the Wall	Festival of "Hidden Lintel" (Ritual).
Hsieh Hsiah	Hsiohe Hssa	Measure the Fields and Regions	Fields and Paths of the Dead.

APPENDIX

iv, 2. Homage to thee, O thou that dwellest in the Holy Mountain of the Hidden Place.

ii, 1. The Chapter of Entering on Light and of living after death. Hail, One, shining from the Moon! (2) Hail, One shining from the Moon! Grant that the Osiris Ani may come forth (from) among those multitudes which are (3) outside; and let him be established as a dweller among the denizens of heaven; and let the Hidden Places be opened unto him. And behold, Osiris, (4) Osiris Ani, shall Enter on Light.

iv, 1. The Chapter of passing over the Celestial Road (2) of Re-stau¹ . . . The Osiris Nu, triumphant says: I open out a way over the Watery Abyss which formeth a path between the two Combatants.²

viii, 1. The Chapter of passing through the Hidden Places (and Entering) on Light.

ix, 1. The Chapter of Entering on Light after having made the passage through the tomb.

xiii. The Chapter of entering into and coming forth from the Hidden Place. . . . May a path be made for me whereby I may enter in peace into the beautiful Hidden Place; . . . and may a path be made for me whereby I may enter in and adore Osiris the Lord of Life.

xv, 1. A hymn of praise to Ra when he riseth upon the Horizon.³

¹ The juncture of the Ascending passage with the Descending passage, it should be noted, occurs at the level of the fourth course of masonry. The Celestial Road refers to the Passage of the Star, as Marsham Adams calls the entrance passage, and Re-stau, as we see in Chapter xvii, is described as "the northern door of the tomb."

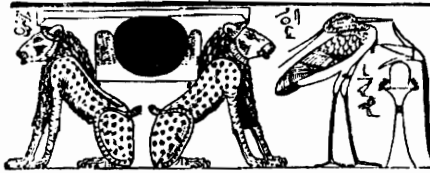
² The "two Combatants" may here be taken as the two portions of the Double Hall of Truth, namely Truth in Darkness and Truth in Light. The "Watery Abyss" is thus, obviously, the Well of Life, which opens downwards at the junction of these two halls, and thus literally forms a path between them. At the same time, if we take the two parts of the ascending passage as forming, in reality, a unity, they become, taken thus together, "a way over the Watery Abyss."

³ The Horizon is first mentioned in this the fifteenth chapter, and it is when he reaches the fifteenth course of masonry that the catechumen first sees this symbol over the entrance. Following the hymn of praise to Ra comes a Hymn and Litany to Osiris, in the first of which Osiris the Justified One is alluded to as "the lord of the hidden place." In the Litany the response in

APPENDIX

xvii, 51. What then is this? It is Restau¹ . . . (52) and it is the northern door of the tomb. Now as concerning (53) the Pool of the Maati, it is Abtu; it is the way by which his father (54) Tem travelleth when he goes forth to Sekhet-Aahlu.²

xvii, 56. Now the gate of Taser³ is the gate of the Pillars of Shu,



THE GODS OF YESTERDAY
AND TO-DAY.

THE "BENNU."

(57) the northern gate of the Tuat; or, it is the two leaves of the door (58) through which the god Tem passeth when he goeth forth to the Eastern Horizon of Heaven.⁴

lxiv,⁵ 1. The Chapter of Entering on Light in the Under-world.

lxiv, 2. I am Yesterday, To-day and To-morrow,⁶ (and I have) the power (3) to be born a second time⁷ (I am) the divine hidden Soul who . . . giveth meals unto the denizens of the Tuat, Amentet and heaven.⁸

¹ The Gate. See the vignette. It is a curious coincidence that the artist has surrounded the actual door itself by exactly seventeen oblong sections, corresponding to the number of the chapter and also to the number of the course in which the entrance actually is.

² The Fields of Aahlu, the Territory of Initiation. We see from the masonry, as explained by the Ritual, that this is the way by which the soul has to pass in order to attain illumination.

³ The Ascent. In the papyrus of Auf-Ankh this section reads: "I go from the Gate of Taser. What is the Gate Taser? It is the Gate where the God Shu lifts the disc of Heaven. The Gate of the north is the Gate of the Great God." See p. 34, note 1.

⁴ The symbol of the horizon on being over the entrance.

⁵ According to Budge this is probably one of the oldest chapters in the Ritual. See p. 48, and note 1.

⁶ The Dweller in Eternity. Cf. p. 186, note 2.

⁷ Cf. p. 186, note 5.

⁸ Note the distinction again made between the Underworld (Taut) and the Hidden Place (Amentet). Cf. p. 186, note 1.

APPENDIX

lxxxix, 1. The Chapter of causing the soul to be united to its body in the Underworld.¹ The Osiris Ani, triumphant, says: Hail, thou god Anniu!² Hail, thou god Pehrer,³ who dwellest in thy hall! Great God! Grant thou that my soul may come unto me from wheresoever it may be.

lxxxix, 7. Hail, ye gods . . . (8) who make souls to enter into (their) spiritual bodies . . . (10) grant ye that the soul of Osiris Ani, (11) triumphant, may come forth before the gods . . . and that it may have peace in the Hidden Place. (12) May it look upon its material body, may it rest upon its spiritual body; and may its body neither perish nor suffer corruption for ever.⁴



THE SOUL OF THE DECEASED AS A HUMAN-HEADED BIRD

cxvii, 2. The paths which are above me lead to Re-stau.⁵

cxvii, 2. Open unto me! Who then art thou? Whither goest thou? What is thy name?⁶

¹ The allusion here is to the lower portion of the House of the Hidden Places.

² Bringer.

³ Runner.

⁴ The prayer is granted, and, descending the Ladder the soul rejoins the body as shown in the vignettes.

⁵ These words are spoken when the postulant is in the Chamber of Ordeal, the lowest chamber of all, at the very bottom of the descending gallery, which he has to ascend to reach the Hidden Lintel or Gateway to the Hall of the Maati. The ascent is shown in the vignette to Chapter cxvii.

⁶ The demand to be admitted to the Hall of the Maati and the preliminary challenge.

APPENDIX

eye of anyone look upon it—that were abomination. *The Book of the Master of the Hidden Places* is its name.¹

ADDITIONAL TEXTS FROM LATER PARTS OF THE RITUAL

clxviii, Sect. i, para 5. (1) May those who build up grant that Osiris N. shall arrive happily in the Hall of Double Truth.

clxviii, Sect. ii, para. 7. (1) May Sesheta Ausar² grant that Osiris N. may be a lord of strides in the habitation of the Ascent.

clxviii, Sect. iv, para. 4. (2) And there shall be made an offering by Osiris N. when he entereth through the hidden pylons.³

clxviii, Sect. iv, para. 6. (1) May the company of the gods who rule over the Hidden Place grant that Osiris N. shall go in through the secret door of the House of Osiris.

clxviii, Sect. iv, para. 14. (2) And there shall be made . . . an offering . . . by Osiris N. when he shall walk up the Great Staircase.

clxxxvi. Hathor, Lady of the Hidden Place, mighty dweller in the funeral mountain, lady of the Holy Place.⁴

It may interest the reader to compare the following quotations from the *Book of Opening of the Mouth*.

“ And Offerings of incense shall be made to all the gods and goddesses:

“

“ To Seker⁵ within his Secret Place.⁶

“

“ To the Great, Secret Doors which are in Annu.⁷

“

“ To Osiris in the House of the Pyramid.⁸

¹ Marsham Adams also renders this, *The Book of the Master of the Secret House*.

² He who maketh Osiris to be secret.

³ Cf. *The Book of Opening of the Mouth*.

⁴ Marsham Adams would probably have rendered this as “ Lady of the Ascent.”

⁵ Osiris was known as Seker in Memphis.

⁶ *The Book of Opening of the Mouth*, Budge, 2 vols., 1909. Vol. i, p. 115.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 118.