

XXIV.

PRINCE OF THE TABERNACLE.

SYMBOLS were the almost universal language of ancient theology. They were the most obvious method of instruction; for, like nature herself, they addressed the understanding through the eye; and the most ancient expressions denoting communication of religious knowledge, signify ocular exhibition. The first teachers of mankind borrowed this method of instruction; and it comprised an endless store of pregnant hieroglyphics. These lessons of the olden time were the riddles of the Sphynx, tempting the curious by their quaintness, but involving the personal risk of the adventurous interpreter. "The Gods themselves," it was said, "disclose their intentions to the wise, but to fools their teaching is unintelligible;" and the King of the Delphic Oracle was said not to *declare*, nor on the other hand to *conceal*; but emphatically to "*intimate or signify*."

The Ancient Sages, both barbarian and Greek, involved their meaning in similar indirections and enigmas; their lessons were conveyed either in visible symbols, or in those "parables and dark sayings of old," which the Israelites considered it a sacred duty to hand down unchanged to successive generations. The explanatory tokens employed by man, whether emblematical objects or actions, symbols or mystic ceremonies, were like the mystic signs and portents either in dreams or by the wayside, supposed to be significant of the intentions of the Gods; both required the aid of anxious thought and skillful interpretation. It was only by a correct appreciation of analogous problems of nature, that the will of Heaven could be understood by the Diviner, or the lessons of Wisdom become manifest to the Sage.

The Mysteries were a series of symbols; and what was *spoken* there consisted wholly of accessory explanations of the act or image; sacred commentaries, explanatory of established symbols; with little of those independent traditions embodying physical or moral speculation, in which the elements or planets were the

actors, and the creation and revolutions of the world were intermingled with recollections of ancient events: and yet with so much of that also, that nature became her own expositor through the medium of an arbitrary symbolical instruction; and the ancient views of the relation between the human and divine received dramatic forms.

There has ever been an intimate alliance between the two systems, the symbolic and the philosophical, in the allegories of the monuments of all ages, in the symbolic writings of the priests of all nations, in the rituals of all secret and mysterious societies; there has been a constant series, an invariable uniformity of principles, which come from an aggregate, vast, imposing, and true, composed of parts that fit harmoniously only there.

Symbolical instruction is recommended by the constant and uniform usage of antiquity; and it has retained its influence throughout all ages, as a system of mysterious communication. The Deity, in his revelations to man, adopted the use of material images for the purpose of enforcing sublime truths; and Christ taught by symbols and parables. The mysterious knowledge of the Druids was embodied in signs and symbols. Taliesin, describing his initiation, says: "The secrets were imparted to me by the old Giantess (*Ceridwen*, or *Isis*), without the use of audible language." And again he says, "I am a *silent* proficient."

Initiation was a school, in which were taught the truths of primitive revelation, the existence and attributes of one God, the immortality of the Soul, rewards and punishments in a future life, the phenomena of Nature, the arts, the sciences, morality, legislation, philosophy, and philanthropy, and what we now style psychology and metaphysics, with animal magnetism, and the other occult sciences.

All the ideas of the Priests of Hindostan, Persia, Syria, Arabia, Chaldæa, Phœnicia, were known to the Egyptian Priests. The rational Indian philosophy, after penetrating Persia and Chaldæa, gave birth to the Egyptian Mysteries. We find that the use of Hieroglyphics was preceded in Egypt by that of the easily understood symbols and figures, from the mineral, animal, and vegetable kingdoms, used by the Indians, Persians, and Chaldæans to express their thoughts; and this primitive philosophy was the basis of the modern philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato.

All the philosophers and legislators that made Antiquity illus-

trious, were pupils of the initiation; and all the beneficent modifications in the religions of the different people instructed by them were owing to their institution and extension of the Mysteries. In the chaos of popular superstitions, those Mysteries alone kept man from lapsing into absolute brutishness. Zoroaster and Confucius drew their doctrines from the Mysteries. Clemens of Alexandria, speaking of the Great Mysteries, says: "Here ends all instruction. Nature and all things are seen and known." Had moral truths alone been taught the Initiate, the Mysteries could never have deserved nor received the magnificent eulogiums of the most enlightened men of Antiquity,—of Pindar, Plutarch, Isocrates, Diodorus, Plato, Euripides, Socrates, Aristophanes, Cicero, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and others;—philosophers hostile to the Sacerdotal Spirit, or historians devoted to the investigation of Truth. No: all the sciences were taught there; and those oral or written traditions briefly communicated, which reached back to the first age of the world.

Socrates said, in the *Phædo* of Plato: "It well appears that those who established the Mysteries, or secret assemblies of the initiated, were no contemptible personages, but men of great genius, who in the early ages strove to teach us, under enigmas, that he who shall go to the invisible regions without being purified, will be precipitated into the abyss; while he who arrives there, purged of the stains of this world, and accomplished in virtue, will be admitted to the dwelling-place of the Deity. . . . The initiated are certain to attain the company of the Gods."

Pretextatus, Proconsul of Achaia, a man endowed with all the virtues, said, in the 4th century, that to deprive the Greeks of those Sacred Mysteries which bound together the whole human race, would make life insupportable.

Initiation was considered to be a mystical death; a descent into the infernal regions, where every pollution, and the stains and imperfections of a corrupt and evil life were purged away by fire and water; and the perfect *Epopt* was then said to be *regenerated*, *new-born*, restored to a *renovated* existence of *life, light, and purity*; and placed under the Divine Protection.

A new language was adapted to these celebrations, and also a language of hieroglyphics, unknown to any but those who had received the highest Degree. And to them ultimately were confined the learning, the morality, and the political power of every people

among which the Mysteries were practised. So effectually was the knowledge of the hieroglyphics of the highest Degree hidden from all but a favored few, that in process of time their meaning was entirely lost, and none could interpret them. If the same hieroglyphics were employed in the higher as in the lower Degrees, they had a different and more abstruse and figurative meaning. It was pretended, in later times, that the sacred hieroglyphics and language were the same that were used by the Celestial Deities. Everything that could heighten the mystery of initiation was added, until the very name of the ceremony possessed a strange charm, and yet conjured up the wildest fears. The greatest rapture came to be expressed by the word that signified to pass through the Mysteries.

The Priesthood possessed one third of Egypt. They gained much of their influence by means of the Mysteries, and spared no means to impress the people with a full sense of their importance. They represented them as the beginning of a new life of reason and virtue: the initiated, or esoteric companions were said to entertain the most agreeable anticipations respecting death and eternity, to comprehend all the hidden mysteries of Nature, to have their souls restored to the original perfection from which man had fallen; and at their death to be borne to the celestial mansions of the Gods. The doctrines of a future state of rewards and punishments formed a prominent feature in the Mysteries; and they were also believed to assure much temporal happiness and good-fortune, and afford absolute security against the most imminent dangers by land and sea. Public odium was cast on those who refused to be initiated. They were considered profane, unworthy of public employment or private confidence; and held to be doomed to eternal punishment as impious. To betray the secrets of the Mysteries, to wear on the stage the dress of an Initiate, or to hold the Mysteries up to derision, was to incur death at the hands of public vengeance.

It is certain that up to the time of Cicero, the Mysteries still retained much of their original character of sanctity and purity. And at a later day, as we know, Nero, after committing a horrible crime, did not dare, even in Greece, to aid in the celebration of the Mysteries; nor at a still later day was Constantine, the Christian Emperor, allowed to do so, after his murder of his relatives.

Everywhere, and in all their forms, the Mysteries were funereal;

and celebrated the mystical death and restoration to life of some divine or heroic personage: and the details of the legend and the mode of the death varied in the different Countries where the Mysteries were practised.

Their explanation belongs both to astronomy and mythology; and the Legend of the Māster's Degree is but another form of that of the Mysteries, reaching back, in one shape or other, to the remotest antiquity.

Whether Egypt originated the legend, or borrowed it from India or Chaldæa, it is now impossible to know. But the Hebrews received the Mysteries from the Egyptians; and of course were familiar with *their* legend,—known as it was to those Egyptian Initiates, Joseph and Moses. It was the fable (or rather the *truth* clothed in allegory and figures) of OSIRIS, the Sun, Source of Light and Principle of Good, and TYPHON, the Principle of Darkness and Evil. In all the histories of the Gods and Heroes lay couched and hidden astronomical details and the history of the operations of visible Nature; and those in their turn were also symbols of higher and profounder truths. None but rude uncultivated intellects could long consider the Sun and Stars and the Powers of Nature as Divine, or as fit objects of Human Worship; and *they* will consider them so while the world lasts; and ever remain ignorant of the great Spiritual Truths of which these are the hieroglyphics and expressions.

A brief summary of the Egyptian legend will serve to show the leading idea on which the Mysteries among the Hebrews were based.

Osiris, said to have been an ancient King of Egypt, was the Sun; and Isis, his wife, the Moon: and his history recounts, in poetical and figurative style, the annual journey of the Great Luminary of Heaven through the different Signs of the Zodiac.

In the absence of Osiris, Typhon, his brother, filled with envy and malice, sought to usurp his throne; but his plans were frustrated by Isis. Then he resolved to kill Osiris. This he d'd, by persuading him to enter a coffin or sarcophagus, which he then flung into the Nile. After a long search, Isis found the body, and concealed it in the depths of a forest; but Typhon, finding it there, cut it into fourteen pieces, and scattered them hither and thither. After tedious search, Isis found thirteen pieces, the fishes having eaten the other (the privates), which she replaced of wood, and

buried the body at Philæ; where a temple of surpassing magnificence was erected in honor of Osiris.

Isis, aided by her son Orus, Horus or Har-oeri, warred against Typhon, slew him, reigned gloriously, and at her death was reunited to her husband, in the same tomb.

Typhon was represented as born of the earth; the upper part of his body covered with feathers, in stature reaching the clouds, his arms and legs covered with scales, serpents darting from him on every side, and fire flashing from his mouth. Horus, who aided in slaying him, became the God of the Sun, answering to the Grecian Apollo; and Typhon is but the anagram of Python, the great serpent slain by Apollo.

The word Typhon, like Eve, signifies *a serpent, and life*.* By its form the serpent symbolizes life, which circulates through all nature. When, toward the end of autumn, the Woman (Virgo), in the constellations seems (upon the Chaldæan sphere) to crush with her heel the head of the serpent, this figure foretells the coming of winter, during which life seems to retire from all beings, and no longer to circulate through nature. This is why Typhon signifies also a serpent, the symbol of winter, which, in the Catholic Temples, is represented surrounding the Terrestrial Globe, which surmounts the heavenly cross, emblem of redemption. If the word Typhon is derived from *Tupoul*, it signifies a tree which produces apples (*mala, evils*), the Jewish origin of the fall of man. Typhon means also one who supplants, and signifies the human passions, which expel from our hearts the lessons of wisdom. In the Egyptian Fable, Isis wrote the sacred word for the instruction of men, and Typhon effaced it as fast as she wrote it. In morals, his name signifies *Pride, Ignorance, and Falsehood*.

When Isis first found the body, where it had floated ashore near Byblos, a shrub of *erica* or tamarisk near it had, by the virtue of the body, shot up into a tree around it, and protected it; and hence our sprig of acacia. Isis was also aided in her search by Anubis, in the shape of a dog. He was Sirius or the Dog-Star, the friend and counsellor of Osiris, and the inventor of language, grammar, astronomy, surveying, arithmetic, music, and medical science; the first maker of laws; and who taught the worship of the Gods, and the building of Temples.

*צפניאי Tsapanai, in Hebrew, means a serpent.

In the Mysteries, the nailing up of the body of Osiris in the chest or ark was termed the *aphanism*, or disappearance [of the Sun at the Winter Solstice, below the Tropic of Capricorn], and the recovery of the different parts of his body by Isis, the *Euresis*, or finding. The candidate went through a ceremony representing this, in all the Mysteries everywhere. The main facts in the fable were the same in all countries; and the prominent Deities were everywhere a male and a female.

In Egypt they were Osiris and Isis: in India, Mahadeva and Bhavani: in Phœnicia, Thammuz (or Adonis) and Astarte: in Phrygia, Atys and Cybele: in Persia, Mithras and Asis: in Samothrace and Greece, Dionusos or Sabazeus and Rhea: in Britain, Hu and Ceridwen: and in Scandinavia, Woden and Frea: and in every instance these Divinities represented the Sun and the Moon.

The Mysteries of Osiris, Isis, and Horus, seem to have been the model of all other ceremonies of initiation subsequently established among the different peoples of the world. Those of Atys and Cybele, celebrated in Phrygia; those of Ceres and Proserpine, at Eleusis and many other places in Greece, were but copies of them. This we learn from Plutarch, Diodorus Siculus, Lactantius, and other writers; and in the absence of direct testimony should necessarily infer it from the similarity of the adventures of these Deities; for the ancients held that the Ceres of the Greeks was the same as the Isis of the Egyptians; and Dionusos or Bacchus as Osiris.

In the legend of Osiris and Isis, as given by Plutarch, are many details and circumstances other than those that we have briefly mentioned; and all of which we need not repeat here. Osiris married his sister Isis; and labored publicly with her to ameliorate the lot of men. He taught them agriculture, while Isis invented laws. He built temples to the Gods, and established their worship. Both were the patrons of artists and their useful inventions; and introduced the use of iron for defensive weapons and implements of agriculture, and of gold to adorn the temples of the Gods. He went forth with an army to conquer men to civilization, teaching the people whom he overcame to plant the vine and sow grain for food.

Typhon, his brother, slew him when the sun was in the sign of the Scorpion, that is to say, at the Autumnal Equinox. They had

been rival claimants, says Synesius, for the throne of Egypt, as Light and Darkness contend ever for the empire of the world. Plutarch adds, that at the time when Osiris was slain, the moon was at its full; and therefore it was in the sign opposite the Scorpion, that is, the Bull, the sign of the Vernal Equinox.

Plutarch assures us that it was to represent these events and details that Isis established the Mysteries, in which they were reproduced by images, symbols, and a religious ceremonial, whereby they were imitated: and in which lessons of piety were given, and consolations under the misfortunes that afflict us here below. Those who instituted these Mysteries meant to strengthen religion and console men in their sorrows by the lofty hopes found in a religious faith, whose principles were represented to them covered by a pompous ceremonial, and under the sacred veil of allegory.

Diodorus speaks of the famous columns erected near Nysa, in Arabia, where, it was said, were two of the tombs of Osiris and Isis. On one was this inscription: "I am Isis, Queen of this country. I was instructed by Mercury. No one can destroy the laws which I have established. I am the eldest daughter of Saturn, most ancient of the Gods. I am the wife and sister of Osiris the King. I first made known to mortals the use of wheat. I am the mother of Orus the King. In my honor was the city of Bubaste built. Rejoice, O Egypt, rejoice, land that gave me birth!" . . . And on the other was this: "I am Osiris the King, who led my armies into all parts of the world, to the most thickly inhabited countries of India, the North, the Danube, and the Ocean. I am the eldest son of Saturn: I was born of the brilliant and magnificent egg, and my substance is of the same nature as that which composes light. There is no place in the Universe where I have not appeared, to bestow my benefits and make known my discoveries." The rest was illegible.

To aid her in the search for the body of Osiris, and to nurse her infant child Horus, Isis sought out and took with her Anubis, son of Osiris, and his sister Nephte. He, as we have said, was Sirius, the brightest star in the Heavens. After finding him, she went to Byblos, and seated herself near a fountain, where she had learned that the sacred chest had stopped which contained the body of Osiris. There she sat, sad and silent, shedding a torrent of tears. Thither came the women of the Court of Queen Astarte, and she spoke to them, and dressed their hair, pouring upon it deliciously

perfumed ambrosia. This known to the Queen, Isis was engaged as nurse for her child, in the palace, one of the columns of which was made of the erica or tamarisk, that had grown up over the chest containing Osiris, cut down by the King, and unknown to him, still enclosing the chest: which column Isis afterward demanded, and from it extracted the chest and the body, which, the latter wrapped in thin drapery and perfumed, she carried away with her.

Blue Masonry, ignorant of its import, still retains among its emblems one of a woman weeping over a broken column, holding in her hand a branch of acacia, myrtle, or tamarisk, while Time, we are told, stands behind her combing out the ringlets of her hair. We need not repeat the vapid and trivial explanation there given, of this representation of *Isis*, weeping at Byblos, over the column torn from the palace of the King, that contained the body of Osiris, while Horus, the God of Time, pours ambrosia on her hair.

Nothing of this recital was historical; but the whole was an allegory or sacred fable, containing a meaning known only to those who were initiated into the Mysteries. All the incidents were astronomical, with a meaning still deeper lying behind *that* explanation, and so hidden by a double veil. The Mysteries, in which these incidents were represented and explained, were like those of Eleusis in their object, of which Pausanias, who was initiated, says that the Greeks, from the remotest antiquity, regarded them as the best calculated of all things to lead men to piety: and Aristotle says they were the most valuable of all religious institutions, and thus were called mysteries par excellence; and the Temple of Eleusis was regarded as, in some sort, the common sanctuary of the whole earth, where religion had brought together all that was most imposing and most august.

The object of all the Mysteries was to inspire men with piety, and to console them in the miseries of life. That consolation, so afforded, was the hope of a happier future, and of passing, after death, to a state of eternal felicity.

Cicero says that the Initiates not only received lessons which made life more agreeable, but drew from the ceremonies happy hopes for the moment of death. Socrates says that those who were so fortunate as to be admitted to the Mysteries, possessed, when dying, the most glorious hopes for eternity. Aristides says that

they not only procure the Initiates consolations in the present life, and means of deliverance from the great weight of their evils, but also the precious advantage of passing after death to a happier state.

Isis was the Goddess of Sais; and the famous Feast of Lights was celebrated there in her honor. There were celebrated the Mysteries, in which were represented the death and subsequent restoration to life of the God Osiris, in a secret ceremony and scenic representation of his sufferings, called the Mysteries of Night.

The Kings of Egypt often exercised the functions of the Priesthood; and they were initiated into the sacred science as soon as they attained the throne. So at Athens, the First Magistrate, or Archon-King, superintended the Mysteries. This was an image of the union that existed between the Priesthood and Royalty, in those early times when legislators and kings sought in religion a potent political instrument.

Herodotus says, speaking of the reasons why animals were deified in Egypt: "If I were to explain these reasons, I should be led to the disclosure of those holy matters which I particularly wish to avoid, and which, but from necessity, I should not have discussed at all." So he says, "The Egyptians have at Sais the tomb of a certain personage, whom I do not think myself permitted to specify. It is behind the Temple of Minerva." [The latter, so called by the Greeks, was really Isis, whose was the often-cited enigmatical inscription, "I am what was and is and is to come. No mortal hath yet unveiled me."] So again he says: "Upon this lake are represented by night the accidents which happened to him whom I dare not name. The Egyptians call them their Mysteries. Concerning these, at the same time that I confess myself sufficiently informed, I feel myself compelled to be silent. Of the ceremonies also in honor of Ceres, I may not venture to speak, further than the obligations of religion will allow me."

It is easy to see what was the great object of initiation and the Mysteries; whose first and greatest fruit was, as all the ancients testify, to civilize savage hordes, to soften their ferocious manners, to introduce among them social intercourse, and lead them into a way of life more worthy of men. Cicero considers the establishment of the Eleusinian Mysteries to be the greatest of all the benefits conferred by Athens on other commonwealths; their effects

having been, he says, to civilize men, soften their savage and ferocious manners, and teach them the true principles of morals, which *initiate* man into the only kind of life worthy of him. The same philosophic orator, in a passage where he apostrophizes Ceres and Proserpine, says that mankind owes these Goddesses the first elements of moral life, as well as the first means of sustenance of physical life; knowledge of the laws, regulation of morals, and those examples of civilization which have improved the manners of men and cities.

Bacchus in Euripides says to Pentheus, that his new institution (the Dionysiac Mysteries) deserved to be known, and that one of its great advantages was, that it proscribed all impurity: that these were the Mysteries of Wisdom, of which it would be imprudent to speak to persons not initiated: that they were established among the Barbarians, who in that showed greater wisdom than the Greeks, who had not yet received them.

This double object, political and religious,—one teaching our duty to men, and the other what we owe to the Gods; or rather, respect for the Gods calculated to maintain that which we owe the laws, is found in that well-known verse of Virgil, borrowed by him from the ceremonies of initiation: "Teach me to respect Justice and the Gods." This great lesson, which the Hierophant impressed on the Initiates, after they had witnessed a representation of the Infernal regions, the Poet places after his description of the different punishments suffered by the wicked in Tartarus, and immediately after the description of that of Sisyphus.

Pausanias, likewise, at the close of the representation of the punishments of Sisyphus and the daughters of Danaus, in the Temple at Delphi, makes this reflection; that the crime or impiety which in them had chiefly merited this punishment, was the contempt which they had shown for the Mysteries of Eleusis. From this reflection of Pausanias, who was an Initiate, it is easy to see that the Priests of Eleusis, who taught the dogma of punishment in Tartarus, included among the great crimes deserving these punishments, contempt for and disregard of the Holy Mysteries; whose object was to lead men to piety, and thereby to respect for justice and the laws, chief object of their institution, if not the only one, and to which the needs and interest of religion itself were subordinate; since the latter was but a means to lead more surely to the former; for the whole force of religious opin-

ions being in the hands of the legislators to be wielded, they were sure of being better obeyed.

The Mysteries were not merely simple lustrations and the observation of some arbitrary formulas and ceremonies; nor a means of reminding men of the ancient condition of the race prior to civilization: but they led men to piety by instruction in morals and as to a future life; which at a very early day, if not originally, formed the chief portion of the ceremonial.

Symbols were used in the ceremonies, which referred to agriculture, as Masonry has preserved the ear of wheat in a symbol and in one of her words; but their principal reference was to astronomical phenomena. Much was no doubt said as to the condition of brutality and degradation in which man was sunk before the institution of the Mysteries; but the allusion was rather metaphysical, to the ignorance of the uninitiated, than to the wild life of the earliest men.

The great object of the Mysteries of Isis, and in general of all the Mysteries, was a great and truly politic one. It was to ameliorate our race, to perfect its manners and morals, and to restrain society by stronger bonds than those that human laws impose. They were the invention of that ancient science and wisdom which exhausted all its resources to make legislation perfect; and of that philosophy which has ever sought to secure the happiness of man, by purifying his soul from the passions which can trouble it, and as a necessary consequence introduce social disorder. And that they were the work of genius is evident from their employment of all the sciences, a profound knowledge of the human heart, and the means of subduing it.

It is a still greater mistake to imagine that they were the inventions of charlatanism, and means of deception. They may in the lapse of time have degenerated into imposture and schools of false ideas; but they were not so at the beginning; or else the wisest and best men of antiquity have uttered the most willful falsehoods. In process of time the very allegories of the Mysteries themselves, Tartarus and its punishments, Minos and the other judges of the dead, came to be misunderstood, and to be false because they were so; while at first they were true, because they were recognized as merely the arbitrary forms in which truths were enveloped.

The object of the Mysteries was to procure for man a real felicity on earth by the means of virtue: and to that end he was

taught that his soul was immortal; and that error, sin, and vice must needs, by an inflexible law, produce their consequences. The rude representation of physical torture in Tartarus was but an image of the certain, unavoidable, eternal consequences that flow by the law of God's enactment from the sin committed and the vice indulged in. The poets and mystagogues labored to propagate these doctrines of the soul's immortality and the certain punishment of sin and vice, and to accredit them with the people, by teaching them the former in their poems, and the latter in the sanctuaries; and they clothed them with the charms, the one of poetry, and the other of spectacles and magic illusions.

They painted, aided by all the resources of art, the virtuous man's happy life after death, and the horrors of the frightful prisons destined to punish the vicious. In the shades of the sanctuaries, these delights and horrors were exhibited as spectacles, and the Initiates witnessed religious dramas, under the name of *initiation* and *mysterics*. Curiosity was excited by secrecy, by the difficulty experienced in obtaining admission, and by the tests to be undergone. The candidate was amused by the variety of the scenery, the pomp of the decorations, the appliances of machinery. Respect was inspired by the gravity and dignity of the actors and the majesty of the ceremonial; and fear and hope, sadness and delight, were in turns excited.

The Hierophants, men of intellect, and well understanding the disposition of the people and the art of controlling them, used every appliance to attain that object, and give importance and impressiveness to their ceremonies. As they covered those ceremonies with the veil of Secrecy, so they preferred that Night should cover them with its wings. Obscurity adds to impressiveness, and assists illusion; and they used it to produce an effect upon the astonished Initiate. The ceremonies were conducted in caverns dimly lighted: thick groves were planted around the Temples, to produce that gloom that impresses the mind with a religious awe.

The very word *mystery*, according to Demetrius Phalereus, was a metaphorical expression that denoted the secret awe which darkness and gloom inspired. The night was almost always the time fixed for their celebration; and they were ordinarily termed *nocturnal* ceremonies. Initiations into the Mysteries of Samothrace took place at night; as did those of Isis, of which Apuleius speaks.

Euripides makes Bacchus say, that *his* Mysteries were celebrated at night, because there is in night something august and imposing.

Nothing excites men's curiosity so much as Mystery, concealing things which they desire to know: and nothing so much increases curiosity as obstacles that interpose to prevent them from indulging in the gratification of their desires. Of this the Legislators and Hierophants took advantage, to attract the people to their sanctuaries, and to induce them to seek to obtain lessons from which they would perhaps have turned away with indifference, if they had been pressed upon them. In this spirit of mystery they professed to imitate the Deity, who hides Himself from our senses, and conceals from us the springs by which He moves the Universe. They admitted that they concealed the highest truths under the veil of allegory, the more to excite the curiosity of men, and to urge them to investigation. The secrecy in which they buried their Mysteries, had that end. Those to whom they were confided, bound themselves, by the most fearful oaths, never to reveal them. They were not allowed even to speak of these important secrets with any others than the initiated; and the penalty of death was pronounced against any one indiscreet enough to reveal them, or found in the Temple without being an Initiate; and any one who had betrayed those secrets, was avoided by all, as excommunicated.

Aristotle was accused of impiety, by the Hierophant Eurymedon, for having sacrificed to the manés of his wife, according to the rite used in the worship of Ceres. He was compelled to flee to Chalcis; and to purge his memory from this stain, he directed, by his will, the erection of a Statue to that Goddess. Socrates, dying, sacrificed to Esculapius, to exculpate himself from the suspicion of Atheism. A price was set on the head of Diagoras, because he had divulged the Secret of the Mysteries. Andocides was accused of the same crime, as was Alcibiades, and both were cited to answer the charge before the inquisition at Athens, where the People were the Judges. Æschylus the Tragedian was accused of having represented the Mysteries on the stage; and was acquitted only on proving that he had never been initiated.

Seneca, comparing Philosophy to initiation, says that the most sacred ceremonies could be known to the adepts alone: but that many of their precepts were known even to the Profane. Such

was the case with the doctrine of a future life, and a state of rewards and punishments beyond the grave. The ancient legislators clothed this doctrine in the pomp of a mysterious ceremony, in mystic words and magical representations, to impress upon the mind the truths they taught, by the strong influence of such scenic displays upon the senses and imagination.

In the same way they taught the origin of the soul, its fall to the earth past the spheres and through the elements, and its final return to the place of its origin, when, during the continuance of its union with earthly matter, the sacred fire, which formed its essence, had contracted no stains, and its brightness had not been marred by foreign particles, which, denaturalizing it, weighed it down and delayed its return. These metaphysical ideas, with difficulty comprehended by the mass of the Initiates, were represented by figures, by symbols, and by allegorical analogies; no idea being so abstract that men do not seek to give it expression by, and translate it into, sensible images.

The attraction of Secrecy was enhanced by the difficulty of obtaining admission. Obstacles and suspense redoubled curiosity. Those who aspired to the initiation of the Sun and in the Mysteries of Mithras in Persia, underwent many trials. They commenced by easy tests and arrived by degrees at those that were most cruel, in which the life of the candidate was often endangered. Gregory Nazianzen terms them *tortures* and mystic *punishments*. No one can be initiated, says Suidas, until after he has proven, by the most terrible trials, that he possesses a virtuous soul, exempt from the sway of every passion, and as it were impassible. There were twelve principal tests; and some make the number larger.

The trials of the Eleusinian initiations were not so terrible; but they were severe; and the suspense, above all, in which the aspirant was kept for several years [the memory of which is retained in Masonry by the *ages* of those of the different Degrees], or the interval between admission to the *inferior* and initiation in the *great* Mysteries, was a species of torture to the curiosity which it was desired to excite. Thus the Egyptian Priests tried Pythagoras before admitting him to know the secrets of the sacred science. He succeeded, by his incredible patience and the courage with which he surmounted all obstacles, in obtaining admission to their society and receiving their lessons. Among the Jews, the Essenes

admitted none among them, until they had passed the tests of several Degrees.

By initiation, those who before were *fellow-citizens* only, became *brothers*, connected by a closer bond than before, by means of a religious fraternity, which, bringing men nearer together, united them more strongly : and the weak and the poor could more readily appeal for assistance to the powerful and the wealthy, with whom religious association gave them a closer fellowship.

The Initiate was regarded as the favorite of the Gods. For him alone Heaven opened its treasures. Fortunate during life, he could, by virtue and the favor of Heaven, promise himself after death an eternal felicity.

The Priests of the Island of Samothrace promised favorable winds and prosperous voyages to those who were initiated. It was promised them that the CABIRI, and Castor and Pollux, the DIOSCURI, should appear to them when the storm raged, and give them calms and smooth seas : and the Scholiast of Aristophanes says that those initiated in the Mysteries there were just men, who were privileged to escape from great evils and tempests.

The Initiate in the Mysteries of Orpheus, after he was purified, was considered as released from the empire of evil, and transferred to a condition of life which gave him the happiest hopes. "I have emerged from evil," he was made to say, "and have attained good." Those initiated in the Mysteries of Eleusis believed that the Sun blazed with a pure splendor for them alone. And, as we see in the case of Pericles, they flattered themselves that Ceres and Proserpine inspired them and gave them wisdom and counsel.

Initiation dissipated errors and banished misfortune : and after having filled the heart of man with joy during life, it gave him the most blissful hopes at the moment of death. We owe it to the Goddesses of Eleusis, says Socrates, that we do not lead the wild life of the earliest men : and to them are due the flattering hopes which initiation gives us for the moment of death and for all eternity. The benefit which we reap from these august ceremonies, says Aristides, is not only present joy, a deliverance and enfranchisement from the old ills ; but also the sweet hope which we have in death of passing to a more fortunate state. And Theon says that participation of the Mysteries is the finest of all things, and the source of the greatest blessings. The happiness promised there was not limited to this mortal life ; but it extended

beyond the grave. There a new life was to commence, during which the Initiate was to enjoy a bliss without alloy and without limit. The Corybantes promised eternal life to the Initiates of the Mysteries of Cybele and Atys.

Apuleius represents Lucius, while still in the form of an ass, as addressing his prayers to Isis, whom he speaks of as the same as Ceres, Venus, Diana, and Proserpine, and as illuminating the walls of many cities simultaneously with her feminine lustre, and substituting her quivering light for the bright rays of the Sun. She appears to him in his vision as a beautiful female, "over whose divine neck her long thick hair hung in graceful ringlets." Addressing him, she says, "The parent of Universal nature attends thy call. The mistress of the Elements, initiative germ of generations, Supreme of Deities, Queen of departed Spirits, first inhabitant of Heaven, and uniform type of all the Gods and Goddesses, propitiated by thy prayers, is with thee. She governs with her nod the luminous heights of the firmament, the salubrious breezes of the ocean; the silent deplorable depths of the shades below; one Sole Divinity under many forms, worshipped by the different nations of the Earth under many titles, and with various religious rites."

Directing him how to proceed, at her festival, to re-obtain his human shape, she says: "Throughout the entire course of the remainder of thy life, until the very last breath has vanished from thy lips, thou art devoted to my service . . . Under my protection will thy life be happy and glorious: and when, thy days being spent, thou shalt descend to the shades below, and inhabit the Elysian fields, there also, even in the subterranean hemisphere, shalt thou pay frequent worship to me, thy propitious patron: and yet further: if through sedulous obedience, religious devotion to my ministry, and inviolable chastity, thou shalt prove thyself a worthy object of divine favor, then shalt thou feel the influence of the power that I alone possess. The number of thy days shall be prolonged beyond the ordinary decrees of fate."

In the procession of the festival, Lucius saw the image of the Goddess, on either side of which were female attendants, that, "with ivory combs in their hands, made believe, by the motion of their arms and the twisting of their fingers, to comb and ornament the Goddess' royal hair." Afterward, clad in linen robes, came the initiated. "The hair of the women was moistened by

perume, and enveloped in a transparent covering; but the men, terrestrial stars, as it were, of the great religion, were thoroughly shaven, and their bald heads shone exceedingly."

Afterward came the Priests, in robes of white linen. The first bore a lamp in the form of a boat, emitting flame from an orifice in the middle: the second, a small altar: the third, a golden palm-tree: and the fourth displayed the figure of a left hand, the palm open and expanded, "representing thereby a symbol of equity and fair-dealing, of which the left hand, as slower than the right hand, and more void of skill and craft, is therefore an appropriate emblem."

After Lucius had, by the grace of Isis, recovered his human form, the Priest said to him, "Calamity hath no hold on those whom our Goddess hath chosen for her service, and whom her majesty hath vindicated." And the people declared that he was fortunate to be "thus after a manner born again, and at once betrothed to the service of the Holy Ministry."

When he urged the Chief Priest to initiate him, he was answered that there was not "a single one among the initiated, of a mind so depraved, or so bent on his own destruction, as, without receiving a special command from Isis, to dare to undertake her ministry rashly and sacrilegiously, and thereby commit an act certain to bring upon himself a dreadful injury." "For," continued the Chief Priest, "the gates of the shades below, and the care of our life being in the hands of the Goddess,—*the ceremony of initiation into the Mysteries is, as it were, to suffer death, with the precarious chance of resuscitation. Wherefore the Goddess, in the wisdom of her Divinity, hath been accustomed to select as persons to whom the secrets of her religion can with propriety be entrusted, those who, standing as it were on the utmost limit of the course of life they have completed, may through her Providence be in a manner born again, and commence the career of a new existence.*"

When he was finally to be initiated, he was conducted to the nearest baths, and after having bathed, the Priest first solicited forgiveness of the Gods, and then sprinkled him all over with the clearest and purest water, and conducted him back to the Temple; "where," says Apuleius, "after giving me some instruction, that mortal tongue is not permitted to reveal, he bade me for the succeeding ten days restrain my appetite, eat no animal food, and drink no wine."

These ten days elapsed, the Priest led him into the inmost recesses of the Sanctuary. "And here, studious reader," he continues, "peradventure thou wilt be sufficiently anxious to know all that was said and done, which, were it lawful to divulge, I would tell thee; and, wert thou permitted to hear, thou shouldst know. Nevertheless, although the disclosure would affix the penalty of rash curiosity to my tongue as well as thy ears, yet will I, for fear thou shouldst be too long tormented with religious longing, and suffer the pain of protracted suspense, tell the truth notwithstanding. Listen then to what I shall relate. *I approached the abode of death; with my foot I pressed the threshold of Proserpine's Palace. I was transported through the elements, and conducted back again. At midnight I saw the bright light of the sun shining. I stood in the presence of the Gods, the Gods of Heaven and of the Shades below; ay, stood near and worshipped.* And now have I told thee such things that, hearing, thou necessarily canst not understand; and being beyond the comprehension of the Profane, I can enunciate without committing a crime."

After night had passed, and the morning had dawned, the usual ceremonies were at an end. Then he was consecrated by twelve stoles being put upon him, clothed, crowned with palm-leaves, and exhibited to the people. The remainder of that day was celebrated as his birthday and passed in festivities; and on the third day afterward, the same religious ceremonies were repeated, including a religious breakfast, "*followed by a final consummation of ceremonies.*"

A year afterward, he was warned to prepare for initiation into the Mysteries of "the Great God, Supreme Parent of all the other Gods, the invincible OSIRIS." "For," says Apuleius, "although there is a strict connexion between the religions of both Deities, AND EVEN THE ESSENCE OF BOTH DIVINITIES IS IDENTICAL, the ceremonies of the respective initiations are considerably different."

Compare with this hint the following language of the prayer of Lucius, addressed to Isis; and we may judge what doctrines were taught in the Mysteries, in regard to the Deity: "O Holy and Perpetual Preserver of the Human Race! ever ready to cherish mortals by Thy munificence, and to afford Thy sweet maternal affection to the wretched under misfortune: Whose bounty is never at rest, neither by day nor by night, nor throughout the very minutest particle of duration: Thou who stretchest forth Th-

health-bearing right hand over the land and over the sea for the protection of mankind, to disperse the storms of life, to unravel the inextricable entanglement of the web of fate, to mitigate the tempests of fortune, and restrain the malignant influences of the stars,—*the Gods in Heaven adore Thee, the Gods in the shades below do Thee homage, the stars obey Thee, the Divinities rejoice in Thee, the elements and the revolving seasons serve Thee!* At Thy nod the winds breathe, clouds gather, seeds grow, buds germinate; *in obedience to Thee the Earth revolves* AND THE SUN GIVES US LIGHT. IT IS THOU WHO GOVERNEST THE UNIVERSE AND TREADEST TARTARUS UNDER THY FEET."

Then he was initiated into the nocturnal Mysteries of Osiris and Serapis: and afterward into those of Ceres at Rome: but of the ceremonies in these initiations, Apuleius says nothing.

Under the Archonship of Euclid, bastards and slaves were excluded from initiation; and the same exclusion obtained against the Materialists or Epicureans who denied Providence and consequently the utility of initiation. By a natural progress, it came at length to be considered that the gates of Elysium would open only for the Initiates, whose souls had been purified and regenerated in the sanctuaries. But it was never held, on the other hand, that initiation alone sufficed. We learn from Plato, that it was also necessary for the soul to be purified from every stain: and that the purification necessary was such as gave virtue, truth, wisdom, strength, justice, and temperance.

Entrance to the Temples was forbidden to all who had committed homicide, even if it were involuntary. So it is stated by both Isocrates and Theon. Magicians and Charlatans who made trickery a trade, and impostors pretending to be possessed by evil spirits, were excluded from the sanctuaries. Every impious person and criminal was rejected; and Lampridius states that before the celebration of the Mysteries, public notice was given, that none need apply to enter but those against whom their consciences uttered no reproach, and who were certain of their own innocence.

It was required of the Initiate that his heart and hands should be free from any stain. Porphyry says that man's soul, at death, should be enfranchised from all the passions, from hate, envy, and the others; and, in a word, *be as pure as it is required to be in the Mysteries*. Of course it is not surprising that parricides and per-

jurers, and others who had committed crimes against God or man, could not be admitted.

In the Mysteries of Mithras, a lecture was repeated to the Initiate on the subject of Justice. And the great moral lesson of the Mysteries, to which all their mystic ceremonial tended, expressed in a single line by Virgil, was *to practise Justice and revere the Deity*;—thus recalling men to justice, by connecting it with the justice of the Gods, who require it and punish its infraction. The Initiate could aspire to the favors of the Gods, only because and while he respected the rights of society and those of humanity. "The sun," says the chorus of Initiates in Aristophanes, "burns with a pure light for us alone, who, admitted to the Mysteries, observe the laws of piety in our intercourse with strangers and our fellow-citizens." The rewards of initiation were attached to the practice of the social virtues. It was not enough to be initiated merely. It was necessary to be faithful to the *laws* of initiation, which imposed on men duties in regard to their kind. Bacchus allowed none to participate in his Mysteries, but men who conformed to the rules of piety and justice. Sensibility, above all, and compassion for the misfortunes of others, were precious virtues, which initiation strove to encourage. "Nature," says Juvenal, "has created us compassionate, since it has endowed us with tears. Sensibility is the most admirable of our senses. What man is truly worthy of the torch of the Mysteries; who such as the Priest of Ceres requires him to be, if he regards the misfortunes of others as wholly foreign to himself?"

All who had not used their endeavors to defeat a conspiracy; and those who had on the contrary fomented one; those citizens who had betrayed their country, who had surrendered an advantageous post or place, or the vessels of the State, to the enemy; all who had supplied the enemy with money; and in general, all who had come short of their duties as honest men and good citizens, were excluded from the Mysteries of Eleusis. To be admitted there, one must have lived equitably, and with sufficient good fortune not to be regarded as hated by the Gods.

Thus the Society of the Initiates was, in its principle, and according to the true purpose of its institution, a society of virtuous men, who labored to free their souls from the tyranny of the passions, and to develop the germ of all the social virtues. And this was the meaning of the idea, afterward misunderstood, that entry

into Elysium was only allowed to the Initiates: because entrance to the sanctuaries was allowed to the virtuous only, and Elysium was created for virtuous souls alone.

The precise nature and details of the doctrines as to a future life, and rewards and punishments there, developed in the Mysteries, is in a measure uncertain. Little direct information in regard to it has come down to us. No doubt, in the ceremonies, there was a scenic representation of Tartarus and the judgment of the dead, resembling that which we find in Virgil: but there is a little doubt that these representations were explained to be allegorical. It is not our purpose here to repeat the descriptions given of Elysium and Tartarus. That would be aside from our object. We are only concerned with the great fact that the Mysteries taught the doctrine of the soul's immortality, and that, in some shape, suffering, pain, remorse, and agony, ever follow sin as its consequences.

Human ceremonies are indeed but imperfect symbols; and the alternate baptisms in fire and water intended to purify us into immortality, are ever in this world interrupted at the moment of their anticipated completion. Life is a mirror which reflects only to deceive, a tissue perpetually interrupted and broken, an urn forever fed, yet never full.

All initiation is but introductory to the great change of death. Baptism, anointing, embalming, obsequies by burial or fire, are preparatory symbols, like the initiation of Hercules before descending to the Shades, pointing out the mental change which ought to precede the renewal of existence. Death is the true initiation, to which sleep is the introductory or minor mystery. It is the final rite which united the Egyptian with his God, and which opens the same promise to all who are duly prepared for it.

The body was deemed a prison for the soul; but the latter was not condemned to eternal banishment and imprisonment. The Father of the Worlds permits its chains to be broken, and has provided in the course of Nature the means of its escape. It was a doctrine of immemorial antiquity, shared alike by Egyptians, Pythagoreans, the Orphici, and by that characteristic Bacchic Sage, "the Preceptor of the Soul," Silenus, that death is far better than life; that the real death belongs to those who on earth are immersed in the Lethe of its passions and fascinations, and that the true life commences only when the soul is emancipated for its return.

And in this sense, as presiding over life and death, Dionusos is in the highest sense *the* LIBERATOR: since, like Osiris, he frees the soul, and guides it in its migrations beyond the grave, preserving it from the risk of again falling under the slavery of matter or of some inferior animal form, the purgatory of Metempsychosis; and exalting and perfecting its nature through the purifying discipline of his Mysteries. "The great consummation of all philosophy," said Socrates, 'professedly quoting from traditional and mystic sources, "is *Death*: He who pursues philosophy aright, is *studying how to die.*"

All soul is part of the Universal Soul, whose totality is Dionusos; and it is therefore he who, as Spirit of Spirits, leads back the vagrant spirit to its home, and accompanies it through the purifying processes, both real and symbolical, of its earthly transit. He is therefore emphatically the *Mystes* or Hierophant, the great Spiritual Mediator of Greek religion.

The human soul is itself *δαίμωνος*, a God *within* the mind, capable through its own power of rivalling the canonization of the Hero, of making itself immortal by the practice of the good, and the contemplation of the beautiful and true. The removal to the Happy Islands could only be understood mythically; everything earthly must die; Man, like Ædipus, is wounded from his birth, his real elysium can exist only beyond the grave. Dionusos died and descended to the Shades. His passion was the great Secret of the Mysteries; as Death is the Grand Mystery of existence. His death, typical of Nature's Death, or of her periodical decay and restoration, was one of the many symbols of the *palingenesia* or second birth of man.

Man descended from the elemental Forces or Titans [Elohim], who fed on the body of the Pantheistic Deity creating the Universe by self-sacrifice, commemorates in sacramental observance this mysterious passion; and while partaking of the raw flesh of the victim, seems to be invigorated by a fresh draught from the fountain of universal life, to receive a new pledge of regenerated existence. Death is the inseparable antecedent of life; the seed dies in order to produce the plant, and earth itself is rent asunder and dies at the birth of Dionusos. Hence the significancy of the *phallus*, or of its inoffensive substitute, the obelisk, rising as an emblem of resurrection by the tomb of buried Deity at Lerna or at Sais.

Dionusos-Orpheus descended to the Shades to recover the lost Virgin of the Zodiac, to bring back his mother to the sky as Thyone; or what has the same meaning, to consummate his eventful marriage with Persephone, thereby securing, like the nuptials of his father with Semele or Danaë, the perpetuity of Nature. His under-earth office is the depression of the year, the wintry aspect in the alternations of bull and serpent, whose united series makes up the continuity of Time, and in which, physically speaking, the stern and dark are ever the parents of the beautiful and bright.

It was this aspect, sombre for the moment, but bright by anticipation, which was contemplated in the Mysteries: the human sufferer was consoled by witnessing the severer trials of the Gods; and the vicissitudes of life and death, expressed by apposite symbols, such as the sacrifice or submersion of the Bull, the extinction and re-illumination of the torch, excited corresponding emotions of alternate grief and joy, that play of passion which was present at the origin of Nature, and which accompanies all her changes.

The greater Eleusinïæ were celebrated in the month Boëdromion, when the seed was buried in the ground, and when the year, verging to its decline, disposes the mind to serious reflection. The first days of the ceremonial were passed in sorrow and anxious silence, in fasting and expiatory or lustral offices. On a sudden, the scene was changed: sorrow and lamentation were discarded, the glad name of Iacchus passed from mouth to mouth, the image of the God, crowned with myrtle and bearing a lighted torch, was borne in joyful procession from the Ceramicus to Eleusis, where, during the ensuing night, the initiation was completed by an imposing revelation. The first scene was in the *πρωνας*, or outer court of the sacred enclosure, where amidst utter darkness, or while the mediating God, the star illuminating the Nocturnal Mystery, alone carried an unextinguished torch, the candidates were overawed with terrific sounds and noises, while they painfully groped their way, as in the gloomy cavern of the soul's sublunar migration; a scene justly compared to the passage of the Valley of the Shadow of Death. For by the immutable law exemplified in the trials of Psyche, man must pass through the terrors of the under-world, before he can reach the height of Heaven. At length the gates of the *adytum* were thrown open, a supernatural light streamed from the illuminated statue of the Goddess, and enchant-

ing sights and sounds, mingled with songs and dances, exalted the communicant to a rapture of supreme felicity, realizing, as far as sensuous imagery could depict, the anticipated reunion with the Gods.

In the dearth of direct evidence as to the detail of the ceremonies enacted, or of the meanings connected with them, their tendency must be inferred from the characteristics of the contemplated deities with their accessory symbols and myths, or from direct testimony as to the value of the Mysteries generally.

The ordinary phenomena of vegetation, the death of the seed in giving birth to the plant, connecting the sublimest hopes with the plainest occurrences, was the simple yet beautiful formula assumed by the great mystery in almost all religions, from the Zend-Avesta to the Gospel. As Proserpina, the divine power is as the seed decaying and destroyed; as Artemis, she is the principle of its destruction; but Artemis Proserpina is also Corē Soteria, the Saviour, who leads the Spirits of Hercules and Hyacinthus to Heaven.

Many other emblems were employed in the Mysteries,—as the dove, the myrtle-wreath, and others, all significant of life rising out of death, and of the equivocal condition of dying yet immortal man.

The horrors and punishments of Tartarus, as described in the *Phædo* and the *Æneid*, with all the ceremonies of the judgments of Minos, Eacus, and Rhadamanthus, were represented, sometimes more and sometimes less fully, in the Mysteries; in order to impress upon the minds of the Initiates this great lesson,—that we should be ever prepared to appear before the Supreme Judge, with a heart pure and spotless; as Socrates teaches in the *Gorgias*. For the soul stained with crimes, he says, to descend to the Shades, is the bitterest ill. To adhere to Justice and Wisdom, Plato holds, is our duty, that we may some day take that lofty road that leads toward the heavens, and avoid most of the evils to which the soul is exposed in its subterranean journey of a thousand years. And so in the *Phædo*, Socrates teaches that we should seek here below to free our soul of its passions, in order to be ready to enter our appearance, whenever Destiny summons us to the Shades.

Thus the Mysteries inculcated a great moral truth, veiled with a fable of huge proportions and the appliances of an impressive spectacle, to which, exhibited in the sanctuaries, art and natura!

magic lent all they had that was imposing. They sought to strengthen men against the horrors of death and the fearful idea of utter annihilation. Death, says the author of the dialogue, entitled *Axiochus*, included in the works of Plato, is but a passage to a happier state; but one must have lived well, to attain that most fortunate result. So that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was consoling to the virtuous and religious man alone; while to all others it came with menaces and despair, surrounding them with terrors and alarms that disturbed their repose during all their life.

For the material horrors of Tartarus, allegorical to the Initiate, were real to the mass of the Profane; nor in latter times, did, perhaps many Initiates read rightly the allegory. The triple-walled prison, which the condemned soul first met, round which swelled and surged the fiery waves of Phlegethon, wherein rolled roaring, huge, blazing rocks; the great gate with columns of adamant, which none save the Gods could crush; Tisiphone, their warder, with her bloody robes; the lash resounding on the mangled bodies of the miserable unfortunates, their plaintive groans, mingled in horrid harmony with the clashings of their chains; the Furies, lashing the guilty with their snakes; the awful abyss where Hydra howls with its hundred heads, greedy to devour; Tityus, prostrate, and his entrails fed upon by the cruel vulture; Sisyphus, ever rolling his rock; Ixion on his wheel; Tantalus tortured by eternal thirst and hunger, in the midst of water and with delicious fruits touching his head; the daughters of Danaus at their eternal, fruitless task; beasts biting and venomous reptiles stinging; and devouring flame eternally consuming bodies ever renewed in endless agony; all these sternly impressed upon the people the terrible consequences of sin and vice, and urged them to pursue the paths of honesty and virtue.

And if, in the ceremonies of the Mysteries, these material horrors were explained to the Initiates as mere symbols of the unimaginable torture, remorse, and agony that would rend the immaterial soul and rack the immortal spirit, they were feeble and insufficient in the same mode and measure only, as all material images and symbols fall short of that which is beyond the cognizance of our senses: and the grave Hierophant, the imagery, the paintings, the dramatic horrors, the funeral sacrifices, the august mysteries, the solemn silence of the sanctuaries, were none the

less impressive, because they were known to be but symbols, that with material shows and images made the imagination to be the teacher of the intellect.

So, too, it was represented, that except for the gravest sins there was an opportunity for expiation; and the tests of *water*, *air*, and *fire* were represented; by means of which, during the march of many years, the soul could be purified, and rise toward the ethereal regions; that ascent being more or less tedious and laborious, according as each soul was more or less clogged by the gross impediments of its sins and vices. Herein was shadowed forth, (how distinctly taught the Initiates we know not), the doctrine that pain and sorrow, misfortune and remorse, are the inevitable *consequences* that flow from sin and vice, as effect flows from cause; that by each sin and every act of vice the soul drops back and loses ground in its advance toward perfection: and that the ground so lost is and will be in reality never so recovered as that the sin shall be as if it never had been committed; but that throughout all the eternity of its existence, each soul shall be conscious that every act of vice or baseness it did on earth has made the distance greater between itself and ultimate perfection.

We see this truth glimmering in the doctrine, taught in the Mysteries, that though slight and ordinary offences could be expiated by penance, repentance, acts of beneficence, and prayers, grave crimes were mortal sins, beyond the reach of all such remedies. Eleusis closed her gates against Nero: and the Pagan Priests told Constantine that among all their modes of expiation there was none so potent as could wash from *his* soul the dark spots left by the murder of his wife, and his multiplied perjuries and assassinations.

The object of the ancient initiations being to ameliorate mankind and to perfect the intellectual part of man, the nature of the human soul, its origin, its destination, its relations to the body and to universal nature, all formed part of the mystic science; and to them in part the lessons given to the Initiate were directed. For it was believed that initiation tended to his perfection, and to preventing the divine part within him, overloaded with matter gross and earthy, from being plunged into gloom, and impeded in its return to the Deity. The soul, with them, was not a mere conception or abstraction; but a reality including in itself life and thought; or, rather, of whose essence it was to live and think.

It was material; but not brute, inert, inactive, lifeless, motionless, formless, lightless matter. It was held to be active, reasoning, thinking; its natural home in the highest regions of the Universe, whence it descended to illuminate, give form and movement to, vivify, animate, and carry with itself the baser matter; and whither it unceasingly tends to reascend, when and as soon as it can free itself from its connection with that matter. From that substance, divine, infinitely delicate and active, essentially luminous, the souls of men were formed, and by it alone, uniting with and organizing their bodies, men *lived*.

This was the doctrine of Pythagoras, who learned it when he received the Egyptian Mysteries: and it was the doctrine of all who, by means of the ceremonial of initiation, thought to purify the soul. Virgil makes the spirit of Anchises teach it to Æneas: and all the expiations and lustrations used in the Mysteries were but symbols of those intellectual ones by which the soul was to be purged of its vice-spots and stains, and freed of the incumbrance of its earthly prison, so that it might rise unimpeded to the source from which it came.

Hence sprung the doctrine of the transmigration of souls; which Pythagoras taught as an allegory, and those who came after him received literally. Plato, like him, drew his doctrines from the East and the Mysteries, and undertook to translate the language of the symbols used there, into that of Philosophy; and to prove by argument and philosophical deduction, what, *felt* by the consciousness, the Mysteries taught by symbols as an indisputable fact,—the immortality of the soul. Cicero did the same; and followed the Mysteries in teaching that the Gods were but mortal men, who for their great virtues and signal services had deserved that their souls should, after death, be raised to that lofty rank.

It being taught in the Mysteries, either by way of allegory, the meaning of which was not made known except to a select few, or, perhaps only at a later day, as an actual reality, that the souls of the vicious dead passed into the bodies of those animals to whose nature their vices had most affinity, it was also taught that the soul could avoid these transmigrations, often successive and numerous, by the practice of virtue, which would acquit it of them, free it from the circle of successive generations, and restore it at once to its source. Hence nothing was so ardently prayed for by the Initiates, says Proclus, as this happy fortune, which,

delivering them from the empire of Evil, would restore them to their true life, and conduct them to the place of final rest. To this doctrine probably referred those figures of animals and monsters which were exhibited to the Initiate, before allowing him to see the sacred light for which he sighed.

Plato says, that souls will not reach the term of their ills, until the revolutions of the world have restored them to their primitive condition, and purified them from the stains which they have contracted by the contagion of fire, earth, and air. And he held that they could not be allowed to enter Heaven, until they had distinguished themselves by the practice of virtue in some one of three several bodies. The Manicheans allowed five: Pindar, the same number as Plato; as did the Jews.

And Cicero says, that the ancient soothsayers, and the interpreters of the will of the Gods, in their religious ceremonies and initiations, taught that we expiate here below the crimes committed in a prior life; and for that are born. It was taught in these Mysteries, that the soul passes through several states, and that the pains and sorrows of this life are an expiation of prior faults.

This doctrine of transmigration of souls obtained, as Porphyry informs us, among the Persians and Magi. It was held in the East and the West, and that from the remotest antiquity. Herodotus found it among the Egyptians, who made the term of the circle of migrations from one human body, through animals, fishes, and birds, to another human body, three thousand years. Empedocles even held that souls went into plants. Of these, the laurel was the noblest, as of animals the lion; both being consecrated to the Sun, to which, it was held in the Orient, virtuous souls were to return. The Curds, the Chinese, the Kabbalists, all held the same doctrine. So Origen held, and the Bishop Synesius, the latter of whom had been initiated, and who thus prayed to God: "O Father, grant that my soul, reunited to the light, may not be plunged again into the defilements of earth!" So the Gnostics held; and even the Disciples of Christ inquired if the man who was born blind, was not so punished for some sin that he had committed before his birth.

Virgil, in the celebrated allegory in which he develops the doctrines taught in the Mysteries, enunciated the doctrine, held by most of the ancient philosophers, of the pre-existence of souls, in the eternal fire from which they emanate; that fire which ani-

mates the stars, and circulates in every part of Nature: and the purifications of the soul, by fire, water, and air, of which he speaks, and which three modes were employed in the Mysteries of Bacchus, were symbols of the passage of the soul into different bodies.

The relations of the human soul with the rest of nature were a chief object of the science of the Mysteries. The man was there brought face to face with entire nature. The world, and the spherical envelope that surrounds it, were represented by a mystic egg, by the side of the image of the Sun-God whose Mysteries were celebrated. The famous Orphic egg was consecrated to Bacchus in his Mysteries. It was, says Plutarch, an image of the Universe, which engenders everything, and contains everything in its bosom. "Consult," says Macrobius, "the Initiates of the Mysteries of Bacchus, who honor with special veneration the sacred egg." The rounded and almost spherical form of its shell, he says, which encloses it on every side, and confines within itself the principles of life, is a symbolic image of the world; and the world is the universal principle of all things.

This symbol was borrowed from the Egyptians, who also consecrated the egg to Osiris, germ of Light, himself born, says Diodorus, from that famous egg. In Thebes, in Upper Egypt, he was represented as emitting it from his mouth, and causing to issue from it the first principle of heat and light, or the Fire-God, Vulcan, or Phtha. We find this egg even in Japan, between the horns of the famous Mithriac Bull, whose attributes Osiris, Apis, and Bacchus all borrowed.

Orpheus, author of the Grecian Mysteries, which he carried from Egypt to Greece, consecrated this symbol: and taught that matter, uncreated and informous, existed from all eternity, unorganized, as chaos; containing in itself the Principles of all Existences confused and intermingled, light with darkness, the dry with the humid, heat with cold; from which, it after long ages taking the shape of an immense egg, issued the purest matter, or first substance, and the residue was divided into the four elements, from which proceeded heaven and earth and all things else. This grand Cosmogonic idea he taught in the Mysteries; and thus the Hierophant explained the meaning of the mystic egg, seen by the Initiates in the Sanctuary.

Thus entire Nature, in her primitive organization, was presented

to him whom it was wished to instruct in her secrets and initiate in her mysteries; and Clemens of Alexandria might well say that initiation was a real physiology.

So Phanes, the Light-God, in the Mysteries of the New Orphics, emerged from the egg of chaos: and the Persians had the great egg of Ormuzd. And Sanchoniathon tells us that in the Phœnician theology, the matter of chaos took the form of an egg; and he adds: "Such are the lessons which the Son of Thabion, first Hierophant of the Phœnicians, turned into allegories, in which physics and astronomy intermingled, and which he taught to the other Hierophants, whose duty it was to preside at orgies and initiations; and who, seeking to excite the astonishment and admiration of mortals, faithfully transmitted these things to their successors and the Initiates."

In the Mysteries was also taught the division of the Universal Cause into an Active and a Passive cause; of which two, Osiris and Isis,—the heavens and the earth were symbols. These two First Causes, into which it was held that the great Universal First Cause at the beginning of things divided itself, were the two great Divinities, whose worship was, according to Varro, inculcated upon the Initiates at Samothrace. "As is taught," he says, "in the initiation into the Mysteries at Samothrace, Heaven and Earth are regarded as the two first Divinities. They are the potent Gods worshipped in that Island, and whose names are consecrated in the books of our Augurs. One of them is male and the other female; and they bear the same relation to each other as the soul does to the body, humidity to dryness." The Curetes, in Crete, had builded an altar to Heaven and to Earth; whose Mysteries they celebrated at Gnosus, in a cypress grove.

These two Divinities, the Active and Passive Principles of the Universe, were commonly symbolized by the generative parts of man and woman; to which, in remote ages, no idea of indecency was attached; the *Phallus* and *Cteis*, emblems of generation and production, and which, as such, appeared in the Mysteries. The Indian Lingam was the union of both, as were the boat and mast, and the point within a circle: all of which expressed the same philosophical idea as to the Union of the two great Causes of Nature, which concur, one actively and the other passively, in the generation of all beings: which were symbolized by what we now term *Gemini*, the Twins, at that remote period when the Sun was

in that Sign at the Vernal Equinox, and when they were Male and Female; and of which the Phallus was perhaps taken from the generative organ of the Bull, when about twenty-five hundred years before our era he opened that equinox, and became to the Ancient World the symbol of the creative and generative Power.

The Initiates at Eleusis commenced, Proclus says, by invoking the two great causes of nature, the Heavens and the Earth, on which in succession they fixed their eyes, addressing to each a prayer. And they deemed it their duty to do so, he adds, because they saw in them the Father and Mother of all generations. The concourse of these two agents of the Universe was termed in theological language a *marriage*. Tertullian, accusing the Valentinians of having borrowed these symbols from the Mysteries of Eleusis, yet admits that in those Mysteries they were explained in a manner consistent with decency, as representing the powers of nature. He was too little of a philosopher to comprehend the sublime esoteric meaning of these emblems, which will, if you advance, in other Degrees be unfolded to you.

The Christian Fathers contented themselves with reviling and ridiculing the use of these emblems. But as they in the earlier times created no indecent ideas, and were worn alike by the most innocent youths and virtuous women, it will be far wiser for us to seek to penetrate their meaning. Not only the Egyptians, says Diodorus Siculus, but every other people that consecrate this symbol (the Phallus), deem that they thereby do honor to the Active Force of the universal generation of all living things. For the same reason, as we learn from the geographer Ptolemy, it was revered among the Assyrians and Persians. Proclus remarks that in the distribution of the Zodiac among the twelve great Divinities, by ancient astrology, six signs were assigned to the male and six to the female principle.

There is another division of nature, which has in all ages struck all men, and which was not forgotten in the Mysteries; that of Light and Darkness, Day and Night, Good and Evil; which mingle with, and clash against, and pursue or are pursued by each other throughout the Universe. The Great Symbolic Egg distinctly reminded the Initiates of this great division of the world. Plutarch, treating of the dogma of a Providence, and of that of the two principles of Light and Darkness, which he regarded as the basis of the Ancient Theology, of the Orgies and the Myste-

ries, as well among the Greeks as the Barbarians,—a doctrine whose origin, according to him, is lost in the night of time,—cites, in support of his opinion, the famous Mystic Egg of the disciples of Zoroaster and the Initiates in the Mysteries of Mithras.

To the Initiates in the Mysteries of Eleusis was exhibited the spectacle of these two principles, in the successive scenes of Darkness and Light which passed before their eyes. To the profoundest darkness, accompanied with illusions and horrid phantoms, succeeded the most brilliant light, whose splendor blazed round the statue of the Goddess. The candidate, says Dion Chrysostomus, passed into a mysterious temple, of astonishing magnitude and beauty, where were exhibited to him many mystic scenes; where his ears were stunned with many voices; and where Darkness and Light successively passed before him. And Themistius in like manner describes the Initiate, when about to enter into that part of the sanctuary tenanted by the Goddess, as filled with fear and religious awe, wavering, uncertain in what direction to advance through the profound darkness that envelops him. But when the Hierophant has opened the entrance to the inmost sanctuary, and removed the robe that hides the Goddess, he exhibits her to the Initiate, resplendent with divine light. The thick shadow and gloomy atmosphere which had environed the candidate vanish; he is filled with a vivid and glowing enthusiasm, that lifts his soul out of the profound dejection in which it was plunged; and the purest light succeeds to the thickest darkness.

In a fragment of the same writer, preserved by Stobæus, we learn that the Initiate, up to the moment when his initiation is to be consummated, is alarmed by every kind of sight: that astonishment and terror take his soul captive; he trembles; cold sweat flows from his body; until the moment when the Light is shown him,—a most astounding Light,—the brilliant scene of Elysium, where he sees charming meadows overarched by a clear sky, and festivals celebrated by dances; where he hears harmonious voices, and the majestic chants of the Hierophants; and views the sacred spectacles. Then, absolutely free, and enfranchised from the dominion of all ills, he mingles with the crowd of Initiates, and, crowned with flowers, celebrates with them the holy orgies, in the brilliant realms of ether, and the dwelling-place of Ormuzd.

In the Mysteries of Isis, the candidate first passed through the

dark valley of the shadow of death; then into a place representing the elements or sublunary world, where the two principles clash and contend; and was finally admitted to a luminous region, where the sun, with his most brilliant light, put to rout the shades of night. Then he himself put on the costume of the Sun-God, or the Visible Source of Ethereal Light, in whose Mysteries he was initiated; and passed from the empire of darkness to that of light. After having set his feet on the threshold of the palace of Pluto, he ascended to the Empyrean, to the bosom of the Eternal Principle of Light of the Universe, from which all souls and intelligences emanate.

Plutarch admits that this theory of two Principles was the basis of all the Mysteries, and consecrated in the religious ceremonies and Mysteries of Greece. Osiris and Typhon, Ormuzd and Ahri-man, Bacchus and the Titans and Giants, all represented these principles. Phanes, the luminous God that issued from the Sacred Egg, and Night, bore the sceptres in the Mysteries of the New Bacchus. Night and Day were two of the eight Gods adored in the Mysteries of Osiris. The sojourn of Proserpine and also of Adonis, during six months of each year in the upper world, abode of light, and six months in the lower or abode of darkness, allegorically represented the same division of the Universe.

The connection of the different initiations with the Equinoxes which separate the Empire of the Nights from that of the Days, and fix the moment when one of these principles begins to prevail over the other, shows that the Mysteries referred to the continual contest between the two principles of light and darkness, each alternately victor and vanquished. The very object proposed by them shows that their basis was the theory of the two principles and their relations with the soul. "We celebrate the august Mysteries of Ceres and Proserpine," says the Emperor Julian, "at the Autumnal Equinox, to obtain of the Gods that the soul may not experience the malignant action of the Power of Darkness that is then about to have sway and rule in Nature." Sallust the Philosopher makes almost the same remark as to the relations of the soul with the periodical march of light and darkness, during an annual revolution; and assures us that the mysterious festivals of Greece related to the same. And in all the explanations given by Macrobius of the Sacred Fables in regard to the Sun, adored under the names of Osiris, Horus, Adonis, Atys, Bacchus, etc., we inva-

riably see that they refer to the theory of the two Principles, Light and Darkness, and the triumphs gained by one over the other. In April was celebrated the first triumph obtained by the light of day over the length of the nights; and the ceremonies of mourning and rejoicing had, Macrobius says, as their object, the vicissitudes of the annual administration of the world.

This brings us naturally to the tragic portion of these religious scenes, and to the allegorical history of the different adventures of the Principle, Light, victor and vanquished by turns, in the combats waged with Darkness during each annual period. Here we reach the most mysterious part of the ancient initiations, and that most interesting to the Mason who laments the death of his Grand Master Khir-Om. Over it Herodotus throws the august veil of mystery and silence. Speaking of the Temple of Minerva, or of that Isis who was styled the Mother of the Sun-God, and whose Mysteries were termed *Isiac*, at Sais, he speaks of a Tomb in the Temple, in the rear of the Chapel and against the wall; and says, "It is the tomb of a man, whose name respect requires me to conceal. Within the Temple were great obelisks of stone [*phalli*], and a circular lake paved with stones and revetted with a parapet. It seemed to me as large as that at Delos" [where the Mysteries of Apollo were celebrated]. "In this lake the Egyptians celebrate, during the night, what they style the Mysteries, in which are represented the sufferings of the God of whom I have spoken above." This God was Osiris, put to death by Typhon, and who descended to the Shades and was restored to life; of which he had spoken before.

We are reminded, by this passage, of the Tomb of Khir-Om, his death, and his rising from the grave, symbolical of restoration of life; and also of the brazen Sea in the Temple at Jerusalem. Herodotus adds: "I impose upon myself a profound silence in regard to these Mysteries, with most of which I am acquainted. As little will I speak of the initiations of Ceres, known among the Greeks as Thesmophoria. What I shall say will not violate the respect which I owe to religion."

Athenagoras quotes this passage to show that not only the Statue but the Tomb of Osiris was exhibited in Egypt, and a tragic representation of his sufferings; and remarks that the Egyptians had mourning ceremonies in honor of their Gods, whose deaths they lamented; and to whom they afterward sacrificed as having passed to a state of immortality.

It is, however, not difficult, combining the different rays of light that emanate from the different Sanctuaries, to learn the genius and the object of these secret ceremonies. We have hints, and not details.

We know that the Egyptians worshipped the Sun, under the name of Osiris. The misfortunes and tragical death of this God were an allegory relating to the Sun. Typhon, like Ahriman, represented Darkness. The sufferings and death of Osiris in the Mysteries of the Night were a mystic image of the phenomena of Nature, and the conflict of the two great Principles which share the empire of Nature, and most influence our souls. The Sun is neither born, dies, nor is raised to life: and the recital of these events was but an allegory, veiling a higher truth.

Horus, son of Isis, and the same as Apollo or the Sun, also died and was restored again to life and to his mother; and the priests of Isis celebrated these great events by mourning and joyous festival succeeding each other.

In the Mysteries of Phœnicia, established in honor of Thammuz or Adoni, also the Sun, the spectacle of his death and resurrection was exhibited to the Initiates. As we learn from Meursius and Plutarch, a figure was exhibited representing the corpse of a young man. Flowers were strewed upon his body, the women mourned for him; a tomb was erected to him. And these feasts, as we learn from Plutarch and Ovid, passed into Greece.

In the Mysteries of Mithras, the Sun-God, in Asia Minor, Armenia and Persia, the death of that God was lamented, and his resurrection was celebrated with the most enthusiastic expressions of joy. A corpse, we learn from Julian Firmicus, was shown the Initiates, representing Mithras dead; and afterward his resurrection was announced; and they were then invited to rejoice that the dead God was restored to life, and had by means of his sufferings secured their salvation. Three months before, his birth had been celebrated, under the emblem of an infant, born on the 25th of December, or the eighth day before the Kalends of January.

In Greece, in the Mysteries of the same God, honored under the name of Bakchos, a representation was given of his death, slain by the Titans; of his descent into hell, his subsequent resurrection, and his return toward his Principle or the pure abode whence he had descended to unite himself with matter. In the islands

of Chios and Tenedos, this death was represented by the sacrifice of a man, actually immolated.

The mutilation and sufferings of the same Sun-God, honored in Phrygia under the name of Atys, caused the tragic scenes that were, as we learn from Diodorus Siculus, represented annually in the Mysteries of Cybele, mother of the Gods. An image was borne there, representing the corpse of a young man, over whose tomb tears were shed, and to whom funeral honors were paid.

At Samothrace, in the Mysteries of the Cabiri or great Gods, a representation was given of the death of one of them. This name was given to the Sun, because the Ancient Astronomers gave the name of Gods Cabiri and of Samothrace to the two Gods in the Constellation Gemini; whom others term Apollo and Hercules, two names of the Sun. Athenion says that the young Cabirus so slain was the same as the Dionusos or Bakchos of the Greeks. The Pelasgi, ancient inhabitants of Greece, and who settled Samothrace, celebrated these Mysteries, whose origin is unknown: and they worshipped Castor and Pollux as patrons of navigation.

The tomb of Apollo was at Delphi, where his body was laid, after Python, the Polar Serpent that annually heralds the coming of autumn, cold, darkness, and winter, had slain him, and over whom the God triumphs, on the 25th of March, on his return to the lamb of the Vernal Equinox.

In Crete, Jupiter Ammon, or the Sun in Aries, painted with the attributes of that equinoctial sign, the Ram or Lamb;—that Ammon who, Martianus Copella says, is the same as Osiris, Adoni, Adonis, Atys, and the other Sun-Gods,—had also a tomb, and a religious initiation: one of the principal ceremonies of which consisted in clothing the Initiate with the skin of a white lamb.* And in this we see the origin of the apron of white sheep-skin, used in Masonry.

All these deaths and resurrections, these funeral emblems, these anniversaries of mourning and joy, these cenotaphs raised in different places to the Sun-God, honored under different names, had but a single object, the allegorical narration of the events which happened here below to the Light of Nature, that sacred fire from which our souls were deemed to emanate, warring with Matter and the dark Principle resident therein, ever at variance with the Principle of Good and Light poured upon itself by the Supreme Divinity. All these Mysteries, says Clemens of Alexandria, displaying

to us murders and tombs alone, all these religious tragedies, had a common basis, variously ornamented: and that basis was the fictitious death and resurrection of the Sun, Soul of the World, principle of life and movement in the Sublunary World, and source of our intelligences, which are but a portion of the Eternal Light blazing in that Star, their chief centre.

It was in the Sun that Souls, it was said, were purified: and to it they repaired. It was one of the gates of the soul, through which the theologians, says Porphyry, say that it re-ascends toward the home of Light and the Good. Wherefore, in the Mysteries of Eleusis the Dadoukos (the first officer after the Hierophant, who represented the Grand Demiourgos or Maker of the Universe), who was posted in the interior of the Temple, and there received the candidates, represented the Sun.

It was also held that the vicissitudes experienced by the Father of Light had an influence on the destiny of souls; which, of the same substance as he, shared his fortunes. This we learn from the Emperor Julian and Sallust the Philosopher. They are afflicted when he suffers: they rejoice when he triumphs over the Power of Darkness which opposes his sway and hinders the happiness of Souls, to whom nothing is so terrible as darkness. The fruit of the sufferings of the God, father of light and Souls, slain by the Chief of the Powers of Darkness, and again restored to life, was received in the Mysteries. "His death works your Salvation;" said the High Priest of Mithras. That was the great secret of this religious tragedy, and its expected fruit;—the resurrection of a God, who, repossessing Himself of His dominion over Darkness, should associate with Him in His triumph those virtuous Souls that by their purity were worthy to share His glory; and that strove not against the divine force that drew them to Him, when He had thus conquered.

To the Initiate were also displayed the spectacles of the chief agents of the Universal Cause, and of the distribution of the world, in the detail of its parts arranged in most regular order. The Universe itself supplied man with the model of the first Temple reared to the Divinity. The arrangement of the Temple of Solomon, the symbolic ornaments which formed its chief decorations, and the dress of the High Priest,—all, as Clemens of Alexandria, Josephus and Philo state, had reference to the order of the world. Clemens informs us that the Temple contained many emblems of

the Seasons, the Sun, the Moon, the planets, the constellations Ursa Major and Minor, the zodiac, the elements, and the other parts of the world.

Josephus, in his description of the High Priest's Vestments, protesting against the charge of impiety brought against the Hebrews by other nations, for contemning the Heathen Divinities, declares it false, because, in the construction of the Tabernacle, in the vestments of the Sacrificers, and in the Sacred vessels, the whole World was in some sort represented. Of the three parts, he says, into which the Temple was divided, two represent Earth and Sea, open to all men, and the third, Heaven, God's dwelling-place, reserved for Him alone. The twelve loaves of Shew-bread signify the twelve months of the year. The Candlestick represented the twelve signs through which the Seven Planets run their courses; and the seven lights, those planets; the veils, of four colors, the four elements; the tunic of the High Priest, the earth; the Hyacinth, nearly blue, the Heavens; the ephod, of four colors, the whole of nature; the gold, Light; the breast-plate, in the middle, this earth in the centre of the world; the two Sardonyxes, used as clasps, the Sun and Moon; and the twelve precious stones of the breast-plate arranged by threes, like the Seasons, the twelve months, and the twelve signs of the zodiac. Even the loaves were arranged in two groups of six, like the zodiacal signs above and below the Equator. Clemens, the learned Bishop of Alexandria, and Philo, adopt all these explanations.

Hermes calls the Zodiac, the Great Tent,—Tabernaculum. In the Royal Arch Degree of the American Rite, the Tabernacle has four veils, of different colors, to each of which belongs a banner. The colors of the four are White, Blue, Crimson, and Purple, and the banners bear the images of the Bull, the Lion, the Man, and the Eagle, the Constellations answering 2500 years before our era to the Equinoctial and Solstitial points; to which belong four stars, Aldebarán, Regulus, Fomalhaut, and Antares. At each of these veils there are three words: and to each division of the Zodiac, belonging to each of these Stars, are three Signs. The four signs, Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius, were termed the *fixed* signs, and are appropriately assigned to the four veils.

So the Cherubim, according to Clemens and Philo, represented the two hemispheres; their wings, the rapid course of the firmament, and of time which revolves in the Zodiac. "For the Heavens

fly;" says Philo, speaking of the wings of the Cherubim: which were winged representations of the Lion, the Bull, the Eagle, and the Man; of two of which, the human-headed, winged bulls and lions, so many have been found at Nimroud; adopted as beneficent symbols, when the Sun entered Taurus at the Vernal Equinox and Leo at the Summer Solstice: and when, also, he entered Scorpio, for which, on account of its malignant influences, Aquila, the eagle was substituted, at the autumnal equinox; and Aquarius (the water-bearer) at the Winter Solstice.

So, Clemens says, the candlestick with seven branches represented the seven planets, like which the seven branches were arranged and regulated, preserving that musical proportion and system of harmony of which the sun was the centre and connection. They were arranged, says Philo, by threes, like the planets above and those below the sun; between which two groups was the branch that represented him, the mediator or moderator of the celestial harmony. He is, in fact, the fourth in the musical scale, as Philo remarks, and Martianus Capella in his hymn to the Sun.

Near the candlestick were other emblems representing the heavens, earth, and the vegetative matter out of whose bosom the vapors arise. The whole temple was an abridged image of the world. There were candlesticks with four branches, symbols of the elements and the seasons; with twelve, symbols of the signs; and even with three hundred and sixty, the number of days in the year, without the supplementary days. Imitating the famous Temple of Tyre, where were the great columns consecrated to the winds and fire, the Tyrian artist placed two columns of bronze at the entrance of the porch of the temple. The hemispherical brazen sea, supported by four groups of bulls, of three each, looking to the four cardinal points of the compass, represented the bull of the Vernal Equinox, and at Tyre were consecrated to Astarte; to whom Hiram, Josephus says, had builded a temple, and who wore on her head a helmet bearing the image of a bull. And the throne of Solomon, with bulls adorning its arms, and supported on lions, like those of Horus in Egypt and of the Sun at Tyre, likewise referred to the Vernal Equinox and Summer Solstice.

Those who in Thrace adored the sun, under the name of Sabazus, the Grecian Bacchos, builded to him, says Macrobius, a temple on Mount Zelmisso, its round form representing the world and the sun. A circular aperture in the roof admitted the light,

and introduced the image of the sun into the body of the sanctuary, where he seemed to blaze as in the heights of Heaven, and to dissipate the darkness within that temple which was a representative symbol of the world. There the passion, death, and resurrection of Bakchos were represented.

So the Temple of Eleusis was lighted by a window in the roof. The sanctuary so lighted, Dion compares to the Universe, from which he says it differed in size alone; and in it the great lights of nature played a great part and were mystically represented. The images of the Sun, Moon, and Mercury were represented there, (the latter the same as Anubis who accompanied Isis); and they are still the three lights of a Masonic Lodge; except that for Mercury, the Master of the Lodge has been absurdly substituted.

Eusebius names as the principal Ministers in the Mysteries of Eleusis, first, the *Hierophant*, clothed with the attributes of the Grand Architect (Demiourgos) of the Universe. After him came the *Dadoukos*, or torch-bearer, representative of the Sun: then the altar-bearer, representing the Moon: and last, the *Hieroceryx*, bearing the caduceus, and representing Mercury. It was not permissible to reveal the different emblems and the mysterious pageantry of initiation to the Profane; and therefore we do not know the attributes, emblems, and ornaments of these and other officers; of which Apuleius and Pausanias dared not speak.

We know only that everything recounted there was marvellous; everything done there tended to astonish the Initiate: and that eyes and ears were equally astounded. The Hierophant, of lofty height, and noble features, with long hair, of a great age, grave and dignified, with a voice sweet and sonorous, sat upon a throne, clad in a long trailing robe; as the Motive-God of Nature was held to be enveloped in His work and hidden under a veil which no mortal can raise. Even His name was concealed, like that of the Demiourgos, whose name was ineffable.

The Dadoukos also wore a long robe, his hair long, and a bandeau on his forehead. Callias, when holding that office, fighting on the great day of Marathon, clothed with the insignia of his office, was taken by the Barbarians to be a King. The Dadoukos led the procession of the Initiates, and was charged with the purifications.

We do not know the functions of the *Epibomos* or assistant at the altar, who represented the moon. That planet was one of the

two homes of souls, and one of the two great gates by which they descended and reascended. Mercury was charged with the conducting of souls through the two great gates; and in going from the sun to the moon they passed immediately by him. He admitted or rejected them as they were more or less pure, and therefore the Hieroceryx or Sacred Herald, who represented Mercury, was charged with the duty of excluding the Profane from the Mysteries.

The same officers are found in the procession of Initiates of Isis, described by Apuleius. All clad in robes of white linen, drawn tight across the breast, and close-fitting down to the very feet, came, first, one bearing a lamp in the shape of a boat; second, one carrying an altar; and third, one carrying a golden palm-tree and the caduceus. These are the same as the three officers at Eleusis, after the Hierophant. Then one carrying an open hand, and pouring milk on the ground from a golden vessel in the shape of a woman's breast. The hand was that of justice: and the milk alluded to the Galaxy or Milky Way, along which souls descended and remounted. Two others followed, one bearing a winnowing fan, and the other a water-vase; symbols of the purification of souls by air and water; and the third purification, by earth, was represented by an image of the animal that cultivates it, the cow or ox, borne by another officer.

Then followed a chest or ark, magnificently ornamented, containing an image of the organs of generation of Osiris, or perhaps of both sexes; emblems of the original generating and producing Powers. When Typhon, said the Egyptian fable, cut up the body of Osiris into pieces, he flung his genitals into the Nile, where a fish devoured them. Atys mutilated himself, as his Priests afterward did in imitation of him; and Adonis was in that part of his body wounded by the boar: all of which represented the loss by the Sun of his vivifying and generative power, when he reached the Autumnal Equinox (the Scorpion that on old monuments bites those parts of the Vernal Bull), and descended toward the region of darkness and Winter.

Then, says Apuleius, came "one who carried in his bosom an object that rejoiced the heart of the bearer, a venerable effigy of the Supreme Deity, neither bearing resemblance to man, cattle, bird, beast, or any living creature: an exquisite invention, venerable from the novel originality of the fashioning; a wonderful,

ineffable symbol of religious mysteries, to be looked upon in profound silence. Such as it was, its figure was that of a small urn of burnished gold, hollowed very artistically, rounded at the bottom, and covered all over the outside with the wonderful hieroglyphics of the Egyptians. The spout was not elevated, but extended laterally, projecting like a long rivulet; while on the opposite side was the handle, which, with similar lateral extension, bore on its summit an asp, curling its body into folds, and stretching upward, its wrinkled, scaly, swollen throat."

The salient basilisk, or royal ensign of the Pharaohs, often occurs on the monuments—a serpent in folds, with his head raised erect above the folds. The basilisk was the Phœnix of the serpent-tribe; and the vase or urn was probably the vessel, shaped like a cucumber, with a projecting spout, out of which, on the monuments of Egypt, the priests are represented pouring streams of the *cruz ansata* or Tau Cross, and of *sceptres*, over the kings.

In the Mysteries of Mithras, a sacred cave, representing the whole arrangement of the world, was used for the reception of the Initiates. Zoroaster, says Eubulus, first introduced this custom of consecrating caves. They were also consecrated, in Crete, to Jupiter; in Arcadia, to the Moon and Pan; and in the Island of Naxos, to Bacchus. The Persians, in the cave where the Mysteries of Mithras were celebrated, fixed the seat of that God, Father of Generation, or Demiourgos, near the equinoctial point of Spring, with the Northern portion of the world on his right, and the Southern on his left.

Mithras, says Porphyry, presided over the Equinoxes, seated on a Bull, the symbolical animal of the Demiourgos, and bearing a sword. The equinoxes were the gates through which souls passed to and fro, between the hemisphere of light and that of darkness. The milky way was also represented, passing near each of these gates: and it was, in the old theology, termed the pathway of souls. It is, according to Pythagoras, vast troops of souls that form that luminous belt.

The route followed by souls, according to Porphyry, or rather their progressive march in the world, lying through the fixed stars and planets, the Mithriac cave not only displayed the zodiacal and other constellations, and marked gates at the four equinoctial and solstitial points of the zodiac, whereat souls enter into and escape from the world of generations; and through which they

pass to and fro between the realms of light and darkness; but it represented the seven planetary spheres which they needs must traverse, in descending from the heaven of the fixed stars to the elements that envelop the earth; and seven gates were marked, one for each planet, through which they pass, in descending or returning.

We learn this from Celsus, in Origen; who says that the symbolical image of this passage among the Stars, used in the Mithriac Mysteries, was a ladder, reaching from earth to Heaven, divided into seven steps or stages, to each of which was a gate, and at the summit an eighth, that of the fixed stars. The first gate, says Celsus, was that of Saturn, and of lead, by the heavy nature whereof his dull slow progress was symbolized. The second, of tin, was that of Venus, symbolizing her soft splendor and easy flexibility. The third, of brass, was that of Jupiter, emblem of his solidity and dry nature. The fourth, of iron, was that of Mercury, expressing his indefatigable activity and sagacity. The fifth, of copper, was that of Mars, expressive of his inequalities and variable nature. The sixth, of silver, was that of the Moon: and the seventh, of gold, that of the Sun. This order is not the real order of these Planets; but a mysterious one, like that of the days of the Week consecrated to them, commencing with Saturday, and *retrograding* to Sunday. It was dictated, Celsus says, by certain harmonic relations, those of the fourth.

Thus there was an intimate connection between the Sacred Science of the Mysteries, and ancient astronomy and physics; and the grand spectacle of the Sanctuaries was that of the order of the Known Universe, or the spectacle of Nature itself, surrounding the soul of the Initiate, as it surrounded it when it first descended through the planetary gates, and by the equinoctial and solstitial doors, along the Milky Way, to be for the first time immured in its prison-house of matter. But the Mysteries also represented to the candidate, by sensible symbols, the invisible forces which move this visible Universe, and the virtues, qualities, and powers attached to matter, and which maintain the marvellous order observed therein. Of this Porphyry informs us.

The world, according to the philosophers of antiquity, was not a purely material and mechanical machine. A great Soul, diffused everywhere, vivified all the members of the immense body of the Universe; and an Intelligence, equally great, directed all its move-

ments, and maintained the eternal harmony that resulted therefrom. Thus the Unity of the Universe, represented by the symbolic egg, contained in itself two unities, the Soul and the Intelligence, which pervaded all its parts: and they were to the Universe, considered as an animated and intelligent being, what intelligence and the soul of life are to the individuality of man.

The doctrine of the Unity of God, in this sense, was taught by Orpheus. Of this his hymn or palinode is a proof; fragments of which are quoted by many of the Fathers, as Justin, Tatian, Clemens of Alexandria, Cyril, and Theodoret, and the whole by Eusebius, quoting from Aristobulus. The doctrine of the LOGOS (word) or the NOOS (intellect), his incarnation, death, resurrection or transfiguration; of his union with matter, his division in the visible world, which he pervades, his return to the original Unity, and the whole theory relative to the origin of the soul and its destiny, were taught in the Mysteries, of which they were the great object.

The Emperor Julian explains the Mysteries of Atys and Cybele by the same metaphysical principles, respecting the demiurgical Intelligence, its descent into matter, and its return to its origin: and extends this explanation to those of Ceres. And so likewise does Sallust the Philosopher, who admits in God a secondary intelligent Force, which descends into the generative matter to organize it. These mystical ideas naturally formed a part of the sacred doctrine and of the ceremonies of initiation, the object of which, Sallust remarks, was to unite man with the World and the Deity; and the final term of perfection whereof was, according to Clemens, the contemplation of nature, of real beings, and of causes. The definition of Sallust is correct. The Mysteries were practised as a means of perfecting the soul, of making it to know its own dignity, of reminding it of its noble origin and immortality, and consequently of its relations with the Universe and the Deity.

What was meant by *real* beings, was *invisible* beings, *genii*, the *faculties* or *powers* of nature; everything not a part of the *visible* world, which was called, by way of opposition, *apparent* existence. The theory of *Genii*, or Powers of Nature, and its Forces, personified, made part of the Sacred Science of initiation, and of that religious spectacle of different beings exhibited in the Sanctuary. It resulted from that belief in the providence and superintendence of the Gods, which was one of the primary bases of initiation. The

administration of the Universe by Subaltern Genii, to whom it is confided, and by whom good and evil are dispensed in the world, was a consequence of this dogma, taught in the Mysteries of Mithras, where was shown that famous egg, shared between Ormuzd and Ahriman, each of whom commissioned twenty-four Genii to dispense the good and evil found therein; they being under twelve Superior Gods, six on the side of Light and Good, and six on that of Darkness and Evil.

This doctrine of the Genii, depositaries of the Universal Providence, was intimately connected with the Ancient Mysteries, and adopted in the sacrifices and initiations both of Greeks and Barbarians. Plutarch says that the Gods, by means of Genii, who are intermediates between them and men, draw near to mortals in the ceremonies of initiation, at which the Gods charge them to assist, and to distribute punishment and blessing. Thus not the Deity, but His ministers, or a Principle and Power of Evil, were deemed the authors of vice and sin and suffering: and thus the Genii or angels differed in character like men, some being good and some evil; some Celestial Gods, Archangels, Angels, and some Infernal Gods, Demons and fallen Angels.

At the head of the latter was their Chief, Typhon, Ahriman, or Shaitan, the Evil Principle; who, having wrought disorder in nature, brought troubles on men by land and sea, and caused the greatest ills, is at last punished for his crimes. It was these events and incidents, says Plutarch, which Isis desired to represent in the ceremonial of the Mysteries, established by her in memory of her sorrows and wanderings, whereof she exhibited an image and representation in her Sanctuaries, where also were afforded encouragements to piety and consolation in misfortune. The dogma of a Providence, he says, administering the Universe by means of intermediary Powers, who maintain the connection of man with the Divinity, was consecrated in the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Phrygians, and Thracians, of the Magi and the Disciples of Zoroaster; as is plain by their initiations, in which mournful and funereal ceremonies mingled. It was an essential part of the lessons given the Initiates, to teach them the relations of their own souls with Universal Nature, the greatest lessons of all, meant to dignify man in his own eyes, and teach him his place in the Universe of things.

Thus the whole system of the Universe was displayed in all its

parts to the eyes of the Initiate; and the symbolic cave which represented it was adorned and clothed with all the attributes of that Universe. To this world so organized, endowed with a double force, active and passive, divided between light and darkness, moved by a living and intelligent Force, governed by Genii or Angels who preside over its different parts, and whose nature and character are more lofty or low in proportion as they possess a greater or less portion of dark matter,—to this world descends the soul, emanation of the ethereal fire, and exiled from the luminous region above the world. It enters into this dark matter, wherein the hostile Principles, each seconded by his troops of Genii, are ever in conflict, there to submit to one or more organizations in the body which is its prison, until it shall at last return to its place of origin, its true native country, from which during this life it is an exile.

But one thing remained,—to represent its return, through the constellations and planetary spheres, to its original home. The celestial fire, the philosophers said, soul of the world and of fire, an universal principle, circulating above the Heavens, in a region infinitely pure and wholly luminous, itself pure, simple, and un-mixed, is above the world by its specific lightness. If any part of it (say a human soul) descends, it acts against its nature in doing so, urged by an inconsiderate desire of the intelligence, a perfidious love for matter which causes it to descend, to know what passes here below, where good and evil are in conflict. The Soul, a simple substance, when unconnected with matter, a ray or particle of the Divine Fire, whose home is in Heaven, ever turns toward that home, while united with the body, and struggles to return thither.

Teaching this, the Mysteries strove to recall man to his divine origin, and point out to him the means of returning thither. The great science acquired in the Mysteries was knowledge of man's self, of the nobleness of his origin, the grandeur of his destiny, and his superiority over the animals, which can never acquire this knowledge, and whom he resembles so long as he does not reflect upon his existence and sound the depths of his own nature.

By doing and suffering, by virtue and piety and good deeds, the soul was enabled at length to free itself from the body, and ascend along the path of the Milky Way, by the gate of Capricorn and by the seven spheres, to the place whence by many gradations and

successive lapses and enthralmments it had descended. And thus the theory of the spheres, and of the signs and intelligences which preside there, and the whole system of astronomy, were connected with that of the soul and its destiny; and so were taught in the Mysteries, in which were developed the great principles of physics and metaphysics as to the origin of the soul, its condition here below, its destination, and its future fate.

The Greeks fix the date of the establishment of the Mysteries of Eleusis at the year 1423 B. C., during the reign of Erechtheus at Athens. According to some authors, they were instituted by Ceres herself; and according to others, by that Monarch, who brought them from Egypt, where, according to Diodorus of Sicily, he was born. Another tradition was, that Orpheus introduced them into Greece, together with the Dionisiac ceremonies, copying the latter from the Mysteries of Osiris, and the former from those of Isis.

Nor was it at Athens only, that the worship and Mysteries of Isis, metamorphosed into Ceres, were established. The Bœotians worshipped the Great or Cabiric Ceres, in the recesses of a sacred grove, into which none but Initiates could enter; and the ceremonies there observed, and the sacred traditions of their Mysteries, were connected with those of the Cabiri in Samothrace.

So in Argos, Phocis, Arcadia, Achaia, Messenia, Corinth, and many other parts of Greece, the Mysteries were practised, revealing everywhere their Egyptian origin and everywhere having the same general features; but those of Eleusis, in Attica, Pausanius informs us, had been regarded by the Greeks, from the earliest times, as being as far superior to all the others, as the Gods are to mere Heroes.

Similar to these were the Mysteries of Bona Dea, the Good Goddess, whose name, say Cicero and Plutarch, it was not permitted to any man to know, celebrated at Rome from the earliest times of that city. It was these Mysteries, practised by women alone, the secrecy of which was impiously violated by Clodius. They were held at the Kalends of May; and, according to Plutarch, much of the ceremonial greatly resembled that of the Mysteries of Bacchos.

The Mysteries of Venus and Adonis belonged principally to Syria and Phœnicia, whence they passed into Greece and Sicily. Venus or Astarte was the Great Female Deity of the Phœnicians, as Hercules, Melkarth or Adoni was their Chief God. Adoni, called by the Greeks Adonis, was the lover of Venus. Slain by a

wound in the thigh inflicted by a wild boar in the chase, the flower called anemone sprang from his blood. Venus received the corpse and obtained from Jupiter the boon that her lover should thereafter pass six months of each year with her, and the other six in the Shades with Proserpine; an allegorical description of the alternate residence of the Sun in the two hemispheres. In these Mysteries his death was represented and mourned, and after this maceration and mourning were concluded, his resurrection and ascent to Heaven were announced.

Ezekiel speaks of the festivals of Adonis under the name of those of Thammuz, an Assyrian Deity, whom every year the women mourned, seated at the doors of their dwellings. These Mysteries, like the others, were celebrated in the Spring, at the Vernal Equinox, when he was restored to life; at which time, when they were instituted, the Sun (ADON, Lord, or Master) was in the Sign Taurus, the domicile of Venus. He was represented with horns, and the hymn of Orpheus in his honor styles him "the two-horned God;" as in Argos Bakchos was represented with the feet of a bull.

Plutarch says that Adonis and Bakchos were regarded as one and the same Deity; and that this opinion was founded on the great similarity in very many respects between the Mysteries of these two Gods.

The Mysteries of Bakchos were known as the Sabazian, Orphic, and Dionysiac Festivals. They went back to the remotest antiquity among the Greeks, and were attributed by some to Bakchos himself, and by others to Orpheus. The resemblance in ceremonial between the observances established in honor of Osiris in Egypt, and those in honor of Bakchos in Greece, the mythological traditions of the two Gods, and the symbols used in the festivals of each, amply prove their identity. Neither the name of Bakchos, nor the word *orgies* applied to his feasts, nor the sacred words used in his Mysteries, are Greek, but of foreign origin. Bakchos was an Oriental Deity, worshipped in the East, and his orgies celebrated there, long before the Greeks adopted them. In the earliest times he was worshipped in India, Arabia, and Bactria.

He was honored in Greece with public festivals, and in simple or complicated Mysteries, varying in ceremonial in various places, as was natural, because his worship had come thither from different countries and at different periods. The people who celebrated the

complicated Mysteries were ignorant of the meaning of many words which they used, and of many emblems which they revered. In the Sabazian Feasts, for example [from Saba-Zeus, an oriental name of this Deity], the words ΕΒΟΙ, SABOI, were used, which are in nowise Greek; and a serpent of gold was thrown into the bosom of the Initiate, in allusion to the fable that Jupiter had, in the form of a serpent, had connection with Proserpina, and begotten Bakchos, the bull; whence the enigmatical saying, repeated to the Initiates, that a bull engendered a dragon or serpent, and the serpent in turn engendered the bull, who became Bakchos: the meaning of which was, that the bull [Taurus, which then opened the Vernal Equinox, and the Sun in which Sign, figuratively represented by the Sign itself, was Bakchos, Dionusos, Saba-Zeus, Osiris, etc.], and the Serpent, another constellation, occupied such relative positions in the Heavens, that when one rose the other set, and *vice versa*.

The serpent was a familiar symbol in the Mysteries of Bakchos. The Initiates grasped them with their hands, as Ophiucus does on the celestial globe, and the Orpheo-telestes, or purifier of candidates did the same, crying, as Demosthenes taunted Æschines with doing in public at the head of the women whom his mother was to imitate, ΕΒΟΙ, SABOI, ΗΥΕΣ ΑΤΤÊ, ΑΤΤÊ, ΗΥΕΣ!

The Initiates in these Mysteries had preserved the ritual and ceremonies that accorded with the simplicity of the earliest ages, and the manners of the first men. The rules of Pythagoras were followed there. Like the Egyptians, who held wool unclean, they buried no Initiate in woolen garments. They abstained from bloody sacrifices; and lived on fruits or vegetables or inanimate things. They imitated the life of the contemplative Sects of the Orient; thus approximating to the tranquillity of the first men, who lived exempt from trouble and crimes in the bosom of a profound peace. One of the most precious advantages promised by their initiation was, to put a man in communion with the Gods, by purifying his soul of all the passions that interfere with that enjoyment, and dim the rays of divine light that are communicated to every soul capable of receiving them, and that imitate their purity. One of the degrees of initiation was the state of inspiration to which the adepts were claimed to attain. The Initiates in the Mysteries of the Lamb, at Pepuza, in Phrygia, professed to be inspired, and prophesied; and it was claimed that the soul, by

means of these religious ceremonies, purified of all stain, could see the Gods in this life, and certainly, in all cases, after death.

The sacred gates of the Temple, where the ceremonies of initiation were performed, were opened but once in each year, and no stranger was ever allowed to enter it. Night threw her veil over these august Mysteries, which could be revealed to no one. There the sufferings of Bakchos were represented, who, like Osiris, died, descended to hell and rose to life again; and raw flesh was distributed to the Initiates, which each ate, in memory of the death of the Deity, torn in pieces by the Titans.

These Mysteries also were celebrated at the Vernal Equinox; and the emblem of generation, to express the active energy and generative power of the Divinity, was a principal symbol. The Initiates wore garlands and crowns of myrtle and laurel.

In these Mysteries, the aspirant was kept in terror and darkness three days and nights; and was then made to perform the *Αφαισις*, or ceremony representing the death of Bakchos, the same mythological personage with Osiris. This was effected by confining him in a close cell, that he might seriously reflect, in solitude and darkness, on the business he was engaged in: and his mind be prepared for the reception of the sublime and mysterious truths of primitive revelation and philosophy. This was a symbolic death; the deliverance from it, regeneration; after which he was called *διφωγης* or twin-born. While confined in the cell, the pursuit of Typhon after the mangled body of Osiris, and the search of Rhea or Isis for the same, were enacted in his hearing; the initiated crying aloud the names of that Deity derived from the Sanscrit. Then it was announced that the body was found; and the aspirant was liberated amid shouts of joy and exultation.

Then he passed through a representation of Hell and Elysium. "Then," said an ancient writer, "they are entertained with hymns and dances, with the sublime doctrines of sacred knowledge, and with wonderful and holy visions. And now become perfect and initiated, they are FREE, and no longer under restraint; but, crowned and triumphant, they walk up and down the regions of the blessed, converse with pure and holy men, and celebrate the sacred Mysteries at pleasure." They were taught the nature and objects of the Mysteries, and the means of making themselves known, and received the name of *Epoptis*; were fully instructed in the nature and attributes of the Divinity, and the doctrine of a

future state; and made acquainted with the unity and attributes of the Grand Architect of the Universe, and the true meaning of the fables in regard to the Gods of Paganism: the great Truth being often proclaimed, that "Zeus is the primitive Source of all things; there is ONE God; ONE power, and ONE rule over all." And after full explanation of the many symbols and emblems that surrounded them, they were dismissed with the barbarous words *Κοῦς* and *Θυπαῖς*, corruptions of the Sanscrit words, *Kanska Aom Pakscha*; meaning, *object of our wishes, God, Silence, or Worship the Deity in Silence.*

Among the emblems used was the rod of Bakchos; which once, it was said, he cast on the ground, and it became a serpent; and at another time he struck the rivers Orontes and Hydaspes with it, and the waters receded and he passed over dry-shod. Water was obtained, during the ceremonies, by striking a rock with it. The Bakchæ crowned their heads with serpents, carried them in vases and baskets, and at the *Ευρησεις*, or finding, of the body of Osiris, cast one, alive, into the aspirant's bosom.

The Mysteries of Atys in Phrygia, and those of Cybele his mistress, like their worship, much resembled those of Adonis and Bakchos, Osiris and Isis. Their Asiatic origin is universally admitted, and was with great plausibility claimed by Phrygia, which contested the palm of antiquity with Egypt. They, more than any other people, mingled allegory with their religious worship, and were great inventors of fables; and their sacred traditions as to Cybele and Atys, whom all admit to be Phrygian Gods, were very various. In all, as we learn from Julius Firmicus, they represented by allegory the phenomena of nature, and the succession of physical facts, under the veil of a marvellous history.

Their feasts occurred at the equinoxes, commencing with lamentation, mourning, groans, and pitiful cries for the death of Atys; and ending with rejoicings at his restoration to life.

We shall not recite the different versions of the legend of Atys and Cybele, given by Julius Firmicus, Diodorus, Arnobius, Lactantius, Servius, Saint Augustine, and Pausanias. It is enough to say that it is in substance this: that Cybele, a Phrygian Princess, who invented musical instruments and dances, was enamored of Atys, a youth; that either he in a fit of frenzy mutilated himself or was mutilated by her in a paroxysm of jealousy; that he died,

and afterward, like Adonis, was restored to life. It is the Phœnician fiction as to the Sun-God, expressed in other terms, under other forms, and with other names.

Cybele was worshipped in Syria, under the name of Rhea. Lucian says that the Lydian Atys there established her worship and built her temple. The name of Rhea is also found in the ancient cosmogony of the Phœnicians by Sanchoniathon. It was Atys the Lydian, says Lucian, who, having been mutilated, first established the Mysteries of Rhea, and taught the Phrygians, the Lydians, and the people of Samothrace to celebrate them. Rhea, like Cybele, was represented drawn by lions, bearing a drum, and crowned with flowers. According to Varro, Cybele represented the earth. She partook of the characteristics of Minerva, Venus, the Moon, Diana, Nemesis, and the Furies; was clad in precious stones; and her High Priest wore a robe of purple and a tiara of gold.

The Grand Feast of the Syrian Goddess, like that of the Mother of the Gods at Rome, was celebrated at the Vernal Equinox. Precisely at that equinox the Mysteries of Atys were celebrated, in which the Initiates were taught to expect the rewards of a future life, and the flight of Atys from the jealous fury of Cybele was described, his concealment in the mountains and in a cave, and his self-mutilation in a fit of delirium; in which act his priests imitated him. The feast of the passion of Atys continued three days; the first of which was passed in mourning and tears; to which afterward clamorous rejoicings succeeded; by which, Macrobius says, the Sun was adored under the name of Atys. The ceremonies were all allegorical, some of which, according to the Emperor Julian, could be explained, but more remained covered with the veil of mystery. Thus it is that symbols outlast their explanations, as many have done in Masonry, and ignorance and rashness substitute new ones.

In another legend, given by Pausanias, Atys dies, wounded like Adonis by a wild boar in the organs of generation; a mutilation with which all the legends ended. The pine-tree under which he was said to have died, was sacred to him; and was found upon many monuments, with a bull and a ram near it; one the sign of exaltation of the Sun, and the other of that of the Moon.

The worship of the Sun under the name of Mithras belonged to Persia, whence that name came, as did the erudite symbols of that

worship. The Persians, adorers of Fire, regarded the Sun as the most brilliant abode of the fecundating energy of that element, which gives life to the earth, and circulates in every part of the Universe, of which it is, as it were, the soul. This worship passed from Persia into Armenia, Cappadocia, and Cilicia, long before it was known at Rome. The Mysteries of Mithras flourished more than any others in the imperial city. The worship of Mithras commenced to prevail there under Trajan. Hadrian prohibited these Mysteries, on account of the cruel scenes represented in their ceremonial: for human victims were immolated therein, and the events of futurity looked for in their palpitating entrails. They reappeared in greater splendor than ever under Commodus, who with his own hand sacrificed a victim to Mithras: and they were still more practised under Constantine and his successors, when the Priests of Mithras were found everywhere in the Roman Empire, and the monuments of his worship appeared even in Britain.

Caves were consecrated to Mithras, in which were collected a multitude of astronomical emblems; and cruel tests were required of the Initiates.

The Persians built no temples; but worshipped upon the summits of hills, in enclosures of unhewn stones. They abominated images, and made the Sun and Fire emblems of the Deity. The Jews borrowed this from them, and represented God as appearing to Abraham in a flame of fire, and to Moses as a fire at Horeb and on Sinai.

With the Persians, Mithras, typified in the Sun, was the invisible Deity, the Parent of the Universe, the Mediator. In Zoroaster's cave of initiation, the Sun and Planets were represented over-head, in gems and gold, as also was the Zodiac. The Sun appeared emerging from the back of Taurus. Three great pillars, Eternity, Fecundity, and Authority, supported the roof; and the whole was an emblem of the Universe.

Zoroaster, like Moses, claimed to have conversed face to face, as man with man, with the Deity; and to have received from Him a system of pure worship, to be communicated only to the virtuous, and those who would devote themselves to the study of Philosophy. His fame spread over the world, and pupils came to him from every country. Even Pythagoras was his scholar.

After his novitiate, the candidate entered the cavern of initiation, and was received on the point of a sword presented to his naked

left breast, by which he was slightly wounded. Being crowned with olive, anointed with balsam of benzoin, and otherwise prepared, he was purified with fire and water, and went through seven stages of initiation. The symbol of these stages was a high ladder with seven rounds or steps. In them, he went through many fearful trials, in which darkness displayed a principal part. He saw a representation of the wicked in Hades; and finally emerged from darkness into light. Received in a place representing Elysium, in the brilliant assembly of the initiated, where the Archimagus presided, robed in blue, he assumed the obligations of secrecy, and was entrusted with the Sacred Words, of which the Ineffable Name of God was the chief.

Then all the incidents of his initiation were explained to him: he was taught that these ceremonies brought him nearer the Deity; and that he should adore the consecrated Fire, the gift of that Deity and His visible residence. He was taught the sacred characters known only to the initiated; and instructed in regard to the creation of the world, and the true philosophical meaning of the vulgar mythology; and especially of the legend of Ormuzd and Ahriman, and the symbolic meaning of the six Amshaspands created by the former: *Bahman*, the Lord of Light; *Ardibehst*, the Genius of Fire; *Shariver*, the Lord of Splendor and Metals; *Stapandomad*, the Source of Fruitfulness; *Khordad*, the Genius of Water and Time; and *Amerdad*, the protector of the Vegetable World, and the prime cause of growth. And finally he was taught the true nature of the Supreme Being, Creator of Ormuzd and Ahriman, the Absolute First Cause, styled ZERUANE AKHEREENE.

In the Mithriac initiation were several Degrees. The first, Tertullian says, was that of Soldier of Mithras. The ceremony of reception consisted in presenting the candidate a crown, supported by a sword. It was placed near his head, and he repelled it, saying, "Mithras is my crown." Then he was declared the soldier of Mithras, and had the right to call the other Initiates fellow-soldiers or companions in arms. Hence the title *Companions* in the Royal Arch Degree of the American Rite.

Then he passed, Porphyry says, through the Degree of the Lion, —the constellation Leo, domicile of the Sun and symbol of Mithras, found on his monuments. These ceremonies were termed at Rome Leontic and Heliac; and *Coracia* or *Hiero-Coracia*, of the Raven, a bird consecrated to the Sun, and a sign placed in the

Heavens below the Lion, with the Hydra, and also appearing on the Mithriac monuments.

Thence he passed to a higher Degree, where the Initiates were called *Perses* and children of the Sun. Above them were the *Fathers*, whose chief or Patriarch was styled Father of Fathers, or *Pater Patratus*. The Initiates also bore the title of *Eagles* and *Hawks*, birds consecrated to the Sun in Egypt, the former sacred to the God Mendes, and the latter the emblem of the Sun and Royalty.

The little island of Samothrace was long the depository of certain august Mysteries, and many went thither from all parts of Greece to be initiated. It was said to have been settled by the ancient Pelasgi, early Asiatic colonists in Greece. The Gods adored in the Mysteries of this island were termed CABIRI, an oriental word, from *Cabar*, great. Varro calls the Gods of Samothrace, *Potent Gods*. In Arabic, Venus is called *Cabar*. Varro says that the Great Deities whose Mysteries were practised there, were Heaven and Earth. These were but symbols of the Active and Passive Powers or Principles of universal generation. The two Twins, Castor and Pollux, or the Dioscuri, were also called the Gods of Samothrace; and the Scholiast of Apollonius, citing Mna-seas, gives the names of Ceres, Proserpine, Pluto, and Mercury, as the four Cabiric Divinities worshipped at Samothrace, as Axieros, Axiocersa, Axiocersus, and Casmillus. Mercury was, there as everywhere, the minister and messenger of the Gods; and the young servitors of the altars and the children employed in the Temples were called Mercuries or Casmilli, as they were in Tuscany, by the Etrusci and Pelasgi, who worshipped the Great Gods.

Tarquin the Etruscan was an Initiate of the Mysteries of Samothrace; and Etruria had its Cabiri as Samothrace had. For the worship of the Cabiri spread from that island into Etruria, Phrygia, and Asia Minor: and it probably came from Phœnicia into Samothrace: for the Cabiri are mentioned by Sanchoniathon; and the word *Cabar* belongs to the Hebrew, Phœnician, and Arabic languages.

The Dioscuri, tutelary Deities of Navigation, with Venus, were invoked in the Mysteries of Samothrace. The constellation Auriga, or Phaëton, was also honored there with imposing ceremonies. Upon the Argonautic expedition, Orpheus, an Initiate of these

Mysterics, a storm arising, counselled his companions to put into Samothrace. They did so, the storm ceased, and they were initiated into the Mysterics there, and sailed again with the assurance of a fortunate voyage, under the auspices of the Dioscuri, patrons of sailors and navigation.

But much more than that was promised the Initiates. The Hierophants of Samothrace made something infinitely greater to be the object of their initiations; to wit, the consecration of men to the Deity, by pledging them to virtue; and the assurance of those rewards which the justice of the Gods reserves for Initiates after death. This, above all else, made these ceremonies august, and inspired everywhere so great a respect for them, and so great a desire to be admitted to them. That originally caused the island to be styled *Sacred*. It was respected by all nations. The Romans, when masters of the world, left it its liberty and laws. It was an asylum for the unfortunate, and a sanctuary inviolable. There men were absolved of the crime of homicide, if not committed in a temple.

Children of tender age were initiated there, and invested with the sacred robe, the purple cincture, and the crown of olive, and seated upon a throne, like other Initiates. In the ceremonies was represented the death of the youngest of the Cabiri, slain by his brothers, who fled into Etruria, carrying with them the chest or ark that contained his genitals: and there the Phallus and the sacred ark were adored. Herodotus says that the Samothracian Initiates understood the object and origin of this reverence paid the Phallus, and why it was exhibited in the Mysterics. Clemens of Alexandria says that the Cabiri taught the Tuscans to revere it. It was consecrated at Heliopolis in Syria, where the Mysterics of a Divinity having many points of resemblance with Atys and Cybele were represented. The Pelasgi connected it with Mercury; and it appears on the monuments of Mithras; always and everywhere a symbol of the life-giving power of the Sun at the Vernal Equinox.

In the Indian Mysterics, as the candidate made his three circuits, he paused each time he reached the South, and said, "I copy the example of the Sun, and follow his beneficent course." Blue Masonry has retained the Circuits, but has utterly lost the explanation; which is, that in the Mysterics the candidate invariably represented the Sun, descending Southward toward the reign of

the Evil Principle, Ahriman, Siba, or Typhon (darkness and winter); there figuratively to be slain, and after a few days to rise again from the dead, and commence to ascend to the Northward.

Then the death of Sita was bewailed; or that of Cama, slain by Iswara, and committed to the waves on a chest, like Osiris and Bacchus; during which the candidate was terrified by phantoms and horrid noises.

Then he was made to personify Vishnu, and perform his avatars, or labors. In the first two he was taught in allegories the legend of the Deluge: in the first he took three steps at right angles, representing the three huge steps taken by Vishnu in that avatar; and hence the three steps in the Master's Degree ending at right angles.

The nine avatars finished, he was taught the necessity of faith, as superior to sacrifices, acts of charity, or mortifications of the flesh. Then he was admonished against five crimes, and took a solemn obligation never to commit them. He was then introduced into a representation of Paradise; the Company of the Members of the Order, magnificently arrayed, and the Altar with a fire blazing upon it, as an emblem of the Deity.

Then a new name was given him, and he was invested in a white robe and tiara, and received the signs, tokens, and lectures. A cross was marked on his forehead, and an inverted level, or the Tau Cross, on his breast. He received the sacred cord, and divers amulets or talismans; and was then invested with the sacred Word or Sublime Name, known only to the initiated, the Trilateral A. U. M.

Then the multitude of emblems was explained to the candidate; the arcana of science hidden under them, and the different virtues of which the mythological figures were mere personifications. And he thus learned the meaning of those symbols, which, to the uninitiated, were but a maze of unintelligible figures.

The third Degree was a life of seclusion, after the Initiate's children were capable of providing for themselves; passed in the forest, in the practice of prayers and ablutions, and living only on vegetables. He was then said to be born again.

The fourth was absolute renunciation of the world, self-contemplation and self-torture; by which Perfection was thought to be attained, and the soul merged in the Deity.

In the second Degree, the Initiate was taught the Unity of the

Godhead, the happiness of the patriarchs, the destruction by the Deluge, the depravity of the heart, and the necessity of a mediator, the instability of life, the final destruction of all created things, and the restoration of the world in a more perfect form. They inculcated the Eternity of the Soul, explained the meaning of the doctrine of the Metempsychosis, and held the doctrine of a state of future rewards and punishments: and they also earnestly urged that sins could only be atoned for by repentance, reformation, and voluntary penance; and not by mere ceremonies and sacrifices.

The Mysteries among the Chinese and Japanese came from India, and were founded on the same principles and with similar rites. The word given to the new Initiate was O-MI-TO FO, in which we recognize the original name A. U. M., coupled at a much later time with that of FO, the Indian Buddha, to show that he was the Great Deity Himself.

The equilateral triangle was one of their symbols; and so was the mystical **Y**; both alluding to the Triune God, and the latter being the ineffable name of the Deity. A ring supported by two serpents was emblematical of the world, protected by the power and wisdom of the Creator; and that is the origin of the two parallel lines (into which time has changed the two serpents), that support the circle in our Lodges.

Among the Japanese, the term of probation for the highest Degree was twenty years.

The main features of the Druidical Mysteries resembled those of the Orient.

The ceremonies commenced with a hymn to the sun. The candidates were arranged in ranks of *threes*, *fives*, and *sevens*, according to their qualifications; and conducted nine times around the Sanctuary, from East to West. The candidate underwent many trials, one of which had direct reference to the legend of Osiris. He was placed in a boat, and sent out to sea alone, having to rely on his own skill and presence of mind to reach the opposite shore in safety. The death of HU was represented in his hearing, with every external mark of sorrow, while he was in utter darkness. He met with many obstacles, had to prove his courage, and expose his life against armed enemies; represented various animals, and at last, attaining the permanent light, he was instructed by the Arch-Druid in regard to the Mysteries, and in the morality of the

Order, incited to act bravely in war, taught the great truths of the immortality of the soul and a future state, solemnly enjoined not to neglect the worship of the Deity, nor the practice of rigid morality; and to avoid sloth, contention, and folly.

The aspirant attained only the exoteric knowledge in the first two Degrees. The third was attained only by a few, and they persons of rank and consequence, and after long purification, and study of all the arts and sciences known to the Druids, in solitude, for nine months. This was the symbolical death and burial of these Mysteries.

The dangerous voyage upon the actual open sea, in a small boat covered with a skin, on the evening of the 29th of April, was the last trial, and closing scene, of initiation. If he declined this trial, he was dismissed with contempt. If he made it and succeeded, he was termed thrice-born, was eligible to all the dignities of the State, and received complete instruction in the philosophical and religious doctrines of the Druids.

The Greeks also styled the *Εποπτις*, *Τριγονος*, thrice-born; and in India perfection was assigned to the Yogee who had accomplished many births.

The general features of the initiations among the Goths were the same as in all the Mysteries. A long probation, of fasting and mortification, circular processions, representing the march of the celestial bodies, many fearful tests and trials, a descent into the infernal regions, the killing of the God *Balder* by the Evil Principle, *Lok*, the placing of his body in a boat and sending it abroad upon the waters; and, in short, the Eastern Legend, under different names, and with some variations.

The Egyptian Anubis appeared there, as the dog guarding the gates of death. The candidate was immured in the representation of a tomb; and when released, goes in search of the body of Balder, and finds him, at length, restored to life, and seated upon a throne. He was obligated upon a naked sword (as is still the custom in the *Rit Moderne*), and sealed his obligation by drinking mead out of a human skull.

Then all the ancient primitive truths were made known to him, so far as they had survived the assaults of time: and he was informed as to the generation of the Gods, the creation of the world, the deluge, and the resurrection, of which that of Balder was a type.

He was marked with the sign of the cross, and a ring was given

to him as a symbol of the Divine Protection; and also as an emblem of Perfection; from which comes the custom of giving a ring to the Aspirant in the 14th Degree.

The point within a Circle, and the Cube, emblem of Odin, were explained to him; and lastly, the nature of the Supreme God, "the author of everything that existeth, the Eternal; the Ancient, the Living and Awful Being, the Searcher into concealed things, the Being that never changeth;" with whom Odin the Conqueror was by the vulgar confounded: and the Triune God of the Indians was reproduced, as ODIN, the Almighty FATHER, FREA, (*Rhea* or *Phre*), his wife (emblem of universal *matter*), and *Thor* his son (the Mediator). Here we recognize *Osiris*, *Isis*, and *Hor* or *Horus*. Around the head of *Thor*, 'as if to show his eastern origin, twelve stars were arranged in a circle.

He was also taught the ultimate destruction of the world, and the rising of a new one, in which the brave and virtuous shall enjoy everlasting happiness and delight: as the means of securing which happy fortune, he was taught to practise the strictest morality and virtue.

The Initiate was prepared to receive the great lessons of all the Mysteries, by long trials, or by abstinence and chastity. For many days he was required to fast and be continent, and to drink liquids calculated to diminish his passions and keep him chaste.

Ablutions were also required, symbolical of the purity necessary to enable the soul to escape from its bondage in matter. Sacred baths and preparatory baptisms were used, lustrations, immersions, lustral sprinklings, and purifications of every kind. At Athens they bathed in the Ilissus, which thence became a sacred river; and before entering the Temple of Eleusis, all were required to wash their hands in a vase of lustral water placed near the entrance. Clean hands and a pure heart were required of the candidates. Apuleius bathed seven times in the sea, symbolical of the Seven Spheres through which the Soul must reascend: and the Hindus must bathe in the sacred river Ganges.

Clemens of Alexandria cites a passage of Menander, who speaks of a purification by sprinkling three times with salt and water. Sulphur, resin, and the laurel also served for purification, as did air, earth, water, and fire. The Initiates at Heliopolis, in Syria, says Lucian, sacrificed the sacred lamb, symbol of Aries, then the sign of the Vernal Equinox; ate his flesh, as the Israelites did at

the Passover; and then touched his head and feet to theirs, and knelt upon the fleece. Then they bathed in warm water, drank of the same, and slept upon the ground.

There was a distinction between the lesser and greater Mysteries. One must have been for some years admitted to the former, before he could receive the latter, which were but a preparation for them, the Vestibule of the Temple, of which those of Eleusis were the Sanctuary. There, in the lesser Mysteries, they were prepared to receive the holy truths taught in the greater. The Initiates in the lesser were called simply *Mystes*, or Initiates; but those in the greater, *Epoptes*, or Seers. An ancient poet says that the former were an imperfect shadow of the latter, as sleep is of Death. After admission to the former, the Initiate was taught lessons of morality, and the rudiments of the sacred science, the most sublime and secret part of which was reserved for the Epopot, who saw the Truth in its nakedness, while the *Mystes* only viewed it through a veil and under emblems fitter to excite than to satisfy his curiosity.

Before communicating the first secrets and primary dogmas of initiation, the priests required the candidate to take a fearful oath never to divulge the secrets. Then he made his vows, prayers, and sacrifices to the Gods. The skins of the victims consecrated to Jupiter were spread on the ground, and he was made to set his feet upon them. He was then taught some enigmatic formulas, as answers to questions, by which to make himself known. He was then enthroned, invested with a purple cincture, and crowned with flowers, or branches of palm or olive.

We do not certainly know the time that was required to elapse between the admission to the Lesser and Greater Mysteries of Eleusis.* Most writers fix it at five years. It was a singular mark of favor when Demetrius was made *Mystes* and *Epopot* in one and the same ceremony. When at length admitted to the Degree of Perfection, the Initiate was brought face to face with entire nature, and learned that the soul was the whole of man; that earth was but his place of exile; that Heaven was his native country; that for the soul to be born is really to die; and that death was for it the return to a new life. Then he entered the sanctuary; but he did not receive the whole instruction at once. It continued through several years. There were, as it were, many apartments, through which he advanced by degrees, and between which thick veils in-

tervened. There were Statues and Paintings, says Proclus, in the inmost sanctuary, showing the forms assumed by the Gods. Finally the last veil fell, the sacred covering dropped from the image of the Goddess, and she stood revealed in all her splendor, surrounded by a divine light, which, filling the whole sanctuary, dazzled the eyes and penetrated the soul of the Initiate. Thus is symbolized the final revelation of the true doctrine as to the nature of Deity and of the soul, and of the relations of each to matter.

This was preceded by frightful scenes, alternations of fear and joy, of light and darkness; by glittering lightning and the crash of thunder, and apparitions of spectres, or magical illusions, impressing at once the eyes and ears. This Claudian describes, in his poem on the rape of Proserpine, where he alludes to what passed in her Mysteries. "The temple is shaken," he cries; "fiercely gleams the lightning, by which the Deity announces his presence. Earth trembles; and a terrible noise is heard in the midst of these terrors. The Temple of the Son of Cecrops resounds with long-continued roars; Eleusis uplifts her sacred torches; the serpents of Triptolemus are heard to hiss; and fearful Hecate appears afar."

The celebration of the Greek Mysteries continued, according to the better opinion, for nine days.

On the first the Initiates met. It was the day of the full moon, of the month Boëdromion; when the moon was full at the end of the sign Aries, near the Pleiades and the place of her exaltation in Taurus.

The second day there was a procession to the sea, for purification by bathing.

The third was occupied with offerings, expiatory sacrifices, and other religious rites, such as fasting, mourning, continence, etc. A mullet was immolated, and offerings of grain and living animals made.

On the fourth they carried in procession the mystic wreath of flowers, representing that which Proserpine dropped when seized by Pluto, and the Crown of Ariadne in the Heavens. It was borne on a triumphal car drawn by oxen; and women followed bearing mystic chests or boxes, wrapped with purple cloths, containing grains of sesame, pyramidal biscuits, salt, pomegranates and the mysterious serpent, and perhaps the mystic phallus.

On the fifth was the superb procession of torches, commemora-

tive of the search for Proserpine by Ceres; the Initiates marching by trios, and each bearing a torch; while at the head of the procession marched the Dadoukos.

The sixth was consecrated to Iakchos, the young Light-God, son of Ceres, reared in the sanctuaries and bearing the torch of the Sun-God. The chorus in Aristophanes terms him the luminous star that lights the nocturnal initiation. He was brought from the sanctuary, his head crowned with myrtle, and borne from the gate of the Ceramicus to Eleusis, along the sacred way, amid dances, sacred songs, every mark of joy, and mystic cries of *Iakchos*.

On the seventh there were gymnastic exercises and combats, the victors in which were crowned and rewarded.

On the eighth was the feast of Æsculapius.

On the ninth the famous libation was made for the souls of the departed. The Priests, according to Athenæus, filled two vases, placed one in the East and one in the West, toward the gates of day and night, and overturned them, pronouncing a formula of mysterious prayers. Thus they invoked Light and Darkness, the two great principles of nature.

During all these days no one could be arrested, nor any suit brought, on pain of death, or at least a heavy fine: and no one was allowed, by the display of unusual wealth or magnificence, to endeavor to rival this sacred pomp. Everything was for religion.

Such were the Mysteries; and such the Old Thought, as in scattered and widely separated fragments it has come down to us. The human mind still speculates upon the great mysteries of nature, and still finds its ideas anticipated by the ancients, whose profoundest thoughts are to be looked for, not in their philosophies, but in their symbols, by which they endeavored to express the great ideas that vainly struggled for utterance in words, as they viewed the great circle of phenomena,—Birth, Life, Death, or Decomposition, and New Life out of Death and Rotteness,—to them the greatest of mysteries. Remember, while you study their symbols, that they had a profounder sense of these wonders than we have. To them the transformations of the worm were a greater wonder than the stars; and hence the poor dumb scarabæus or beetle was sacred to them. Thus their faiths are condensed into symbols or expanded into allegories, which they understood, but were not always able to explain in language; for there are thoughts and ideas which no language ever spoken by man has words to express.