

Chapter 9

The Ritual of Egyptian Initiation

The Western World is fast becoming aware that beneath the allegories and unconvincing verbiage of the sacred books there lies concealed a primitive secret doctrine, that behind apparently meaningless religious usages and pious jugglery there is a substance of sound psychological practice, that even outside the consecrated precincts of the Church—notably in Freemasonry and kindred fraternities—there are rites and ceremonies which convey by their symbolism fragments of knowledge concerning the history and destiny of the soul. Convinced of this, many worthy students are now endeavoring to raise the veil that so long has shrouded the mysteries of antiquity, hoping to solve the sacred allegories and correctly to interpret the symbolism of modern fraternities. To assist these in their research, I here propose to describe in detail the various steps, explaining the esoteric significance of each, of the ritual of initiation as conducted anciently in Egypt.

Not that the ceremonies and elaborate rites of the Samothracian Mysteries, those of Eleusis and Bacchus in Greece, and the Saturnalia of Rome, as well as the ritual of modern Freemasons, lack in mystical significance do I select Egypt, but because without exception these latter derived their procedure from the Mysteries of Ancient Egypt. Thus by interpreting these rites at their common source, even though they have been sometimes obscured by later transformations, we shall be able to perceive the fundamental concepts that underlie them all.

In this work we are fortunate in having a treatise, not entirely inaccessible to modern readers, that gives a detailed description of the Egyptian Mysteries. Iamblichus, a noted scholar and Neo-Platonist who lived in the first half of the fourth century, wrote a work upon the Egyptian Mysteries in which he portrays the principal steps and trials imposed upon the candidate during initiation. This description was translated into the French by P. Christian, and has been drawn upon freely for information by the more eminent students of the tarot, as it contains a complete description of the Egyptian tarot. In 1901 it was translated from French into English by my good friend Genevieve Stebbins, who has given me permission to make use of her translation in this lesson and in the course on The Sacred Tarot.

I, therefore, shall follow accurately the trials to which the Egyptian candidate for initiation was subjected, as described by Iamblichus, and shall endeavor at each step also to explain what originally was intended to be conveyed to the mind of the candidate. Such trials in some form, handed down

from this remote period, persist today, as witnessed by the hazing of newcomers at school, and the riding of the goat in our lodges.

But why should tests of fitness for initiation be called riding the goat? This revolves about the significance of the five-pointed star which from antiquity has been employed as the symbol of man. The star placed with one point up has the significance of intelligence ruling the four elementary kingdoms, reason dominating the instincts of the flesh. It is thus the Grecian Hygeia, used by the Pythagoreans as the symbol of health. Now, in the zodiac the head of man, organ of intelligence, is ruled by Aries, pictured among the constellations as the Ram. In sacred works, consequently, to designate that the creative forces are directed by intelligence, it is common to refer to this circumstance as the lamb, and is so mentioned by St. John.

The five-pointed star when inverted, however, signifies man standing on his head; reason dominated by lust, passion, and selfishness; and is thus emblematical of chaos, the pit, black magic, and the devil. Zodiacally the home sign of Saturn, the origin of our Satan, is Capricorn, pictured in the firmament by a goat. The goat, whose beard forms the downward point, whose ears form the two lateral points and whose horns form the two upward points of a five-pointed star, therefore, as well as the inverted five-pointed star, is a symbol of black magic and evil. St. John refers to this inverted star as a falling star named wormwood. It will also now be apparent why the separation of the good and the evil should be referred to in the Scripture as dividing the sheep from the goats. The goat is the symbol of evil, and riding the goat signifies that temptations have been vanquished, the devil overcome, and the animal instincts sublimated into spiritual assets.

In the course of initiation, past or present, the candidate comes into the possession of new knowledge and new powers that alike are capable of either use or abuse, the proper application of which requires a high moral standard. To become master of the occult sciences, which ancient religious law forbade to be placed in writing, requires a strong intellect. The practice of white magic demands fortitude, persistence, self-confidence, and courage. Therefore, to prove the candidate's mental, moral, and physical fitness to receive the Hermetic Secret Doctrine, the strength of these qualities were, and are, subjected to test.

The primary object of all ancient Mysteries, however, and by far the most important use of the initiatory ritual, was to impress indelibly upon the mirror of his consciousness, by means of never-to-be-forgotten experiences, the past history, present opportunities, and future destiny of the soul. During the course of his travail there was also often another result attained. The stimulus received by his psychic faculties frequently opened the senses of the soul to visions of transcendental realms, and awakened the dormant powers of his divine self to new potency.

It is true that in some of the Mysteries the birth, crucifixion, interment, and resurrection of the sun were celebrated. But the initiate recognized in the sun's annual pilgrimage a direct analogy to the experiences of the soul in its cyclic journey. Likewise, in some, certain experiences of the soul were given preeminence. Thus the ecstatic reunion of the soul with its divine source gave rise to the Bacchic frenzies; the orgies originally representing the reunion of separated souls, the wine being emblematical of the mixture of masculine and feminine magnetism.

Now it is common knowledge that the classic nations, as well as other people of antiquity, believed in the doctrine that the soul once existed in a

spiritual state of Edenic purity, was tempted to undergo involution into material form for the sake of experience, and must ultimately win its way back to paradisiacal bliss. While recognizing that sex symbols were a prominent feature in the Mysteries, and that sex doctrines were an important revelation, yet most commentators have preferred to omit them, either through ignorance of their true function, or for fear of shocking the modern sense of propriety. These sex doctrines of the ancient Mysteries are not what is currently termed sex practices, being neither devoted to sex magic nor to celibacy. They are doctrines of the true and pure relationship of marriage, such as today would be approved by our most eminent physicians and psychologists.

All life and activity being the result of polarity, the history and the mission of the soul can only be comprehended in association with its sexual activities. Now the ancient Secret Doctrine is very emphatic that in the beginning the ego is androgynous. After its differentiation, corresponding to birth, as it involves down from the celestial realm to the highest state of the spiritual world it develops a soul sphere—a sphere of consciousness organized in celestial substance. But to contact still coarser substance such as spiritual substance, astral substance, and physical substance, these energies become polarized into two separate channels of flow, into two organizations of consciousness, into two souls. This is the separation of the Twin Souls; who are over-shadowed and energized by one ego, yet each develops individual consciousness.

This separation is beautifully described in the Bible as Eve taken from the original Adam, who had been created in the image of God: “Male and Female created he them.” Yet after the descent into material conditions and partaking of the evolutionary tree—gaining a knowledge of good and evil—to become as gods, as the Bible states it, they must also partake of the Tree of Life.

This tree of life is the reunion of the separated male and female souls. This is portrayed in the Greek ritual as Dionysus, slain and dismembered, after which the parts are collected and reunited in a new birth. In Egypt, Osiris is portrayed as murdered and the fourteen dismembered parts (each soul possessing a septenary constitution) sent floating down the Nile (the current of involutory life) finally to be cast upon the muddy banks of the Delta (the material world). But faithful Isis (Nature) gathers together these fragments and breathing upon them the breath of life they become reunited and Osiris is born anew, never again to die. These allegories symbolically picture the drama of the soul’s descent from the celestial state, the separation of twin souls in the highest realm of the spiritual world, who after a time Nature again brings together, breathes upon them the breath of love, uniting them, and by their united strength they become immortal.

Now, in the description of the trials with which Iamblichus has furnished us, the Sphinx of Gizeh served as the entrance to subterranean vaults in which the initiation was conducted. From between the forward limbs corridors closed by a secret door ran to crypts beneath the Great Pyramid.

As in modern fraternities, before the candidate was admitted to participate in the trials he must be selected by unanimous vote. Then he must give himself unreservedly into the hands of his guides and place implicit confidence in them, obeying their commands without asking questions. If we bear in mind that the whole ritual symbolically depicts the cycle of the soul, we perceive that this represents the faith that the soul should have in the wisdom and beneficence of Deity, and the obedience it should manifest to Nature’s laws. The ego is called from an undifferentiated state by the unanimous de-

mand for souls to be fitted for specific work in the cosmic scheme of things. During the earlier portion of their initiation into the mysteries of life, these souls do not know the why or wherefore of the suffering they endure; but if they place implicit faith in the guidance of their spiritual tendencies, at last they will see the light shine through the darkness, and following this, will be led into the glorious sunshine of Self-Conscious Immortality.

At a distance from the Sphinx the neophyte's eyes are bandaged, and he is led to its foot an unknown distance, where a door of bronze opens to admit him and then closes without noise. Bronze is an alloy of tin, ruled by Jupiter, and copper, ruled by Venus. Venus is the planet of love, and Jupiter in addition to being the planet of beneficence, through his rulership of the sign Sagittarius, the sign of the higher mind, is in one of his aspects considered the planet of wisdom. Bronze, therefore, represents not only a union of a male and a female potency, but also a fusion of love and wisdom. Now, the bandaged eyes of the neophyte represent the unconscious condition of the pure, diffusive spirit before its differentiation as an ego. The journey of the neophyte to the foot of the Sphinx represents the indrawing of this spirit potency to the celestial matrix of the ego's angelic parents. Its projection on the toilsome journey of involution and evolution, through the intense vibrations of wisdom and love of its angelic progenitors, is signified by the neophyte silently passing through the door of bronze.

The Sphinx, into which the neophyte enters, is a synthetic representation of all the energies in the zodiac, being composed in its unconventionalized form of the emblems of the four quadrants of the heavens—a lion, an eagle, a man, and a bull. It thus symbolizes a cycle, and because time is measured by the sun's passage through this cycle, it also signifies the passage of time. For the ego time was not prior to its differentiation.

Next, the neophyte is led down a spiral stairway of 22 steps and through a second bronze door which when closed so harmonizes with the wall of the circular chamber into which it opens as to be undetectable. He is halted upon the verge of an abyss and commanded to cross his arms upon his breast and remain motionless. In the heavens, the solstitial colure and the equinoctial colure make a cross, the original of the swastika cross. This heavenly cross, due to the revolution of the earth on its axis, apparently moves around the heavens each day from east to west, and due to the procession of the equinoxes moves through the constellations also from east to west, though slowly, and is thus symbolized by the swastika with its points turned to the left, this being the emblem of evolution. The swastika with its points turned to the right is the emblem of involution.

The spiral stairway of 22 steps symbolizes the involutory descent through the embryonic celestial state of the seraphs, the door being the passage into the paradisiacal worlds of the cherubs, where for the first time vibrations of love and wisdom, represented by the door of bronze, begin to disturb the tranquil innocence of the ego. Twenty-two steps are emblematical of the zodiacal circle of 12 signs and the chain of 10 planets which exert their influence upon the soul, and upon all Nature, throughout all states, from the highest to the lowest. The soul's spiral pathway through each plane of existence is thus influenced by them. The candidate's crossed arms signify progress.

The candidate now halted upon the abyss, represents that state in which a rib was being removed from Adam for the creation of Eve. The abyss represents the grosser worlds into which the ego cannot descend; upon which it directly can have no influence. Its vibrations are too fine to affect substance

coarser than that of the paradisiacal world, or upper realm of spirit, represented by the circular chamber in which the neophyte now stands. But during its descent through the seraphic realms it has evolved a soul sphere, or organization of consciousness, containing both male and female potencies. That it may transmit motion to grosser substance, this soul sphere polarizes its motion and divides into two organizations of consciousness, into two souls related to each other as male and female; the Adam and Eve of each deific ego.

While the candidate stands motionless upon the verge of the abyss, the two guardians who have accompanied him take from an altar, and dress in, white linen robes. One wears a girdle of silver and a mask representing the head of a bull, the other wears a belt of gold and a mask representing a lion's head. The robes of white symbolize purity, of linen, typify strength. Gold is sacred to the sun, and the lion's head is the sign Leo in which the sun exerts its greatest power. Silver is sacred to the moon, and the sign where the moon has its best influence is Taurus, symbolized by the head of the bull. Thus do the two guardians, in a most spectacular manner, represent the masculine and feminine portions of the ego's soul sphere.

The Thesmothete, as the guardian is called, representing Pi-Rhe, genius of the sun, stands at the neophyte's right, while the Thesmothete dressed as Pi-Ish, genius of the moon, stands at his left. Suddenly, with a great noise, a trap door descends in front of the neophyte, and at the same time the bandage is snatched from his eyes and he beholds the two figures, one on either side. Standing thus he represents the ego at the moment of parturition when the twin souls are born. The shock of their separation is denoted by the noise, and as Adam and Eve they stand by his side.

Then, from out of the abyss, only half of its body visible, rises a horrible mechanical spectre holding in its hands a huge scythe which, barely missing him, sweeps past the neophyte's neck seven times. This spectre is the symbol of death. The scythe represents the changes which time brings. Only the upper half of the spectre is visible, to designate that the higher qualities of the soul alone survive the changes of time. The seven sweeps of the scythe, weapon of death, indicate that the soul both in involution and in evolution passes through conditions ruled by each of the seven planets.

Now, according to kabalistical doctrine, before the creation of the universe there existed the all-diffusive spirit, called Ain Soph Aur. From this the universe came into manifestation by means of ten emanations, the first of which, called Kether, or crown, signifies motion, and corresponds in human affairs to the ego. The next two emanations are Chocmah and Binah, wisdom and intelligence, which involve the idea of polarity and correspond to the positive and negative souls at the moment of their separation. From this godhead, Kether, Chocmah, and Binah, the universe evolves by means of seven other emanations, or impulses; and according to the law of correspondences, the soul also builds its microcosmic universe about itself by similar means, the seven-fold constitution of man being evolved, as was indicated, by passing through environmental influences ruled by each of the seven planets, a circumstance symbolized by the seven sweeps of the death-dealing scythe, evolution being accomplished only after the separation of the souls, by means of successive lives and deaths.

After the enactment of this drama, the Thesmothetes lead the neophyte to the door of a small dark tunnel, giving him a lamp with which to light his way. The lamp represents the inner promptings of the ego which if listened to

will direct the soul aright. He is now left to his own devices to indicate that the twin souls each go their separate ways. The tunnel is so small that to enter it he must proceed on hands and knees, and to indicate that once the cycle of necessity has been entered there is no return except through following out Nature's plan, the door immediately shuts behind him. This tunnel dips more and more downward as he follows it until finally it ends abruptly at the brink of a crater formed like an inverted cone. The tunnel symbolizes the descent of the soul through the spiritual realm, and the inverted cone, the sides of which are polished to reflect the light of his lamp even as in the astral world the astral light is seen, represents the astral world. Down the side of this cone he observes an iron ladder of 78 rungs, and finding no other method of advance open, he descends it. At the bottom of the ladder, he observes when he arrives there, a yawning well. Therefore, to find a way out he starts to ascend, looking carefully for a means of egress. Climbing seven steps upward he notices a crevice in the rocks just large enough to admit his body, and through this he squeezes, to find himself at the foot of an ascending spiral stairway.

The ladder is of iron to indicate that after leaving the spiritual realm the soul has entered a realm of force, a realm where animal tendencies as well as those higher are present, where the planet Mars has full sway. To indicate that during this period of its journey the soul is only a rudimental form, at no time can the neophyte assume the upright position, the position of the truly human. The 78 rungs of the astral ladder represent the influences that exert their power over the descending soul: the 12 zodiacal signs, the 10 planets, the 12 mundane houses and the denizens of the 4 astral kingdoms, the 36 decanates of the zodiac, and the 4 quadrants of the zodiacal circle.

The bottom rung of the ladder represents that point where the involving soul can go no lower, the point where it contacts the mineral realm and first incarnates in objective form. The 7 upward steps represent the 7 states of its evolution from mineral to man. In this seventh state the soul has behind it those experiences which have given it a complex astral organization, which enables it to be attracted to a human mother. The travail at its birth into human form is represented by the neophyte when he painfully squeezes through the narrow cleft in the rocks.

Now, from the beginning of its cyclic journey until it is born as a human being there are just 108 steps—22 prior to the separation of the male soul from the female soul, 78 involutory steps through the astral realm, 7 steps from mineral to man, and an 8th step representing birth into the human form, symbolized by passing through the crevice in the rock. These 108 steps correspond to the 108 tablets of the more complete Egyptian tarot. The set of 78 cards commonly known constitute the exoteric set such as was revealed to all who succeeded in passing the trials here described. But initiates know that at an advanced stage, after undergoing soul purification, and being admitted to the rites of the inner sanctuary, the neophyte was instructed in the use of an esoteric set, consisting of 22 Astro-Masonic symbols, and that at a still higher point in initiation there was revealed to him a septenary of Kabalistical Pictographs, sealed with an 8th, thus constituting in all 108 tablets, completing the Deific number 9 (1+8=9).

Now, for all ordinary purposes the exoteric set of 78 tablets, which constitutes the common Egyptian tarot, is quite adequate. These are reproduced in Brotherhood of Light tarot cards. And here also, I believe, I should designate where the tablets of the esoteric set are accurately described. In ancient times these were kept most secret, but that they might not be lost to coming genera-

tions, they have been fully described and commented on in a book unfortunately now out of print, but which is possessed by many students throughout the world. This book is *Light of Egypt, Vol. No. II*, by T.H. Burgoyne. It presents this ancient esoteric set under the caption THE TABLETS OF AETH. The first 22 are the Astro-Masonic symbols referred to. Next is given a vision of the 10 great kabalistical powers, or angels, of the universe. The first 7 of these, as given under, VISION, are the 7 Kabalistical Pictographs referred to. But that this esoteric set may also be used separately as explanatory both of the kabala and of the 33 degrees of Freemasonry, there is added an eighth, ninth, and tenth pictograph, which were not included in the complete Egyptian set of 108 tablets. The seal, which is the seal of the earth, however, is given, a seal that is dual yet is one, the obverse and reverse view being represented on one tablet.

After the neophyte has passed through the cleft, symbolizing his expulsion into the world of human activities through the sacred yoni, he ascends the spiral stairway of 22 steps and halts before the entrance to the sanctuary. These 22 steps, symbolical of the influence upon human life of the 12 signs and 10 planets, signify his experiences under their influence from birth to the time that he seeks occult initiation. A grating of bronze—symbol of love and wisdom—bars his progress, but a magus, called a Pastophore, opens the gate and welcomes him in. Thus always is there a master ready to assist and instruct the neophyte who, in love and in devotion to sacred science, has successfully passed the early ordeals.

The neophyte now finds himself in a long gallery sustained by sculptured caryatides representing 24 sphinxes, 12 on either side. In each space between two sphinxes the wall is covered with a frescoed painting, these 22 pictures being lighted by a line of 11 lamps that extends between the two rows of figures.

A sphinx, representing the four quadrants of heaven, symbolizes any cycle of time, and as here arranged they designate the 24 hours of the day, as well as the 24 elders of the Apocalypse. The 22 frescoed paintings picture the 22 Major Arcana of the tarot, the symbolism of which at this time is explained to the neophyte and by him committed to memory. The eleven lamps are crystal sphinxes in each of which burns an asbestos wick at the surface of a sacred oil, each lamp being supported by a bronze tripod.

The flame of the lamp represents the ego, a living, brilliant, changeless spark of Deity. The asbestos wick which ever feeds the flame yet is never consumed, represents the immortal soul feeding the ego with the results of its experiences. These experiences, gained through cycles of time as symbolized by the form of the sphinx, and in objective realms as indicated by the crystalline structure of the lamp, are typified by the oil. The transparent quality of the lamp suggests that matter offers no barrier to the sight of the initiate. The tripod, upon which the lamp rests, an alloy of a positive and a negative metal, presents the symbolic aspect of two interlaced trines. The negative trine symbolizes involution, and the positive trine evolution, together constituting the support of the soul and making possible its conscious immortal existence.

One of the lamps is set slightly apart from the other ten and represents the final synthesis of the others, symbolizing also the point from which the neophyte departs to undergo further perils. The 22 frescoed pictures each correspond to one of the 12 zodiacal signs or 10 planets and constitute an esoteric interpretation of their attributes and functions. The 22nd picture cor-

responds to the unknown; but each of the other 21 correspond either to one of man's seven physical senses, to one of his seven psychic senses, or to one section of his seven-fold constitution. Each is also related to one of the 21 branches of occult science that the neophyte is called upon to master before he can aspire to adeptship. Taken as a whole—as shown in detail in Course 6, *The Sacred Tarot*—they constitute a science of the will and an absolute religious doctrine, and each corresponds to a definite step in the neophyte's occult advancement. The 10 lamps represent the numerical decade as well as the ten emanations of the Sephiroth of the Kabala, and together with the 22 pictured Major Arcana point to the 32 paths of wisdom. With the final lamp, or 33rd symbol, they constitute the exoteric view of the same set of universal principles the esoteric side of which is set forth in the 33 TABLETS OF AETH previously mentioned. They, therefore, represent the original ideas from which the 33 chapters of the kabalistical book, Sephir Yetzirah, and the 33 degrees of modern Freemasonry, were derived.

The neophyte is permitted to remain in this Gallery of the Arcanum under the instruction of his master until he has thoroughly familiarized himself with all the symbols and their interpretations. This symbolizes all that he may hope to attain from the physical world.

To progress farther on the path, the soul must temporarily leave the physical world and soar into other realms where ascended souls will conduct its initiation on the inner planes. To reach the spiritual plane, either while still connected with the physical body or after death, the soul must pass through the four kingdoms of the astral world. To symbolize this journey, the neophyte leaves the Gallery of the Arcana. First, to represent his travel through the realm of the gnomes he passes through a tunnel. At the end of this tunnel, to represent the realm of salamanders, he is confronted with a roaring fire through which he must go if he would not retreat. This fire is really not so great as it at first appears, and he passes through it without injury, but no sooner has he passed it than it is replenished by unseen hands to make his return impossible. Thus he realizes an important truth; that in occultism he who places his hand to the plow and then turns back is lost. Next, as representing the influence of the undines, he is compelled to wade through a stagnant lake the water of which rises to his chin, but by going on tiptoe he manages to reach the opposite shore, and climbs dripping and cold upon a platform which he sees in front of a closed door.

This door is of bronze, and is divided laterally by a column on which is sculptured the head of a lion having in its mouth a ring figuring a serpent biting its own tail. The ring in the form of a serpent symbolizes eternity, and the lion symbolizes courage. Courage, therefore, he is made aware, should sustain his efforts throughout eternity. To open the door he grasps the ring, and as it resists he uses both hands. But no sooner does he get a firm grip upon it than the platform beneath his feet drops from under him and leaves him suspended in air, in the realm of the sylphs. The trap beneath his feet rises again promptly, and he passes through the door which now opens to permit his entrance. This bronze door symbolizes love and wisdom. It is divided into a right, or positive, half, and a left, or negative, half; the dividing column, placed where positive and negative forces join, symbolizing the tree of life that confers immortality. The sign Leo is natural ruler of love affairs. The lion's head, however, as Leo is ruled by the sun, also typifies the male element, while the circle in its mouth typifies the female element. The symbol as a whole, therefore, represents the complete and harmonious fusion of the

sexes, actuated by love. Thus is conveyed to the neophyte's mind the thought that the door of the sanctuary opens only in the union of two harmonious souls inspired by love and guided by wisdom. Not by one alone can the spiritual heights be scaled, but through the mighty movement within the finer substances of space caused by the soul union of both.

The neophyte thus having triumphed over the tests by earth, fire, water, and air, representing his passage through the astral kingdoms, is now met by 12 Necores. These men typify the translated souls of those who once lived upon the earth and who belong to each of the 12 zodiacal signs. They blindfold his eyes, to signify the dullness of the real spiritual perceptions until higher initiation is attained, and lead him to a crypt beneath the pyramid where the college of the magi awaits him. This crypt symbolizes the spiritual world which he now ritualistically has entered. The pyramid above is a symbol of the earth which he has abandoned, and being directly above this crypt indicates the exact correspondence between the physical world and the world spiritual, between that which is above and that which is below.

The walls of this crypt are sculptured with the pictures of the 48 constellations that represent the influence and spiritual significance of the 12 zodiacal signs and the 36 zodiacal decanates. There are also pictured representations of the 7 planetary angels, and the 360 genii of the degrees of the zodiac, through which the sun passes in one year. Beneath each of these pictures is an explanation which can only be read by those possessing the key, this key being that of Spiritual Astrology, which is treated in complete detail in Course 7, *Spiritual Astrology*. At each of the four angles of the crypt stands a bronze statue posed upon a triangular column, one having the head of a man, one the head of a bull, one the head of a lion, and one the head of an eagle. These figures denote—as each is posed on a trine—the four zodiacal triplicities. Each head bears a cross—symbol of union of forces and of earth—upon which is a light, as if engendered by the union and representing the divine fire that permeates and vivifies earth.

The dome of the vault contains a golden rose of five petals. The rose, because it is harbinger of spring, represents renewed life. Five is the number of man, and gold is the metal sacred to spirit. This entire symbol represents those who have attained spiritual regeneration. From the rose are suspended seven lamps, each having three branches. The three branches signify the three great divisions of occultism: astrology, alchemy, and magic. Each of these is divided into 7 distinct subjects, the 21 branches signifying the 21 branches of occult science which the neophyte is called upon to master and which illuminate the mind of the adept.

Below this rose sits the Hierophant. He is dressed in purple, sacred to Jupiter, the planet governing the higher mind, indicating that he is master of the sacred sciences. His forehead is girt with a circle of gold to indicate that his mind is fully cognizant of spiritual things. From this band arise seven stars, indicating that he is in possession of the seven states of consciousness that are the heritage of the perfect man. He occupies a silver throne. This metal is sacred to woman, and indicates that he is not ignorant of woman's share in the attainment of spiritual victory. The throne is placed upon a raised platform, and thus indicates the exalted position which his knowledge and efforts have conferred upon him.

To indicate their purity, the other Magi are dressed in white. And to indicate that they also have the spiritual light, there is a band of gold about each brow. At right and left of the Hierophant they are arranged in triple semi-

circles, there being three semicircles on the Hierophant's right and three on his left, so that he occupies the central, or seventh, point between the two triads. The triad on the left is negative, and represents an equal development of body, intellect, and soul in woman. The triad on the right is positive, and represents an equal development of body, intellect, and soul in man. Thus the Hierophant, himself masculine yet occupying a throne of silver, by his unique position symbolizes the meeting and blending of the very highest type of man and woman.

In the rear, under a purple canopy, symbolical of beneficent Nature as she overshadows all, is a colossal statue of Isis. It is composed of an alloy of lead, tin, iron, gold, copper, mercury, and silver; each being a metal ruled by one of the seven planets and thus symbolizing one of the seven active principles that pervade all nature. The statue wears a triangular diadem of silver, with an aigrette of 12 rays, and upon her breast is a golden rose in the centre of a golden cross. The arms are extended in front in such a manner as to form an equilateral triangle with the forehead at the apex. From each of the open fingers streams toward the earth a golden ray.

The rose upon the golden cross symbolizes the united transmutation of positive and negative energies from a lower range of action to a higher scale of vibration. The ten golden rays typify the chain of ten planets through which Nature molds the destiny of all things. The silver aigrette of 12 rays represents the 12 zodiacal signs that act as sounding boards from which the vibrations of the planets are reverberated. The equilateral triangle of silver signifies woman who has proportionally developed her body, intellect and soul. The triangle from which flow the golden rays indicates man who has cultivated in a harmonious manner his body, intellect and soul. Thus their point at the top of the forehead of Isis denotes that Nature's crowning glory is the reunion of two such perfectly developed people.

Before the Hierophant is a table upon which rests a planisphere, and it is here, before the assembled college, that the neophyte, whose eyes are now unbandaged, is required to demonstrate his knowledge of astrology by erecting and delineating a birth-chart, calculating the progressed positions and passing judgment upon the events that have taken place in some person's life, and the times when these events have taken place. In order to check the accuracy of his delineations, the chart of some person known to members of the college is selected, but its identity is kept secret from the neophyte. He is expected to portray the temperament of the person, to select the channels of activity into which the life has chiefly been turned, to designate what departments of life are fortunate and what are unfortunate, and to select the times and natures of the principal events that have transpired in his life. Also he is expected to know something of all the other six branches of astrology.

After his knowledge of astrology has been thoroughly tested, he is required to demonstrate his knowledge of the tarot. He must be familiar with the meaning of each of the Major Arcana in each of the three worlds as well as the divinatory significance. He must know the vibratory influence of names, numbers, colors, tones and flowers, and must have some knowledge of the talismanic properties of gems. And he must know how a particular name, number, or other vibratory influence will affect a certain person, as revealed by comparing it with the birth-chart. Finally, he is required to lay out and correctly read a tarot spread, thus demonstrating his ability to use these tablets as divinatory instruments.

After these tests of his knowledge, he is required to take an oath, similar

in its wording to that administered in modern Freemasonry, never to reveal the sacred sciences or other portions of the mysteries. Then he is required to take a second oath, vowing himself to submission and obedience to the Hierophant. This second oath represents the pledge the initiate makes to himself to obey always the voice of his conscience. At this point a terrible noise is heard and an artificial tempest is produced during which the Magi point their swords at his breast and accuse him of past crimes, typifying the day of judgment when the soul will be called upon to render an account of its deeds done while in the flesh. Next, two Necores, each carrying a cup of wine, approach and offer the cups to him. Then the startled candidate is told that one of the cups is quite harmless but that the other contains a deadly poison. Reminding him of the oath he has just taken to obey, the Hierophant commands the neophyte to make a choice of, and immediately to drink, the contents of one of the cups.

The harmless cup symbolizes love and virtue; the poison cup, passion and vice. Each soul is confronted with the trial of this choice, and only by obeying the Voice of the Silence can it safely be passed. If, in spite of his oath of submission, the neophyte refuses to obey, he is informed that the initiation is broken and he is confined to a dungeon for seven months and then allowed a second trial. If he thus fails at the first test he may never rise higher in the ranks of the Magi, though he may gain freedom later by successfully passing the test. In such a case he represents a weak and wavering soul who fears to obey the dictates of his inner self. The neophyte's only hope of escaping extinction is to pass the ordeal, though once failing he does not have the opportunities that would have been open to him had he taken the decisive step at once. The laws of the Magi compel him to pass the trial or perish in the dungeon cell.

Thus the soul, by virtue of moral integrity and aspiration, is represented as triumphing over the barriers that confine it to lower spiritual states. His blindfolded entrance to the crypt indicates his entrance into the first state of the spiritual world; the tests of his astrological and his kabalistical skill take him symbolically into the second spiritual state; his first oath conducts him into the third spiritual state; his second oath leads him into the fourth spiritual state; the trial of the cups gives him entrance into the fifth spiritual state; and now, to represent the sixth spiritual state, he is led into a neighboring hall which is furnished luxuriously to convey the impression of a royal nuptial chamber.

His clothing is removed by attendants, indicating that all grossness has been purged away. He is dressed in white linen to symbolize the strength of purity. An exquisite repast is enjoyed while his ears are refreshed by strains of rapturous music, emblematical of the higher states of ecstasy and the music of the spheres. As he finishes the refreshments, curtains are drawn aside, revealing to him beautiful young women dancing. To conceal their identity, even as the body hides the soul, they wear masks attached at the brow by a circle of gold, typical of intellectual illumination. They are scantily clad in a gauzy veil spangled with golden bees, the veil indicating how slight is the obstruction that bars man from realization, and the golden bees signifying the divine creative essence in its most spiritual aspect, and further, that the veil may be penetrated only by the industrious; for the slothful soul will never penetrate the spiritual states. Across each girl's shoulders is thrown a filmy scarf, symbolizing the spiritual raiment formed by exalted aspiration and devotion to truth; and each carries a garland of flowers, indicative of inno-

cence, joy and supreme happiness.

Delightful perfumes fill the air, and the neophyte approaches the dancers. After a time two of their number throw their garlands about him, encircling him with a chain of roses, while the others flee. These two girls continue to dance about him, shaking their garlands by turn as if to provoke his choice. The chain of roses represents the binding power of love.

If the neophyte dares to violate the sanctity of the mysteries he is in actual danger, but if he continues to conduct himself with propriety the Magi come to congratulate him upon passing the last of the trials, and confer upon him the title of Zelator. This final act in the initiation symbolizes the reunion of twin souls, which takes place upon the boundary of the sixth and seventh spiritual states. While conveying the idea that all passion must be evolved upward into pure unsullied love before this state can be reached, and that this sacred union must not be profaned with violence or carnal desire, it at the same time, by the two girls dancing about the neophyte, symbolizes the original trinity that existed before the separation of the sexes—ego, male soul, and female soul. It should be noticed that this scene is very different from that representing the separation; for that was a region of hideous monsters and dim consciousness; while this is a place of joyous beauty, ecstatic sensations, and vivid perceptions. By this union the soul is represented as passing into the seventh spiritual state together with its long missing mate, and can no longer be considered human, for it has now attained to the state of angelhood; immortality is no longer a possibility, but an assured fact.

Lastly, to impress upon the new Zelator the fate of those who follow the inversive path, he is led in the midst of 12 Necores, representing the zodiacal signs, into the opening of a cavern. Here a pale, uncertain light reveals to him a pit in which a sphinx is tearing the effigy of a human form. So, according to tradition, will the cycles surely destroy those who lose their immortality by following the fateful road of selfishness and black magic. Thus ends the ritual of Egyptian initiation, portraying, as it does, the cycle of the soul.

Study Questions

CHAPTER 1, THE TWO KEYS (SERIAL NO. 2)

1. By what means alone can nature's sanctuary be unlocked?
2. What was the prevalent condition of science prior to the 17th century?
3. What man refuted the old authorities, stating, "Nothing can be proved or disproved by unproved principles?"
4. By the aid of what can all sophisms be avoided and all problems solved?
5. What conditions prevent the soul from accurately conveying the truth perceived psychically to the objective consciousness?
6. What are the most valuable possessions used in arriving at the mathematics of truth?
7. What was the earliest form of worship?
8. What was the source of fire worship and sex worship?
9. What is the written law? What is the Golden Key to its interpretation?
10. What is the key to the door of positive knowledge?
11. What knowledge enabled Paracelsus to effect wonderful cures?
12. In what manner did the sacred books have their origin?
13. What is the Oral Law? What is the Silver Key to its interpretation?
14. What book had been consulted by the most learned kabalists and mystics?
15. To what do the twenty-two major arcana and the forty minor arcana of the tarot correspond?
16. To what do the court cards of the tarot correspond?
17. What is the relation of the Tarot to Astrology?
18. What is meant by the eclipse of the sun at the death of Moses?
19. What is meant by the moon being diminished at the death of David?
20. What relation had the Ark of Covenant to the Book of Thoth?
21. What symbolical representations were carried in the ark?
22. What are letters?
23. What are absolute ideas?
24. What are numbers?
25. Due to what fact are the Golden and Silver Keys of such great value?

Chapter 2, The Zodiac (Serial No. 46)

1. Why can there be no intelligent study of occultism that omits astrology?
2. Define the Zodiac.
3. To what do the signs of the zodiac owe their peculiar influence?

4. What influence have the signs of the zodiac over the planets found in them?
5. Why does each sign transmit certain tones much more readily than other tones?
6. What sign in a birth-chart indicates, in a large measure, the individuality?
7. What is the characteristic quality of people born under each zodiacal triplicity?
8. What are the four chief ways in which the zodiacal signs may be considered?
9. How is sight an apprehension of a trinity?
10. Name the signs belonging to each of the three Qualities, and state to what condition of matter each corresponds.
11. What is the meaning of Degree of Emanation?
12. Name the masculine signs of the zodiac.
13. What natural phenomenon does the sign of Aries resemble?
14. To what portion of the human anatomy does the sign of Taurus belong?
15. People of what sign are looking for the "why" of things?
16. To what degree of emanation does the sign of Cancer belong?
17. How are Leo people like, and how unlike, Aries people?
18. People of what sign are ever looking "how" desired results may be attained?
19. People of what sign are inordinately fond of approbation?
20. What is the dominant idea of Scorpio people?
21. What zodiacal sign rules the hips and thighs?
22. People of what sign are very diplomatic?
23. What airy sign possesses the most continuity?
24. People of what sign often lack self-confidence and are prone to worry?
25. Which sign has the most extremes of temperament and ability?

Chapter 3, Mundane Houses (Serial No. 47)

1. What are Mundane Houses?
 2. What is a House Cusp?
 3. Where is the First House of a horoscope located?
 4. Why is the top of a horoscope considered as the South?
- What houses are in the following, and what do they rule?
5. Trinity of Life.
 6. Trinity of Psychism.
 7. Trinity of Wealth.
 8. Trinity of Association.
 9. Which houses are Angular?
 10. In which houses do the planets have the strongest volume?
 11. Which are the Personal Houses, the Companionship Houses, and the Public Houses?
 12. What houses are positive? Which tend toward increase?
- Name the following planets:
13. Vital Planets. Intellectual Planets.
 14. Social Planets. Business Planets.
 15. Harmonious Planets. Discordant Planets.
 16. What planet rules the heart or vital center of life?
 17. What planet has dominion over the animal appetites and passions?
 18. What part of the human anatomy does Jupiter rule?
 19. What is the octave expression of Mercury, of Venus, and of the Moon?

20. Which planet rules the astral body?
21. Give the one word that best expresses the nature of each of the planets.
22. What aspect has the nature of Venus?
23. What aspect has the nature of Mars?
24. What aspect is harmonious in the highest degree? Discordant in the highest degree?
25. Give the one word that best expresses the nature of each of the ten aspects.

Chapter 4, The Mission of the Soul (Serial No. 4)

1. What is the primary requisite for success in any enterprise?
2. Define ego.
3. Define the soul.
4. Did the ego ever have a beginning, and can it have an end?
5. Did the soul have a beginning, and does it change?
6. Why must the ego either remain unconscious or gain experience through contact with relative conditions?
7. What is the dual function that the soul develops?
8. For what purpose did the soul develop the power to mold forms?
9. How do the experiences of the soul in one form enable it to attract and mold a form of still higher organization?
10. Why could there be no love without experiences with relative conditions?
11. Why could there be no life without the experiences of functioning through forms in some kind of substance?
12. What is the answer to the question as to why we are here?
13. Why is contrast in experience to be desired?
14. Why is variety of experiences to be desired?
15. Why do the innumerable forms of the physical, astral, and spiritual worlds offer the best opportunity we can imagine for developing not only wisdom, but also love?
16. What are the two essential factors of immortal life?
17. Why is the cycle of the soul called the Cycle of Necessity?
18. What is the mission of the soul?
19. What is the process by which the soul evolves from the mineral state to incarnate as man?
20. What is symbolized by the Bible story of Eve being tempted and partaking of the forbidden fruit?
21. What is the relation of adaptation to immortality?
22. If man is to survive on the spiritual plane what must he have the power to do?
23. What is the general plan by which Self-Conscious Immortality may be attained?
24. What is the greatest wisdom?
25. What is the expression of the highest love?

Chapter 5, Physiology and Correspondence (Serial No. 3)

1. Why is it illogical to think that a man is ever incarnated in woman's form?
2. When velocities are attained greater than that of light what happens to space, time and gravitation?
3. In the astral body what corresponds to the physical cells and structures

- of the physical body?
4. In what manner do states of consciousness perform for the astral body functions similar to those performed by sunlight for the vegetable world?
 5. Why must man have food on the spiritual plane?
 6. Why do some thoughts have an influence upon the astral body but not upon the spiritual body?
 7. What enables energy derived from the motive Contribute Your Utmost to Universal Welfare to build the spiritual form?
 8. In the maturation of the seed, to what event in human life does casting off of the first polar body correspond?
 9. Name the ten realms in the Cycle of Necessity through which the soul passes.
 10. In the adjustment of mankind to the Aquarian Age, what does the tenth and final step indicate?
 11. What is of paramount importance to the individual?
 12. What primarily determines the behavior of the individual and the events which enter his life?
 13. Why, to be free from want and free from fear, and to possess freedom of expression and freedom of worship, should men be familiar with the facts of astrology?
 14. Why are illiteracy, poverty, disease, heartrending toil and the acceptance of the doctrine of atheistic materialism hindrances to the development of spirituality?
 15. Upon what must people chiefly rely for personal experiences that prove there is a Supreme Guiding Intelligence, and life after physical death?
 16. What is the most destructive of all emotions, and how may it be banished?
 17. Why are induced emotions so important?
 18. Why does atheistic materialism strive to suppress the facts of astrology and the facts of extrasensory perception?
 19. Why should men be free to express their individual aptitudes?
 20. The thought energies flow into and tend to develop what?
 21. Why for true progress is it essential that man should be at liberty to change his religious views to conform to new information?
 22. What are the nine points of the Nine-Point Plan for the New Civilization?
 23. To what plane do the Four Freedoms set forth in association with the negative, or even, numbers, 2, 4, 6 and 8 chiefly relate?
 24. To what plane do the Four Orders of Facts set forth in association with the positive, or odd, numbers, 1, 3, 5 and 7 chiefly relate?
 25. Of the points in the Nine-Point Plan for the New Civilization, which is the most important?

Chapter 6, Doctrine of Signatures (Serial No. 5)

1. What does the Solar Ray contain?
2. From whence are all the life-entities of our universe issued? To what do they correspond?
3. What law forbids the beginning or destruction of egos?
4. What constitutes Character of Genius?
5. How does the State of Life affect a soul?
6. What is meant by Degree of Emanation?

7. Describe the motives and impulses of a soul belonging to each of the four States of Life.
8. Describe the actions of a soul belonging to each of the three Degrees of Emanation.
9. What three factors determine the Doctrine of Signatures?
10. After differentiation, how is the soul affected by the states it passes through?
11. Is the Doctrine of Signatures confined to entities?
12. Do all peppers have their origin in the same Spiritual State of Life?
13. By what sign are the Irish people ruled?
14. Do things ruled by the same zodiacal sign harmonize?
15. What do the terms good and evil imply in relation to some definite entity?
16. How can we understand the manner in which man is influenced by objects in his immediate environment?
17. What birth-chart position denotes the Planetary Family to which a soul belongs?
18. By what Law do energy-centers in the astral form attract events of the corresponding quality?
19. What three distinct factors can change the energy centers mapped by the birth-chart?
20. What happens to our astral bodies when we come in close contact with another person?
21. What does a comparison of birth-charts indicate?
22. What is the first astrological consideration in a question of harmonious marriage?
23. Is there good ground for companionship between people belonging to the same Planetary Family?
24. What things indicate the strongest natural source of wealth?
25. How can the practical application of the Doctrine of Signatures help man?

Chapter 7, Facts and Fancies About Reincarnation I {Serial No. 20}

1. Why is it dangerous to permit any idea to become so strongly entrenched that no one is permitted to criticize it?
2. Give the range of the number of human incarnations as taught by various schools.
3. What does human reincarnation imply?
4. What did Madame Blavatsky teach regarding human reincarnation while working under Western Initiates?
5. Did Madame Blavatsky teach human reincarnation before removing her headquarters to India?
6. Why is popular opinion a poor criterion of Truth?
7. What relation to progress are hardships, trials and sorrows?
8. Do events in themselves have a value, or can all events be made to create values for the soul?
9. What determines the value of any event of life?
10. Are there other spheres than the physical that offer every facility for progress?
11. Why is it difficult for many to think of any place of reward or punishment or progress other than earth?
12. What is the true cause of the apparent inequalities of life?

13. Is it logical to think the spiritual giants who have suffered have done so in punishment for crimes of previous lives?
14. Are all souls progressing to fulfill the same destiny?
15. Why are the educational needs of souls arriving at the human stage very different?
16. Is it probable that it requires many incarnations as a horse to produce a race horse, or many incarnations as a man to produce a college professor?
17. Why does the average savage have as much opportunity for spiritual progress as the common civilized man?
18. What opportunities for progress have those who die young?
19. If characters were equal and opportunities were equal would there be apparent inequalities in life?
20. Explain the justice of differences in character.
21. Can we say that human suffering is due to karma only, and disregard the suffering of animals that have no moral responsibility?
22. Is it logical to suppose that people are perfectly happy in their first human incarnation, before having any karma?
23. Does the doctrine of karma inspire the hope of soon being free from suffering?
24. What does karma really embrace?
25. What factors determine man's condition in life when born into human form?

Chapter 8, Facts and Fancies About Reincarnation I {Serial No. 21}

1. Why is it easy to mistake a psychometric rapport with an astral record as an experience in a past life?
2. How are the real experiences of the soul during sleep often mistaken for an experience in a past life?
3. Why is genius no proof of past incarnation in human form?
4. What determined the first human incarnation?
5. What is the Cycle of Naros?
6. Why do certain types of people periodically recur?
7. What is the Anthem of Creative Life?
8. Is stagnation part of Nature's plan? Why?
9. Are Nature's limits so narrow she must force man back upon earth to relearn the lessons he has already been taught?
10. Why do people who recall past lives remember they were some notable person?
11. Why is human reincarnation not strictly an occult doctrine?
12. Why is it taught that the Dalai Lama is a reincarnation of Buddha?
13. In what way does the doctrine of human reincarnation tend to make the masses willing slaves of kings and potentates?
14. What teaching of Moslemism has for its purpose the subjugation of the masses?
15. What Christian teaching appeals to the selfish instincts of man and tends to keep him from rising against oppression?
16. Why has the priesthood always opposed the advance of science?
17. Why is the Caste System the natural outgrowth of the doctrine of human reincarnation?
18. Why is human reincarnation the most successful dogma ever taught for keeping the masses contented with their lot?
19. Do ideas reincarnate?

20. What are the exceptional cases in which there is human reincarnation?
21. What part has karma to play in life after death?
22. Why do Eastern priests discourage investigation of the spiritual realm?
23. What is the teaching the world needs at present?
24. Why have the people of the West made greater strides in civilization than those of the East?
25. Why is the teaching of human reincarnation destructive?

Chapter 9, The Ritual of Egyptian Initiation (Serial No. 1)

1. From whence were the elaborate ceremonies of the Samothracian Mysteries, Eleusis, Bacchus, and the Saturnalia, derived?
2. Who was Iamblichus, and what did he write?
3. What does "Riding the Goat" symbolize?
4. What were the objectives of the trials during initiation?
5. What are the sex doctrines of the ancient Mysteries?
6. In what scriptural allegory is the separation of the ego into male and female souls described?
7. What does the murder and reconstruction of Osiris symbolically picture?
8. What does the whole ritual symbolize?
9. What does the candidate's journey to the foot of the sphinx represent?
10. What does the sphinx symbolize?
11. What does the descending spiral stairway of 22 steps symbolize?
12. What is signified by the arms of the candidate crossed on his breast?
13. What does the abyss upon the edge of which the neophyte is halted represent?
14. What does the mechanical spectre swinging the scythe at the neophyte's neck seven times indicate?
15. What does the first dark tunnel symbolize, and what does the inverted cone with a well at the bottom represent?
16. What does climbing up 7 steps of the iron ladder and passing through the cleft in the rocks represent?
17. What does the door of bronze symbolize?
18. What does a golden rose symbolize?
19. What is signified by the 7 lamps of 3 branches each?
20. What is indicated by the Hierophant wearing a band of gold about his brow and occupying a throne of silver?
21. What does the triangle from which flow the golden rays, and the equilateral triangle of silver meeting at the top of the forehead of Isis, symbolize?
22. What does the second oath represent?
23. What does the royal nuptial chamber symbolize?
24. What does the garland of flowers indicate?
25. What is symbolized by the sphinx destroying the human effigy?

Appendix

History of The Brotherhood of Light

To trace the origin of The Religion of the Stars, recourse must be made to tradition. Pseudo occultists and charlatans are only too ready to appropriate a name and use it to deceive the unwary. Hence a name and boasted lineage mean nothing in such matters. When genuine they rest upon secret tradition. And such documentary evidence as can be submitted for the genuine may easily be imitated by the spurious.

The only safe criterion of the genuineness of any esoteric teaching is the amount and accuracy of the information contained therein. The Brotherhood of Light lessons are now accessible to all. We welcome investigation with a view to proving their value. The lineage here given is not to claim infallibility or to prove authority, but to disclaim any originality in the ideas set forth beyond their method of presentation. Upon the *prima facie* evidence these lessons contain as expositors of THE RELIGION OF THE STARS, The Church of Light is well content to rest all its claims.

According to tradition, in the year 2,440 B.C., a group separated from the theocracy of Egypt, and through subsequent times, as a secret order, the name of which translated into English means The Brotherhood of Light, has been perpetuated, and has exerted a beneficial influence upon western civilization.

During only one period of Egyptian history did the teachings of The Religion of the Stars have a great influence on Egyptian civilization. This was during the reign of Akhenaten. This king was influenced by The Brotherhood of Light and broke completely with the corrupt priesthood of Amen. He moved to his City of the Horizon and spread stellar art and wisdom throughout Egypt. He died before the establishing of a new civilization could be completed; so the priests of Amen did the best they could to destroy his city and philosophy.

With the ascension of the Greek civilization, the influence of The Brotherhood of Light is seen in the astrology and mythology of Greece. Many of the Greek Mysteries take their basic rites from the ancient Egyptians.

The Greek philosophers, Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, Euxodus, and a score of others famed for learning that might be mentioned, received initiation directly at the hands of the Egyptian members of the fraternity.

At a later date this venerable order gave the impetus to learning in Alexandria, which made the city so justly famous. One of The Brotherhood of Light, the noble Hypatia, who, after the decline of the colleges in that city,

was the last to withstand the onslaughts of superstitious ignorance, and died endeavoring to spread the light of ancient wisdom.

It was The Brotherhood of Light that preserved the taper of learning from complete extinction during the dark ages, and that was responsible for kindling with it the fires of science and philosophy in Europe, even in the face of ruthless persecution.

The Brotherhood of Light not only has persisted as such on the innerplanes, but the line of succession has been kept alive, although at times it became exceedingly thin, also on the physical plane.

Much of our written history is lost in the mist of time. The thread of modern day existence on the physical plane picks up with the following.

M. Theon, for years, was the head of The Brotherhood of Light in Europe. The teachings came to America and were published in two books translated and edited by Emma Harding Britten, *Art Magic* and *Ghost Land*. The original edition of *Art Magic* bears this legend at the bottom of the title page, "Published by the author, at New York, America, 1876."

T.H. Burgoyne was the son of a physician in Scotland. He roamed the moors during his boyhood and became conversant with the birds and flowers. He was an amateur naturalist. He was also a natural seer. Through his seership he contacted The Brotherhood of Light on the innerplane, and later contacted M. Theon in person. Still later he came to America, where he taught and wrote on occult subjects. We find articles on the tarot, written by him, for instance, during 1887 and 1888, in *The Platonist*, published by Thomas M. Johnson at Osceola, Missouri. This was more than a dozen years before Genevieve Stebbins translated the work of P. Christian.

Captain Norman Astley, an officer in the British Army, had traveled extensively. In the performance of his duties he had lived in India and there had pursued occult studies. He also resided a short time in Australia. Later he returned to England to meet M. Theon, having previously contacted The Brotherhood of Light in his travels.

Astley was also a surveyor. Retired from the British Army he surveyed, among other places, what is now Carmel, California. It was such a beautiful region that when he married Genevieve Stebbins, a member of The Brotherhood of Light and a Delsarte teacher in New York, they decided to build their home in Carmel. That was in the 1860's.

As T.H. Burgoyne was a member of the same organization, it was natural he should pay them a visit. Captain and Mrs. Astley, who had contacted a number of earnest students suggested to Burgoyne that he write the basic Brotherhood of Light teachings as a series of lessons. This he agreed to do provided the students would enable him to live while he did this work. The Astleys made contact with students he knew and 12 were found who were willing to donate \$5 per month to this purpose.

Burgoyne lived in the home of the Astleys while he wrote *Light of Egypt*, Volume I. He wrote and issued as a manuscript lesson, which the 12 students were permitted to copy, one chapter each month. He had a white pony which would come at his whistle and follow him as if it were a dog. Each morning the weather was clement, he and his pony would leave the Astley domicile and go to a certain wild spot on Point Lobos to commune with the Monterey pines, to listen to the birds, to caress the flowers, and to hear the noisy surf boil into a little rocky cove above which in spring wild asters grew in profusion. Overlooking the charging and retreating waters, always sitting at the same spot, he wrote the whole of *Light of Egypt*, Volume I.

For reasons set forth in the preface to *Light of Egypt*, Volume I, it was later decided to publish these private lessons in book form. That this might be done it became necessary to finance the venture, and to have some kind of an organization which would resist the attacks it was anticipated would be made by those opposed to the purpose of the book.

Dr. Henry Wagner and Mrs. Belle M. Wagner (both with Jupiter in the tenth house of their birthcharts) agreed to finance the venture, and did so to the extent of \$100,000. And a branch of The Brotherhood of Light called the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, was formed for the express purpose of seeing to it that the *Light of Egypt* and its teachings should receive wide distribution.

The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor was governed in all its affairs by a council of three members consisting of a scribe, or secretary, an astrologer and a seer. Burgoyne was the original secretary. He passed to the next plane in March 1894, while residing in Humboldt County, California. Belle Wagner, Sun in Pisces, Aquarius rising and the Moon in the first house in Aquarius, was elected to take his place on the council. Minnie Higgins, Sun in Gemini, was the astrologer. Mrs. Anderson, Sun in Sagittarius, Moon in Cancer, Libra rising, was the seer. Meetings to decide issues were held on the second floor of Mrs. Anderson's large home in Denver, Colorado.

The bylaws of The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor made it impossible for any person under 21 years of age to join; made it impossible for a married person to join unless the spouse also joined, and made membership possible only after the individual's record had been thoroughly investigated.

Early in 1909 Minnie Higgins passed to the next plane, and in the spring of that year Elbert Benjamin was called to Denver and elected to take her place on the Council as the astrologer. At this meeting on the second floor of Mrs. Anderson's home, the other two members of the Council did their utmost, as the official minutes of the meeting show, to convince Elbert Benjamin that he should undertake the job of preparing a complete system of education that would enable a wide public to become conversant with The Religion of the Stars. But it was not until April of the following year that he consented to do this work.

Meanwhile he had contacted personally and through correspondence not only members of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, but members of The Brotherhood of Light who had remained aloof from the organization with headquarters at Denver. But it was chiefly by his becoming more closely associated with The Brotherhood of Light on the innerplane that he overcame his reluctance to take over so imposing a task.

In 1913 the three members of the Council of The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, after due deliberation, voted unanimously to close The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, and since then no members have been accepted.

During the period, 1914 to 1934 that The Brotherhood of Light lessons were being written, there was never any spirit other than that of helpfulness shown toward this work by any member of The Brotherhood of Light or by any person who had been a member of The Brotherhood of Luxor. And, in particular, Captain and Mrs. Astley were helpful. Elbert Benjamin visited them in their home on various occasions, and some of the extensive and encouraging correspondence he received from them helped him in this work.

In 1918 classes were first opened to the public. In order to carry out its objective of reestablishing The Religion of the Stars on earth, The Brotherhood of Light was incorporated as The Church of Light, on November 2,

1932, 9:55 a.m. PST at Los Angeles. The three founders of The Church of Light were Elbert Benjamine (C.C. Zain), who served as President until his demise November 18, 1951; Elizabeth Benjamine, who served as Secretary Treasurer until her passing in 1942; and Fred Skinner, who served as Vice President until his demise in 1940. From the 1920's through the 1940's much astrological research was carried on which has become standard reference for many astrologers.

Much of the history of The Church of Light in years between 1915 and 1951 involve the history of Mr. Benjamine's efforts. His mission on earth being completed through the writing, rewriting and printing of The Brotherhood of Light lessons, he felt that his physical form was worn beyond repair and that he could better serve the cause of Universal Welfare by leaving that body behind and moving to the next phase of his work in God's Great Plan.

In accordance with Mr. Benjamine's instructions, there was no public funeral, and his body was cremated. Because of his desire to be free from thoughts and emotions of grief so he might make a speedy adjustment in his new life, the announcement of his passing was withheld until the Response Day dinner in Los Angeles on December 18, 1951.

He left a priceless heritage in The Brotherhood of Light lessons, which must be preserved and passed on unchanged to succeeding generations.

The Light of Egypt is a consortium of advanced students and Hermiticians who seek to carry on the high traditions of the Brotherhood of Light by contributing our utmost to Universal Welfare without thought of personal gain or recompense.

It continues to work toward fulfilling these purpose by meeting the needs of a new world order with its progressive philosophy of soul development. As always there is a determination that each individual should have the opportunity to Contribute his or her Utmost to Universal Welfare to the end that all people may live with freedom from fear; freedom from want; freedom of speech; freedom of religion, and to be enlightened to the extent they wish by the soul uplifting teachings of The Religion of the Stars.

Appendix

Declaration of Principles

We are a Religious altruistic association. We consider all humanity as equal in the higher sense, and utilize our resources for the purpose of assisting each individual to fulfill their part in the Divine Plan. Our Hermetic Philosophy indicates that each soul is responsible for its spiritual progress; and our lessons provide the best information possible for the attainment of true spirituality and happiness on the physical plane and on each higher plane of progress.

There cannot be Two Orders of Truth in the Universe. Therefore, we deny that there is any antagonism between true Science and true Religion. We accept but one book as infallible in interpreting the Will of Deity. That is the Book of Nature. We worship but one Religion, which is also a Science: Nature's laws.

Students are under no obligation to accept our teachings. We encourage them to investigate all existing religious and occult organizations, and our course on *Evolution of Religion* gives details on how our philosophy relates to many of the religions of the world today.

We teach that the family and the marriage relationship are the most powerful aid in building the spiritual body. It is through the sacrifices of the parents for the children that they give up selfishness and then transfer that love to higher planes of work. Our course, *Ancient Masonry*, gives more detail about this process, as well as the course on Spiritual Alchemy and the one on *Occultism Applied to Daily Life*.

Our view of the reason for existence upon the earth is discussed in the book, *Astrological Signatures*, and the book *Organic Alchemy*. We know from tradition and scientific experiments that the soul and personality survive the transition called death and live on higher planes of existence. This is outlined in the book *The Next Life*. We also have lessons on healing and alchemy (psychology) both from the spiritual and physical plane.

Our philosophy is grounded in two basic studies: The Golden Key of Astrology and the Silver Key of the Sacred Tarot. Only with a thorough knowledge of these two keys may the sanctuary of Nature's Temple be opened. Astrology is the science of finding and utilizing the natural potentialities as indicated by the planetary chart of birth. It becomes a religion when it shows the individual how these natural tendencies can be utilized for the benefit of all humanity and furtherance of the purposes of Deity. This is why we are called The Religion of the Stars.

The *Sacred Tarot* is the pictorial form of the spiritual ideas of our world as viewed by the spiritual giants of the past and checked by subsequent illuminated ones as to accuracy. Initiates of all ages have added their contributions. It is the esoteric presentation of the Hermetic Philosophy, and provides each Neophyte with many sources of meditations and inspiration. Our courses on *The Sacred Tarot* and *Spiritual Astrology* give much insight on these two foundations of Knowledge.

The Religion of the Stars is dedicated to the unfoldment of the Universal Plan for this Aquarian Age. A Nine Point Plan provides the framework for this work. The Nine Point Plan is:

That everyone should have:

Freedom from Want
Freedom of Expression
Freedom from Fear
Freedom of Religion

That to obtain these in proper measure, people must have the freedom to become familiar with:

Facts of Astrology
Facts of Induced Emotion
Facts of Extrasensory Perception
Facts of Directed Thinking

And, that instead of working to take all that he can for himself, each must learn to find pleasure in

Contributing His or Her Utmost to Universal Welfare

The Brotherhood of Light teachings are presented in 21 courses covering 21 Branches of Occult Science. The courses have study questions in the back of each book for every lesson. If you request them, you will receive a final exam for each course. Upon passing the final exam, the Award Manuscript will be sent to you. These give information on the safest method of developing higher states of consciousness and other information of value to the neophyte.

Appendix

Home Study Program

About The Home Study Program...

The Brotherhood of Light lessons offer the safest and most reliable information concerning occult studies found anywhere! Many are interested in investigating the occult sciences but cannot find a suitable teacher or are unable to find a practical approach to such matters. To meet this challenge the Home Study Program was designed.

Much information about the outerplane environment can be had in public schools and universities. Of equal importance is knowledge of the innerplane. Since this information is not yet available in our public institutions, The Brotherhood of Light lessons are published.

With the dawning Aquarian Age, our planet is undergoing a new dispensation of knowledge. Manifestations of this knowledge are evident in the scientific and technological growth experienced since 1881. So that development may be along the most constructive channels, it is important that we work to align personal and community intention to the Will of Deity. It is the role of religion to facilitate this alignment.

The Religion of the Stars teaches that the most reliable evidence of God's intention is obtained by observing Nature. To do this requires not only effort, but the process of trial and error. Sometimes standing on the shoulders of those who precede us can be helpful. May we suggest that you will find The Brotherhood of Light lessons to be a reliable guide, as well as some of the most uplifting material you will ever encounter.

Who can enroll in the Home Study Program...

Anyone can study the 21 Courses by reading the material contained therein, and may submit examinations for correction. Upon receiving a passing grade, members will receive the "NotSold Manuscripts." They contain information which we believe to be safest and most reliable methods for psychic unfoldment.

While the reason for each person's study is highly personal, there can also be an organization goal. That is, to become a Hermetician. A Hermetician is a person who has passed final exams on all 21 Courses and thereby demonstrated physical knowledge of all branches of the Hermetic Sciences (Astrology, Alchemy and Magic). As a Hermetician one is eligible to participate more fully in the religious and educational aspects of the organization.

How does the program work...

Recognizing that each person begins his/her course of study with a particular area of interest we have structured the program so you may pass courses in any order you wish. We strongly encourage you to undertake the passing of examinations in sequence from Course 1 to 21.

You can request that we send you an a Course 1 (Laws of Occultism) examination.

After receiving a passing score (exams are open book) we will send you the "Not Sold Manuscript." This process is repeated until you reach the Hermetician level by passing exams for all 21 courses.

Appendix

Other Brotherhood of Light Courses

Other Brotherhood of Light Courses in the Astrology Branch

Course 7, Spiritual Astrology

The ancient Wise Ones, when they had discovered some great and vital spiritual truth, looked about to find some material object which would explain, in terms of universal symbolism, this truth to generations to come, of whatever land and of whatever subsequent time. Doctrines of the Religion of the Stars thus formulated were pictured in the sky as the 48 ancient constellations. Each of these constellations is a spiritual text and by their means every story in the Bible or any other Sacred Book may correctly be interpreted.

Course 8, Horary Astrology

This course is most often chosen by beginning students of Astrology for its technical Lesson, "How to Erect a Horoscope," as well as for its clearly organized, easy-to-understand system for judging any given horoscope. More advanced students quite frequently refer to this volume for details concerning the delineation of a horary chart. For students of the Religion of the Stars and/or Hermetic Astrology, the Lesson, "Doctrine of Horary Astrology," is of special importance, with its explanation of just how and why this branch of occult science can solve a problem relating to events past, present and future. Also included for beginning students are C.C. Zain's chart erection shortcuts, for which he designed the Church of Light #2 chart pad to further facilitate this process.

Course 10-1, Delineating the Horoscope

As the Lessons on Astrology emphasize: much is to be gained by diligent application of the rules when delineating—and much is lost by not doing so. Here, then, is the Hermetic System of Natal Astrology, step by step, along with the unsurpassed "Outline of a Complete Astrological Reading." When this process is followed, one can hardly avoid providing an effective and helpful delineation. Of interest to the beginning student or the advanced are the explanations of the 36 decanates, illustrated with examples of renowned persons having Sun, Moon or Ascendant in that decanate.

Course 10-2, Progressing the Horoscope

A technical manual on the Hermetic System of Progressions, major and minor. Some of the best proof of Astrology's validity and effectiveness (especially for those extremely skeptical of the science) can be found in this area due to the ease of observing the influences of properly timed major progressions. Hermetic rules regarding the delineation of progressed aspects assist the student in avoiding erroneous assumptions concerning the progressed chart. To round out this study of Natal Astrology, a Lesson on the Hermetic System of rectifying the horoscope is included for use in erecting a birthchart when the exact birth-time is undetermined.

Course 13, Mundane Astrology

The sign occupied by each of the planets in our solar system, and the aspects they form from time to time, have an influence over the trend of world events. Where these events will chiefly take place, however, must be determined from specific natal charts and progressions. When these natal charts are unavailable, though, astrological influences can be determined through the Cycle charts of the nations, cities, groups, etc., in question. This course is not only one of the few technical manuals available on the erection of Cycle charts and delineation, but, by way of numerous examples, provides a fascinating and enlightening account of the effect of planetary cycles in the 1800's and early 1900's on the United States and the world.

Course 15, Weather Predicting

A complete treatment of the subject and the only text available entirely devoted to astrological influences on the weather. The inner-plane weather mapped by astrological positions has an influence on all earthly things and enterprises and physical weather is no exception. Weather predicting according to the Hermetic System here set forth is exclusively astrological. The attention is directed to the manner in which the inner-plane weather tends to change the physical weather from its normal trend during the season at any place selected. This is particularly useful information for those involved in agriculture, aviation, travel or planning a social event. It is an aspect of the science that should surely not be neglected by anyone seeking a complete, working knowledge of Astrology.

Course 16, Stellar Healing

This course entails what is probably the most effective method of spiritual healing: treatment according to birthchart indications. Natal and progressed constants have been determined through years of extensive research for 160 of the more prevalent diseases; these are included along with the appropriate stellar treatment for each. For ease of reference, the latter six Lessons are devoted to an alphabetical arrangement of the diseases, from abdominal troubles through yellow fever. A most important inclusion is the method in Lesson 197 for calculating astrodynes, harmodynies and discordynies, the unsurpassed mathematical formula for the measurement of astrological power developed by Elbert Benjamine and W.M.A. Drake in 1946.

**The 21 volume Brotherhood of Light series
on the occult sciences by C.C. Zain includes:
3 Branches of Study**

Title	Serial Number
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Cs. 7	Spiritual Astrology 71-83
Cs. 8	Horary Astrology 36, 86-92
Cs. 10	Natal Astrology 19, 103-117
Cs. 13	Mundane Astrology 141-150
Cs. 15	Weather Predicting 190-196
Cs. 16	Stellar Healing 197-208
Alchemy	
Cs. 3	Spiritual Alchemy 49-54
Cs. 9	Mental Alchemy 95-101
Cs. 12	Natural Alchemy 125-140
Cs. 14	Occultism Applied 151-162
Cs. 17	Cosmic Alchemy 164-172
Cs. 19	Organic Alchemy 209-215
Cs. 21	Personal Alchemy 216-225
Magic	
Cs. 1	Laws of Occultism 39-45
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Cs. 5	Esoteric Psychology 56-67
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