

blessed must be obtained through the atonement. With primitive man this was accomplished by initiation. To become a blessed spirit, a man must die. Hence "the death of the Mysteries," or "Cabeiric death," which was brought about by exhausting ordeals, long fastings, and the use of narcotics, under the effect of which the aspirant lost consciousness, and fell into a death-like trance. He was then buried and resurrected, but he returned a blessed spirit. An American Indian who has been initiated indulges in the boast, "I am a spirit." Death thenceforth has no spiritual terrors for him (2).

This was the Egyptian belief. The deceased worshipper of Osiris, who had been initiated into "the Mysteries of Isis," himself become an Osiris, and, as a "Blessed Osirian," reigned with the gods. These ideas can be detected in the Apocalypse, a work permeated by the astronomical imagery, the symbolism of numbers, and the allegorical spirit of the venerable Mysteries. Read by the light of primitive cults, the following significant passage becomes a little more intelligible than it has hitherto seemed.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20 : 6).

In 1888 I mentioned to Professor Maspero verbally, and afterwards by letter, that the "*Osirian cult*" still existed in America. *Osiris* is the Greek form of *Hoesari* in Egyptian, which in Phœnician and in the traditions of southern Morocco and the western Soudan is *Isiri*. Among the Caribs and the Abipones of South America the name is *Hoscheiri*, or *Ischeiri*, and the initiated becomes an *Ischeiri* after death.

I shall hereafter bring out these points in a paper on "*Vestiges of the Osirian Cult in the New World.*"

Shell mounds are to be found from the icy North to the Straits of Magellan. At a suitable time of the year the Indians used to picnic for weeks on the seashore. In New England they bequeathed their indigestible but tempting "clambake" to the Pilgrim Fathers and their descendants; and their memory will be preserved green as long as "clam-chowder" endures.

On the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, where oysters took the place of the venerated clam, there are many "shell-islands" where there are enormous deposits of oyster shells. I spent the winter of 1882-3 on one called Tiger-tail Island, where that terrible Seminole Chief, Tiger-tail, was wont to roast and bake oysters in place of Yankees.

In the Caribbean Sea the conch took the place of the oyster. I chartered a schooner in 1870 and explored the network of little islands and inlets in the British and foreign Leeward and Virgin Islands, which no one ever visits. As Pere Labat speaks of heaps of shells left by the Caribs at Anegada, I thought I would take a look at them. The island is surrounded by a network of coral reefs extending ten miles to the seaward, and but few strangers reach it except those that have been washed ashore. I found the people there (about two hundred in number I should think), much disturbed by my visit, and they refused at first to come with me. But the next morning the whole population seemed to turn out to aid me. I

(2) The following passage, from Mr. Lyman Abbott's article in the Outlook (Mar. 1897), is applicable to the belief of prehistoric man:—"What is God's way of doing things according to evolution? It is to develop life by successive processes, until a spirit akin to this appears in a bodily organism, akin to that of the lower animals from which it had been previously evolved. This bodily organism is from birth in a constant state of decay and repair. At length the time comes when, through disease or old age, the repair no longer keeps pace with the decay. Then the body returns to the earth, and the spirit to God who gave it. . . . But every death is a resurrection of the spirit. What we call death, the New Testament calls 'an exodus,' or an emancipation from bondage, an 'unmooring,' or setting the ship free from its imprisonment. The spirit is released from its confinement, and the release is death. Death is, in short, not a cessation of existence, not a break in existence; it is simply what Socrates declared it to be, 'the separation of the soul and body; and being dead is the attainment of this. When the soul exists in itself, and is parted from the body, and the body is parted from the soul, that is death.' (See *Phædo*, Jowett's Trans.)"