

it lawful for you to hear. But both the ears that heard those things and the tongue that told them would reap the evil results of their rashness. Still, however, kept in suspense as you probably are with religious longing, I will not torment you with long protracted anxiety. Hear, therefore, but believe what is the truth. I approached the borders of death, and having trod on the confines of Proserpine (Goddess of Hell), I returned therefrom, being borne through all the elements. At midnight I saw the sun shining, with its brilliant light, and I approached the presence of the Gods beneath and the Gods above, and stood near and worshipped them. Behold, I have related to you things of which, though heard by you, you must necessarily remain ignorant."

Isis, in Egyptian mythology, was a sister and wife of Osiris, and was worshipped by the Egyptians as the Goddess of Nature, and it is probable that the mysteries taught—as our first degree—the principles of moral Truth and Virtue, as well as the physical laws of Nature. The Mysteries of Serapis constituted the *Second Degree* of the Egyptian system, and of these we know next to nothing, save that they formed an intermediate step for the initiates. In the mysteries of Osiris the *Third Degree* lesson was taught and amplified, and the doctrine of resurrection after death was specially inculcated. The legend of Osiris was this: Osiris, a wise king of Egypt, left the care of his kingdom to his wife Isis, and travelled for three years to communicate to other nations the arts of civilization. During his absence his brother Typhon formed a secret conspiracy to destroy him and usurp his throne. On his return Osiris was invited by Typhon to an entertainment, in the month of November, at which all the conspirators were present. Typhon produced a chest inlaid with gold, and promised to give it to any person present whose body would exactly fit it. Osiris was tempted to try the ex-

periment, but he had no sooner lain down in the chest than the lid was closed and nailed down, and the chest thrown into the River Nile. The chest containing the body of Osiris was, after being a long time tossed about by the waves, finally cast up at Byblos in Phœnicia, and left at the foot of a tamarisk tree. Isis, overwhelmed with grief for the loss of her husband, set out on a journey, and traversed the earth in search of the body. After many adventures, she at length discovered the spot where it had been thrown up by the waves, and returned with it in triumph to Egypt. It was then proclaimed, with the most extravagant demonstrations of joy, that Osiris had risen from the dead, and was become a god. The close resemblance to the Masonic legend will be at once detected by all. Osiris and Typhon represent the two antagonistic principles of light and darkness; of good and evil, of life and death, showing the struggle between the two, and the ultimate triumph of life and light.

It was to those rites that the Prophet Ezekiel probably referred as the "Abominations of Desolation," for very soon after their establishment women were admitted to a partial participation in them, and then followed the adoration of the Phallus, and the partial deification of the male and female organs of generation, the *leis* and *phallos* being actually exposed in models, and carried about in public processions. Hence, say some, the origin of the Egyptian obelisks, and, as others think, though without sufficient warrant, the round towers of Ireland. In the 8th chapter of Ezekiel you will find this sentence:—"Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's House, which was towards the north, and behold there sat women weeping for Tammuz. Then said he to me, hast thou seen this, O son of man? Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. And he