

THE RITE OF MEMPHIS

49° SUBLIME SAGE OF THE PYRAMIDS

As this degree has a full ceremonial it may be used as a break where to confer the lower degrees from the 34° to this by name only.

OPENING

Sublime Dai (*Knocks 1*)—Sage 1st Mystagogue assure yourself that we are covered from the indiscretions of the profane.

Ceryce knocks 7777777 which is answered.

1st Myst.—The bounds of the temple are deserted, its echoes are silent, none can overhear us.

Sublime Dai—Arise to order (*done*) Sage Ceryce, overrun the Tribunes and assure yourself that all are members of this degree *He demands P. W. and reports.*

S. D.—Sage 1st Myst, at what hour do we open?

1st Myst.—At the dawn of day, S. D.

S. D.—Why?

1st Myst—For the instruction of our Brothers

S. D.—What are the first duties of S. of P.

1st Myst—Benevolence towards the men, our Brothers, justice to all, to combat the vices which dishonor humanity and to have but one thought, that of being upright and the propagation of Light and Truth

S. D.—May God give us strength for this mission. He is Truth, teach then the Truth.

All—We promise it (*extending hand*)

S. D.—Sage 2nd Myst, What hour is it?

2nd Myst.—The hour to begin our labours, S. D.

S. D.—Since it is the hour to begin our labours, let us Invoke T S A O.T.U. to bless and prosper our work

S. D.—(*Descends to the centre facing East, the 2 Myst. place themselves on each side. An antique Vase burns sacred perfumes*).

"Sovereign God who reigns alone, All Powerful Jehovah, Father of Nature, Source of Light, Supreme law of the Universe,

receive, O! My God, the homage of our love, our admiration and our worship. We prostrate ourselves before the eternal law of thy Wisdom, direct our labours, enlighten them with thy light, dissipate the darkness which veils Truth from our eyes, that we may learn something of the wisdom by which thou governest the world in order that we may become more worthy of Thee, That we may be able to celebrate in endless hymns the universal harmony which Thy presence impresses on all nature.—Adonai,—Adonai—Adonai.

S. D. mounts the Dais, the Officers take their places, he gives the battery and says,—

S. D.—To the glory of T. S. A. O. T. U. I place the labours in activity.

The Sage Hierostotista reads the Minutes.

RECEPTION

The Hydramos retires to prepare the Candidate. He places in his hand the Golden Branch. The Symbol of Initiation, and Knocks at door.

Hierocerysc.—(*Guardian opens the door, throws over the head of the Candidate a Crape Veil and conducts him to the place for Neophytes*).

S. D.—They have doubtless told you that to be received amongst us it is necessary to speak with all the eloquence of the heart, of all those things which raise the spirit and enlighten the Soul, in order to separate the true from the false, and to be just in judgment and above all in morals. Will you tell me the principles of the natural law.

Reply—They are the general truths upon which we can effectively comprehend the will of the S.A.O.T.U. by a just and reasonable application of these laws.

S. D.—It is human nature that we must consult for the recognition of general truths. What is the first cause?

Reply—The first cause is that which depends upon no other, therefore the S.A.O.T.U.

S.D.—And the second cause?

Reply—The second cause is that which depends upon the first, such as all created causes.

S. D.—And the immediate and mediate cause?

Reply—The *immediate* cause is that which produces its effect by an action, and the *mediate* is that which has produced the immediate.

S. D.—And the physical and moral cause?

Reply.—The physical cause is that which contains the sufficient reason of a being by its own act, it is the efficient cause considered in another point of view. The moral cause is that which influences a being by a law, council, or example. These questions are extended upon providence, chance, goodness, etc. (See also the English "Lectures of a Chapter, Senate and Council")

S. D.—Sage *Odos* speech is accorded you upon the history of Initiation.

Odos.—About the 95th Olympiad, an Epoptae or perfect seer, went the length of the Nile to study Theosophy and demand the revelation of the Mysteries.

After having overrun the Thebiad, that classic land of the fine arts he presented himself in the Pronaos of the Temple of Memphis, in the hope of obtaining initiation. He struck the 7 Mystic blows, and the Ceryce, after admitting him to the enclosure, presented his right hand in sign of fraternal amity, for he had made the usual Salutation.

After a serious examination entrance to the temple was accorded him, and the S. Dai addressed him with severe questions upon his past life, and unrolled before him mildly all his actions. The Visages of the Sages, assembled in the Sacred Temple exhibited nothing of sympathy, evoked by a career full of ardent researches in science and in virtue.

Upon a sign made by the S D all the Illustrious Sages, grouped themselves to form a triangle with the Master at the Summit. After some minutes deliberation the triangle opened at its base to form but a right angle.

Thy demand is accorded, said the S. Dai, thou hast undertaken a long and painful journey. Forget not that man in obtaining life, bears within himself a passion which ought one day to dominate his soul. If thy reason directs all thy passions by love, or the sentiment of tenderness, of piety, of benevolence, of generosity, of humanity, thy dominant passion will become sensibly reasonable. If thou knowest the dignity of thy nature thou wilt raise thyself towards its author, if thou knowest love, then thou wilt love the first of Beings; thou wilt love thyself, thou wilt love thy country, humanity, mankind, and love will be thy passion. Forget not that triumph over the passions is the union of wisdom and virtue with Justice and liberty. The Sage Ceryce will accompany thee; to know it is necessary to learn, to learn it is necessary to labour.—Seek and thou wilt find, Go, and may the Spirit of God watch over thee.

A masked door opened to the right, the candidate followed the Ceryce; it gave access to a vast vault, lighted by a single lamp suspended from the centre of the hall. The walls were so much affected that they seemed to threaten ruin in every part. But supported by the arm of the Ceryce he slowly descended by an incline, into the bowels of the earth, all was performed in obscurity; but a strong voice said to him:—

"Arrest thee! Learn to know thyself and form thyself for God, such is the natural law. Presume not to unveil divinity; the proper study of mankind is man; he is placed in a species of isthmus, being of a mixed state, obscurely able, grossly great with much of understanding for sceptical doubt, and much of feebleness for the proud stoic. He is, as it were, suspended between two ideas, in the uncertainty whether to act or to do nothing; of being a god or a brute, whether to give preference to the body or to the spirit. He reasons but to wander, and such is that reason, that he errs equally by thinking too much, or thinking too little, a chaos of reasons and of passions, all is confused, continually abused, or disabused, by himself; in part created to rise, and in part to fall; Master of all things, sole judge of truth, and endlessly precipitating himself into error, the glory, the plaything, the enigma of the world. Go, surprising creature. Mount to where science carries thee, measure the earth,

weigh the air, rule the waves, instruct the planets in the course they should take; correct the old time and guide the Sun, raise thyself even to the first of beings, to the first perfect. Go, and teach eternal wisdom how it should govern, then return into thyself and what wilt thou find,—nothing,”

After these words a panel of the wall glided away before him and gave passage to a vast ground where an hundred odorous flowers rejoiced the sight and smell.

Music, afar off, reached their ears. Their march is then arrested by a lake of great extent, but shallow, which they traversed.

Arrived upon the further bank the candidate finds himself before a splendid monument. Its Portico is of marble of Paros, where they arrive by 21 steps of red granite, resplendent with the rays of the setting Sun, and indicating to the Neophyte the termination of his journey. The marvellous architecture struck him with astonishment. It had a circle of Crypts which had to be overrun before arrival at the only entrance, they formed a labyrinth of inextricable crypts where the Neophyte would have wandered a couple of days and nights without finding the entrance had he not been led by his guide.

He entered, with courage the first crypt but after retracing his steps several times, he arrived by observation and perseverance at a Vestibule, above which was written,—*Gate of the dead*. As soon as he had freed this Asylum a Tepisyte went to his aid and presented him with the *Golden Branch*, the Symbol of Initiation, and threw over his head a black transparent veil, and conducted him into a temple where were seated 21 Patriarchs, clothed in black tunics. The place was covered with hieroglyphics, and painted in lively colours, and all the signs of the Zodiac were represented, in the midst of this Sanctuary was a triangular pyramid surmounted by the Sun, and below it a small richly decorated Altar, upon which laid a book bound in red leather. This the Ceryce opened and caused the Neophyte to write his name, his prenames, and qualities. Hardly was this done when one of the Patriarchs addressed him thus:—

"Learn that the Universall Cause acts with one aim, but it acts by different laws; let this great truth be always present to thy memory. "Consider the world in which thou art placed, examine that chain of love which gathers and unites all below as well as on high, see how fruitful nature labours with that end, one atom drawing to another, and that which is drawn in drawing another, figures the embracement of its neighbour.

"Behold nature, varied in a thousand forms, pressing towards a common centre for the general good.

"Dost thou believe that God labours only for thy good, thy leisure, thy ornament, and thy nourishment? Is that a cause to give thyself airs and graces! Is it for thee the birds sing? No, joy excites their song Is it for thee that the nightingale utters its melodious accents? No, it is for love Is it for thee only that harvest covers the earth? No, the birds claim their grain. Is it for thee only, that the corn shows a fertile year? No, the ox merits his art for his labour. See then that all nature partakes of God's care.

"Such is the grand harmony of the world from which union has birth the general order and concert of all things. It is thus that the S.A.O.T.U. and of nature that self love and social love shall make but one.

"Thus, my Brother, work, without ceasing, to acquire the necessary knowledge, in order to be able to ameliorate the human species, and to inaugurate that happiness which exists only with virtue "

S. D.—If thou wilt persevere, thou wilt learn amongst us the Amomgue (Mysteries of Antiquity) and the Hytopadessa, the most ancient book in the world, the repository of wisdom Wilt thou continue thy journey?

Neophyte—That is my desire.

Ceryce—(*Presents a globe round which is twined a serpent, sustained by two open wings, and the President says*)

S. D.—Look!

Reply.—I comprehend by this that you give to the earth a double

movement, conformable to the laws of nature, and the calculation of reason.

S. D.—Light thou thy torch before darkness arrives. Pardon others everything, thyself nothing. Rejoice thou in what is just, combat iniquity. Suffer without complaint Be good, for goodness enchains all hearts.

Ceryce—(*Takes the hand of the Neophyte and retires with him They march for a long time without a word. Then they reach a sycamore tree, respecting which there is a touching tradition of the Copts who venerate it even to this day The Ceryce raises the veil which covers the Neophyte's eyes*) "The night is upon us It is necessary to descend a narrow way bounded on one side by rocks, and on the other by forests." (*Then thunder is heard at a distance With trembling steps they arrive at a vault*)

Ceryce (*says*)—Hast thou courage to pursue this journey?

Neophyte I have. (*They continue their march in profound obscurity, and arrive at a place environed with mountains, under shades of olive wood. Lightning rapidly traces a lozenge of fire The wind becomes impetuous After an hour's march they arrive at a grotto which is closed by an iron door. Near it a man of venerable appearance, tall in stature, the heavens brilliant and the moon shining beautifully*)

Ceryce—Behold this man, he has been a benefactor to humanity, he is here to teach virtue, thou canst interrogate him The Neophyte went towards him, he was Zoroaster, and said,—

Z.—"If in doubt whether an action is good or bad abstain from it, ever march in the way of Justice"

(After saluting the Sage they advanced to the iron door, it opened and then closed with such force that the body of the Neophyte was shaken, he looked and the Ceryce had disappeared. After a vain search he marched by chance, sometimes he seemed to see his guide supported against an obelisk, he looked but found only a mutilated statue. Then he perceived at some distance a brilliant light towards which he went with caution, until he found himself on a platform with 3 persons who surrounded him. One placed

himself at his right, he is half invested in a white tunic and holds in his hand a mirror, in the left a branch of the Lotus flower, a Sun emblem; *the leaves open to the rays of the Sun at rising and close on its disappearance below the horizon; its flower covered with a species of down seems to mistake the radiant disc of that planet (the Egyptians consecrated this plant to the God of day).*

The Neophyte recognizes a figure of *Truth*, the 2nd is vested in a tunic of emerald green, and wears a collar of seven brilliant stars; in his hand he holds an anchor of gold, and the traveller murmurs *Hope*. The 3rd man remains 9 steps behind, and is barely visible, and is more a light condensed vapour than a real being. The neophyte sees in it an emblem of *human life*. They all march for a while in silence. Then

Hope (*says*)—"Courage, my child, there is hospitality and happiness."

Truth (*says*)—"Look on this mirror, it reflects thy past, seek in that hope for the future."

They arrive at an edifice which bars passage, and Hope knocks at the door with his anchor of Gold and to the surprise of the Neophyte it opens and leaves a free passage, to a vast hall over which are the words—"Assylum of the Dead." Here are two long ranges of coffins and mummies against the wall on each side. In the middle are several tombs arranged triangularly. He is disposed to leave by another door when the black robed, says to the white one "*Read these Words!*"

Neophyte reads—"Vanity of vanities, all is Vanity."

Demand—"And why this, all is but Vanity?"

Neophyte.—It is that our heart is too great for small things which are not intended to fill it. It is because God who has formed this heart has formed it for himself, and has imprinted therein the necessity of finding happiness alone in him.

Ceryce.—Let us descend, in spirit, under the sacred vaults which these tombs cover, and seek there the pompous cortege which accompanies the happy of this world, by the sombre shade of a sepulchral lamp; let us admire the sad monuments of their past

grandeur, or seized with a religious fervor, and in profound silence behold all their past grandeur annihilated and reduced to dust. Let us evoke their shades and they will say to us,—Instruct thyself by our example, behold these cinders, all that remains here below of those who have preceded thee, in a brilliant career of honours and worldly pomp". When we slept in the full career of sweet security in the bosom of glory and pleasures, all at once death terminated for us the dream of life; we awoke, and what a sad awakening! Read these fastidious inscriptions, these epitaphs of names and titles in teaching thee what we have been, we say to thee still more strongly, that all which passes is but vanity. Amongst these inscriptions thine own one day, perhaps soon, thy own will be found, and if thou had not joined to such vain eulogiums that of constant virtue and solid piety what will be announced to the world? That there is but on earth a feeble mortal less, and in the bosom of death another reprobate! Forget not that nothing is real but the good which we do, and of which we can wait the recompense in future ages." Continue thy voyage, learn to die well, and may the Eternal enlighten thee with his living and pure light, it will dissipate all the charms of thy passions, and all the illusions of thy pride, and thou wilt know Truth.

Truth passes first, and Hope conducts the Neophyte but soon disappears, and *Human Life* vanishes like a shade. After a long voyage the Neophyte led by Truth arrives at a splendid Portico. The Levites, dressed in tunics of bordered linen, come to aid him to free an Abyse of which he cannot measure the depth. Encouraged by Truth he throws himself on the Mystic ladder, it trembles under the weight of his body. Here some young Patriarchs come and place upon his lips some drops of a strengthening liquor, and introduce him into the temple.

This temple is resplendent with light, and richly decorated. Three brilliant suns inflame the East, all is golden. Incense rises in light clouds, undulating to the top of the vault. At each side are ranks of warriors armed with glaives, and heads covered with mitres of Egypt.

S. D.—(Who is seated upon an ivory throne awaits the Recipiendre, conducted by the Ceryce, and invests him with a bordered linen robe says) "This Robe is the emblem of that purity which thou ought always to preserve; the Companions of thy voyage have accomplished their mission. Go place the symbol of thy Initiation on the Altar." (Does so). "Swear never to reveal that which we confide to thee."

Neophyte—I swear it.

Then the bottom of the temple opens and 21 Patriarchs descend a large gallery in marble of Paros. The Levites advance in procession, to the new Initiate. The standard is unrolled before him, a sweet melody is heard. Then —

S. D.—"Since thou hast resisted the proofs, come receive the new life which has been prepared for thee." (Raising the sacred knife). "I proclaim thee a Sage of the Pyramids, and will instruct thee in our secrets of recognition. Learn that all men are equal, and that Justice is based upon the great law of reciprocity. Sage Ceryce, conduct the N to his destined place. Hoff Omphet,—watch and be pure."

"Ceryce cause the Neophyte to advance." (Does so). "Have you well understood the proof, which our predecessors, the Initiates of Egypt had to submit to obtain Initiation?"

Initiate—"Yes, S. D., and I will swear never to stray, from the straight line which will conduct me to the perfect point of the triangle."

The Ceryce presents a cup.

S. D.—"This cup is the symbol of life, drink and forget thy past, think only of the future. Give to thy body, to thy heart, and to thy Spirit, all the strength, and the greatness of perfection of which thou art capable. Form thyself for God, for thy country, for humanity of which thou art part; in one word form thyself for good."

"Sage Ceryce, I pray you, conduct the Neophyte to the Altar to take the O. B. To order."

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All arrange themselves before the Altar in a triangle in such sort that the S. D. is at the Apex and the two Mystagogues at the base. The Neophyte has his right hand upon his heart, and his left upon the V. S. L.

"I, A. B., in presence of the S.A.O.T.U., of this August Assembly, and upon the Sacred Book of the Law, swear fidelity to our venerated Institution. I promise to be submissive to the laws of my country, and to practise all the virtues. I promise to be compassionate, affable, generous, and constant, a worthy spouse, good father, tender son, respectful and submissive. I promise to deliver myself to all good works, and to labor constantly to carry truth, justice, and peace to all hearts. I promise to propagate science, and the sweet morality that our Rite professes and to exact no more from Neophytes who desire admission amongst us than probity and gentleness."

S. D.—(Placing the point of his sword on his head). "To the glory of T.S.A.O.T.U., and in the name of the Grand Hierophant I create and constitute you a Sage of the Pyramids. Go in peace and may the spirit of God ever watch over you."

PROCLAMATION

S. D.—"To the glory of the S A O T U , and in the name of the Grand Hierophant, Sublime Master of Light, I proclaim for the present and for always, member of the Grand Consistory of Sages of the Pyramids, Thrice Ill. A B , and request you to recognise him in that capacity, and aid and protect him."

"Join me Ill Bros. in felicitating ourselves on the happy acquisition we have this day made. To me" (All give sign and battery.)

CLOSING

S.D.—(Strikes 1) "Arise to order. Sage Mystagogue, at what hour should we suspend our labours?"

1 Mys.—"When the sun is in the West."

S. D.—"It is time to suspend our labours."

COLLECTANEA

1 Mys.—“Yes, Sublime Dai.”

S. D.—“Sage Ized, (Messenger) Come receive a Mission.” Ized does so, and S. D. whispers in his ear, “Sige et Alethe” (Silence and virtue), the Ized does the same with 1 and 2 Mys. and lights the Incense.

S. D.—“Since it is the hour to suspend our labours, join with me, my Bros., in that proceeding.”

He descends and all the Officers place themselves as at the Opening.

S. D.—“Father of the Universe, eternal source of light and truth, full of recognitions of thy infinite goodness, we offer thee a hundred thanks for all the goodness granted to us, of the useful and glorious in this journey. Continue, merciful father, to protect our labours, and to direct us in the way of perfection, and grant that harmony, concord and union may be ever the triple cement which unites us. Glory to thee, Lord, Glory to Thy Name, Glory to Thy Works.”

The Sublime Dai takes his place, also the Officers.

S. D.—(Strikes 7777777. Each Myst, repeats it). “To the glory of the S.A.O.T.U., in the name of the G. H. the labours are suspended. Retire in peace, my Bros., and may the Spirit of God, ever watch over us.”

S. of Order—Raise right index finger to heaven. (It indicates the Unity).

S. of Recognition—“Place thumb of left hand on breast to form a L.

T—Grasp each other by the two first fingers and give 3 shakes

Answer—Extend 3 fingers, last two in palm.

W. P.—EGIS W. S.—FHTELA. Battery 7777777

Jewel and Symbol—Square medals on which is a Masons Square, from the angle issues a serpent.

N. B.

The Ancient Arabs believed the Pyramids were Antediluvian, and that one is the grave of Setli. On the other hand the more

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modern Koreish teach that Abraham instructed the Egyptians in the building of Pyramids, and that Abraham, Issaque, and Ishmael built Mecca.

The Rite of Memphis in Egypt says that Kleiber, and Napoleon received Investiture with a ring at the hand of an Egyptian Sage, at the great Pyramid.