

ARTICLE II.

EGYPTIAN ETHICS.¹

EACH of the great nations of antiquity had, so to speak, its mission in the world; the special mission of the Egyptians appears to us not the least noble in the development of the civilization which is the pride of modern times.

This history presents itself to us in three divisions.

To the Babylonians is due incontestably the merit of having created commercial law, with a marvellous knowledge of the questions of interests, of business, of the transformation and the utilization of different values; with a surprising intuition of the fundamental principles of political economy.

Among the Greeks human thought expanded to wondrous amplitude. Poetry spreads its wings, and charms by its divine songs. Eloquence is no longer the spontaneous accent of a heart that is moved: it becomes an art that is cultivated, I had almost said, a science. Philosophy giving body to abstractions, proclaims the reign of the idea, the worship of the beautiful.

But law, taking this word in its highest meaning; morality, its application to the relations of men to each other; the equitable organization of the condition of persons and its consequences; the science of the human soul and its desti-

prophets as among the historians, the poets, and the philosophers of Greece, there existed the same almost unlimited admiration of the sages of Egypt. It is the sages of Egypt to whom Isaiah can find no opponent but the wisdom of Jehovah. It is to them that Pythagoras, Solon, Plato, the most illustrious of the Greeks for their wisdom, went to be taught as disciples, according to the stories of their times; and we have often had occasion to show that these statements of the ancients are confirmed by documents recently discovered, so that, for instance, we now know with certainty that Solon copied many of the laws of Athens after those of Egypt.

Of all that has lasted until our time, ethics, as we understand it, is pre-eminently of Egyptian origin. Strangely enough, we can even say that, while among other ancient peoples ethics was the result of religion, one is led to think at the first glance that in Egypt it was in some way independent.

There were in Egypt a large number of learned men who were, properly speaking, only moralists, as were, at a relatively recent period in our western world, Isocrates, Epicurettus, the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, etc. Is not the oldest book in the world the Egyptian book of the "Maxims of Ptah-hotep," going back as far as the fourth dynasty, that is, to an epoch so remote that everywhere else it is lost in the night of time? And later, under the Ramessides, have we not the "Maxims of the Scribe Ani," another book of pure ethics of the same kind? To the same class belong also the numerous analogous treatises written in demotic, as well as curious Coptic treatises that have been published.

Wisdom [a book of the Apocrypha], whose Egyptian origin St. Jerome saw clearly, and several centuries afterward, the

started exclusively from Egypt, to propagate itself throughout the ancient world, as the weakened echo of a sound. Outside of Egypt all seems to us curtailed. How small does Isocrates himself, so celebrated as a moralist, seem beside the old scribes of ancient Egypt! For Isocrates certainly did no more than put in circulation the translation of ancient works from another country than his own. We have proof of this at each step. How otherwise in his treatise addressed to Demonicus could this Athenian have recommended this citizen of the republic of Athens to reverence the king, to obey his orders as sacred laws? All of this savours of Egypt and comes from Egypt. The ancients then were perfectly right when they traced everything to these old masters who said to Herodotus: "You Greeks, you are only children."

I have previously used the expression, the independent ethics of the Egyptians. We must not give this expression too much of a modern dress. If ethics was independent of religion, it was because this ethics was to the Egyptians religion itself. In fact, whatever idea one may form of Egyptian mythology, which has been so much discussed and about which there will be discussions for a long time; whether the Egyptians were or were not monotheists at heart and polytheists in form; whether they worshipped their sacred animals as gods, or as symbols, or as fetiches: one thing is certain and incontestable, that the essential element of the true Egyptian religion was man and his destiny.

Let us not think, however, that this religion was merely an atheistic philosophy, like Buddhism: and that a final Nir-

fied and elevated, as later among the Buddhists. But this was in order to become another god, another Osiris, though remaining always absolutely distinct from the "Osiris of heaven," to use a demotic expression, that is to say, the "good being," the martyr for the right, who represented the divinity in its highest acceptance. Consequently it was of little importance whether one worshipped Amon at Thebes, Ptah at Memphis, or elsewhere a crocodile, a cat, a jackal. The important matter, the one thing necessary, was to imitate Osiris and to become another Osiris, the great prototype of virtue, as well as of virtue persecuted.

In the books of morals, then, one may eliminate all other worship but that of virtue, the beautiful, the good, and the true: the truth by which one must live and which must be shown in all one's works, according to the Egyptian expressions. Undoubtedly the Egyptian sages, preoccupied with the beautiful and the good, did not always condemn the useful in their counsels. It is such an axiom as a Jew could copy without ceasing to be a Jew, but without copying the others.

To be a new Osiris, like him impeccable, like him deified: this was the ever present thought of the Egyptian during his life, and his ideal after his death. This we find from the time of the earliest dynasties, with Anubis and the other elements of funeral worship, with the desire for revivification, for a resurrection, for happiness beyond the tomb; sometimes a little materialized, but sometimes also illumined by grand views. As the sun disappears below the horizon, soon to reappear as brilliant as before; as nature darkened by the signs of autumnal decay, resumes, soon afterward, all the glory of its springtime youth: so, the Egyptians believed, man himself, having vanished from the world of the living, should one day reappear in it more glorious than ever. Hence the care they took to preserve to man his first body. Hence the funereal invocation of the sun in whose boat the

dead journeyed. Hence the libations poured out upon the tomb and destined to water the eternal germ. Hence also the numerous prayers, designed to avert from the soul, during its voyage across the lower hemisphere, the terrors and dangers of this nocturnal journey. But, at the same time and above all, to this belief was due the extreme care which the moralists took to show men their duty; for it was the complete accomplishment of this duty, and, I repeat it, an almost absolute sinlessness, with which were intimately connected, for the Egyptian, the legitimate hope of becoming another Osiris, enjoying eternal happiness. Of the penitential side, so highly developed in the ancient Babylonians and in the Hebrews, which gave rise, in the one as in the other, to many admirable psalms having for foundation the repentance of sins past, we find only a trace among the Egyptians. In all our monuments in the Louvre, we have only found one or two, a little pyramid No. 43, for example, where one sees Osiris besought to remove all evil, all sin from the person of the dead, that he might find favor. It is only during the last epoch, and in consequence of foreign influences, that the idea of repentance, of intercession, and of pardon gains importance. We see it clearly in the Papyrus of Pamont, dating from the time of Nero, as well as later, among the Egyptians of the Christian epoch, after the Council of Alexandria, held by St. Athanasius in A. D. 362. But in the most ancient monuments, as in the first Coptic documents, sinlessness is the rule. The deceased vaunts himself as having been the pre-eminently honest man, a hero of virtue, in accordance with the statements in the one hundred and twenty-fifth chapter of the "Book of the Dead," to which we shall soon return. Upon this condition alone he became

bas-reliefs, which they contain, you will, perhaps, not find ten on which this fundamental idea is not distinctly expressed, together with facts whose remembrance they wished to insure. With greater reason no contrary doctrine can be found. If some strong mind, epicurean in reputation, like the great priest Pserenptah, father of a prophet of Augustus, wishes to insinuate into the minds of his readers a doubt concerning immortality, he takes great care to surround it with pious formulas and to multiply as much as possible the funeral rites. It was so at all times in Egypt: for the general opinion was opposed to incredulity. Let me add that this dogma of the deification of the dead elevated the living also, as we have already shown, and as we shall continually show in our course on Egyptian law. In Egypt all men could become Osiris: and this supreme deification effaced in great part the inequalities of condition in terrestrial life. Especially charged with the funeral services for his father, the son is pictured in them accompanied by all the rest of the family, the upper servants and the slaves included. In fact, they will find the dead again in the other world and become, like him, other Osirises. In default of the son, in default of all other members of the family, it is upon the slaves that the worship of the dead devolves. And, by a reciprocity which in no way recalls the religion of ancestors, as the Chinese understand it, or the subordination of the family in the Roman world, when the son dies before his father and mother, it is they who adore him, in the first rank, in his character of Osiris. You will see pictures of this kind on the monuments in the Louvre numbered c 178, c 176, c 52, c 184, and on many others. When all three are dead, the son takes his place between his father and mother, as in c 72, where, in default of relatives, the slaves render them the funeral worship. Sometimes the son foresees this final reunion while he still lives, and appears as the maker of the funeral tablet. He then joins beforehand with his deceased

parents, in adoring the celestial Osiris; and when he has himself rendered them the funeral duties, he seats himself opposite them on his eternal seat (see No. c 82). Or else (c 211) he prays for himself, for his wife, as well as for his father and mother.

We have already said that, in the family, the sons were, in the first place, charged with the funeral duties. But a very large number of funeral tablets show either a brother, a sister, or a beloved wife performing or causing the same funeral rights to be performed (see Nos. c 22, c 40, etc.). All classes of society are mingled, so to speak, near the new Osiris, in a common homage: the steward, the servant, the nurse, defile before his eyes, and sometimes the latter is represented as suckling the child, who is pictured as a man in the same record, and who is adored as God. Dates and chronology are of small consequence, since the dead now shares in the divine eternity. Certain funeral tablets, No. c 34 for instance, represent at the same time Osiris young and Osiris old facing one another; while the legend recounts the good works of the dead and recommends him to the prayers of the priests whom he has loaded with benefits.

The resurrection, the eternal happiness of him who has done right, are the sanction of Egyptian ethics. In respect to these the latest rituals bear a strange resemblance to the most ancient monuments. All the complicated mythology which filled, during the classic epoch, the Book of the Dead, is obliterated again. They now only speak of the deceased, of Osiris himself, who is surrounded and escorted by the divinities beyond the tomb, the judges of the sacred tribunal: that is, by Osiris of heaven, Hathor of Amenti, Horus the avenger of his father Osiris, Anubis the conductor of souls, the divine mourners, Isis and Nephthys, Thot the recorder of the judgment. They declare the dead justified, deified. They describe the joy that awaits him. They speak of the virtues which have deserved this eternal joy, and that is all.

I shall analyse for you in a few lines the demotic ritual of Pamont, of the time of Nero, which we shall study in coming lectures; at present let me enter into some details. This ritual is composed of several chapters: The first has nothing corresponding or analogous, as far as we know, in the hieroglyphic or hieratic specimens of the Book of the Dead. It is devoted to a brief summary of the whole doctrine of the deification of the dead. Here is the literal translation: "Writings of *pir em hou*:¹ "O Osiris Pamont, whom Tsepse-mont bore! Thy name is known. God is satisfied with the inspiration of thy heart. Osiris is joyful. Thou receivest incense, libations, every day of eternity, from the hands of Isis and Nephthys. Horus is peaceful beside his king. He takes his repose. Near thee is truth. Hathor exalts thee. Anubis, he who shrouds the body, makes thy bands. He makes thy flesh like that of Osiris-Khent-Ament.² He rejoices in thy eternal duration. He receives thee into the place of truth. He makes thine eyes to see, thine ears to hear, thy foot to walk in and out. He takes away all the impurities which are in thy soul. In this state of stability, thy hand is pure, of perfect purity. Thy heart is in the truth, far from all falsehood. Thou dost eat, thou dost drink by thy throat. A pure oil is on thy flesh. Thy limbs purified, without perspiration, are animated³ by the hand of Su.⁴ Men mourn for thee. The women lament over thee.

¹"Book of *Pir em hou*" is the general title of the great funeral ritual. This word means "to go out in the day" or "before the day." The preposition *em* has the double sense of "in" and "of."

²*Khentament* means "dwelling in Amenti," that is, in the abode of the dead. It refers therefore to the funereal Osiris, who is represented mummified and enclosed in bandages.

³It is curious to see that among most of the ancient nations the same root expresses the ideas of being animated and vital.

The mourners cry out to fulfil the prayers of Sensen.¹ It is Thot who is thy protector, who has written them himself with his divine hand. He makes thy words good before Osiris. Thou lookest into the hall of truth. Thine embalming remains there: thy bones are there."

Here there is a gap of one line. Undoubtedly they here contrasted the hope of a good resurrection with the funeral lamentations; for the text continues thus: "[How great are] thy beauties! Thou approachest the earth without a fault. Thine are the resplendent spirits! Thine are those who love Osiris! He shall call thee to enter the divine abode. Thou sailest towards the sky. Thou unitest thyself with Osiris: no one putting any obstacle in the way of thy rejoicing. Thou walkest upon the earth. Thou goest to Amenti: thou sittest there without opposition from any one. Thou goest to Tiaou: thou dost join the spirits; thou dost praise Osiris. He says to thee: Fear not! come! He causes thy burial to remain in Amenti. Thy name lives in the world. Thy house remains for thy children and thy people. Great is thy name for all eternity!"

Such is the first chapter, serving as an introduction.

The second, equally unknown until now, is a spoken picture, if I may so express myself. It is the description of the judgment-hall, almost the same as represented either by paintings or drawings in a great number of funeral papyri, in the vignettes relative to this chapter about the appearance of the soul before Osiris. Notice, however, that one person, the goddess Hathor of Amenti, who is also called in the texts the

papyrus, this goddess Amenti holds the scales on her arm. Must we believe that the author of the Pamont ritual was inspired by the representations on some sarcophagi, where the goddess Ament, facing the goddess Nout, personifies the lower world and supports the dead, while Nout personifies the upper world and covers the dead? Must we believe that, consequently, the ground of Amenti is to be understood by these words: "The arm of the goddess Hathor of Amenti holding the scales"? At all events, Amenti would be perfectly personified. She who holds the scales is a great goddess, the supreme queen. She weighs man and consequently plays the principal role. Isis and Nephthys, who are sometimes represented in the great judgment, behind the seat of the judge, that is, the celestial Osiris, but whose funeral role is to watch over Osiris when he lies upon his funeral couch, here accompany Pamont, whilst he himself becomes another Osiris. They hold the place usually occupied by truth, or the two truths, behind the dead person who is being judged. The result of this judgment is foreseen. Isis, in fact, carries a lily,¹ which she presents to him, and in a *neb*, vase, a pure offering. He also holds a lily with the stalk, which Anubis has placed in his band, as in the vignette of a papyrus in Leyden. Here, translated word for word, is the description forming this second chapter:—

"The gods of the hall of truth: the forty-two gods who administer justice, as attendants upon Horus,² in the upper part of the hall of truth.

"A princess Hathor of Amenti, the supreme queen. She weighs the soul, and it is her arm that holds the scales. The left hand of Thot is at the right of this one.

¹ The word *sensen* means "the lotus" in the hieroglyphic representations; but it translates "lily" in the Coptic biblical books, and in the Pamont ritual a symbolism, analogous to that of the lily with us in these days, seems to be attributed to it.

² *Sesu hor*. See what is said, later on, concerning this expression, so celebrated in the hieroglyphic texts.

“Horus, the avenger of his father, verifies her weight, and Anubis grasps it upon the part where truth is. He puts it in equipoise with that part of the scales wherein he himself [Pamont] is. Thot reads from the writing in a book. His hand is upon the platform where the goddess of destruction sits, having in her hand a knife, having a sword and a sceptre, *hek*, before her. [There is] the man whose hand Anubis has filled with a lily and its stalk: on the flowering stalk are the four gods Mesu Hor.¹ A divine power, which is Isis, is behind him. She places near them [the divine judges] a *neb*, vase, wherein are pure offerings, and she holds a lily out before her. Behind her, on one side is Isis, and on the other side Nephthys.”

I have already said that the vignette here described is so placed in the funeral papyrus as to form part of the one hundred and twenty-fifth chapter. It is the same with this spoken picture in the Pamont papyrus. The scenery being thus arranged, the curtain rises upon the judgment of the soul.

Listen first to the declaration of the man who is soon to appear:—

“Writings which penetrate into the hall of the gods who judge, to make man good, to make him see the face of the gods: ‘I present myself before you, O lords of truth! I present myself before thee, great god, lord of justice! I come toward thee, my lord, to see thy beauties. I know thy name. I know the names of the forty-two gods who are with thee in the judgment-hall. Thy name is lord of justice. I have accomplished it, justice. I have made known your name, lords of truth. I have also brought the truth to you. I have kept harm far from you.

‘I have not lied to any man.

¹ The four *Mesut* are the four funeral spirits, *Hesi*, *Yehhoannaf*, etc.

‘I have not done violence to the widow.

‘I have not spoken the false word in the place of justice.

‘I have done no wrong.

‘I have not obliged a man to work each day more than was meet for him. I have not kept in prison¹ the men who depended upon me.

‘I have made none infirm. I have made none poor. I have not done that which is the abomination of the gods.

‘I have done no wrong to the slave before his master.

‘I have not caused hunger. I have not caused thirst.

‘I have not caused mourning.

‘I have not commanded treacherous murder.

‘I have not eaten the sacred bread (or the revenue) of the temple. I have not offended the master of the gods. I have not taken away the sacred loaves. I have not sold the wrappings of the dead.

‘I have not defrauded in weighing upon the scales.

‘I have not taken away milk from the little child.

‘I have not removed grass from before the cattle.

‘I have not stolen the fish belonging to God.

‘I have not turned aside the water (of the fertilizing irrigation) at the moment of its issuing.

‘I have not made a dam before the water to turn it aside.

‘I have not extinguished the flame at its legitimate hour.

I have not troubled the sacrifices of the gods. I have not troubled the cattle of the divine domain.

‘I have not offered violence to a god in his manifestation.

‘I am pure in every way. My purity is that of the god

¹ Throughout the ancient world, private persons had prisons for their slaves and often for their debtors. We know from a series of demotic contracts that it was only under Darius, and not under Bocchoris, as Diodorus of Sicily pretended, that it became impossible in Egypt for people to give their persons as

who is in Heracleopolis. There is nothing false in me in this land of judgment. As I know the names of the gods who are with thee in the hall of judgments, save me from them.' ”

Here ends the first part of the negative confession, which contains an affirmation of innocence from almost every kind of fault which could have been imputed to the deceased. It is clear that what we call charity plays here an important part; and duty towards man is placed on precisely the same line with duties to the gods. Take, for instance, the paragraph where the deceased cries: “I have made none infirm. I have made none poor. I have not committed the abomination of the gods. I have done no harm to the slave before his master. I have not caused hunger. I have not caused thirst. I have not caused mourning.” On account of the place here occupied by “that which is the abomination of the gods,” may we not think that this “abomination” must be, above all, a lack of charity? This charity is carried to a great extent: for one must not take away milk from the little child, one must not even take away grass from before the cattle who are eating it. With still greater reason all injury to the general well-being, to the production of the soil and the fertilizing irrigation, becomes an unpardonable crime. This was preserved even so late as the Roman period, in the special legislation for Egypt, where all injury to the management of the waters was punishable with death.

After this first general confession, in the hieroglyphic rituals, comes a whole series of particular confessions, if I may thus express myself. Each one of the forty-two assessors of Osiris is supposed to ask a question, or at least the dead replied to each one after having saluted by his name the god whom he addressed. Here the judges are called *Sesu Hor*, that is the followers of Horus, the avenger of his father Osiris. Osiris, “the good being” (*Ounnofre*), had

been the victim of the evil being. His son Horus, to avenge him, to bring about the triumph of right, had surrounded himself with companions, each one of whom was intrusted with the pursuit of evil under one of its forms. Whoever wished to become another Osiris must submit successfully to examination by all the companions of Horus. The author of the demotic ritual of Pamont understood the matter in this way. But it seemed to him quite as simple first to group a certain number of these Sesu Hor by invoking them by their title, then to address collectively to all this group the series of affirmations of purity and innocence which he had to make to each one of them. In this part, wholly mystical, the negative confession of the rituals, whether hieroglyphic or hieratic, often became almost incomprehensible; while it is perfectly clear in our ritual of Pamont.

It is not worth while to give the list of these judicial gods, which commences thus: "Listen, O he who enlarges his walk and who comes out from Heliopolis! Listen, O he whose mouth is open and who comes out from the glorious abode of the gods," etc. But that which interests us above all is the ethical portion:—

"I have not been unjust. I have not defrauded.

"There is no fraud in my heart.

"I have not stolen.

"I have killed no man by treason.

"I have not eaten the bread (or the revenue) of the gods.

"I have not done evil. *I have not prevented the doing of good.*

"I have not urged others in the way of evil.

"I have not taken possession of any beast of burden belonging to the gods.

"I have not acted a lie . . . I have said no evil word. I have not raised my voice (in pride or in anger).

"I have not committed adultery or any impure act. I

have not prevented my ears from hearing the truth. I have done no wrong by the strength of my hands.”

Here Pamont returns to the usual order of the one hundred and twenty-fifth chapter, and addresses himself separately to each of the latter gods:—

“Listen, Nofre tum, coming forth from Memphis! I have not sullied my name. I have not defiled that of a pure one.¹

“Listen, he who is never at rest, coming forth from the temple of Osiris! I have not cursed the king. I have not cursed my father.

“Listen, he who loves, coming forth from the mummies! I have not obstructed the navigation of a boat upon the water.

“Listen, young man, who shines over the abyss! I have used no haughty word.

“Listen, he who makes men good and comes forth from Sais! I have not blasphemed God.

“Listen, he who interrogates the gods, coming forth from Heliopolis! I have done no harm to the slave before his master.

“Listen, basilisk who comes forth from the Oasis! I have done no harm to any one.

“Listen, serpent coming forth from the abode of Ptah! I have not raised up my body while invoking the divinity.

“Listen, Thot, coming forth from Amenti! I have not debased God in my heart.”

Notice, that in this repetition of the negative confession, a higher degree of perfection is attained. Not only has the deceased done no harm himself; not only has he induced no one else to do it; but he has not hindered good from being done; he has not debased God in his heart; he has not assumed a pharisaical attitude before the gods; he has not spoken evil words. He has shown himself humble, modest, benevolent, since he was true.

¹The word *oneb*, pure, “purified,” is constantly employed to designate the priests.

We now come to the third part of this chapter, which is appropriated in the rituals to the affirmative confession. From the artistic point of view, it must be remarked that this affirmative confession, copied after that of the ancient rituals, comes before us in this papyrus with suppressions and additions, very easily seen, which give it quite another aspect. It may be said that the demotic text is here, as also in all the preceding, very superior to the hieroglyphic.

“I pray before you, O gods! I know you and I have made your names known. Do not overthrow me! Do not impute to me my sins before God with whom you are! No sin of mine comes before you again, since I have done that which is sweet to the hearts of men and gods. To that I have put my hand. I have given bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, a boat to him who had none. I have given the divine offerings to the gods, bread and water to the deceased. These things save me. You have revealed to me that by reason of this you have no accusation to bring against me before the great.

“My mouth is pure by the things which I have said. My heart is pure. Before (that is, ostensibly) and behind I am pure in all things. There is no member of mine that has done wrong.

“Calm, thou comest to me (O my God), thou dost draw near to me. All salute me, when they see me, because I have heard the great word which Osiris has spoken to confirm this.”

It must be noticed that the corresponding part of the hieroglyphic text ends quite differently. According to M. Pierret's excellent version, the last sentence declares: “He who perceives it says: “Let him arrive in peace; for Osiris [i. e. the deceased] has heard the great conversation between the ass and the cat in the abode of Pat.”

I prefer here “the great word of Osiris declaring the deceased innocent,” to the “*great conversation between the*

ass and the cat,"—whatever may be the meaning elsewhere attached to these expressions for those initiated into the mysteries.

After this we meet in the Pamont ritual a new fragment which has not anything at all corresponding in the hieroglyphic or hieratic rituals. The one hundred and twenty-fifth chapter is entirely interrupted in the demotic by the introduction of this new chapter; while in the hieroglyphic ritual it is continued by paragraphs of little interest, which the demotic has not translated. The inserted chapter, in this latter text, commences by a spoken picture (just as the one hundred and twenty-fifth chapter opens with a spoken picture):—

"In the city of Memphis, a statue of Sokar Osiris with the face of a hawk, having a goddess who protects it and having for a diadem a silver basilisk upon the head. It is before this statue that the divine truth conducts man."

After this setting of the scene comes the title (as with the one hundred and twenty-fifth chapter):—

"Words spoken by the truthful Pamont, born of Tsepse-mont, in blessing Osiris."

Then the words attributed to the dead:—

"I come. I cause myself to be received by thee in thy presence. I appear before thee to-day. I make pure offerings to thee: bread, beer, beef, goose, wine, all kinds of good food.

"Arise, Osiris! Consume thy good offerings! Thy hand is powerful.

"Listen, Osiris! Be appeased! Good is thy name of

“In thy name of judge, listen, Osiris! I come to address myself to thee. I have justified thy word before the gods who judge.”

Here the god speaks in his turn: “Thou hast given food to those who are in the tomb. Thou hast prayed to the gods. Thou hearest the word of truth to-day.”

Let us ask, to what the scene which has just been described, and which is entirely foreign to the Book of the Dead properly so called, refers? This scene takes place upon the earth, in the city of Memphis; while the judgment occurs far off from the earth in the abode of the dead. Was there, then, an indispensable ceremony to insure the entrance of the dead into the kingdom beyond the tomb? It was so among the Greeks. They believed that the dead, in default of a funeral, could never be admitted into Pluto's domain, but wandered unhappy among the living in the state of shades. The Athenians, especially imbued with this belief, showed an unpitying severity towards those generals, conquerors or not, who, in a naval battle for example, had neglected their dead. In Egypt, we learn from another ritual (that of funerals, entirely different from the Book of the Dead, which has been translated by M. Schiaparelli)¹ that a solemn sacrifice was offered in honor of the dead before he was introduced into the tomb. It is evidently this religious service, comprising divers offerings, to which reference is made in the preceding chapter of the ritual of Pamont.

In Schiaparelli's ritual for funerals, the statue to which offerings were made was that of the dead man himself, become Osiris. In our demotic ritual, the statue is that of the divine Sokar Osiris, considered as a judge, but surrounded by

¹ [Il Libro dei Funerali degli Antichi Egiziani, Tradotto e Commentato da

his wrappings as a mummy and protected by a goddess, according to the expressions of the demotic text. Who is this protecting goddess? Is it a Truth, winged after the manner of Isis, who sometimes received this title of "Xut" protecting Osiris? Is it Isis, herself winged, who often, in the same posture, plays the same part to the reclining Osiris? Is it Isis without wings, protecting the reclining Sokaris, as in the mythological naos of Amasis, in which Sokaris has a human instead of a hawk's head? Or did the author have before his eyes and did he wish to depict the vignette which, in the traditional funeral ritual, usually accompanied the one hundred and forty-eighth chapter? In this vignette, Sokar Osiris with a hawk's head,¹ but with a human body, and surrounded with his wrappings like a mummy, is placed erect on a sort of pedestal, where the goddess Ament protects him, and thus receives the offerings of the dead. However it may be, the text does not at all represent that of the one hundred and forty-eighth chapter, pre-eminently mysterious, which must be communicated to no one except the king or to the officiating priest.

As he lays the scene in Memphis, the author of the *Pamont* papyrus has in full view the ceremonies of funerals properly so called. One must not be surprised if he puts the divine statue of Sokar Osiris in the place of the statue of the dead, for we have already had occasion to call attention to this tendency of the later epochs to realize fully this identification of the dead with Osiris, under all his mythological forms, this *good god*, into whose bosom he was made to enter, according to neo-Platonic ideas. From this point of

Christianity the pantheistic sect that soon filled the whole world. From the time of Tertullian, the Valentinians were, by far, the most numerous of the heretics.¹ The pagan Ammonius, who was the teacher of Plotinus, of Longinus, and of our Origen, must have drawn his neo-Platonism from the same Egyptian source. With the Valentinians, with the disciples of Ammonius, including Origen, words and cabalistic formulas play an important part. The *Pistis Sophia*, attributed to Valentinian, and which we possess in the Coptic, contains portions which recall in some particulars the funeral rituals, with the peculiar phrases, and the Gnostic questions and passwords.

The divinity is at the same time one and many, in the Valentinian doctrine of this epoch. Without losing, for all that, its unity, it filled the world with its emanations of persons who took bodies, and each one constituted a divine being having its special domain. In Origen, as in the *Pistis Sophia*, each part of the world, each star, each people, each city, each physical or moral division of the universe, has its spirit, which rules there as the human soul rules over the body. So that the whole world is animated in this way and possesses a distinct life in all its parts.

The gnosis, the supreme science of the theologian and of the initiated, consisted in knowing these beings, knowing them by their names, for the idea attaches itself closely to the name in order to form the being in its emanations from the word, the thought, the speech, of the creating god. Hence the sovereign power of the cabalistic formulas, in which all the Gnostics believed, whether pagan or Christian. By means of the name, one reached the being, and this being must obey if one possessed the formula created, at the

same time, for that purpose by the Supreme Being. Thus a man could overcome every obstacle, whether in the world of the living or the world of the dead. It is the same in this demotic papyrus; and it does not, in this, differ in any way from the most ancient specimens of the funeral ritual. In fact, to enable the deceased to cross the threshold of the blessed abode, the author of our papyrus takes up again at this point the traditional funeral ritual. But the large amount that is here borrowed from the one hundred and twenty-fifth chapter in hieroglyphics is made by our author a new chapter, with the title: "Writings which cause one to penetrate into the abode by the leaves of the closed door." This abode, we have just told you, is the kingdom of Osiris, the habitation of the blest. The examination does not commence until the deceased arrives at the leaves of the door; while in the Book of the Dead, before allowing him to penetrate thus far, he was obliged to pass a sort of examination, entirely Gnostic and for us incomprehensible, but which must have appeared natural to the numerous sects into which initiation, with its mysteries, was one of the chief things.

It has been my object to give a general idea of the whole papyrus, and I shall not translate the whole of this chapter, which would be tedious to those who have not received the initiation indispensable to a full comprehension of its import. Here is merely the opening:—

"O Osiris Pamont, come! penetrate into the hall of rectitude, that thou mayest be known!

"The door takes up the word and says: I shall not permit thee to pass into the interior until thou hast told me my name. He says to it: He who opens the breast is thy name.

"The leaves of the door speak with him saying: We shall not permit thee to pass unless thou hast told us our name. He says to them: Your name is Those who know the decrees.

"The right side of the door speaks with him and says: I will not let thee pass unless thou tell me my name. He says to it: Thy name is He who does the truth."

After this the left side of the door, the threshold of the door, the lock, the key, the panels, the door posts, the ground, and finally the porter, speaks. Here we resume the literal translation of the manuscript: "The porter says to him: I will not announce thy name if thou hast not told me mine. He replies and says: Thy name is He who knows the constitution of the heart and who knows what is within the bosom.

"The porter says to him: I will bring thee before the god who is present.

"The Osiris Pamont says to the porter: Who is the god who is present?

"He replies to him: It is he who is great in the world. He says to him: Who is he who is great in the world?

"He replies to him: It is Thot, who will save thee.

"Thot speaks to him as follows: Let them bring you. Come before Osiris! I will bring thee in. What have you to say for yourself?

"The Osiris Pamont speaks before Thot, saying: I am pure from all evil, from all sin. I am not among those who in their day have erred. Thot says to him: I will bring thee before him who is in the heaven of fire; before him whose divine abode is surrounded by living cobras, in whose house is found the water which envelops the earth.

"Enter, he adds, before Osiris. I will bring thee in there. I will provide thee with the bread from the store-house; the offerings, *hotep*, of the store-house. O Osiris Pamont, son of Pamont! I will forever justify thy speech."

All of this, though still impregnated with Gnosticism, is much clearer than the corresponding paragraphs of the one

“This has been written by Menkara, son of Pamont, for his great father whom he loves, Pamont, son of Pamont, son of Hermodorus, brought forth by Tsepsemont, in order that his soul might live before Osiris Ounnofre, the king of the whole world, the king of the abyss, the chief of Amenti. May he bless Menkara his son before Osiris, the great god, and also his children, forever! Written in the tenth year of Nero Claudius Cæsar Sebastos Germanicus, Autocrator.”

What strikes us in this subscription is that the son, considering his father a god, asks him to bless him and his children forever before the supreme god.

This Egyptian doctrine appears to be the same that began to invade the rest of the world, at the epoch when, on the site now occupied in the city of Rome by the Christian convent of Minerva (St. Mary upon Minerva), there rose a temple of Isis, of which numerous absolutely Egyptian remains have recently been discovered; at the time when, on the site of St. Germain-des-Pres, in Paris, there rose another temple to this same Isis, of whom one statue, preserved until the last century (when it was relegated to a place under the porch), was then destroyed, because some good women performed acts of adoration before it; at the epoch when, as we see from Petronius, even in Italy the pillage of the boat of Isis was considered one of the greatest of sacrileges.

Egyptian doctrine came before the people with these two faces: one all Gnosticism, the other all morality. Of these two faces the one which most faithfully represented the old

but he must also do right. He not only did not kill, did not steal, did not commit injustice; did not bear false witness; did not defame; did not dishonor any one's hearthstone; made no one infirm; caused no one to hunger or thirst; caused no one to weep! But he gave bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, a boat to him who, having lost his own, found himself thus deprived of his means of existence. He also fulfilled all his duties towards all classes of society; wounding no one by his pride, respecting those whom he ought to respect, not making his people work to excess, not wronging any slave in the mind of his master: showing himself in all his life, in all his actions, in all circumstances, a good being, like the supreme good being, carrying in himself the image of the divine Osiris, and by this means becoming another Osiris after death.

In the study of Egyptian law, our admiration is often excited by the equity, the gentleness, of this legislation, which, in so many features, resembles our own, particularly in all that concerns the condition of women, the rights of children, etc., which often may be regarded, if we are unprejudiced, as being superior to it. This legislation is the daughter of that ethics, which so profoundly separates the Egyptian religion from the infamous paganisms of Asia Minor, for example.

In this religion the Gnostic part, the mythology properly so called, could change infinitely, from city to city, from epoch to epoch. But that which remained always and everywhere, that dominated even to the point of causing all the rest to be neglected, was the idea of the good Being and of his imitation by man, called to be good like him. The Egyptian temples in Italy, Spain, Gaul, Brittany, in all parts of the ancient world, were specially consecrated to the myth of Osiris, that is, to the mythological history of that good Being whom one must imitate upon earth. One must not be astonished that this myth spread at the same time with

Christianity and was confounded with it in the Valentinian and in the other Gnostic sects. This was only the acting out of this Egyptian morality, the wisdom of Egypt, which was so much admired by the sages of Greece and of Judæ.

It seems to me that among all the monuments from the valley of the Nile, established for eternity, none had a more solid base than this Egyptian wisdom, which rose higher and higher in succeeding generations, but which appears to us in its earliest form brilliant, colossal, dominating the ancient nations, in the maxims of Ptah-hotep, while the pyramids were building, and more sublime, more resplendent still perhaps, in that negative confession of which we find so many reflections on the funeral tablets of the ancient empire.