

The Secret Tradition in Freemasonry

And an Analysis of the Inter-Relation
Between the Craft and the High Grades

IN RESPECT OF THEIR TERM OF RESEARCH,
EXPRESSED BY THE WAY OF SYMBOLISM

BY

ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE

IN TWO VOLUMES

WITH 28 FULL-PAGE PLATES, AND MANY OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME I



LONDON

REBMAN LIMITED

129 SHAFTESBURY AVENUE, W.C.

1911

538977
18.4.52





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PROLEGOMENA

1. The Secret Tradition which it is my proposal to trace in the present work, through its vestiges and intimations in the Rites of Symbolical Masonry, will not be found to differ, in respect of its root-matter, from other aspects of the Secret Tradition during Christian times in the West.

2. As regards that Tradition and what I have so far said upon the subject, the general outlines of the principles at issue and of the evidence were offered in the *Hidden Church of the Holy Graal*, but with particular reference to that phase which appears in certain departments of romance-literature.

3. The Secret Tradition contains, firstly, the memorials of a loss which has befallen humanity ; and, secondly, the records of a restitution in respect of that which was lost. For reasons which I do not propose to consider at the present stage, the keepers of the tradition perpetuated it in secret by means of Instituted Mysteries and cryptic literature.

4. Without the circle of tradition in the Western world there rose up a collateral body of

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testimony which deals with the same subject, and this is the mystic literature of Christendom.

5. As the tradition itself bears witness in its highest development to an experience attained in man's spirit, so also does the mystic literature, but in place of secret working we have records in the open day.

6. The mystic literature of Christendom contains the experience of sanctity in the West, and here the channel of transmission has been chiefly through the Latin Church. It should be understood that there has been a great analogical transmission on the same subject through channels in the Eastern world ; but, important as it is, I am not concerned in the present work with this concurrent testimony.

7. As regards the Secret Tradition, the forms assumed were, in respect of the Instituted Mysteries, of a ceremonial and liturgical kind ; in respect of cryptic literature, there was more than one embodiment ; in fine, there are some other forms which were emblematic in the pictorial sense, as, for example, the pictures of Alchemy.

8. Some of the ceremonial modes of presentation have remained in concealment with little trace of their existence, down to the present day : each and all are testimonies, after their individual mode, to the hand of the soul in history.

9. The statement applies in all directions, and the question arises whether—in the East or the West—that which was open, and owed nothing

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in its conscious part to anything reserved in concealment, had penetrated as far as the latter into the mystery of its subject.

10. I register the fact of the question without offering an answer at the present stage : it is part of our research to determine this point, if to do so be indeed possible, and we shall at least see as we progress that some claim to superiority is implied in the nature of the Secret Tradition, and on the justification thereof there depends its title to existence as something set apart from the rest.

11. The loss and recovery of a certain treasure of secret life being—as I have said—the subject-matter of the Secret Tradition, it must next be explained, in the interests of that important phase which is more especially in hand, that the philosophical transaction concerning such loss and recovery has figured on several occasions under the guise of a verbal formula.

12. The evidence testifies to (*a*) the æonian nature of the loss ; (*b*) the certitude of an ultimate restoration ; (*c*) in respect of that which was lost, the perpetuity of its existence somewhere in time and the world, although interned deeply ; (*d*) and more rarely its substantial presence under veils close to the hands of all.

13. It recalls in this manner the legends concerning an universal science imputed to man in his first estate, and concerning its perpetuation among unknown sages from generation to generation.

14. In the literature of the Holy Graal the

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specific aspect presented is the existence of a mysterious House of many Hallows, which was accessible under certain circumstances until some one or more than one of those who went in search of it should succeed in attaining thereto and should take over the custody of the place, together with its mysteries—or alternatively of the sacred objects only—after which these were either removed or the doors were sealed up and no one else went in. It is a mystery of attainment and withdrawal, the latter being—on the surface—final. Here also the mode of attainment is in many texts by means of a verbal formula.

15. The specific formula differs from that which we meet with in other traditional forms, and as the literature extended this symbolism passed out of sight, the quest of the Graal itself and the religious conditions attaching to that quest overshadowing all else.

16. In a much earlier work—namely, in *The Doctrine and Literature of the Kabalah*—I have delineated the position and importance of a non-Christian Tradition in Christian times through the channel of Zoharic theosophy, making sufficient reference to its relationship with later schools.

17. In the literature of Kabalism the specific aspect of the verbal formula is found in the loss, suppression, or reduction and substitution of a Sacred Word, until the restoration of which there shall be sorrow and exile for Israel. Here it is a

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mystery of withdrawal, but the recovery, though delayed, is certain.

18. My present inquiry will be followed when the opportunity arises by an examination of the Tradition in Alchemy on the spiritual side of that literature, and this, in some respects, will be found the most important of all, and of all the most decisive.

19. In the literature of Alchemy the antithesis of the usual testimony is borne consistently by innumerable writers. It is a literature of attainment only ; the object of research is always in the world ; it is "nearer than hands and feet," but it cannot be known except (*a*) by the communication of a Master, (*b*) through some other channel of secret instruction, or (*c*) by the act of God in illumination.

20. Masonry offers an instance in Christian times of the Secret Tradition expressed in dramatic form. It is by no means the only instance, but it is that which is above the horizon, in the open face of day.

21. The form embodies a great symbolical quest imbedded in mystic rituals, the number of which is legion, and one of my subsidiary designs is so to reduce their multiplicity that those which have a message to give may be left to testify apart from the complications of things extraneous, and under such circumstances that we should be in a position to test their warrants.

22. The imputed object of research is again a

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verbal formula, but the mystery of Emblematic Freemasonry is very deeply concealed, and those who regard it as summarised in this one object are likely to be led aside from the path.

23. In several branches of the tradition the formula is known as a simple Mystic Word: the loss is the loss of the Word, and the quest is the search for its recovery.

24. Craft Masonry is a memorial concerning the quest, and a record of the circumstances which led up to the loss. These circumstances are connected with a memorable event which constitutes the Craft Legend.

25. It is permissible to say that the memorable event is connected with a mystery of building, and that the edifice or temple chosen for the purpose of the mystery is that erected by King Solomon.

26. I put on record at this point that the analogy of the Lost Word is the traditional Fall of Man, which is understood in the Secret Tradition after a manner that removes it from the legends of exoteric religion, whether those of Jewry, Christendom, or the further East. It is not an analogy which will be appreciated readily on the surface and it is only stated here, the development being left till a later stage of our research. The analogy is not an identity. The mystery of the Word in Masonry is in its proper understanding the testimony of a secret kept in reserve, which secret corresponds to the first estate of

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man. It is the way of going back upon the Fall ; it is the way of approach to the Divine in the Universe, notwithstanding the loss and concealment which persist by necessity in the Universe.

27. I put on record also that the mystery of building is concerned with an imputed design to erect a great Spiritual House or House of Doctrine, the care of which was in the hands of a properly warranted Master ; but a conspiracy took place and prevailed, with this result, that certain things are said to have been lost, and, so far as the Craft is concerned, the design was frustrated.

28. It is implied, but has not been observed in preceding schemes of interpretation, that nothing was lost in reality, but rather that an intended manifestation was delayed through the ages, those who could have spoken electing to keep their counsel, with the result that Symbolical Masonry draws from a Fellow Craft Lodge instead of a Lodge of Masters.

29. Craft Masonry signifies a quest for that which was lost like the Word in Kabalism ; for that which has been hidden like the holy Vessel of the Graal ; for that which is communicated by God like the Mystic Stone of Alchemy ; but Word and Vessel and Stone are all evasions, as it should not be necessary to say to those whom I address in these pages.

30. High Grade Masonry is either an extension of things connected with the subject-matter of

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the Craft, and, many curious intimations notwithstanding, is therefore mostly negligible, or it is a claim to restore the loss.

31. It is necessary to add that there is a lower sense of the Secret Tradition in Christian Times, being that of the occult sciences and the arts connected with or arising therefrom. The tradition of which the Instituted Mysteries is a reflection or a veil, and of which the concealed literatures like Alchemy are a presentation, also under a veil, has no consanguinity and no real external connection with these.

32. They do not enter, therefore, into the consideration of the issues reached by the vital criticism of Symbolical Freemasonry ; but as something which is far from the term, it will be found that there were occult Rites working in the vast field of the High Grades. It will be shewn in its proper place that they were not Masonic in character.

33. I have dealt otherwise with the Tradition in Ceremonial Magic, and have exhibited the vain pretence under which it has been suggested, that the perpetuation through this channel was of anything that signifies to the mystic, though occult orders have existed and have transmitted in their own degree what should be understood as belonging to the matter of occult research. It is the art of opening the House of Life to the deeps rather than the heights.

34. Masonry, in its proper understanding,

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is a summary of the quest after that which is Divine, and it is followed in the universe by that which is Divine in man ; alternatively, it is the manifestation of that which is Divine in the universe to that which is Divine in man.

35. This quest is embodied in allegory, in ritual, in legend, in symbolism ; and if the elucidation of all that is implied in these—or is in these imbedded—had no practical message to the people of the Brotherhood and to the world at large, I should not regard the present labour as justified by the reward thereof. But the Secret Tradition in Christian Times is—as I have hinted—the secret of a Great Experiment, and that Experiment is not without appeal to every heart and soul into which the conception of it can enter.

36. I invite, therefore, those who are properly prepared—after the manner which I have just indicated—to enter with me upon the research which is here and now inaugurated ; the definition of the Masonic quest will be justified therein from the evidence of the several forms in which I have affirmed that it is embodied ; I shall shew after what manner the quest in its proper understanding should be regarded as the making of the experiment ; and at the close of all something will be added from which it will perhaps follow that the experiment itself is not so remote from the higher side of the Brotherhood as may be suggested by its delineation in outline. We lose

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ourselves in the bypaths and the side issues, but the way to God is actually and literally the most simple and most short of all—though it is not for this the easier. It is on the basis of this unrecognised truth that I have thought it worth while and dutiful to enter at such length into the Secret Tradition in Freemasonry.

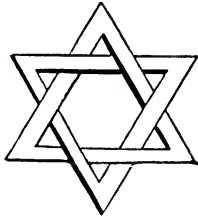
It will be understood that all schools indifferently are schools of symbolism, and that some of them are presented only in a dramatic form. The Rituals of Masonry, for example, are the word-books of dramatic acts in which the principal part is taken by the Candidate himself, with the officers of the Lodge shaping his proper course and guiding him and instructing him on the way. In addition to the active and ceremonial part there is that of the charges and the legends. Masonic legends and symbolism are concerned—as we have seen—with a mystery of building which is attributed on the literal surface to the creation of a certain Holy House on the material plane ; but behind this there is the spirit or the life of the story, in which the earthly temple is so spiritualised that it can be erected only in the heart, and not with the hands of men. It is actually a House of Doctrine, and those initiated into the mystery are the living stones of the Temple. As a House of Doctrine it follows from the Craft Legend that there was an intention to manifest something which had remained concealed in wisdom ; but the

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time was not ripe, and there occurred, to check the design, a conspiracy among those who were employed in the symbolical work, as the outcome of which the Master Builder was slain, and the project was never fulfilled according to the original plans. We shall see at a later stage that the intention itself is not what it appears on the surface, and is part of a story in symbolism, designed to draw special attention to the fact of the Secret Tradition, and that the progress of the Candidate through the three Grades signifies that he is on the search of hidden doctrine; but a bare intimation on the subject must be held sufficient at the moment.







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To be a thyrus-bearer in the Mysteries is not perhaps hard, but to communicate from a chair of authority some sense of life to the ceremonial state of a pageant takes place assuredly in virtue of a gift of its own ; yet this has also its pitfalls. I do not refer here to the almost proverbial facility with which the merely letter-perfect man, installed by the imputation of language in the place of adeptship, gives evidence too often of his utter deficiency in the spirit of a ritual which he is putting to the high use of receiving candidates. I mean rather that, granting the best intentions, granting even a modicum of what must be called the seeing sense, it is easy to miss the deeper meaning of great things. It is missed, of course, when it is cryptic, when it is even somewhat far to seek ; it is missed also when it is not, when the first intimation concerning it raises the wondering question why it was not transparent from the beginning. Perhaps on the principle of the poet that

“He who hath watch’d, not shared, the strife,
Knows how the day hath gone—”

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there is something communicated occasionally to the lonely student which comes comparatively seldom to those who are working the Rites. Yet the irony of it is that if the informed student were set to work in his turn, he might manifest a complete incapacity after his own kind and lose not only himself but the whole world of ritual. It comes about, therefore, that we go into our proper solitudes and build our books therein as if into holy temples, full of mystery and meaning, and those who will enter the precinct, having a heart of pure understanding, can, without error or hindrance, take part in the offices of exotic sanctuaries, uniting in virtue of a two-fold gift the high art of perfect ceremonial working and consciousness of the great meaning which lies behind the outward letter.

It is such an experiment that I have made in the present work for my own enlightenment and for the welfare of my kinship. It may happen that they have heard—as I have heard and hear—within the sealed doors of many houses of initiation ; it may happen that they have seen—as I have seen and see with my own eyes—the echoing words and shining symbols of an hundred mysteries. It is time that we should retire apart and in a yet more intimate convocation expound to ourselves and one another the meaning which is within meaning of that which we have beheld, of that to which we have listened for perhaps so long and long. I consecrate, therefore, the

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labours of our conference with the great exordium of old : *Munda cor meum, ac labia mea, omnipotens Deus, qui labia Isaie Prophetæ calculo mundasti ignito* ; and I declare that the Temple is open in all those Grades and Degrees with which we shall be concerned in our quest.

Yet seeing that we speak to one another in the plenary sense but otherwise to the proselytes of the gate, and otherwise to apprentices and juniors, and seeing that we have signed long since our concordat with Horace concerning *profanum vulgus*, one axiom of the œcumenical council bids us *celare verbum*, that those who are without the portal, because of their unfitness, may see yet not discern—except within their own measures—and hear but not comprehend—except within their own limits. I offer this statement, by an act of free gift, to the general reader, as another version of my usual counsel of charity—not that I would warn him off the premises, but I question whether he is likely to find a home therein, or even a hostel. To those who are of another order, who are elect or capable of election, who may be initiated or not—that signifies little at the moment ; who may be learned or not—the qualification is sometimes a hindrance—to those I offer salutation. That which follows hereafter is in a form intelligible to them ; they are called hereby to the council ; the same is convened for their instruction ; they are an integral part of the assembly. I have

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written this book for them ; they are my elect audience ; the seats in chapter and temple are to them reserved. I have written it, not as something which, on the outer side, concerns the history of Masonry, because the graces and beauties of our holy and glorious Zion are scoriated in the glasses of the Lodges, and as it seems to me in many of the Rites themselves, but as something that touches its symbolism, as something from which the ample vistas are prolonged to the distant term ; while seeing that the term is set forth and expounded from its own base, we are not unlike those who have gone so far in their pilgrimage that they know of that which awaits them.

And now—as a colophon hereto—one word with a word after, to that cloud of witnesses, out of every tongue and people and nation, who are Masons under their several obediences, integrated in the same faith and the same most high expectation. The word *in principio*, the one word, shall concern the faith itself. It is rooted in the Divine in the universe, as in a *centrum naturæ concentratum*, and out of this centre the universe came forth. Passing into expression under the symbolism of whatever terms may be held to satisfy best the implicits of philosophy, theology and the deep matter of religion known and declared in the heart, I affirm that the faith in an essential, inevitably presupposed Being, in a great accounting truth, is the condition upon which, as a

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foundation-stone, the Masonic building is erected, and the point is that it constitutes an indispensable, not an arbitrary, condition. Apart from this the holy offices are voided and the high Rites suspended. But the expectation and the reason shall be expressed in that *postremum verbum* which I have called the word after. It is the doctrine of other life entered through figurative or mystical death and realised in mystical resurrection. This death and this resurrection are the professed concern of Masonry and the sum of its operative art ; they are the pictured emblems which are figured on the embroidered veil, and the deep mystery of their meaning is that which is behind the veil. Hereof are the Divine intimations of the Craft Grades and hereof are the High Degrees—by which I mean those only that deserve the great name. As the Master Builder dies under the obedience of the Old Law, so He rises in Christ, and so also must the Candidate die by a sacramental death, that He may rise in the mystical resurrection. But we are dealing on the one hand with no exoteric concept of Deity, and on the other with no literal death suffered in the body of man. The legend of the Master Builder is a macrocosmic legend, a legend of the great world : it is the concealment of the Divine in creation. It is also a legend of the microcosm, of the little world ; it is the concealment of the Divine in man. Hereof is the death symbolism, and of such also is the rising ; it is the manifestation of the Divine in

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the universe to the higher part of our consciousness, and it is the integration of our higher consciousness in that which is Divine in the universe. The death is therefore that which we now understand as mortal life, and the resurrection is into spiritual life ; the one is the history of separation and the other of union. Craft Masonry delineates the mystery in pageant and symbolism ; but because from time immemorial it has been vested in weeds of widowhood to commemorate an immemorial loss, its deaths and resurrections, its rites and emblems, register the longings of the heart but not its attainment. Whether the High Grades, their gracious suggestions notwithstanding, are mysteries of restitution or only of substituted recovery, is one great question posed for our consideration ; but we can say at once and assuredly, that at best they are outlines of symbolism, and this only. Another great question of research concerns therefore the direction in which we are to look for the mystery expounded after a direct manner, so that it may be put to the test of experience.

I return in this last statement, and that of set purpose, to the prolegomena which opened my thesis, and I note (*a*) that the practice signified in symbolism by mystic death and resurrection lies behind the Secret Tradition of Christian Times, and, although it is a secret practice, very deeply interned ; (*b*) that some part of the mode and way is not so utterly withdrawn in the luminous tradi-

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tion that it must be pronounced irrecoverable. The means of its recovery are indeed about us on every side, but we must know how to look for them. We come already to see in this manner that the Secret Doctrine within the Secret Tradition did perhaps hold in its sanctuaries more than is offered to the faithful in the religious institutions of the outer world.

We must, however, be careful of the natural qualities of enthusiasm which intimations of this kind are apt to occasion. The path of the Secret Tradition is not an easy path, and it conveys nothing whatsoever automatically. Is it necessary for me to say that its records are intellectual memorials, and though they are great instruments for the awakening of consciousness in the soul, they do not impart the consciousness? If all the materials were placed at our disposition to-morrow, they must remain as dead letters unless the power which is within the individual can itself communicate the life, after which it receives in return the knowledge of the work which is to be done, which work is the prosecution of the Great Experiment. And this Experiment is the Pearl of Great Price which lies hidden within the Tradition.

Whether we conclude to regard it as of one kind in its essence and nature or as springing from many roots, it is indubitable that the Secret Tradition in Christian Times passed through various developments, and these for the most part

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are represented by their memorials in literature. The memorials are both successive and concurrent. We can take the tenth century as a point of departure in respect both of Alchemy and Kabalism. It was at that period that the Hermetic writings—understood generally as cryptic books containing the theory and practice of metallic transmutation—began to assume the vesture of the Latin tongue and hence to be known in Europe. But we are aware that for generations previously the theory and practice of Alchemy were on record in Greek and Syriac. So also the Secret Tradition of Israel, which dates by its own claim from times of incredible antiquity, had begun to pass into writing before the year 1100 A.D. Emerging to some extent concurrently in this very general sense, they also grew up together, and together in fine decayed. The fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were the productive periods of Kabalism, whatever the antiquity which we may elect to assign to specific texts like the *Sepher Yetzirah* and *Zohar*. But in the seventeenth century the great commentators had come to the end of their labours and nothing is of moment thereafter. The debate upon Alchemy had by no means ended then, but the classics of the subject had been written before the year 1666. As a product of the seventeenth century, Rosicrucianism is of course exceedingly late, but it stands for much that had preceded it, and its last words belong to the eighteenth century—indeed, almost to the

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time of the French Revolution. Outside these things there were of course the traditions of Astrology—such as they may be held to be—and perhaps above all other arts and crafts of occultism there is that which passes under the generic term of Magic—but this is without value for our purpose. These literatures stand for personalities and perpetuations, sometimes as from master to disciple, sometimes from generation to generation in secret circles of adeptship. There was, further, that phase of the whole subject which passed on the unwritten memorials of ritual and procedure, of which Masonry is the readiest instance. Behind all these was the perpetuation of tradition in religious sects — the *Gnosis* of all grades and degrees ; but of this I am not proposing to speak.

Now, we can trace the persistence of the Secret Tradition through the Christian centuries up to a certain point, and the question which arises is whether after that time it came to an end abruptly so far as historical evidence is concerned, or whether another channel was opened. The period which I have in my mind is the end of the eighteenth century. The present work is an attempt to answer this question in respect of Masonry, and it will be observed that the issue is one of a very simple kind—at least in the matter of appearances. It is also, as it seems to me, exceedingly important after its own manner, because there is an actual, immediate and living interest attaching thereto. Those who have

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accepted the dedications, concerns and quests which, for want of a word more catholic, are embraced by the word transcendental, who are acquainted generally and especially with the issues of Secret Doctrine, are directly affected by the question whether it has living memorials at this day. We are surrounded on all sides by schools of instruction, schools of interpretation, schools putting forward the claims of the old doctrine, and affirming in the presence of the great official religions, of modern science and philosophy, that such doctrine had a basis in experience which is recoverable even now.

Their titles do not concern us ; they have warrants after their own manner, but this is only in so far as they pursue their researches with proper regard to sincerity, as they have no roots in the past. It is to such schools that an inquiry like the present should more especially appeal ; and if the memorials of the Secret Tradition, after what manner soever, do subsist in Masonry, it must for them assume a value that is more important than for any detached, literate and normally intellectual student. In a word, it is of more moment to them than to the concourse at large of the Brotherhood for this simple reason, that the occult schools are prepared already for the subject and the ordinary Mason is not. Herein lies my chief justification for dealing, under necessary reserves, with the question of Masonic Ritual and Symbolism.

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The reader will please observe that in this reference to current schools I am seeking rather to indicate the extent and limits of the field which I address herein. I leave open otherwise the question whether the Tradition of the past has not its Veiled Masters, far from the public eye, and whether those who are compelled to divest of their warrants many things that are now among us, living in the open day, may—this notwithstanding—remember that there are other regions of research, though the historical sense may cause them to rule out of court whatsoever cannot enter within the region of palpable evidence.

It proves sometimes, in conclusion, that the silent witnesses are more convincing than the speaking witnesses ; there is nothing so silent as Masonry in respect of its real claims, because they are below the surface ; there is nothing—when it does speak—which testifies so little to the purpose ; it offers, therefore, a free field, in which—without let or hindrance—we can examine all the materials, with no extrinsic interventions to distract us.







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INTRODUCTION

I ASSUME that a scheme of interpretation which is concerned with the life and the essence, with the things that really signify, of and within the great Masonic division of the Instituted Mysteries, a scheme which is therefore lifted into all the heights of its subject, may not improperly begin in the earth of its own system, like Jacob's ladder. I am starting on this assumption in these introductory words from a purely technical point. That point is the historical position of the Lodge which bears a cypher in the Roll of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and I must take in this connection the alternative claims of Mary's Chapel in Edinburgh. It is a question of priority, antiquity and those dear things of debate which are so important to the competitive side of our human mind ; but it should scarcely be necessary to premise that my device has a purpose in view.

The Schaw Statutes of 1598 and 1599 seem, on the face of them, to determine once and for all the priority of Mary's Chapel ; but as the title of

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Second Lodge applied to Mother Kilwinning is used in conjunction with that other term of Head Lodge, it is not so clear as it seems. And, among writers in England, there is some disposition to think that, in correspondence with its name, the Mother Lodge may have been the original seat, or chief centre, of Scottish Masonry. That the priority of Mary's Chapel was perhaps a mere question of enumeration on some old Lodge list, has speculatively a certain cogency.

One fact remains which is outside and superior to the region of special pleading : Mary's Chapel has the oldest Craft records, whatever may be thought of the contention that those of Kilwinning were burnt. The loss, or—in more guarded terms—the deficiency of essential documents is accounted for too easily—indeed, with suggestive facility—after this manner. On the other side, all the great Masonic super-traditions centre about Kilwinning ; but I speak here more especially, and indeed almost exclusively, of those which connect with the High Grades and the legends thereto belonging. It matters nothing how the ascription originated, as, for example, that it derives from the amazing dream of Ramsay. We shall deal with this later on. I note at the present moment the question of fact, that no one knew anything of Mary's Chapel on the Continent—where most of those Grades originated, whatever pretensions they put forward. But the name of Kilwinning seems to have acted like a talisman,

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and as I am dealing with many jewels of talisman and symbol, I have made it my point of departure. THE ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND, setting aside its position historically, is supposed to have drawn therefrom. And Kilwinning was itself, by the voice of legend, a reflection of unknown mysteries practised by the Order of Culdees at Mount Heredom, on an island South of the Hebrides. In this way we have the recurring title, Heredom of Kilwinning, to which place traditionally the not less traditional mountain was fabled to be in close proximity.

I must ask that the design of this reference shall not be misconstrued ; it is not within the circle of my concern to affirm that the Culdees were a secret heretical sect, the result of a marriage between priestly Christianity and the old Druidical religion, or something still more withdrawn. The dreams on this subject I leave to those who have dreamed them. Nor do I affirm that they were a monastic or semi-monastic group of Christian anchorites and ascetics. The research of many years has not extricated the involved subject. I am speaking rather of the office of imagination in early Masonic faith and legend, and it should not be necessary to say that all its reveries are as mythical as its mystic mountain.

In the putative historical discourses attached to several of the more obscure and long since interned High Grades, Kilwinning becomes the Holy House of Masonry ; its imagined secret

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knowledge was passed, so it is affirmed, like a heritage, to all Scotland, and through Scotland to the world. Templar and Rosicrucian connections have been freely attributed thereto, as if to one general source of all that was fundamental, great and withdrawn in the Quixotic romance of Masonry. We have thus, under many phases, and through many changes, the degree of *Knight Rose-Croix or Heredom of Kilwinning*, with a score of similar ascriptions; the CHAPTER OF THE EMPERORS OF THE EAST AND WEST, working twenty-five Grades, was a Council pretending to derive by the way of Kilwinning from Heredom. This Chapter granted—or is supposed to have granted—the famous Charter to Stephen Morin, who took the Rite to America, where it was developed into the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE. Once more I mention these facts, which are only particular examples drawn from a great body of tendency, not as one putting forward historical claims which would be preposterous rather than doubtful, but as so much evidence that the Mother Lodge was the hypothetical centre of many traditions—whether or not as against some few evidences which helped to turn the scale, a little or more than little, in favour of Mary's Chapel, so far as antiquity is concerned.

These are the facts, and I now pass to their application. It is an old saying that there are three mountains—Moriah, Sinai and Heredom. Having regard, however, to the High Grades, and

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the importance of some which still exist on the Continent, though they are unknown in England and America, I should say on my own part that there is in symbolical reality a chain of five mountains — Moriah, Sinai, Tabor, Carmel and Heredom, but that, still speaking symbolically, the message which went forth from these mystic eminences was, as it now is, fundamentally one message. They are supposititious hills of the Secret Tradition, and it is for this reason that it has been worth while to speak of that counter claim and claim with which my discourse has opened. Heredom is therefore a symbol. The legend concerning it may have begun in fantasy ; it may even have begun in the conscious quality of invention—which, personally, I do not believe ; neither alternative concerns us in this place, as no one, unless in distraction, would accept historically and literally (*a*) the explanation of their own origin put forward by the High Grades and the Rites into which they were collected, or (*b*) any one of their hypotheses concerning the origin of the Craft. We know in the absolute sense that Mother Kilwinning has claimed Craft Masonry as her only-begotten daughter, but of the other systems and degrees, which are said to have been the fruit of her mystical womb, she has never even heard in a dream. On the part of the High Grades which rank seriously as such, the ascription covers the intimation that they came out of that world of mystery which is comprised by the

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consciousness of the Secret Tradition—so far as it belongs to Masonry—and that Tradition, in choosing—as it was necessary to choose—a local Masonic habitation, found sufficient wisdom to connect it with a purely imaginary mountain, shewing thus that symbolical Masonry may have had its root in the Building Guilds—represented by Kilwinning—but was raised into a mystical region—represented by Heredom. And hereof is the literal truth, to which all interpretations, all theories and the facts at large subscribe. On the part of the High Grades which make for delusion only, no ascriptions signify, and for the time being at least I leave them at this point, that I may pass to another, which is indeed my proper, concern, and to the logical inferences therefrom.

The value of old operative records, statutes, minute-books and so forth, is very high on the operative side, or the side of the Building Guilds; but they are of no value from the standpoint of Masonry considered as a speculative and highly emblematic science. Behind the veils of that science—if my assumptions concerning it are valid—there is a Mystery the secret of which lies deeply embedded (*a*) in the central Legend of the Craft Degrees; (*b*) in the sublime Closing which attaches to the degree embodying the Legend-in-chief; and (*c*) in those symbols of the Order which are not of an operative kind. This mystery is never communicated verbally, and thus it comes about that it remains concealed from

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the majority of good and true brethren over the whole world. The cloud of witnesses to whom I adverted in the preface can therefore, on their own part, bear witness only to the minima of these high subjects, except in so far—and they are few—as there are adepts included among them.

The Mystery in question connects the symbolical Brotherhood by the roots thereof with other secret associations, some of which belong to the far past, though their descendants, under different incorporations, and indeed amidst many changes, remain in seclusion to this day. In a word, it is the Mystery of that Experiment to which my prolegomena refer.

Even at the risk of repetition, it must not be through deficiency in the attempt if I fail to establish that one and all of the legendary origins of High Grade Masonry—which have been the subject of summary allusion in these introductory words—belong to the order of archaic fantasy, and are nothing more. I am entering untrodden ground in studies of this kind, and it is needful to guard all the gates against the accidents of misconception and the consequences of hurried reading. Once and for all, those legends of origin are comparable to the Craft Legend regarding the memorable event, being historical to the same extent.

Outside these, and diverting also our attention from the early enthusiasts who wrote upon the history of Masonry from the basis of their

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own imagination, there remains the broad fact that the immediate antecedent of the suggestive art of spiritualised building was the old material Craft. There is a certain high understanding on which this question is essentially rather indifferent, for it is a kind of dead past which may be left to bury its dead in the face of such a living and transformed reality. But Mary's Chapel and other ancient Lodges have records which are in this respect conclusive. It is, however, still more certain that such antecedents are as incapable of accounting for the 3rd Degree in the Craft as for the 18th or the 30th Degrees in the SCOT-TISH RITE—to contrast three extremely divergent cases. In a word, they are incapable of accounting for all that signifies symbolically, that justifies the research which I am making, that enters into the Secret Tradition. The Mystery of the Building Guilds—whatever it may be held to have been—was that of a simple, unpolished, pious and utilitarian device ; and this Daughter of Nature, in the absence of all intention on her own part, underwent or was coerced into one of the strangest marriages which have been celebrated in occult history. It so happened that her particular form and figure lent itself to such an union, and—as a consequence of that which intervened—she reappeared in wonderful vestures and was no longer a Daughter of Nature but a great Lady of the Mysteries, and of the paths and portals thereto approaching. The Craft Mystery was transformed

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into another Mystery ; another element of secret life was brought within it, and the result was such that speculative Masonry, as we know it, has borne for two centuries precisely those marks and seals which made even the foolish old seekers, who endeavoured, like Godfrey Higgins, "to draw aside the veil of the Saitic Isis," see dimly through clouded glasses that somehow, they knew not how, the Masonic secret was part of the old secret, the first secret, the great secret of all ; that it concerned God and the universe, man and the soul of man, death and resurrection through death into spiritual life ; that the Masonic pedigree was the old star of thought, the old high light, a quest which was not that of the coming forth of man into manifest and external experience, but one of return towards his source.

I do not intend to suggest that these old *literati* and *alumni* expressed it after this manner, that they conceived otherwise than vaguely of the religion which is behind religion, or that by such religion they understood the fruition of faith in experience and in a realisation which transcends knowledge. They had their occasional great moments, for they worked from the clean heart of an utter sincerity, but they suffered under every inhibition and are our cautions rather than our guides ; yet in respect of Masonry they could not help seeing what is implied therein and—of all that therein is imbedded—one part, one parcel, of the whole.

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Heredom, by a romantic etymology—as I have already intimated—has been held to signify the Holy House, that is to say, the House which was built in Wisdom, the House of Secret Doctrine, wherein the Hidden Mysteries of Nature and Science were of old studied, and were also communicated of old. I refer this notion to the symbolical science at large, and—so understood—it is a statement in advance of my whole thesis. The etymology is, of course, a dream, but another symbolism calls this same science the Rosicrucian House, the College of the Holy Spirit. It is to such a mystical edifice that reference is made in the great Legend of the Craft, as a process of exhaustion will shew at a later stage. In other words, when those unknown initiates who took over the Trade Guild constructed out of its rough and raw materials the elements of symbolical Masonry, they emptied of living value that part of its archaic memorials which had survived the process of the centuries. These therefore remain—curious indeed as memorials, interesting—if you will—so far as the builders of houses made with hands are concerned—but nothing to our Masonic purpose at this day.

That fuller light of Masonry which we all desire will not come from the study of old Craft records, supposing that we should find any fresh materials of importance, but rather from a consideration of the Catholic Mysteries of Initiation in various ages and countries. To pursue this

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quest is, however, scarcely possible for persons who are unacquainted with the spiritual purpose of other secret Orders—being those which survive to this day and at the existence of which I have hinted. The reason is that they are linked with secret institutions belonging to a further past and that they develop in some cases that which is implied only in the mystic dialect which is peculiar to the Masonic quest. They also speak in a strange and cryptic language, and I make no pretence that the tongue decodes more easily, but when it is in fine decoded there is a fuller presentation given.

To those who grafted the symbolic art on the old craft of building I have referred as unknown initiates, and I have spoken also of things which are missed utterly by the Brotherhood at large. A question therefore arises which I will endeavour to express as follows :—

If the familiar path of symbolism which is known under the name of Masonry—and is as a beaten track so very familiar—does issue into such strange regions as I have announced herein, why are those regions like a concealment within concealment? How comes it that not only the ordinary Brother of the Craft, but the Knights *Rose-Croix*, the Masters of St. Andrew, the Knights Beneficent, even the Sovereign Princes, have never opened the gates which lead into this far-reaching country? Holding such Grades and titles, such high imputed dignities, they, at least—

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and more than all—should hold also the keys of entrance to a region which all would travel, if they could only find the way. They do not, and this is transparent ; but why are things so ordered that the glorious signs and sacraments of Masonic ritual thus seemingly fail in conveying that which they exist to communicate by their own public hypothesis ?

The real answer is one that will be explained at large in the sequel, but because of its urgency and indubitable recurrence in the mind, I will go before the problem at this early stage of all and will register a bare statement against the coming explanation that those Veiled Masters to whom we owe the adapted symbolism, the Craft and possibly some part of its extensions, devised these things to serve as a memorial, as a permanent witness in the world, and they devised it as an embroidered curtain which could be drawn only by the few. To those few I conceive that it did or might open the door behind which there are the hidden places of peace and understanding, wherein the Secret Tradition is no longer a mystery.

I admit, of course, unreservedly, that here is a straight and thorny path, “and few there be that find it.” The present record of certain aspects assumed by the Secret Tradition in Freemasonry is designed, amongst other things, to make the way more smooth, though it is not concerned with the history of initiation through the ages and nations.

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I proceed therefore with these introductory paragraphs by propounding the general thesis that Freemasonry did strictly, but in the symbolical sense, derive from Mount Heredom, it being understood that such eminence is not in time or place. And the Lodge of the Adepts is still held thereon—which Lodge is, as I have intimated, the House of Secret Doctrine. I have intimated also that the book which follows is the extension, the illustration and the evidence of this thesis. It is written for my brethren of the free spirit, for the advancement of the glory of the true knowledge and the honour of a great Order. It is an experiment on the mind of Masonry and an attempt to reach those who are prepared for the experiment in all parts of the world. I put on record the plain statement from motives of sincerity, as this work is not an elementary text-book, a reflection or a summary of anything whatsoever that has been said previously on any side of the subject; it is a study in cryptic writing, and all my interpretations are intended to recall my readers by each and every device to the spiritual truths which I have found behind the veil of all the schools of symbolism, and behind few perhaps more indubitably than the pageant of the Craft and its dependencies. It would not have been a simple task under the most favourable circumstances, and it has been rendered almost infinitely difficult by the necessity of preserving the official veils of concealment

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which are drawn by occult associations for the protection of the official side of their Mysteries. I call attention to the fact that I have not uttered one word by which these veils, their particular nature or embroideries, have been communicated to any one ; and I say further, that such things are those only that we have undertaken to keep within the treasury of our honour. The search after God is the quest of all the sanctuaries, and the modes, like the object thereof, are no secret. For the rest, therefore, I have written as an adept philosopher and lover of learning, leaving to the wardens of the things external all that to them belongs, but explaining—to those who can read in the heart—some part and substance of the truth which is behind the sanctuaries.

This is of universal application among those who have been called and chosen, whether they are Masons or not, and because in respect of the latter I believe that the passing of the veils would be right and salutary, since they are properly prepared in the mind—so therefore in this book, acting under the obedience of all constitutions, and with faithful and reverend observance of all landmarks, I recommend, by a proper solicitation, those who have ears to hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches, to participate in the Mysteries of Freemasonry.

As one who may venture to assume a point which is not in dispute, I have spoken with some freedom of the old Operative Guilds, and of their

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assumption by the Wardens of another and greater Mystery. It is just, however, on account of one of my precursors, and of a distinguished English name in current Masonic literature, to say that the recognised connection and distinction between the two aspects of Masonry were challenged in the middle of the nineteenth century by J. M. Ragon in France, and recently, on other evidence, by Mr. R. F. Gould, the historian of Freemasonry. It seems difficult to approach the subject from any point of view individually without coming to a conclusion which is analogous if not identical, and though the point may be scarcely worth specifying, I will say that I have reached my own on the basis of personal and quite independent considerations, the analogies, of course, remaining. According to Ragon, Operative Masonry, the Confraternities and Building Guilds, with their art and their privileges—these were one thing; Symbolic Masonry was another, and it came about through the entrance of Elias Ashmole as the accredited envoy of the Rosicrucian Fraternity. This is a thesis which I believe to be categorically untrue, firstly, in respect of the envoy; and secondly, in respect of the intervening school, because all the Ashmolean interests were on that side of the Hermetic School which represented the physical work of Alchemy. This is negligible, however, for the moment, since the point at which we coincide is in the fact that the Operative Guild was at some stage and period

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assumed by another, distinct and more exalted interest.

Mr. Gould, on the other hand, taking the Regius MS. as a kind of *terminus a quo*, develops the more important and certainly more interesting view that symbolical Freemasonry has been, so to speak, always in the world, though whence it came seems for him an open question, or at least he gives no intimation concerning it. The fact remains that we are brought at the end to the same point precisely ; the time came when the symbolical science rose up, and so far as an Instituted Mystery is concerned, of what kind soever, the Operative Art vanished in respect of the Lodges and Chapters : if it was not assumed, it was most certainly absorbed.

There was a school already in the world which did adapt the folklore legends of Celtdom into the Graal literature ; there was a school already in the world which adapted the terminology of Alchemy to its own ancient spiritual purpose ; and it follows from the hypothesis here under brief notice that a school already in the world did at some period, whether late or early, adapt the symbolism of architecture to another purpose. In a manner which we cannot trace at present, but in one which was very natural, it combined with Operative Masonry. Mr. Gould is able to tell us, on the authority of a wide acquaintance with Masonic memorials, that the ceremonies still worked in Lodges are the remnants of an ancient



ELIAS ASHMOLE

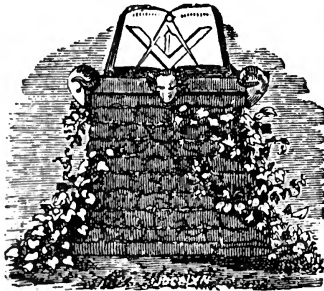
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learning ; that this learning was in the custody of a purely speculative Brotherhood ; but “in the course of ages a great portion of the meaning” was forgotten. As to the nature of that learning he gives no indication—as I have said—and I question whether, from what I know of his liberal mind, he would feel himself qualified to hazard a suggestion concerning it. It is this deficiency which I propose to supply out of other sources of knowledge, by the development of all that which inheres (*a*) in the fact that Masonry is concerned with the building in symbolism of a certain secret edifice ; (*b*) in the fact that this edifice signifies a House of Doctrine, wherein was treasured *ex hypothesi* a certain pearl of tradition. I shall speak throughout of this House under the terms belonging to its proper subject, in which manner I shall be, firstly, about my proper business, and, secondly, shall keep from those who, Masonically speaking, are profane, though belonging otherwise to the elect, that acquaintance with the externals and the accidents which for them are of no effect and which I am covenanted to preserve from all who are without the gate.

It remains that Mr. Gould's thesis, however unacceptable in itself, is the first note of real illumination on the whole subject which I have met with in the arid field of English Masonic research. It was read before a Lodge of Installed Masters in the year 1907, and I do not know what expressions of opinion, if any, it may have elicited in the almost

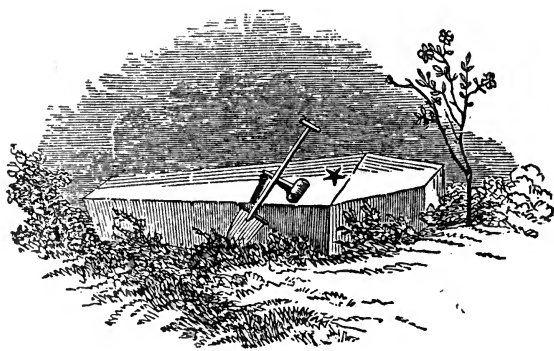
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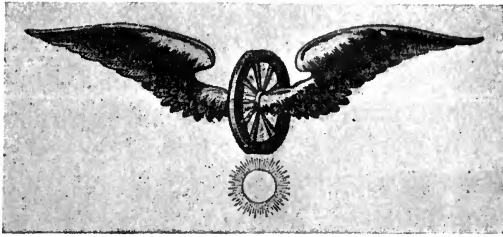
silent auditorium of the English Brotherhood. It is a statement of fact with a long note of interrogation after it, but one is thankful for those questions which come out of all expectation, and to which answers, unlikely or not, are fortunately possible.



BOOK I

**Fundamental Relations of the Craft
and the High Grades**





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III. THE EXPERIMENT OF THE HIGH GRADES AND THE CLAIMS IMPLIED THEREIN

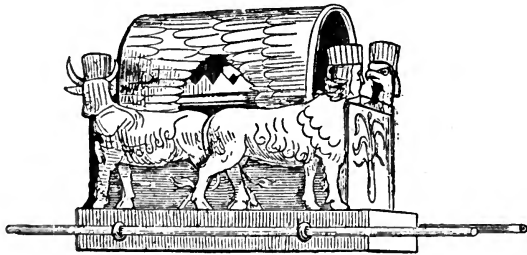
Of many inventions—Of High Grades and the Secret Tradition—Relations and distinctions—The recognition of the High Grades—A suspension of judgment justified—The proper spirit in approaching the High Grades—The Secret Tradition and the super-Masonic experiments—Grades of the Old Alliance—Grades of the New Alliance—Grades of the Secret Tradition—Of sequels to the Craft Legend—Of spiritual chivalries—Of Masonry and Templarism—Of the Ancient Alliance in the minds of Christian Masons—Rosicrucian, Alchemical, Kabalistic and Magical Degrees—Of certain exotic Grades—The world of Fantasy—Woman and Freemasonry—Extensions of the Craft within the covenant of the Old Law—Christian Masonry—Further concerning the Secret Tradition.

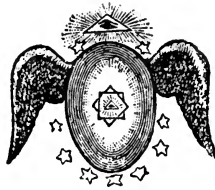
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BOOK I

Fundamental Relations of the Craft and the High Grades

I

THE HORIZON OF THE CRAFT GRADES AND THE TRADITION THEREIN

WHEN we purchase real estate we should choose freeholds, so that even our earthly acres may after their manner remind us of the eternal possessions to which we are earning a title. The implicit of this statement, which is intentionally fantastic—if it be worth while to say so—is that the wise man, being in search of reality, or at least of its symbols, does not enter strange paths of initiation, or even paths of personal research, to arrive after many travellings at some familiar point of knowledge, an admitted canon of criticism, or the immemorial antiquity of a few ethical axioms. These things are like short leases, well enough in their way, but it is not good business to acquire them—perhaps for a hundredth time—at the

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purchase price of too many years of labour. The application of my reasoned ribaldry should here emerge into the light of moderate clearness, which I will assist further by a simple form of comparison, and this shall also have a touch of the grotesque. One chief difficulty about secret societies, and especially those aspects of these which are the subject of consideration herein, seems—by antithesis—not unlike the chief difficulty about socialism—which is the existence of the *οἱ πολλοί*, the instituted aristocracy, the plutocrat and the middle class. In other words, although it is time that the natural heirs of creation, whose title is *Adepti Exempti*, should come into their own, socialism has so far failed to manifest this exotic Grade. On the other hand, the secret societies—and more especially some Masonic Rites—communicate many titles of conventional Adeptship, but in place of the adept's secret they have, for the most part, only the middle-class motive, the platitudes of the crowd and its spokesmen, and a *consolamentum* in decorations which lie under the suspicion of having been manufactured in some symbolic Birmingham. It is not of course all associations maintained in concealment which correspond to this description; if placed in the seat of pleading, not all of them would have to recite their *Confiteor* under the spur of this loving impeachment. Some have been conceived in the heights, and abide therein. Moreover, there are follies in fraternities which are not precisely the follies or

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the madness of crowds. In fine, Freemasonry—which is our proper and only subject—requires to be distinguished from incorporated societies at large, because of its inscrutable position through the Mystery that lies behind it and the connection of this Mystery with the inheritance of a Secret Tradition. The position is inscrutable along all ordinary lines, because those who are acquainted with the Tradition know certainly that the Emblematic Art is the most obvious and world-wide instance of its public manifestation under veils. But it has been put forward, as I have stated, and as my thesis intends to shew, under such a disguise of symbolism that nine-tenths of its participants have never penetrated beyond, and have never dreamed that the pageant of the ceremonial masque is other than the whole secret of the living Temple. They have known nothing of the sanctuary behind, or of the door in the manifest Holy of Holies which opens upon another Temple.

They have been lulled into a lifelong sleep of their higher consciousness (*a*) by the legend of a Temple built with hands; (*b*) by the enchanting suggestions of a music-breathing system of morals; and (*c*) by an allegorical presentation of the technique of an art and craft in the literal side of which they have no concern whatever. If they were told that the Temple of Solomon is no living interest of theirs, that the highest doctrine of ethics can shew them nothing that is new and that an artifice

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extracted from the tools of the building trade is a curious conceit at best, they might confess—and could scarcely do otherwise—to the truth of such statements, but they would say that the dissolution of these elements would leave nothing of Masonry behind. And this is just the fundamental error which appertains to the whole subject, for it is when these veils dissolve that the true art and the true craft, the mystery of experiment and the matter of the whole quest appear in their robe of glory.

These are the considerations in brief regarding the horizon of the Craft Grades, which on the surface embody a morality in a rudimentary dramatic form concerning birth, life, death and the ethics of our desirable conduct between the opening providence of the cradle and the closing grace of the grave. This clear and pictorial table is, however, so presented that it contains more than it shews on the surface side. The introduction of an element of quest, the mysterious sense of loss, which prompts the long undertaking, and that which is offered in place of the term of research constitute another interlinear morality which is not in congruity with the first, till it attaches to that first a second and deeper meaning. In this light the birth restates itself as the fruit of a spiritual generation and gestation, the life as a spiritual condition, and the death as a mystical and not a physical dissolution. The restatement reacts in its turn on that by which it is transmuted, and a second conversion is performed ;

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the transmuting elements are seen in another light and so become intelligible. We understand the nature of the quest, of the loss which prompts it, and why something else is offered—as every Mason knows—in place of the term of research. This realisation causes yet another reaction, and we find that the first morality is true in both the aspects ; it is really man's natural history, and as natural he can attain only a commutation of the Divine end of quest ; it is also man's spiritual history, and as spiritual he can attain through mystic death—in another Temple than that of the manifest universe—the Divine Object of Research.

It is the story (*a*) of man in his place in the universe, among the things that are ; (*b*) of that which he lacks therein, and behind this fact the *raison d'être* of that which he needs to complete him ; (*c*) of the intimations concerning his loss, owing to a state of imperfection in himself and his environment ; (*d*) of the duty imposed upon him to repair the loss, and the method to be pursued therein ; (*e*) of the quest which thus arises, and how it is the great quest of life ; (*f*) of its close and the close of life in physical death, and of this as a means of his release, if that which he takes with him should offer no further barrier ; (*g*) but more than all of a death to his present self and to the world, the mystical resurrection or re-birth which follows it ; and (*h*) the life of liberation in Holy and Divine Union which is the reward of those who have reached so far in their

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pilgrimage from the circumference of manifested things to the centre of the hidden Godhead.

After this summary, which can be followed by any intelligent Mason, and will sufficiently instruct the uninitiated who are capable of initiation, without exceeding my limits as to the nature of Craft Masonry, I proceed to the fuller development of my general thesis. The thesis is this shortly : when we come to examine Emblematic Masonry we find that it contains a Mystery which does not belong to ethics, and is not concerned with the building of any material Temple.

Let us take the definition of Freemasonry which is presented in public as the typical and official answer to a certain technical and assumed question of the public mind : it affirms that the art or science is a beautiful system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. I suppose that in the whole wide world there is no system which, confessing as does this to allegory, has less in the allegorical portion to do with simple morality. The myth or allegory of the great Legend-in-chief contains the counsel of perfection regarding the reservation of speech for the maintenance of the Secret Tradition under its proper prescribed veils—which belongs to another and indeed a remoter realm of motive. The moralities and ethics are not contained in this or any other allegory ; they are, as they must be, presented in a literal manner ; no one can miss them, no one can read into them another and a deeper meaning. It

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is different in respect of the symbols ; some correspond to the description in virtue of an artificial application—though in these there is a second significance for the few who can find it—while some are at the opposite poles. Now it seems indubitable that if the definition were in analogy with the real truth, or with any preponderating and substantial portion thereof, an undertaking to speak of the Secret Tradition in Freemasonry would be the idlest of all pretensions. The allocation of things to their proper and determinable nature must rise up to forbid. The counsels of morality and brotherhood borrow nothing from the realms of mystery, and secrecy has no part therein. The Secret Tradition is concerned with the Mysteries of Nature and the High Science of Grace, not with external love or counsels of relief, not with the corporal works of mercy, not with the principles of good fellowship. Freemasonry, on the other hand, though the point is often missed, establishes its own distinction with sufficient clearness on the subject. In the Craft Degrees it explains the objects of research, which are in fact these Mysteries, while the title to share therein is the possession of moral qualifications and an expressed determination on the part of the recipient to regulate his life according to their higher counsels of conduct. They are the gate, however, the condition, the preliminary curriculum and not the end.

The nature of the Mysteries is indicated in the

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Legend of the Craft under a veil of allegory, and as it is not otherwise expounded in the ceremonials of initiation or advancement, so it comes about that a general, serviceable, but otherwise inadequate lesson of fidelity is that alone which it is customary for the recipient to take away from the catholic experience of the Craft Grades. It is for this reason that some, who have seen further, though not always in the right direction, have been disposed to regard Freemasonry as the shell of a law of concealment from which the object of concealment has escaped. The truth, on the contrary, is that the Craft, in its ceremonies and its symbols, has retained everything ; that which is under the veil is to-day as much among us as it was when Symbolic Masonry arose ; it is here in as plenary a sense as possibly it may ever be. But the embroidered draperies of morality and conduct are a living, not a dead, veil, and those in whose hands it has remained to exhibit the textures thereof, have not, on their own part, realised that there was more to follow, that in order to become truly a Mason it was indispensable to draw the curtain and enter the Holy of Holies, which lies behind the outward pageant and the first Temple thereof. The reason is that there was never in the official consciousness of Masonry, in its capacity as an association on the plane of public life, an intention or a warrant to convey the intimation clearly, and much less the knowledge of a concealed sanctuary, or a secret within a secret.

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Those who established the speculative Order imparted that which they chose in the manner that they chose, and to none of the official masters or brethren did they reveal their motive. The symbolical science was, firstly, an experiment on the mind of the world and, secondly, a shrine erected to contain a memorial on the part of those whose memorials are everywhere, but their complete programme is nowhere. The veil was woven with very great care, so that the rank and file of the Brotherhood, who were not otherwise prepared to see behind and beyond it, should have a colourable reason to be content with the veil itself, believing that they had attained a precious gift therein. But even with greater care the hallows and the holy relics, the signs and root-matters of a secret science, were placed behind the veil and obtruded vaguely beyond, so that those who could penetrate further should have no doubt as to the Mysteries within, but should recognise them as records of a Great Experiment which was once made in the world, as testimony that it had not failed, and as an incentive to the zeal of the few who might dare to dream of repeating it. And it has come about that many have seen in part and a few with real illumination ; but the last secrets are possible, as I have said, to those only who have passed through the experience of other and greater schools, so that hereunto it has never entered into the region of communication.

It would be unpardonable if I, speaking in these

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terms, were to prove unfaithful, through false delicacy, to that which I have received out of all expectation and proper desert of mine. The normal law of personal self-effacement counts in such matters for nothing, and I must not be afraid to confess or to proclaim at once that I hold the Key of the sanctuary, or by what motive I am actuated in an intention to impart its communicable elements, firstly, to my proper brethren and, secondly, to my consanguinities in the spirit who are not as yet incorporated in the fellowship of Masonic wisdom. The task is one of extreme difficulty, because the external disguises are imparted under great pledges, and having proceeded so far that I have a better reason than most to know that they are not arbitrary, I have before all things to be faithful and true concerning the *cortices* and *minima* of the mystery. I have thus, on the one hand, so to regulate my methods that I shall speak in respect of the externals with frankness on matters that are of common knowledge only, but, on the other, that I shall not fail in explicitness over the deep things concerning which there are no pledges, remembering at the same time, that it is impossible to speak intelligibly except to the prepared in heart and idle to use evasions with those who have ears to hear. One effect of this work will be to provide Masons with that which, from the nature of things, they have not known previously regarding their own science, and for those of the uninitiated who can accept the message, it will lead

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them to seek initiation, so that they may attain that intimate knowledge of the extended veil which cannot be imparted in books, because in the last resource such an attempt would prove impossible. The records of life are communicable, but not life itself.

Having a long research before us, and one which, I believe, will place the systems of Craft and High Grade Masonry under a new light, I do not propose at the inception of the whole subject to speak of the hidden term itself, which belongs rather to the end of our quest. But there are some preliminary points which are proper to the present place, and we come in this manner to the question of Building Symbolism. The Legend of the Craft is that of a Spiritual House : it is this, of course, and without concealment of any kind, on the external side itself. But it can be shewn by a process of exhaustion that in so far as it may appear technically and officially to be put forward in the guise of a material building, it is to this extent evasive, and is something which stands without as the sign of an intention that is within. I submit, as self-evident and transcending the common need of argument, that it could serve no purpose symbolically to commemorate in terms of concealment, as if it constituted in itself the root-matter of a secret gnosis, the creation far away in the past, in other lands, under the ægis of other religions and other modes of thought, the raising of any external palace, temple, or sanctuary. Our Houses

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of Parliament are a great monument of national liberty and progress, but the history of their design and construction would be an inadequate and improper object for the institution of a secret society, while it would be only in the pure spirit of fantasy that we should try to present them under any symbolic aspect. We do justly in regarding St. Peter's at Rome, Canterbury Cathedral and Westminster Abbey as high and holy temples erected to the greater glory of God ; but if we should convert their plans into allegories as an excuse to put forward a new analysis of religious belief, we should, I think, be acting like children. If, however, on the other hand, we knew, through the opening of some hidden door, that behind the Latin Church or the Greek Orthodox Rite there were some undeclared mystery of religion, and if, to keep the rule of the door, we were to spiritualise St. Peter's or Sancta Sophia so that we might communicate that mystery—to persons properly prepared—under the seals of parable and secrecy, we might then be justified. Even if we so acted on our proper incentive only, we should be imparting something not otherwise known to the world at large, and must be entitled to do it in what manner we will ; it would then depend on the nature of the mystery whether we were acting like sages or, again, as children at play. Now, it is in something after this mode that the existence of a concealed doctrine behind the Law and Covenant of the Ancient Alliance in Israel has been memorialised,

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according to my interpretation, by those Unknown Masters who in part made and in part adapted the sheaf of symbolism which is included by Craft Masonry. They took possession of a certain fact, and, maintaining the external guise, they put forward the notion of a Secret Doctrine perpetuated in Jewry under the guise of that great event which is part of the history of architecture. Their real concern was to shew that behind the external cortex of the Holy Law in Israel there was another and greater Mystery. The evidence on the question of fact is in this case close at the hands of all. I need scarcely inform my readers that such a tradition exists in Jewry and is comprised in the Kabalistic writings. It was about the period when speculative Masonry was emerging above the horizon—as I have said in my preliminary summary—that this literature began to spread through Europe in a Latin form by means of Baron Knorr von Rosenroth's comprehensive summary and analysis in the *Kabbala Denudata*, and the knowledge made thus accessible was extended before and after by the famous tract of Athanasius Kircher, by Reuchlin's three books *De Arte Cabalistica*, and by Petrus Galatinus in *De Arcanis Catholicæ Veritatis*. There were also (a) the translation of *Sepher Yetzirah*, published by Ritangelius, (b) the great collection of Pistorius under the title *Artis Kabbalisticæ Scriptores*, (c) the *Cælum Sephiroticum*, (d) the *Magna Bibliotheca Rabbinnica* of Bartolucci, with other commentaries

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and interpretations by the score. Of all, it is sufficient to say that they made known the mystical doctrine of Jewry concerning Temples and Palaces which forms the basis of the Masonic House in Israel, and Kabalism also embodies the doctrine of loss in Israel which gave the motive of the Masonic quest. If it be asked why this memorial was undertaken, I recur to my previous statement, that it was on the part of those whose records are everywhere in the world, but who are not fully represented by any one record. Each form of testimony stands on its own merits ; none is put forward as the voice of the school at large ; it rests usually on the responsibility of some class or section, perhaps, at the beginning, even of a single individual, as it may have been in the case of Eckartshausen. The school is not represented by the literature of the Holy Graal, of Alchemy, of Kabalism, or of an experiment like that of Masonry. Speaking on my own warrants, I should say that the last was, in some respects, the least fully representative, as it is also the most elementary of all. But in other respects it was the most public of the major experiments, and it came at a time when the office of the others was over, when it was held necessary to have a fresh witness, and on this occasion the appeal was to a wider circle. I believe this attempt to have been made about the third quarter of the seventeenth century, but the way had been prepared, either by accident or design.

Mr. R. F. Gould relies upon one of the Paston



ATHANASIUS KIRCHER

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letters, tentatively and dubiously assigned to the year 1464, for the existence of a Holy Order called the "Temple of Sion," which he is disposed to identify with some form of speculative Masonry, but it is impossible from the document itself to draw any conclusion whatsoever. He also relies on the Regius poem printed by Mr. J. O. Halliwell in the *Early History of Freemasonry in England*. This has been ascribed to the latter part of the fourteenth century, but I do not think that its evidence is at all conclusive as to the existence of a symbolical apart from operative Masonry at that period. The question is very interesting, and the document is curiously suggestive in two or three of its points. The inferences from it are not unlike those which have been drawn with such wealth of imagination from the reception of Elias Ashmole in the year 1646. This is the basis of the great hypothesis concerning the intervention of Hermetic fraternities in the development of the speculative Craft. For myself I believe that the mystic hands which transformed Freemasonry were the hands of a Kabalistic section of Wardens of the Secret Tradition; that their work is especially traceable in the Craft Legend; and that although in its present form this Legend is much later and a work of the eighteenth century, it represents some part or reflection of those Zoharic preoccupations which began in England with Robert Fludd, Thomas Vaughan, were continued through Henry More, and were in evidence

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both in France and Britain before and about the period of the French Revolution.

The preoccupation was not *per se*, and simply on its own merits, in Jewish theosophical tradition, or it was the talismanic wonder and mystery of the literature married to the preoccupation of a discovery which Christian scholars of the time believed that they had made therein. In a sense, it went before symbolical Masonry, as the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ. The Zoharic and connected writings offered for these scholars an indubitable proof that the Secret Tradition of Israel was itself the most powerful engine that could be put in operation for the conversion of Jewry at large. They believed that the Zoharic Messiah was literally their own Messiah and that Kabalistic doctrine certified to the Christian Trinity. When, therefore, they found that there was a legend of loss in Israel, and that something was expected to be restored, they believed that the restoration would be in Christ. And we as Masons, who also know of a loss, must look, therefore, towards Kabalism as a not unlikely direction for the root-matter of our mystery. We know, further, that Christian High Grade Masonry restores our loss in Christ, and though I do not say at this point that the Craft was designed to dissolve into Christian Masonry, I am entirely clear that we are in the presence of a conspicuous analogy, into which we must look more deeply at one or another stage.

Let us however at the present moment direct

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our attention to one side of the Secret Tradition in Israel, and let us realise, in the first place, how it follows from *Exodus* itself that even the Law was a substitute. The tables of testimony, written with the finger of God on both sides of the stone—that is, within and without, having a meaning within a meaning—were broken by Moses when, descending from Horeb, he found the people in idolatry and wantonness. The loss was replaced subsequently by other tables which were the work of Moses, and appear to have been written with his hand, although there is a seeming equivocation on the surface of the text. In place of the Law of Mercy there was given that of Judgment, and the redemption—which was the advent of *Shiloh*—was put back for generations and ages. It has been noted further by my precursors, that Moses when he spoke to the people—on his second descent from the Holy Mountain—put a veil upon his face, signifying the concealment of the Law ; but he removed it for communion with the Lord. The theosophic tradition in Jewry says further that Moses committed the Secret Law to certain elders, by whom it was transmitted to others. He built also the Ark of the Covenant as a sign without and a depository of things signified within, for which reason—though now all unconsciously—there is recognised by Masonry the existence of a Holy Lodge in the wilderness, and its three Masters are commemorated. We deal in Scripture with substitutes and veilings everywhere, from that

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moment when in the Garden of Eden man is represented as having chosen on his own initiative the knowledge of sin and death by way of the Tree of Knowledge, instead of the wisdom of the centre by way of the Tree of Life.

It is out of the implicits of all these traditions, and out of its own also, that, in fine, we get Solomon's Temple spiritualised, which has been done many times in exoteric works, but also in the exotic part of the traditional literature. The old *Midrashim* extant on the correspondences of this subject are almost a study in themselves, those concerning the *Palaces* and the *Measurement of the Height* being particular cases in point, as we shall see in the next section. The Temple therein is the universe; it is the quantitative and qualitative summary thereof as well as the mirror of the justification of God's ways with men. This is secret doctrine enough, and a dowry for the elect thereto. We are far already from the letter of the Law, though the material side of the Temple waxed in importance as the spiritual grew in its complexity. It remained, however, for another order of symbolism to take up the dream of Temple-building, and, while preserving the externals, to present within a purely spiritual side of its construction as a profound, ordered memorial of doctrine, which itself issued from a concealed root.

This is my reading of Craft Masonry. But, like the original Law of Moses, it was not intended to depict its completion in accordance with the

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first plans thereof. It is of the essence of Secret Doctrine that it should remain in concealment, and while intimating the fact of its existence for their own reasons, the makers of Craft Masonry did not design that their Emblematic Temple should really contain the Mystery. They did design to shew how Israel was—from the beginning, and through its own fault—without the truth, afterwards manifested under another Dispensation. They proceeded as follows. A conspiracy is said to have intervened, as if against the formulation of the doctrine, on the part of those who, although engaged in a proposed promulgation, were not acquainted with the last secrets, or—in the terms of building—who were craftsmen rather than architects. They desired a higher knowledge—an acquaintance with the design beyond that which they possessed at the moment—and they dreamed that this Kingdom of Heaven would suffer violence for its attainment. But it suffered destruction rather. The result was that which I have described otherwise; the House of Doctrine was not finished in the story according to the original designs; and, to make this matter as intelligible as I can within the limits which are allowed me, there arose that sanctuary loss which is conveyed under heavy veils in the Legend of the Craft. For the explanation of this loss we must take another illustration from the annals of Jewish theosophy, and I hold in my hands the inexpugnable proofs that the two symbolisms are one.

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My thesis is that the mystery of Freemasonry is the concealed mystery of a Word, and this Word is what other forms of symbolism have declared to contain everything. It is therefore, in the first place, not what it appears on the surface ; the expression is itself symbolical, and signifies—as it can only—the root-matter of the Secret Doctrine. In yet other terms, it is the way of experience by which the Divine Science that is communicated in doctrine to the logical understanding is manifested by experience to the holy spirit of man. There is no need to add that it is only by an economy that it can be spoken of as a verbal formula ; it is a secret of life and of that life which leads into all truth. It is a Word in the same sense that all things were made by the Eternal Word of God.

To the degree and within the measure that this life ceases to be communicated, there is interdict on the Land of Doctrine, an arid waste about the precincts of the House of Knowledge, and loss and desolation within. Let me borrow an illustration from a corresponding realm of experience. Those who believe in sanctification by external faith only are in danger of this kind of judgment. Belief is eminently necessary to all manners of redemption, and especially in the highest use of the term, because every action issues from an assumption either expressed or implied ; but the kind of salvation which proceeds, for example, from faith in Christ depends on the

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active work which follows from the assumption of faith ; or, in other terms, on seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness. The Secret Doctrine in Christian Times is the evidential theory concerning such a search, and if Masonry was ever in the past, or is now, in respect of its root-matter, concerned with the essence of that doctrine, it is not only a religious experiment but is married to the life and sum and total, the end also and the beginning, of all religion. It is not a religious experiment on its manifest and external side, and this has been put forward somewhat forcibly and frequently by the exponents of the Craft. The reason is scarcely for our seeking, because it is of all things obvious that the principles of moral law are the gate through which man goes up to the House of the Lord, but they are not the House itself or the place where the glory dwelleth.

The root-matter of the Secret Doctrine has been called by many names in many schools of symbolism ; the records are everywhere, and I have no concern in their recital, since it is obvious that each system chooses its proper veils ; there are also some which seem on the surface more adequate to the intellectual comprehension of the subject than are others, but at need anything answers, because it is certain that the King's craftsmen can work with any tools. It would not be affirmed at first sight that the symbolism derived from the expression and recession of a Divine

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Name, a word, or a verbal formula, is especially preferable. We must, however, on our part, seek to ascertain its place and history in the admitted records of tradition.

That which is nearest to our hands, which enters most deeply into the Secret Tradition in Christian Times, and is the most proximate antecedent of the particular Masonic symbolism, is unquestionably the Great Name of Jehovah according to Jewish doctrine and tradition. It is on record in the Secret Doctrine of Israel that the true pronunciation of this name has been lost; and accordingly such loss is memorised everywhere in the literature. I have dwelt sufficiently on the simple fact in the consideration at great length of other traces of the Secret Tradition, so that I need only say here that for the ordinary believer of Jewry, as indeed for the Christian world, we are left with the consonants of יהוה, pronounced according to the rules established by the system of the Massoretic points. The literal fact is, of course, a pretext for symbolism. We find traces also in the *Zohar* of another or substitute name, which was used before and after the redaction of that great work, and is still used largely in place of *Tetragrammaton*. To this I shall recur shortly.

Taking as a primary idea the position of the word Jehovah in the form of its consonants, we find arising therefrom a whole tissue of secret terminology in Jewry to which great importance

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was ascribed. Those who have studied the late magic of Chaldea will know the kind of virtue which was supposed to exist in words, above all in sacred names. Perhaps what was done by Israel was to take over and transmit, under veils of its own, that far anterior tradition regarding verbal formulæ, which, pronounced with the full knowledge of their import, had the power of compelling the gods themselves. In Chaldea this had already degenerated into a species of exotic magic, but there are grounds for supposing that, still further away, it had another and deeper root.

Independently of this, and more express for our present purpose, the captivity in Babylon is sometimes thought to have signified a specific loss in language, and it is held as certain that on the return of the Jews to Palestine the reading of the Law was a matter of expert knowledge. That language which from generation to generation grew more and more archaic, was exalted by grade and by grade, till it became too sacred and unearthly in Jewish conception for the world itself to produce a more exalted form, or the mysteries which are not of this world to contain anything which in expression could exceed it. The sanctity and efficacy resided not so much in the verbal aspects of the language as in the ciphers of the written word, and these ciphers—by which I mean the consonants of the language—were thought capable of combination independently of the spoken tongue. For example, if an

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adequate or required meaning could not be extracted from a given word, that word might be and was turned by the interpreters into another, or even into an unknown word, by any one among several methods of transliteration.

A sort of secret language grew up in this way among the Kabalists, and as time went on it filtered down into the traditions of Ceremonial Magic, which attached omnific power to inexplicable words and had the venerated Chaldean Oracles to support them. Students of the subject will remember that the disciple is counselled by these Oracles to forbear from changing the barbarous names of evocation, because of the sacred virtue which resides therein. The idea in later times took many forms, and so in Cornelius Agrippa we find not, indeed, any direct traces of a secret language, but varieties of secret ciphers and mystic alphabets, the presumption being that *ex hypothesi* they were more efficient in occult arts than those in daily use. Still later, in the years of Dr. Dee, a sort of magical language was instituted, the texts of which are available in his manuscripts and in his published *Faithful Relation* ; they are capable of a definite construction by those who can obtain the key. Now we know after what strange manners certain conceptions not only persist through time, but, under various guises, travel through space, and the arbitrary efficacy of words is a doctrine of that order which, having once found root in the past, would reassert itself

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in many forms. In those which were grosser, it became part of the accidents that encompassed the Secret Tradition, but it endured also in the higher theosophical part, and my thesis is that those masters of symbolism who created Emblematic Freemasonry put it to their own use.

The mind which is unversed in symbolism would, in the absence of a guiding hand, see only some dubious point of language or an arbitrary complexus of convention in this strange allocation of letters or sounds alleged to be wanting in the Hebrew name of the Deity. I must, however, explain further, that the cortex of the consonants represents the outward manifestation of things—as, for example, the visible universe, the external sense of the Law, the defined formalism of doctrine, the material sign of the sacramental system, the first meaning of parabolical writing, and human nature on its known side in the world. The vowels symbolise the life within—as, for example, the Divine Power and Grace which, operating from behind the universe, fill all the spaces thereof, so that God is everywhere, and in accordance with the faithful witness of orthodox and true doctrine is immanent and yet transcendent, nearer than hands and feet, and thus intimate everywhere, though not in the mode of pantheistic identity, for He is also unknown and inaccessible.

The vowels are thus the higher sense of the Law, without the possession of which it is possible

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to recite the Law but not to give the meaning ; they are the inward truth of doctrine, which is truth at first hand, and not under the limitations of human expression ; they are the grace behind the sacraments, the inward meaning of parable, and the supernatural life which sanctity superadds upon the natural life of man. In Zoharic and connected literature the permutations and permeations of the Divine Name are a grace, a palladium, a holy presence, the added part which makes the Cosmos integral and completes manhood by sufficing, efficacious and super-efficacious grace. In a word, they confer all things upon those who have conceived in their hearts concerning the Kingdom of Heaven. It would seem on some occasions as if these Kabalists had forgotten at last their own express distinction between the consonants and vowels, or between the accidents of Divine manifestation in immanence and the essence of the concealed Godhead in utter transcendence. But thereto they return always. So also they assume occasionally another form of symbolism, which to us is peculiarly remarkable.

It is true that the pronunciation of the Divine Name, with the power and the life which declare the glory of God in all regions of the universe, has been lost, by the hypothesis, to the sanctuary, but the cortex itself, or the shell, is too beloved and too sacred for even its imperfect pronunciation during the long interdict of the exile, and—not so much because it is impossible, or that its manner

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is unknown, but because it is reserved with other good things of the Lord in the Land of the Living—that conscious and willing substitution—already referred to—has intervened in the sanctuary, for which reason the chief rabbi replaces the Name of Jehovah by the name of Adonai, wherever the *nomen inenarrabile* occurs in sacred texts, and he will so do until those times and circumstances which may seem proper to Divine Providence shall restore the true Name, or put an end to the exile of Israel.

Now this is the matter of tradition which had remained embodied and interned, so to speak, in written Jewish theosophy for something like two or three centuries, and which passed, we know not how, into symbolical Masonry at that date to which we may elect to refer the Legend of the Craft Degrees. It may have come through Latin sources, for there is nothing in the Grades as we have them to suggest a knowledge at first hand of Zoharic texts. Indeed, if we follow the line of least resistance, we shall have no doubt on the subject, while the history of Masonry seems to point in the direction of Christian interest in Kabalism during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The fact of a tradition in Israel, to which the Talmuds bear witness, but which itself is extra-Talmudic, was well known in Europe, and I have already enumerated the representative Latin sources through which that knowledge arose.

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It came about in this manner, that Solomon's Temple — understood in its widest sense — was spiritualised for Christian as well as for Jew, and when the idea of this transmutation was married to that other Kabalistic notion of a theosophical loss in Israel, we can understand how exoteric Christian scholars began to put an interpretation thereon which had never entered into the hearts of those who devised the mystic legend of palaces or the legend of the Lost Word. That which was lost under the ægis of the Old Covenant was for them restored in Christ, and so it followed that a new method was devised for the conversion of Israel out of the mouth of its own most exotic texts.

I have shewn elsewhere that the instrument from which so much was expected by William Postel, Picus de Mirandula, Reuchlin and Rosenroth proved of no effect whatever ; but my thesis is that it drifted from the hands of these literal expositors fired by an evangelical mission into the hands of pure symbolists, who desired to commemorate (*a*) the fact of a Secret Tradition, and (*b*) their belief that this tradition was concerned with the mystery in Christ—signifying, however, the mystical Christ-life in the spirit of man. For them, perhaps, as for others, Kabalism may not have been regarded as more than one of the vehicles ; it may not have been, even from their standpoint, the best vehicle, but it was the one which was nearest to their hands and most readily

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served their purpose. They enveloped the fact of a tradition, handed down from the days of Moses, in a Legend of Solomon's Temple, which they regarded as a House of Doctrine wherein the tradition was contained. They adapted the notion of something lost by Israel to their own concealed purpose by reciting that a great secret was interred at the building through the sacrifice of the Architect-in-chief. They instituted a long quest for its discovery, and took care that it should remain unfinished in the Craft Grades, thus suggesting something which must follow of necessity in the form of a sequel.

Many persons unacquainted with the traditions, and hence with the intention of the first rituals, began to devise by their own unaided skill various extensions and a few worthless sequels. Of the extensions, some came tolerably enough into the general line of development, leading up to the Grade of *Royal Arch*, which, under the pretence of restoring the Lost Word, was designed to make the nature of the loss as clear as it could be made in symbolism. The story of the tradition under the old Covenant terminates with this Degree, or rather breaks off abruptly, because that which should have followed was never worked out—I mean, the building of the Second House of Doctrine. There came at a later season the Christian makers of Masonic Rituals, and, to speak my mind frankly, it may not prove in the sequel that they carried out the intention of those who

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were responsible for the Craft Symbolism, but they had a great intuition which brought them near to the point. They provided the restoration of the Word in Christ ; they developed the tradition of mystic building in the sense of the Christian House, not made with hands but eternal in the heavens; they erred more especially, perhaps indeed only, on the side of too literal interpretation.

Recurring for a moment to the implicits of the *Royal Arch*, I have indicated that in this there is an attempt to restore the deficiency, to replace the loss in the Sanctuary, but that which it does give back is only a memorial of the loss. Those who hold the Degree will understand what I mean, and those who do not will suffer no mental confusion by my apparent suppression, because all that can be held to concern them will permit of explanation apart from further reference to the Grade itself. By a process of exhaustion, the loss in Jewry, which is affirmed to be a Name, and the loss in Masonry, which is regarded as that of a Word, will be found identical in essence, and at variation only in the outward form of symbolism. Behind both devices the whole mystery is concerned with the Divine in man and the Divine in the universe.

On the basis of this statement, and subject to its proper demonstration, we are in a position to realise what is the term of Masonry and—"once in time and somewhere in the world"—what is represented thereby as being built in symbolism

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—in other words, the attainment of the state of the perfect man in Christ. Of that which was being built I have spoken here as if by an accident ; the suggestion is, however, true within its own measures, seeing that there was in fact—by which I mean the fact of parable—a completion after a certain manner, even if the experiment which was left unfinished after the episodes of the Craft Legend was never made perfect at any time thereafter within the Masonic horizon.

We shall find the evidence of this in its proper place, but I am reminded herein of an *obiter dictum* that is proper to the present point. The inmost shrine of the sanctuary, the place of the treasures of pearl, has never been truly externalised, and it is for this reason that Masons are accustomed to speak of that which they build in their hearts. The House of Doctrine is also the House of Consciousness, which only reaches its fullest status when it includes the all ; between now and then there is a peculiar intermediate state, wherein that which lies behind doctrine—and constitutes the justification thereof—may become part of our experience. Meanwhile those aspects of the logical understanding which are occupied with the abstract notion of things, though they cannot comprehend them by an act of union, are in a condition of widowhood and loss. The state of union is that state which we call experience in the highest, wherein we know as we are known ; and so long as we live in the widowhood we live so

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long among substitutes, which we may express, if we please, as the condition of those who utter the Name of *Adonai* but not that of *Tetragrammaton*, who are content perforce with the Word of Substitution in place of the Word of Life. It is also in this sense that Masonry on its surface side is a summary in symbolism of our mortal life and memorialises the widowhood of the rational faculty—of that faculty which ever in its heart desires the great things but attains them only in signs of sacramental conception—which clings also to faith as the most precious of all gifts for those who are denied vision. The Secret Tradition is concerned with the vision that begins in faith and with its attainment by the opening of that door which gives upon the infinite.

We have now to proceed one step further in our consideration of the high mysteries that belong to this preliminary part. Throughout the immemorial sequence of all initiations there is that which is the harmony of all, the point of their union, the identity of their catholic intention ; now this is the tacit, apparently unconcerted, agreement by which they have combined to represent the transition from theoretical consideration to actual experience of the great things—firstly, as a passage from darkness to light ; and secondly, as a progression from death to life. Death is ever inflicted mystically upon the Candidate, and that to which he is restored is mystical life.

But these subjects are introduced in their

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application (*a*) to doctrine as a symbol of spiritual life, and (*b*) to life in the individual spirit. While they are the most pregnant and profound, they are also the most simple form of symbolism. All religions testify to the literal exactness of their similitude. The comparison of light and darkness may tend indeed at times to deceive us, presenting here and there a certain aspect of fallacy, but it is in virtue of eternal truth that the birth of man into consciousness on the material plane is contrasted with the opening of the soul into consciousness of supernatural life. Before this there is only the soul's sleep in the matter of the body. That death pictured in the Mysteries is therefore in no sense physical, but is mystical, like the resurrection which follows it, and that which is true of all other systems is true in a pre-eminent degree of the most important ceremony through which the Candidate passes in Masonry. There is more than one side to its symbolism. So far as manifestation is concerned, it is the Secret Doctrine which dies therein, and it will be understood by Masons when I say that the symbolism offers only the picture of a partial and imperfect restoration, being into the land of shadow rather than the land of light. The reason is that the loss is not atoned for, and hence Craft Masonry is waiting for a day of salvation which has not been declared therein. The symbolism also memorialises the internment of man's highest part in the body of physical life.

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The experience which is allocated to the Candidate is that he is brought back whence he came, carrying the suggestions and the portents of a wonderful experience, the purport of which he can only realise in part. And the whole Lodge closes in expectation. The quest continues henceforward, as if for ever and ever. But there is another form of symbolism, some intimations of which will be given at the term of our whole research, when it will be found that the Mystery with which we are dealing is really the concealment of the Divine in the universe. It is the restriction which the law of manifestation has erected as the bounds thereof—which law is inherent, not imposed, in the limitations of personal consciousness. But on our part we shall do well at the moment to keep in view the simpler aspects of symbolism, while admitting that the aspects are many.

There is also another counsel: in attempting to summarise that which is expressed in the Craft Grades, we must not be misled by the accidents, though these have also their meaning, because the recipient is traversing throughout a region of parable and similitude under a Divine Guidance and as an especial part of God's service, that he may attain the reward of such service—which is the fuller light of truth. Once more, therefore, and always, it is the old counsel and undertaking, by which those who can so govern their own natures that they do lead a certain life, shall become par-

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takers of doctrine which is hidden from the world at large. The counsel here more especially concerns a spiritual building, of which the Candidate must be himself the chief stone, shewing that the material is within him ; that on the external side he is a part of the Temple which is to come, and more inwardly that he has personally to be erected into a perfect building following those plans which are communicated to him in the teachings of Freemasonry. It is a work which is begun, continued and ended in God, and the resources of language are drawn upon to assure the Candidate, firstly, that the spiritual building is his own temple and not an earthly monument ; secondly, that its erection progresses during the course of his advancement in the science ; and, thirdly, that in its proper understanding such an advancement is an ascent from earth to heaven by the path of Divine Law.

But by the fatality which inheres in the mystery and, *ab origine symboli*, was part, as I have said, of the design, it is not possible for Masonry to give him the complete process, the Catholic instruction, or the essential matter of the plan ; the true plans were never deposited in Temple or crypt of Temple. The desolation in respect of Masonry is that it has these designs no longer ; it becomes therefore, and remains, the custodian and master of the initiate's moral welfare, outside which it can only counsel him to proceed on his own initiative and see what he can discover in the

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Hidden Mysteries. It is in this sense, and during the progress of this work, that he always remains a Craftsman.

To sum up now on both sides, that which is expressed in the Craft Grades is the ethic of life as the veil of the whole mystery, and I have said enough in a previous work regarding the catholic appeal and ultimate incapacity of this part of the subject, considered as the basis of an Instituted Mystery. It is only the basis by subterfuge and is the curtain that has to be drawn. The symbolism itself memorises that which ought to follow and that which cannot be communicated because of the æonian loss. Those, therefore, who say that Masonry, with its moral instruction, has nothing but the commonplaces of the code of conduct to offer as the reward of initiation, say what is utterly true, but in so doing they produce the fullest evidence of their own inadequate warrants. In the world of things as they are, the Craft fulfils its entire office as a record of the loss of the union ; it testifies in parables to the existence of the great things, and it keeps green the remembrance concerning them. To those, however few, who are properly prepared, there is no more precious gift, because they can see beyond it. Masonry is also the counsel of a quest continued henceforward, and if we are able to discern and interpret its strange lights and shadows, I know of nothing more fruitful.

Whenever that time comes, in universal or

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individual experience, for the things which are here and now lost to be restored to the sanctuary that is within, the Craft will once and for all recite the closing of the Lodge in every grade of the work, giving place thereafter to the office of the truths and graces that have been signified for so long a time. They err in their fondness, and in the deeps of their dreaming, who think of things which might be expected to follow in the symbolic order as a true sequel to the Craft: they err, that is, who look perchance to find them within the measures of the same horizon and under the same Symbolic Covenant.

The Craft is a symbol of loss, and as such it is complete and perfect after its own manner; all that which fulfils it—according to the measure of ritual and in the world of instituted communications—lies without it and far away, supposing that there is anything by possibility and in very deed of symbolism. Now, it is just this point that is the concern of the whole inquiry, and therefrom will arise the connecting and expectant questions of what is contained in other and later Masonic Symbolism—whether the strict experience is veiled thereby, or whether we may not have to pass out of all Masonry, real or implied, to attain, if not in experience then in an act of symbolism, that which we seek. For the moment, in any case, we are brought into the presence of a sharp alternative, as follows: (*a*) that there is no true

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horizon in Masonry outside the Craft Grades, or (b) that the wisdom which created the emblematic Craft gave up, or suggested, other forms and voices from the deeps thereof. As a last word, therefore, of this section, the position in which the unfinished experiment is left by these Degrees is essential to the whole subject. It is the testimony that the Kingdom, which is nearer than the lover and the beloved, is yet far from the world without ; that man on the external side is remote from his proper term ; that the Power and the Glory are seen only through a great veil of substitution ; and that here we have no abiding city, house, or temple. But the confessed purpose of the High Grades—or their implicit when it is not expressed—is to add something to the Craft which it does not, on its own part, set forth. And of that which we should look for I have indicated in these lines the purport ; to re-express it in utter simplicity, it is the Divine Life manifested in the world and the soul.

Of such is our quest, and it is here and now inaugurated ; but as I have been dealing in the present section with a very difficult side of an exceedingly involved subject, I shall hold myself excused beforehand for whatever seeming repetition may prove unavoidable in an attempt to take my readers through a more comprehensive summary of the thesis regarded as a whole, and I shall express it, for their greater convenience, in

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a series of numbered paragraphs. They may be compared with those of the *Prolegomena* and have not been included therein because the two sequences serve each a purpose apart. I should add that the clauses are in reality more than a summary, as they contain also a forecast, and as such are not only an elucidation of what has preceded, but an introduction to much that is to come.

Mysterium Absconditum Latomorum

1. Craft Masonry is the story of an episode in the erection of a great Temple.

2. This Temple is part of the story of God's providence in respect of Israel.

3. On the literal surface, such providence is now a matter of past interest only.

4. The episode is also of no consequence unless it has an inward meaning.

5. There is, however, a two-fold meaning : (a) in the catastrophe which is recounted ; (b) in that which lies behind the idea of the building.

6. The catastrophe was the enforced withdrawal of the Maker-in-chief of the veil, with whom perished (a) the true plans and (b) a Divine Secret, symbolised by a Word or verbal formula.

7. All Craft Masonry is on the Quest of this secret.

8. The fact that there was a Divine Secret connected with the building-design intimates that the story is concerned with no ordinary edifice.

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9. When we turn to the records of Jewish tradition, we learn of that which is symbolised by the erection of Temples and Palaces.

10. We find also that in this tradition there are particulars of a verbal loss, and these are not to be understood literally any more than is the loss in Masonry.

11. I suppose that in both places the same kind of misapprehension has ensued through the inattention and grossness of the material mind: on the one hand, the loss in Jewry has been understood as something missing from the language owing to exile and bondage; on the other, the rank and file of Masonic initiates have rested content in the assumption that their loss is a pass-word belonging to a Grade which has ceased.

12. Some part of the records containing the Secret Tradition in Israel was emerging into the knowledge of Latin-reading Europe at the period when Symbolical Masonry was emerging also on the horizon of history and thought.

13. We know, therefore, from what quarter of the intellectual and esoteric world there has come to us the root-matter of Craft legend and symbolism.

14. The written Jewish tradition pre-supposes throughout a tradition which did not pass into writing. The *Zohar*, for example, which is its chief memorial, refers everywhere to a great body of doctrine as something perfectly well

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known by the circle of initiation for which the work was alone intended.

15. The body of traditional doctrine is therefore but partially included by the *Zohar*.

16. To supply what is wanting in this great text there arose the endless mass of commentary, some part of which has passed into Latin, but it is questionable how far this incorporates further elements of a Secret Doctrine and how far it represents the reveries and independent excogitations of a later age.

17. The masters of Craft Symbolism may have been acquainted with the *corpus non scriptum* of the Secret Teaching, but we do not know, and the question is not vital. Its roots they knew otherwise.

18. They were certainly acquainted with a more universal Secret Tradition, which comes down from the furthest past : it may be described broadly as the doctrine of Mystical Death and Rebirth.

19. Behind this doctrine there lies the whole world of mystic experience, which is a matter of practice and not a matter of belief or philosophical inference.

20. Craft symbolism is concerned with Mystic Death and Rebirth.

21. It is, however, the beginning and not the end of this mystery.

22. A shadow of the Divine Secret is alone communicated therein ; it may be called the Secret of Death.

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23. There came a time when the *Holy Order of the Royal Arch* was established, presumably to restore the Secret in full, but it only delineates in another form of symbolism the specific nature of the loss.

24. There came also certain High Grades which invented various devices arising out of Craft Symbolism, and shewing how the external Temple was completed without the plans, how the Master-Builder was vindicated, and what circumstances led up to the erection of the Second Temple.

25. Speaking broadly, these Grades have very slight traces of the Secret Tradition out of which the Craft arose.

26. There came, in fine, the Christian High Grades, which claim to replace the Secret of Death communicated in the Craft by a Secret of Life revealed in Christ, and thus to restore the Word.

27. Some of these Grades belong to the Secret Tradition, some of them bear its traces, and some are offices of vain observance.

28. It is in this manner that there arises the present work as a record of the evidence of a root-connection between the Craft and the High Grades expressed by the way of symbolism.

29. It is designed also to shew that Masonry in its catholic interpretation formulates an important aspect of the Secret Tradition in Christian Times.

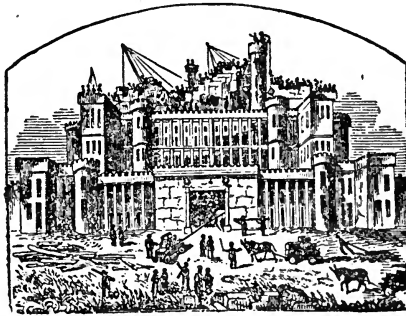
30. And this Tradition being concerned with

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a Great Experiment carried to a certain term, and with an experience communicated at the term, the work is further and finally designed to intimate the nature of the Experiment and of the experience attained therein.

31. The Great Experiment is a Mystery of the Christ-Life, and if Masonry is a memorial regarding it, or a reflection thereof, it will be understood readily that a Mystery of Building which began in Israel could only be completed in Christ.

32. It does not follow herefrom that we shall find the completion in perfection, but it will be much if we find the traces.





II

THE MYSTERY OF BUILDING IN ISRAEL

FOR the theosophical Jew amidst the penalties of the greater exile, the Divine Mystery of the universe was but another side of the Mystery of God's Providence in Israel; if the course of the world and life explained his state and place in a certain measure, and if in this manner he also was shewn to be the child of circumstances, there was for him, in his reverie, a very much higher sense, and a deeper sense by far, in which that providence, ever strange and ever wonderful, explained the manifest universe. It was by the letters of his language that the world was built of old; it had been externalised for his sake, and if the literal side of the inspired Word did in any way concern humanity at large, the hidden and inward side concerned only himself and his people. The secret, traditional, subsurface doctrine was thus the heritage of all who were most elect and set apart among a nation that was utterly elect in every generation and family.

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There was nothing for this reason to compare, in desirability, in urgency and necessity, with the study of the Secret Tradition. It was to be dwelt on by day and by night ; the day uttered speech concerning it, and the night shewed knowledge. It was a new heaven, wherein it was proclaimed continually that the former things had passed away. A part of it was expressed, but a part was implied only, and every new explication was assumed into the world of *Atziluth*, which is the world of the Holy One, and was crowned by God therein. The crown with which it was adorned was emblazoned, as with precious stones, by letters of Divine Names ; and seeing that enthusiasms of this order were without prejudice to one another, and were not to be interpreted exclusively, it was equally true that if such an explication belonged to the order of highest mystic wisdom, it was placed also on the head of the just man who had announced it ; his crown also it was ; and it would decorate him for ever and ever.

Happy and illustrious, therefore, were those who were dedicated utterly to the study, for it not only redeemed them, increasing their beatitude in the world which was called life, but it increased the accidental glory and bliss of God in a manner which would be understood readily by orthodox catholic theology, for it has analogous developments of its own. Amidst the novelties thus made possible, it was most necessary, however, to be sure of the exactitude of what was

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expressed newly concerning the Doctrine, or it would be outside the law and the order, and would entail punishments rather than rewards. It must be of the true legitimacy, must remain in the line of tradition and must follow without a break from that which was antecedent therein. There were many cogent reasons, as, for example (*a*) that God created the world by means of the Secret Doctrine, just as He formed or built it by means of the Hebrew letters, and a false development therefrom would be a reckless creation in chaos; (*b*) it was the jewels of the heavenly spouse, and there must be no counterfeit specimens; (*c*) it was the perfect part of the Law, and the Law does not suffer arbitrary accretions.

Now, I have spoken of a hidden meaning concerning the first Tables of the Law and their fracture by Moses; as an illustration of Kabalistic exegesis, it may be mentioned that even the story of the Garden of Eden and the Fall of Man is held to have been written, as it was also enacted, with conscious reference to Israel during the dispensation of the First Covenant. The Law on Sinai was intended to undo the Fall, at least in respect of the chosen people. When Moses ascended the sacred mountain the curse fell away from the sons of Abraham; when he came down carrying the Tables, what he brought was the restored Law of Paradise—the Law of Mercy, of union and of glory. But between those two symbolical and actual points of time Israel had

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re-enacted the Fall by its idolatry and wantonness. The breaking of the Tables opened the eyes of the people to the enormity of their acts, and it is in this sense that the eyes of Adam and Eve are said in Genesis to have been opened, so that they saw their own nakedness. When it is recited further that *Jehovah Elohim* provided our first parents with garments of skin, this signifies in respect of Jewry—though of course without prejudice to the separate sense of the first story—that in place of the Law of innocence there was given ultimately, on other tables, the Law of judgment, of severity and trespass. The text from which I am deriving my thesis—that is to say, the *Sepher Ha Zohar*, or *Book of Splendour*—adds that Moses is predestined to return on earth and to proclaim the Word lost by the sin of Israel—which Word is the true name of the *Shekinah*—in other terms, that name which would have been delivered from Sinai if the chosen people had not proved unworthy. The office of *Shekinah* in connection with *Messiah*, as it is developed in the same text, contains the root-matter of the relation between the Craft and the Christian High Grades of Masonry, and in this manner, but without dwelling on the especial points, I come round to my proper subject, which I will re-express for convenience as follows :—

(a) The makers of symbolical Masonry, within the limits of the Craft Degrees and the *Holy Royal Arch*, were initiates of the Secret

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Tradition in Kabalism ; (*b*) they were, in my opinion, more than this, but this much is at the moment enough for my purpose ; (*c*) it was from this source in the main that they derived their emblematic materials ; (*d*) they spiritualised Solomon's Temple in the sense that it was spiritualised by Kabalism ; (*e*) they drew also from it their notion of something substituted in place of something that was removed ; (*f*) they derived in the same manner certain intimations concerning other things that—for purposes of safe custody—were taken from the first Temple into places of concealment, and were brought therefrom at the building of the Second Temple ; (*g*) these intimations were woven into a legend, the central episode of which is not Jewish, for it belongs to a wider tradition.

Craft Masonry has been heretofore supposed to deal only with matter of legend which is justified by a moral purpose, and I conceive that I deserve well of my initiation if I shew that it has higher warrants.

I will now take the chief points in their order, and first as regards what I have called the mystery of building in Israel. It must be understood that the Temple of Solomon followed a Divine plan, and in the hypothesis of the whole subject that plan was communicated to David because he was a man after God's own heart—that is to say, he received it as St. John received the plans of the later House of Doctrine on the

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breast of Christ. Masons who know in what sense their own Lodges do each represent (*a*) the Temple of the Brotherhood at large, considered as one stately and superb edifice filling the four quarters of the globe, and (*b*) the external universe itself, or, in the words of one of the *Midrashim*, the proportion of the height, the proportion of the depth and the lateral proportions, the measurements of the body of God, which are the delineation of the heavenly Temple—these will understand that the first Temple at Jerusalem was planned after such manner and that all its measurements were mystical. The same description applies to the precious objects which were located in the Holy of Holies ; for example, the Tabernacle, when it was erected in the wilderness, was, according to another *Midrash*, brought to Moses as a bride is brought to the bridegroom—a statement which will be perfectly unintelligible to the ordinary reader, but it is explained by the relation of the Tabernacle to the *Shekinah*, while this Indwelling Glory was the Spiritual Spouse of the Lawgiver. When the Tabernacle was placed in the Temple the latter was inhabited by the *Shekinah*. A similar involved sacramentalism attached to the rest of the hallows, and in this manner the Temple which had its root on earth, because it was a real Temple, was raised and exalted through the whole world of symbolism. The literature of Kabalism concerned itself comparatively little with the root, but extended on every side whatso-

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ever was expressed and implied in the emblematic part ; and when those who were acquainted with the tradition drew from its records the materials of emblematic Freemasonry, we have not to seek for their intimations on the subject of a mystery in building.

They knew by reference to their source that the universe is a Temple erected to the glory of the Lord ; that the *Elohim* who operated in the creation were a Temple of the Divine Seed which germinated therein ; that the wise on earth are the columns of the Temple which is in heaven ; and that the *Shekinah*, which is glory present in manifestation, is also a Palace of Prayers. All Kabalistic Palaces or Temples may be regarded as a reflection into the heights of that which was built by Solomon ; but this is another way of saying that the latter was an earthly symbol reflected from the world of the Archetype. When it ceased to exist on earth it was removed into that world and was nearer to theosophical Jewry than when Jewry beheld it with the mere eyes of mortality. The whole Sephirotic system of Kabalism became a mystery of Temples, and the four worlds were the worlds thereof. It was the same with the Sacred Names ; for example, the word *Adonai*, which was substituted for *Tetragrammaton*, became the Palace of *Tetragrammaton*, and was the nearest likeness of all to the Temple at Jerusalem. The *Shekinah*, which dwelt in that Temple, symbolised the Indwelling Presence of the Divine in man, and

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hence it is said that man was made from the earth on which the Temple was afterwards built. Out of this notion there arises the idea of an externalised edifice that is to come, and it is hence said in the *Zohar* that when the Holy One shall remember the people Israel, He will cause them to return into their country, and the Temple shall be then rebuilt. But it should be understood that the country and Temple are not of this world.

In the fervid minds of the Kabalists it was inevitable that the development of such notions carried them far away from the earth on which they began. The dream drew them through the mystery of the Garden of Eden, which they situated in contiguity to the Kingdom of this world, called *Malkuth* in the Sephirotic system. Herein there were seven Palaces or Temples, which were habitations and, in a sense, stages of progression, through which the souls of the just passed on their journey upward, after their departure from this life. These were the many mansions of the Father's house. The first was entered by those who had never denied their Master ; the second, by those who had suffered, for the soul's sake, in the moral and physical sense ; the third, by those who had wept for the destruction of the Temple—signifying the loss of the Secret Doctrine—and they were consoled therein by Messiah ; the fourth was entered by those who had mourned for Zion and Jerusalem, and had been slain by unbelievers ; the fifth was the place of true penitents ; the

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sixth was entered by those who had loved their Master with the true love of the zealous ; and the seventh, which was the centre of all, was, this notwithstanding, that which was visited by everyone at the moment of death, and from this place they were relegated to their proper Temple. They were all places of tarrying, not of ultimate abode. Above them was the higher Eden, and there were also the higher Temples or Palaces, analogous to the lower, and also seven in number. Therein the glory of the Holy One was manifested above, as the *Shekinah* was manifested below. They were Palaces of the Mystery of Faith, they were mystic Palaces of Prayer, Palaces of the Stages of Prayer, Palaces of the Mystery of Mysteries.

The enumeration might be continued through a longer space than it can claim for the present purpose. I will add only that there were even Temples of the deeps, infernal Palaces or Mansions, forming gradations of the abyss, from the first, which was a pit or well of iniquity, to the seventh or last, which was that of the ecstasy of evil, symbolised as intoxicating wine. This was the wine of death, and the juice of the forbidden fruit which Eve gave to Adam.

The dream of the Temples in the heights reacted on the earthly Temple for the further glorification of its memory ; and thus, as I have said, was Solomon's Temple spiritualised. Much of it will be mere fantasy to the modern mind, but behind it lies the doctrine of the peculiar sanctity

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on earth which is the path of election to the unseen worlds, wherein the end of sanctity is realised. It serves also to shew that the Secret Doctrine was itself a spiritual Temple based on the part of earth, which is the literal word, but raised into all the heights.

I have said already sufficient on the subject of a loss suffered by Israel in respect of a Divine Word to make it unnecessary in this section to do more than clear certain issues. The name which was suppressed in the wilderness is not to be identified with the true form of *Tetragrammaton*, so that there is more than one word in regard to which Jewry is in a state of widowhood. Respecting the true form of *Tetragrammaton*, I have presented so far only one side of this subject, and it is in a sense the most exotic side ; it is something like the doctrine of Temples and Palaces, for it began a little nearer to the earth—that is to say, in the alleged fact that the name of Jehovah was pronounced only once a year, when the High Priest entered the most Holy Place. The last person who uttered it was Simeon the Just, and after the destruction of the Second Temple a prohibition was understood in respect of it. It came about in this manner that *Adonai* was substituted for reading purposes, wheresoever *Yod, He, Vau, He*, occurs in the sacred text. The suppression in the course of time served for the exaltation of the word ; that which must not be pronounced came to be regarded as *nomen inener-*

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rabile, at least by ordinary skill ; it was a mystery of knowledge, and those who could attain thereto had the forces of Nature at their command. This is the root of Kabalistic magic, leading in its ultimate developments to all kinds of intellectual corruption and to the impostures connected with the title of *Baal Shem*, or Masters of the Divine Name. But *Tetragrammaton* was reserved and incommunicable in respect of another hypothesis, because it expresses eternity and the nature of the Divine Essence ; it is referred to in this sense in the *Book of Wisdom*. According to the *Talmud*, both natural and eternal death were visited on those who dared to utter the sacred word in public, metaphorically because the effect was to subvert heaven and earth. As a matter of precaution it was represented in texts like the *Zohar* by the letters *Yod, Daleth, Vau, Daleth*, or by a double *Yod* and the point called *Kametz*. Its nearest equivalent was not *Adonai* but *Aleph, He, Yod, He*, and was another substitution, itself liable to be replaced in Kabalistic works by a triple *Aleph*. It seems to follow that the sanctuary loss is not exactly a loss at all, but a law of exile and of punishment ; and Masonry itself, amidst all its quest for the buried verbal formula, is continually hinting in side Rituals and things arising therefrom that the formula is not interned, but is near to the lips of all. I do not mean that this is frequently or ever put forward upon the literal surface, but it is the recurring voice of the symbol-

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ism. We now know how it arose and whence it came.

It will be seen as we proceed that I do not hold any special brief on behalf of the *Royal Arch* in its existing textual state, but I know after what manner it can be said to escape the most drastic forms of criticism by a study of the symbols which are supposed to testify against it. It is therefore additionally important at the present point to shew that its chief material on the historical side of its legend derives, like that of the Craft, from a similar source in the Secret Tradition. The intimation is only a variant of the account in the *Second Book of Maccabees*, but the differences are vital. The apocryphal text states that the prophet Jeremias at the time of the Captivity concealed the Tabernacle, the Ark and the Altar of Incense in a cave on Mount Nebo. This is cited by the Talmudists, though they appear to have rejected the book. But one of the *Midrashim* affirms (*a*) that the Ark was hidden in the Temple itself by command of Josias, the king, and (*b*) that other hallows, including the Tabernacle, tables and chapters of the Pillars were concealed in vaults beneath. We see, therefore, from what source the inventors of the *Arch Degree* and the *Cryptic Degrees*, which lead up to the *Royal Arch*, derived their notion concerning the existence of certain buried treasures.

I have indicated that it would be easy to multiply the instances, the allusions and the

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allegories of Temple Building according to the Secret Doctrine in Israel. Whatsoever is manifest is a sanctuary for that which is withdrawn. We have seen also that the world itself is a Temple, a Palace, a sacred and glorious House built in the honour of Him who is Lord of all the Mysteries, Mysteries of Nature and Grace and the formal Mysteries instituted to preserve and pass on the hidden knowledge concerning Him. One side of the doctrine of macrocosmic building is described under the allegory of a King who proposed to construct a number of edifices—as, for example, the sun, the planets and this habitable earth of ours. He employed an architect, who worked under his sole authority—as the Master-Builder under the ægis of a King in Israel. The name of the King was *Chokmah*, who is Wisdom in transcendence, the second *Sephira* or Divine Hypostasis. The name of the architect was *Matrona*, literally, the Mother in transcendence, *Binah* or Supreme Understanding, the third Hypostasis, who worked by way of emanation, and in her artifice appeared as the lower *Shekinah*, the Mother in manifestation. She employed an Intendant of Buildings, and by her authority man was created in the image of the Elohim.

Again, the Secret Doctrine is a House or Temple, within which is the Eternal Wisdom—not the Sephirotic *Chokmah*, but that which is hidden in the Eternal Thought and never unveiled or perceived. It is obvious that this

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Temple is also in concealment ; it is called the Voice of Jacob, the Great Voice, which is too subtle for the ears of sense. About it, however, there is the House of the Word, which is heard everywhere and is the Word that passes into writing.

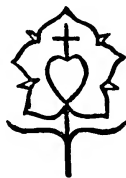
As regards the material Temple of Solomon, which was yet so utterly mystical in all its parts and dimensions, this Sanctuary of Zion was called the hill of incense and it was established in the joy of the whole earth. Its geographical site was described and regarded as the centre of the world. In this way it had analogy with another Temple, which is mentioned but not described—that Palace at the Centre which was the peculiar abode of the Holy One.

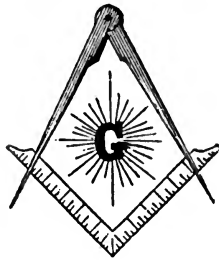
The Talmuds of Jerusalem and Babylon are more concerned, however, than the *Zohar* with the external building. There is the story of the trees planted about its precincts by Solomon and bearing fruit of gold. When the wind blew, the fruit fell and was gathered up by the priests. Things like this are curious in their way, but they belong to the spirit of fantasy rather than the spirit of inward doctrine.

For the rest, the chosen people dwelt in the light and shadow of the glorious place, and beyond them was the outer world, like a vast reflection of its precincts. The material Temple was the Law as it was literally delivered on Sinai, full of secondary radiance and derived truth.

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Within it was the Holy of Holies, but this was the dwelling of *Shekinah*, the spirit which animated the mass, the Secret Doctrine, the holy tradition, of which Israel at large was unworthy, the Law of the first Tables. But the breaking of these prefigured the destruction of the First and Second Temples, and, as the years rolled on, the people passed from evil to greater evil. The silent prophecy was realised in respect of the first calamity, and that which it was possible to rebuild after the captivity in Babylon was the imitation only of something which itself was not finished, by the Masonic hypothesis, according to the perfect plan. Then followed the second sorrow, when, this time by the hypothesis of the Secret Doctrine, everything was lost but the Doctrine. The seed of future liberation and return out of exile is contained in that treasury, so that as in Masonry nothing is irretrievably lost. Behind the cloud of substitution the pearls lie concealed, and when the people take possession of their inheritance, that will be the time—as we have seen—when the Holy One shall remember Israel. The analogy of this is the end of the Masonic quest.





III

THE EXPERIMENT OF THE HIGH GRADES AND THE CLAIMS IMPLIED THEREIN

THE vast expository and historical literature of Masonry in the chief countries of Europe, and in the world that we call new, has approached its subject of research after all manners and from nearly all points of comparison. It has spoken of the things which matter and of those which signify scarcely ; it has opened every way that seemed practicable to the skill of inquest ; it might be said that it had left nothing undone, were it not that the great subjects are inexhaustible. But as if that infinite were suddenly to be declared anew, which is declared everywhere, there arises, out of all expectation in the consciousness of the normal mind, that construction of the mystery some rumour and outline of which I have given in the work that preceded this. The sketch of the symbolical position which served a specific purpose in *The Hidden Church of the Holy Graal*, not

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only of necessity but by design, provided the mere preface and left for a larger opportunity the thesis that calls to be stated in the present place.

In so far as the Craft Grades can be said to have made the Mason upright, he has sought out every invention in the high supplements, sequels, extensions and exotic conceptions with which we shall be now and henceforth concerned. In some, as we shall find, the consanguinities are rather of the ghostly order than that of real flesh ; but there are intimations of a spiritual or at least of a psychic affinity. In others this phantom alliance itself dissolves, and there is only a marriage which seems to have been made in offices for the registration of Degrees rather than in Heaven, or in its reflection, which is the Church on earth. Setting imagery aside, the simple Masonic qualification exacted from Candidates, and testifying to the fact that the Grade, Order or Rite has enrolled itself under the Masonic Banner, constitutes the sole kinship. Most things which arise out of devices of this kind can only be considered herein for the purpose of removing them from the sequence as *nihil ad acta Latomorum*. In so far as they belong to the Secret Tradition, they enter separately therein ; in so far as they are concerned with its term, they reach it by another road of symbolism ; in so far as they continue to exist, they must be regarded as erecting their particular habitations, even their holy houses, in secret wayside places, over against their particular

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streams and lagoons of thought. Too often, however, they are not the Catholic House of Secret Doctrine, or even a chapel of ease which holds therefrom; but their fortuitous and enforced relationship is apart, fortunately, from any design of claiming a more intimate bond of union.

There are other Degrees which on the surface are in the same position, but they have obscure roots of identity with the subject-matter of the Craft, and the reason is that, either by transmission or revival, they represent an analogous memorial of the Secret Tradition. These are important after their own manner, not only in themselves but in their Masonic aspects, and they will call for careful judgment. Yet even these, in spite of the closer relation which is thus established, are again better recognisable as independent testimonies to the Secret Doctrine, than as things Masonic in their nature. There are still others, in fine, which embody that logical understanding and vital essence as principles behind the High Grades, in the absence of which they may be exalted in their own degree to any heights of intelligence, but they are not Grades of Masonry; they are neither its ground nor its development. It will be in virtue of the test or touchstone provided by this principle that we shall find in its proper place the integral connection between certain orders of Christian chivalry, Christian symbolism, offices of the Christian apostolate—between these and the Craft experiment, though it

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does not follow, as I have hinted hereinafter, that the mind of the Craft has power to recognise it till its own consciousness has been extended, and though it sometimes happens that those who now hold them—when they would most exalt their significance—are most disposed to separate them entirely from Masonry.

This is scarcely the place to discuss errors of enthusiasm belonging to the latter order, but the fact that the rulers of the Craft in England and its dependencies have elected to disassociate from the Masonic object whatever is outside the fundamental Degrees, and the supplement of the *Royal Arch*, has produced an illogical rejoinder on the part of some High Grade Masons. It is true that the Masonic qualification is required for any external Degree, but, this notwithstanding, the recipients who have thus earned their title are almost disposed to cast from them the ladder by which they have ascended, and to take pride in the fact that, exalted and enthroned as they are, the Craft—with its more restricted horizon—has become rather a subject for their patronage. As a fact, by adopting the course which I have mentioned, it has perhaps done the only thing that was admissible within the logic of its own mind. Intellectually it is possible for its members, collectively or individually, to recognise certain of the High Grades, supposing that it can accept their titles; but actually and in all reason it neither has nor can have any valid canon of criticism by which to distinguish between

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them, to affirm or deny concerning them. In the present state of its consciousness it has no ground of identification whereby it can establish the nature of its own loss, and till something is restored to the Sanctuary which shall furnish some portent of that loss, it is locally, and not universally—by an official decision arising out of special dispositions in certain Orients and Grand Lodges—that it can accept the construction of the Christian High Grades as to the nature thereof, and much more as to the specific restoration of its treasures. The act also remains exoteric in its nature and, within the official sphere, it cannot ascend higher. I should incline to hold this view in the present state of the case, even if other evidence should demonstrate fully that the Craft was originally intended to lead up to Christian Masonry after the same manner that Zoharic theosophy was once believed to introduce Christian doctrine.

At the same time, that which is offered in the Christian Degrees—being, as we shall find, a shadow reflected from the vital essence of the Secret Tradition itself—is that only which can be held to supply anything, so that other claimants are put effectually out of court.

A point of some importance has been established by way of accident herein, and it is the more interesting because in an unexpected manner it justifies—or at least explains—the procedure of the Craft in those cases and in those countries where it refuses to recognise the pretensions of

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extended Grades, while at the same time it does not impeach those Grades. They constitute testimonies apart which must be judged on their own merits, and as to these the Craft itself can pursue at present only a policy of silence. It can give no warrant to things which lie outside its horizon. In the existing stage of its development on the plane of symbolism, who shall convince it that the Law of Israel is fulfilled in the Law of Christ? Who shall convince it, in the order of Hermetic science, that the testimony of spiritual Alchemy—far from its own horizon—may, and perhaps does, give answers that no one dreams of to questions which the Craft has been asking through the days and generations, but has found no response in its own oracles? Only tentatively and dubiously it might confess—if it knew only—that Kabalism offers a reflection of its own subject—or I should say rather a replica—but help is none therein, for Kabalism utters only the same thing in the same tone of sorrow, and with the same heart of expectation.

On the other hand, in those countries where the root-matter of the Masonic system has incorporated something, whether much or little, from the High Grades, out of two things one has happened: the Rite as a whole—including the Craft sections—has suffered an inevitable change, and has either assumed a Christian motive and explanation, or alternately the Christian essentials which inhere in the High Grade portions have

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been fraudulently effaced. We shall recur to this point for its fuller consideration at a later stage.

Setting, therefore, this question aside for the time being, and having regard to the utter importance of the Craft message, the first thing that must occur to us in connection with the High Grades is the reverence with which we should approach their claims; and although on the surface they may seem in one sense conflicting, they are not so, even apparently, in the better and higher sense, while it is only in their improper understanding that they can be called exclusive of one another. I do not know that there is any one of them which, by the hypothesis or otherwise, appears to close the high debate of Masonry. So far as it is possible to co-ordinate the testimony of all the eloquent witnesses, they form in their combination the pillars of one temple, or perhaps more appealingly they are fragments of one gospel. Again, they are the same testimony in its variations through the ages and nations. It is such a work of collation that constitutes the major part of my task, so that we may judge under our own lights, firstly, whether they do, subject to their assumptions and world of things implied, extend the spiritual edifice of Masonry; and, secondly, whether the message which they deliver proves adequate so far as it goes, and enters into a logical sequence.

The mode of reverence is, however, a mode of courtesy and involves no prejudgments, nor shall

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we experience at their proper times any difficulty or reluctance in applying those tests which we shall find have been put into our hands or in abiding by the results obtained. It would be a sin against the literary sense if I forestalled conclusions now by so much as one intimation, for we are entering on untravelled regions and making our own road. Both in England and Scotland the system of High Grades is so far in operation that of those which have been collected into Rites, the lesser degrees are communicated in groups, and those more important, which are in this manner isolated, are moderately in working order; but they have never been made the subjects of a suggestive inquiry, while even as regards the Continent and America the present experiment stands alone in the literature of Masonry. It has therefore the additional task of seeking to create precedents rather than of following any, though in other respects I do not stand on the basis of my personal warrants only, for I speak with tradition behind me, and the memory of many worlds of initiation is stored up in my heart.

If there were not an intimate connection between the Secret Tradition in Christian Times and the super-Masonic experiments, we should be dealing in the High Grades only with a far extending realm of fantasy, and this study would not have entered into the written word. Now, seeing that the tradition itself, though it is old as the exile of our mortality, has assumed particular

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complexions through the ages of Christendom, and is either the inward source of Christian life or has adopted its veils, we shall be prepared *a priori* to find, and shall find in fact abundantly, that the place of Christianity in the High Grades is so much of first importance that there is nothing second in comparison. The preoccupations of those who created the several systems are therefore declared from the beginning. They drew, however, from many worlds of tradition, worlds of invention, worlds of experience, so we shall see shortly in summary that there was more and far more than one chorus of hierophants. To the urgent, though tacit and *sotto voce*, questions of the Craft, many things answered. And as on the one side the Law of the Gospel was, under innumerable phases, the recurring solution offered for the problems left over by the Law of Israel, when seen in the light of Craft Masonry, so there was a lesser host of Grades and Degrees, which sought to extend the Craft under the ægis of the Ancient Alliance. But there were others also, and therefore the proper classification of the great mass of Degrees, and Rites containing Degrees, is the first matter to concern us here and now.

If we set aside from consideration the purely fantasiast devices, which are detached for the most part and enter into no system, the High Grades are separable in the first instance into three great comprehensive classes, being (*a*) those of the Old Dispensation, confessing to the Craft

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motive ; (b) those of the New Alliance, confessing to the Christian motive, as the necessary development and completion of the Craft motive ; and (c) those which are designed to incorporate some specific portion of the Secret Tradition in Christian Times as a part of the Masonic system. I must not say that an exhaustive sub-division is possible in any case, but each class falls into sections which seem to include all that have any title to consideration, whether as important symbolically, historically, or in connection with our research. Class A responds to three periods of symbolic time, being (1) those Grades which precede the catastrophe commemorated in the Legend of the Craft Degrees ; (2) those which arise out of it or are coincident immediately thereto ; and (3) those which are concerned with the erection of another Spiritual House, still under the Law of the First Covenant—I mean, the Second Temple.

It does not follow that—with the exception of *Mark Masonry* and one or two *Cryptic Grades*—any of these intervene, by their symbolism or otherwise, between *Fellow Craft* and *Master*, understood as grades of dignity. One precarious inference from the ultimate Craft Degree is a veiled intention to suggest that there were always titular Masters in addition to those who ruled paramount over the great mystery of doctrine-building which at that time was at work hypothetically in Israel ; but it is entirely certain that this will not bear analysis. The Grades of *Neophyte* and *Fellow*

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Craft have no symbolical time except as to order in initiation, and no High Grades can precede these symbolically. We shall see—and I have already intimated—that there are many that do not really create a connection at all, and these are *nihil ad rem* ; but there are others which, although upon the surface they will seem open to the same charge, have imbedded in their symbolism a strange consanguinity and an arresting identity of intention.

In respect of Class B, the second of our comprehensive classes, this is much more difficult to resolve into lesser elements ; but we may distinguish (1) several Degrees which seek to provide a distinct sequel to the Legend of the Craft Degree, among the most important of which are those that respond to the motive in the *Écossais* Grades of St. Andrew ; (2) those which incorporate a purely spiritual chivalry, like the *Grade of Rose-Croix* ; (3) those which institute a connection between Masonry and Templarism, and of such is the true *Kadosh* ; (4) those which incorporate Templarism without confessing on the surface to any Masonic connection, though they require the Masonic qualification ; (5) those which expressly attempt to exhibit a development from Jewish into Christian Masonry ; (6) those which commemorate epochs of the Ancient Alliance in the minds of Christian Masons, *e.g.* *Prince of the Tabernacle*. It should be understood that a system like that of the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED

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SCOTTISH RITE, or the EARLY GRAND RITE, has confused the order of the Degrees, so that the Candidate, in his advancement through these, returns under the symbolical ægis of the First Covenant after he has passed under the New. A similar criticism would no doubt obtain in some larger systems of Rites, the degrees of which are in many cases known to us by little more than their names.

Series C is the entrance into a new scheme, which is simple so far as it goes, and there is no difficulty in separating it into component parts. But of these I will here and now name only the most important, as follows: (1) Rosicrucian Degrees, as distinguished from those of *Rose-Croix*, and of these the example in chief is the group included by the REFORMED RITE OF THE BRETHREN OF THE ROSY AND GOLDEN CROSS, established in 1777; (2) Alchemical Degrees, sometimes in groups and sometimes in solitary Grades, whether incorporated or not by other systems; (3) Kabalistic Degrees—usually with a Christian interest—and from a few words which have been said already on Zoharic analogies with Masonry, a particular importance must antecedently attach to these collections; (4) Magical Degrees, chief among which is the RITE OF THE ELECT COHENS.

These may be taken to exhaust the three classes, but there remain certain exotics of which a word of enumeration must be said separately—(1) The RITE OF SWEDENBORG, which is really,

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in its present form, a special construction placed upon Craft Masonry ; (2) certain Grades in which the doctrinal principles of Swedenborg were incorporated ceremonially by a few loving disciples ; (3) Grades introduced to depict the principles and practice, and to develop the philosophical notions of subjects like Animal Magnetism—but it must be said that they are quite worthless.

Beyond these there is the curious and inchoate world of that which I have called fantasy—a world which cries aloud and vainly for the unity of form. Its materials help to make up the incredible list of 1400 Grades collected and commemorated by Ragon, yet without exhausting everything. The French historian—and critic in the rudimentary sense—had little capacity for his vast subject, and his opportunities in respect of texts have been wanting to me. It is possible, therefore, that some few jewels of enlightenment may adorn other treasuries to which I have found no access ; but as it happens very seldom that a great name in literature fails utterly to come into its own, so have I an antecedent conviction that no Masonic Rite with seals of greatness has remained in complete obscurity. The dust which is left as a residuum after the classification that I have made, contains, I am sure, no stars.

There is one thing more. The inevitable anxiety on the part of some or many that both sexes should share in the privileges of Masonry led them in the past to institute Rites for women

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and androgynous Grades. That which was offered in each case was, however, a casual substitute only, in place of the real thing, and there is not one of them, or barely one, which has any real title to existence. The things that are manifest in respect of mystic association are the shadow of things which are scarcely manifest at all. There are technical difficulties at the present day regarding the reception of women into Masonry, and these, although they have no connection with the disingenuous follies that found expression in the past, are sufficiently serious to adjourn the discussion of the question *sine die*. But the place of woman in the Rites of initiation has been determined long since after a manner which leaves no doubt regarding the equality of the sexes therein. As in the days of Greece, and in days earlier than those, there were Lesser and Greater Mysteries—the imperfect memorials of which are still objects of research—for the reception of chosen men, so there were others—but we know little more than their names, which admitted women only; the bisexual rites are not less old than these, and their reflections are with us now, as they were when symbolical Masonry was first lifted above the horizon of history. In the secret ceremonials which have Divine knowledge as the final settlement of their research, the man is not without the woman, nor he who is priest of sacramental mysteries according to the ordination of Melchizedek without a priestess within the communion of super-essential sanctity.

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So far as regards that which arises herein as an extrinsic issue at the moment ; and now as to the comparative importance of the various classes comprised in the above tabulation, this must be determined by their analysis in detail ; but for the completion of the present section within its proper measures it is not irrelevant to say that the Grades which endeavour to extend or perfect the Craft within the covenant of the Old Law, must, even if their claims were commensurate, lie under a grave disability because of the standard with which they invoke comparison. I can conceive no more stressful ordeal. But it must be said in a general sense that most of them establish at once their ambition and their incapacity. A criticism of the same kind will obtain respecting a vast majority of the Degrees which exist under the ægis of the New and Eternal Testament ; but the fact that there are pearls of great price in the divisions which respond to this motive is the fact that has created this book. And herein is an avowal at once that, in relation to its particular assumption, there did begin in the symbolism the building of a new and more perfect House of Doctrine, so that in the logical understanding the old things merged into the things that were new, and, symbolically speaking, there were a new heaven and a new earth, the former things having passed away.

Hereof is the specific implicit which will be found in the Grades of Christian Masonry ; but

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they will have to be judged individually, each by its own standard, because it is more than possible that they may fall short of (*a*) their proposed term, or (*b*) of that which, *ex hypothesi*, we allocate thereto in our dream of those Higher Grades that would complete Masonry, supposing that they had ever entered into the heart of man.

The existence of the Secret Tradition in Christian Times does not depend upon the evidence of symbolical Masonry under any form and in respect of any Covenants, old or new. But the existence of the Craft system and its origin in these times are an eloquent testimony, from all things else apart, as to the fact of that Tradition, howsoever it is left at the end in the subsurface mind of Masonry. We shall learn that all these speaking witnesses confess to one another, are made in the image of each other, and in fine sustain one another. The Craft, with its moving argument of a loss which it commemorates for ever and laments for ever, a loss which is visited thereupon from generation to generation, yet was not of its own creation, does, as it must, direct a yearning glance towards all that cloud and cohort of symbolic pageants, made after its own image and in the likeness one of another, which say that there or here lies the true way of restitution. And the kings of the East and the West, with the other quarters of heaven, bring their strange offerings, as of gold, frankincense and myrrh, to heal the loss of the House, to consecrate that place

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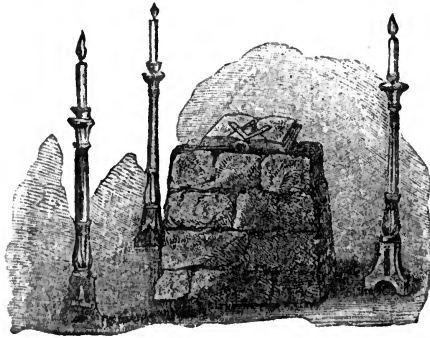
where the Master was laid to His rest, taking His wisdom with Him, and if we know where they have laid Him, it seems long and very long before the hour of His awakening. The guardians of those sacred consonants, the vowels of which are missing, and the wardens of those words of death, substituted for the words of life, know so little for what they are looking that if the Word itself were uttered suddenly in their midst, it might scarcely find an echo in their hearts, they speaking another language. So also, if He came to the Lodge door unannounced on a morning of Easter, giving that battery of a Master which no door has heard in all our Lodges of Mourning, He who would be coming to His own, might not find His own receiving Him.

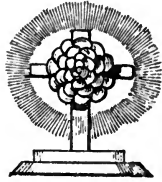
I have spoken of strange gifts, but the Keepers of some Mysteries have turned all the letters in their hands into little catechisms for very simplicity, till the children chide in their classes, for this it is which their mothers had taught them, and why should they come to hear it again, and even again, being now, as it seems to them, grown men who have started in search of knowledge? Still, if it is not given to every man according as he seeks, the exotics are there also, and he who has turned thither may hither also turn, when the intervention of the secret sciences dawns in the far vistas. Therein he will find great rumours, curious inventions, and hints of tradition continued; but whether there is not after all a more

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excellent way, we shall see perhaps in the sequel.

Perhaps also it should be understood and expressed, even at this comparatively early point, that it is less for what is on their surface that there is importance in the best of the Christian Grades than for that which is implied, all that which lies behind the outward modes of expression in ritual. It is rather in virtue of this that they hold by the roots from the Secret Tradition in Christian Times.





IV

THE CHIEF RITES AND THEIR SYSTEMS

I AM anxious to make it understood somewhat more clearly at the beginning of this section that it forms no part of my task to write a history of Freemasonry on the external side. Of this kind there is already more than one competent and authoritative account in the English language ; it would be possible, and from some points of view might not be less than desirable, to approach such an undertaking from a new standpoint ; but I do not know that it would promote the light of the soul, which is the main purpose of books. Moreover, the esoteric history will be represented sufficiently in my thesis, which, for the rest, accepts and assumes all that has been determined on adequate evidence in regard to the things that are without—in a word, the story of the great Masonic movement as it has been manifested so far in the open day. I have no special qualification to pronounce beyond the sphere of my allotted devotions, but I may observe with befitting appreciation that the *Concise History of Freemasonry* by Mr. R. F. Gould is an excellent text-book,

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which could be mentioned as an introduction to the present work of interpretation. It embodies reasonably late knowledge, and is an instance of mature reflection on facts; it is temperate and catholic in its presentation of the issues and counter-issues, and in its tolerance of all divergent views. Furthermore, it rests rigidly within the limits of its own horizon, and leaves my particular field advisedly untouched. It is therefore in all respects a proper subject of reference at this point; I am writing for advanced students, and I must be allowed to presuppose some acquaintance with the simple elements, more especially when these are available otherwise in a comparatively recent and comprehensive form.

In so far as a few preliminary words belonging to the historical grounds are necessary here at the inception, the reader should recall in the first place what I have said in the Introduction regarding the Building Guilds. Having existed from time immemorial, these were (*a*) made subject somewhere in the seventeenth century to the intervention of an interest outside operative Masonry, but under circumstances the particulars and inner concern of which have not come down to us; (*b*) or at that period the speculative side of building, having long been in close connection with the operative side, began to absorb it entirely. I believe that in this second case it had undertaken, on its own part, to assume new and more symbolic vestures. In the alternative possibility the inter-

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vention must have been clear and express, but it worked in part upon antecedent materials, which removed from it the aspect of sudden and arbitrary change. It will be observed that in this statement I may appear to have left rather as an open question Mr. Gould's interesting theory, founded on the *Regius MS.* I think, however, that the document scarcely bears the construction which he has placed thereon, and if it did, it would fail to establish any connection between an English school, using the terms of architecture in a speculative sense at the middle of the fourteenth century, and that Secret Tradition of which the Craft Legend and a certain Closing of the Lodge are an indubitable part. But I feel that, by a bare possibility, there is something to be said for his view outside the evidence which he cites, and as I can work with either scheme I need not reject it utterly.

There were—independently of this—at least two ways in which the available elements of the Building Guild could be adapted to the modifications of allegory, symbol and parable; the rudiments of the mode of treatment probably pre-existed in the Craft of Masonry after the simplest of all manners and for the most obvious of all reasons. The art of moralising on the work, interests and relations of daily life was a characteristic of thought and invention during the Middle Ages, and so forward; it did not derive its origin from any very secret and unfathomed well-spring of the soul. Through all Christian times a correlation

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was recognised between our duty to God and our duty in the world, and as the Church instructed the faithful to keep its own commandments like those which originally were committed to humanity under other Divine warrants, so was the spirit which thus obtained in the sanctuary reflected into laical life among the Sons and Daughters of Christian Doctrine. For example, the preservation of trade secrets within the limits of a trade sodality, or guild, not only assumed, as one might say, naturally, and by the reflection which I have mentioned, a religious aspect, but reception into such companies was often characterised by a quasi-religious ceremonial. The truth is that the teaching authority conceived and created an universal code of honour which applied in all directions, and was one in all ; it had its roots in the earth and was raised from the workshop, the cottage and the cabin, till, like the ladder of Jacob's vision, it was lost in the heights of heaven and the aspiration towards Divine union. It was the working out of a great doctrine of analogy in all things. And so it came about that, *cæteris paribus*, the apprentice in respect of his duty was not out of kinship with the novice in a monastic House of God ; the Craftsman might recall those who had assumed new responsibilities with minor orders ; the Master, accepted as a proficient in his art, was in a position of authority and a man of skill like the priest. After this manner was life consecrated in those elder days,

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and even though ceremonies of reception had touches of the rude and the burlesque, they were not for that reason unhallowed.

We shall see later on that a time and place came in Masonic history when emotion and romance contrived to invest the art and craft of architecture with much higher consecrations, for those who could tolerate the ascription. It was exalted by interpreters into a mystery of religion as well as a mystery of building, and into a channel through which a secret knowledge was perpetuated from times almost mythological. But the legend of the Dionysian architects is no part of the Secret Tradition, as I understand the expression, and the religion was of the imputed kind rather than a recognition of the mystic term in Masonry. It suffered therefore from a miscomprehension of the implicits of its own hypothesis. I will not, however, forestall further the judgment on this question that we shall reach at a later stage. One thing remains clear : to the extent that trade guilds may have assumed a shadow of ceremonial in their mode of reception, and so far as that ceremonial was utilised to instruct candidates in their conduct towards the guild, and one towards another therein, what it taught was duty—that is to say, a certain definite code of moral action. If similitude and allegory were adopted, as it is sometimes thought, to insist thereon, we have already the root-matter of the ethical law in symbolical Freemasonry ; we see some part of

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that which was lifted with another intention out of the old body of procedure ; we can understand how and why it remained—how also and why two of the emblematic Craft Grades have nothing to communicate outside moral commandments and connected injunctions. We see further exactly what was brought into Freemasonry, being a *mysterium* that differs generically, that is not in relation with the side of moral law but with something reserved in doctrine and belonging to the life of religion.

Supposing that there was such a development from one to another state, we do not know, as I have said, when or by whom the rudimentary moralities and emblems of the Building Guild were elaborated into an ordered system ; we do not know under what circumstances the old occasional rule of initiating patrons and persons not belonging to the operative Craft was extended to an universal practice, so that the body of the sodality fell away and a soul of it only remained ; we do not know when the Legend of the Craft first became current in Masonry. I believe that the tendency to a speculative element was a growth of generations, but that a transmutation took place in fine, and that suddenly.

There is a sense in which the present work is a development of this statement from its first page to the last. It is of course very difficult to pronounce upon evidence of the kind with which we are dealing, because it is so utterly isolated ; but

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the inference seems irresistible, that if there were ever, apart from the operative guild, an analogous speculative society, it could never have been far apart from the former ; and my personal feeling is that their practical fusion must have occurred before the initiation of Elias Ashmole in the middle of the seventeenth century. Ashmole, as I have probably said elsewhere, is a sort of signpost that is useful as indicating the kind of intervention which took place in Masonry, but the suggestion that he was the intervention itself is worth as much and as little as another suggestion which has become current in recent times ; I mean the attempt to connect the speculative architecture of early English Freemasonry with hints of a similar mode of symbolism in China—that last resource for the explanation of all mysteries.

Those who performed this Great Work of Masonic transmutation knew both the formal mode and the high term which was set, symbolically or otherwise, before the Postulant of the Mysteries, and they presented it as a journey with the sun from East to West for the recovery of a certain hidden treasure which had once been the world's possession. They knew after another manner than that of *literati* in the seventeenth or the eighteenth century ; for the Legend of the Craft, which is their mark and seal—but I speak here of the Symbolical Legend as a thing apart from any fictitious historical legend—is in its veiling a far more profound and indeed unsearchable

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picture of things within in the guise of things without—and in the passing of its veils there is a far greater light upon the vicissitude of Secret Doctrine, than is to be found almost anywhere in the world of initiation.

But, as I have indicated, it is, in its proper understanding, a story of loss, sorrow, change and deferred hope in the Sanctuary, though the fact that it is not hope extinguished resides in the perpetuation of the great memorialising Rite. Now, the rise of those Grades which are called high, because the things wanting in the Sanctuary are *ex hypothesi* restored therein, is involved in the same uncertainty as that of emblematic Freemasonry, and the most reasonable conclusion concerning the Grades is that their rudiments or essence are almost coincident with the Craft system. Unfortunately such conclusion is not supported by any clear and demonstrative evidence, while even the hints or rumours which pass in some minds for proofs strike a very uncertain note under the light of analytical investigation. The existence from so-called time immemorial of the Grade of *Harodim Rosy Cross* is one case in point, to which I shall recur in its place, and another is the inference from the Masonic dedication of Robert Samber prefixed to his translation of *Long Livers*. To this I shall also recur, as at present I am only mentioning casual points, to indicate that there is occasionally a marked failure of correspondence between things as they are and the same

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things as they seem according to the mind of accepted Masonic criticism. In any event, the implicits of the High Grades pre-existed assuredly in the subject-matter of Craft Masonry, because they are its own implicits ; in other words, it was impossible for any properly prepared person who had received the particular quality of illumination that could be imparted by the Craft not to turn elsewhere for a fuller experience of its mystery. Continuations, side extensions and completions, real or imagined, were inevitable, and they are with us for this reason.

It might seem, on such an understanding, that in a study of the present kind an examination of the various efforts to furnish the missing factors should preferably begin without reference to their dates or places of origin. I believe that such a course might simplify the subject, but as there are some who are versed in general mystic symbolism without being versed in the course of Masonic events, it is desirable perhaps to put the historical side—as it can be done sufficiently—in a nutshell. Like all other momentous developments, the High Grades were not the growth of a moment, or indeed of one generation ; the crest of the wave of expansion took, in fine, a century to attain its utmost height, and as the Grades enter—broadly speaking—into a natural classification of Rites—that is to say, of groups of Degrees—I shall make such a levy on history as may be necessary for my purpose.

It should be understood, therefore, that the

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element of especial research is thinly represented only in these paragraphs ; they are rather the substance, with variations, of readily available knowledge, reasonably collated to ensure accuracy, so far as the latter is possible in such a dubious and involved subject.

Whatever was sleeping beneath the surface or fulfilling its office in obscurity prior to the Declaration of Union in England, the foundation of the High Grades is supposed, almost by universal consent, to have been laid by the Chevalier Andrew Michael Ramsay in 1737, when he delivered his celebrated discourse to the so-called Provincial Grand Lodge of England, located at the Orient of Paris, in which Lodge he is said to have held the French dignity of Orator, as well as that of Grand Chancellor. The Lodge is believed to have dated back to the year 1730, and to have applied for a Constitution as a Provincial Grand Lodge in the year 1735. It obtained the requisite powers in 1736, and was therefore a newly authorised institution when Ramsay pronounced his oration. There has been every opportunity for French writers like Ragon, and even in America it could not have been difficult for Mackey, to become acquainted with its purport ; but the most extraordinary confusion has been perpetuated from generation to generation, and has put into the mouth of Ramsay the substance of the mythical claims preferred by High Grades which were then in the bosom of futurity.



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The discourse created a great impression at the period. I note, however, that it gave no intimation whatsoever of the claims preferred subsequently in respect of Templar Masonry, and it did not even mention that most illustrious and most ill-starred of all the orders of chivalry. The heads of the thesis, in so far as it here concerns us, may be summarised briefly thus: (1) That the ancestors of Freemasons were the Crusaders and that the order was instituted in the Holy Land during the period of the Christian Wars in Palestine. (2) That it was an attempt to unite individuals of every nation into one brotherhood (*a*) for the restoration of the Christian Temple in the city of Jerusalem—meaning, among other things, the maintenance and extension of the true religion therein and (*b*) to bring about a return to the first principles of the sacred art of architecture. (3) That in some undetermined manner the Mysteries variously designated as those of Ceres, Isis, Minerva, Urania and Diana, were connected with the Masonic Mystery. (4) That the bond of union was the perpetuation in common among them of certain vestiges belonging to the old religion of Noah and the patriarchs. (5) That Masonry therefore derived from remote antiquity and was restored rather than founded in the Holy Land. (6) That on account of Saracen spies the Crusaders agreed upon secret signs and words by which to recognise one another. (7) That they also adopted symbolic ceremonies, presumably for

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the purpose of initiating candidates and advancing members who had been received into lower Grades. (8) That the power of the Christians waned, and that, the building design being in fine suspended, many kings, princes and lords retired from Palestine to their several countries and therein established Masonic Lodges. (9) That in this manner the illustrious Mother Kilwinning came into being in the year 1286. (10) That the chief order of chivalry concerned in the building scheme was that of St. John of Jerusalem.

We should note further: (1) It does not follow of necessity that all modern Freemasonry derives from Scotland, and much less from Kilwinning, but the great importance of Kilwinning is implied by the words of Ramsay. (2) The Order is described as disseminated universally, which is either (a) an exaggerated reference to colonisation from Britain or (b) a veiled reference to the perpetuation from time immemorial of the Lodges formed *ex hypothesi* by returned Crusaders. (3) That albeit the Masonic Mystery has its roots in the Old Alliance, its revival in Crusading times, under direct Crusading influence and amidst the Holy Wars, signifies a Christian complexion *ab origine symboli*.

I do not know why, upon the face of it, the mind of Masonry on the Continent should have been moved so deeply by this hypothesis; I do not know why its simple affirmation, apart from all evidence, should have become, so rapidly as it

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did, a series of Articles of Faith. We have to remember, however, as something more than an adventitious circumstance, that the Craft was at this time a new continental introduction. It was only in 1725 or 1726 that the Lodge of St. Thomas is reported to have been founded at Paris under a power granted by the London Grand Lodge, the prime mover in the matter being John Ratcliffe, Earl of Derwentwater. The circumstances may be dubious enough, the founder is perhaps more than doubtful; but if this be mere legend, the introduction may have been a little later still and the novelty which I have mentioned to that extent the greater in 1737. In any case, the Order came to those who received it with the claim of immemorial time. It imposed its own authority and explained it only by legend. It exhibited only the powers by which this or that Lodge had the right to work. It should be remembered further that Ramsay—like a licensed spokesman—advanced his personal views not in the language of hypothesis but in that of certitude, and perhaps because of a complete inability to check the statements they were accepted somewhat blindly, like the licence of the Unknown Superiors who granted patents to Lodges from their Holy House in Great Britain.

It has been suggested that the strange knightly origin was welcome as a counterpoise to the essential idea of Masonic equality between all classes, but I reject this arbitrary notion on the

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ground that the institution was much too recent for French Masons to stand in need of such a corrective. Perhaps the romantic association of the Holy Wars in Palestine acted more powerfully than anything as a stimulus to continental imagination, as it does at the beginning of research to some of us at the present day. Finally, there is the suggestion that Masonry in the *Lodge of St. Thomas*, and with such a founder as the presumed Derwentwater, was used as a Jacobite veil, but I do not see why the chivalrous hypothesis should appeal especially to this interest, which is otherwise negligible for us, as Jacobite preoccupations are no part of our concern.

The question of fact remains—that the discourse has been regarded invariably as the moving spirit in the evolution of the High Grades, and Ramsay himself has long been credited on the Continent, and long also in England, by those who reflect, apart from personal research, the consensus of continental opinion—he has been credited with the introduction of a Rite which bears his name. I reject this supposed creation on the authority of my own researches ; I reject it on the authority of Mr. Gould, who has given in his large work a very careful synopsis of the entire Ramsay intervention ; and I find that the same conclusion has been recently reached in France. Setting it aside for the moment, as it must be reconsidered at a later stage, it must be indubitably admitted that the discourse gave rise to the system of *Écossais*

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or Scots' Lodges, involving or representing (*a*) possibly a certain manipulation of the Craft Grades along the lines of the Ramsay hypothesis and (*b*) additions and super-additions in the form of High Grades. It is impossible to determine dates, but we begin to hear of St. Andrew Degrees, of Knightly Degrees, and, later, of the rise of the Templar element. There was kindled, in a word, the great passion for Grades; invention followed invention, system grew out of system, springing fully armed, perfect in ceremonies and liturgies, as if the Jove of Masonry were begetting innumerable Minervas, like instantaneous products of thought.

Let us look for a moment ahead and suppose that the dream of Ramsay had brooded less or more quietly in the mind of the age. Without affirming that the date is in any respect indubitable, we will come to the year 1754, which is especially memorable for the alleged foundation, at once independent and simultaneous, of (*a*) the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE—but this had earlier roots; (*b*) the occult and mystic RITE OF MARTINES DE PASQUALLY; (*c*) the CHAPTER OF CLERMONT.

With the first is connected the name, at once suspicious and inspiring, of Baron von Hund, who is said to have been received into Masonry so far back as 1742. In the year following this he is alleged to have been created a Knight of the Temple by the Earl of Kilmarnock, which, if it signified anything but one of his distorted visions,

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would mean that he was then under the obedience of the *Écossais* Lodges confessing to the motives of Ramsay and perhaps with a subsurface political concern of the Jacobite kind. Personally, I believe that no such Grades were at that time in existence. My thesis is that the Temple dream arose with the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE, or, if another origin is tolerable, then it was independent of Masonic preoccupation, as we shall find that it must have been when we come to the consideration of this memorable Rite.

Between the period of Ramsay and that of the STRICT OBSERVANCE it will be seen that there is a lacuna of something like seventeen years, supposing that 1754 is, in any general sense, a certain or approximate date. The intervening period was not however unfilled, and we hear in the first place of isolated Grades coming into existence. There was that of *Petit Élu*, or Lesser Elect, which is sometimes mentioned as the root of the *Kadosh* Grades, and is referred to 1743 or thereabouts, but I am entirely uncertain as to its proper place in historical time. I set aside the *Primordial Rose-Cross Jacobite Chapter of Arras*, which is said to have been founded in 1747 but belongs in reality to 1774. There was, however, the Grade of *Écossais Fidèles*, which is ascribed to 1748, and has been thought to represent a reflection of Ramsay's Jacobite preoccupations, which have been much exaggerated. Finally, there was founded in 1750 the *Mother Scottish Lodge*

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of *Marseilles*, which developed or collected a long sequence of Degrees, though there is no means of ascertaining the circumstances under which it was initiated or its original numerical capacity in respect of Grades.

The history of all continental Masonry, and especially that of France, still remains to be written as the result of first-hand knowledge, and the task is impossible to undertake apart from reference to archives which are here unknown. Of necessity, from the limited opportunities of English writers, reliance has been placed upon foreign printed books, which do not, for the most part, represent faithful research according to the historical spirit. So far as we are able to check them, their evidence stands in need of correction and sometimes calls to be set aside; in a word, they are open to suspicion at nearly all points. The later reflect the earlier, and the original sources on which they depend are too often high speculation expressed in the terms of certitude. It is only within the last two decades, if indeed now generally, that a tolerable spirit of exactitude has replaced that of romance in the presentation of the Masonic subject anywhere in the French literary schools, and France is of palmary importance in the Quest of the High Grades. The mendacity of fantastic emotion was also on occasion enforced by the resources of deliberate invention. But on the whole the most deplorable results are those which have followed

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an uncritical tendency to regard the fictitious accounts in so-called historical lectures allocated to the High Grades, and recited for the instruction of Candidates in the course of the Ceremonies, as serious contributions to their history.

For one or for another reason, there is scarcely an important statement of that world-wide authority, Jean Marie Ragon, which can be accepted without verification on every available side. He seems even to have created on occasion the materials of his history; he also borrowed from past fantastic writers; and the seals of a heavy and common imagination are over all his work. Even his accounts of the rituals lie here and there under a certain vague suspicion. If I had to depend on sources such as these, my proposed codification of Rites could never come into existence. I mention this specific instance of a general trend in Masonic literature because of its importance, and it is not without a sense of responsibility that I tend, within limits, to displace an authority long regarded as paramount in his own place and period. My criticism notwithstanding, he did some valuable work, and he is not specifically worse than a few who preceded and followed him. He wrote too largely from hearsay; his own construction distorted the text of grades; and truth in the sense of history was scarcely in him.

Returning to the question of the High Grades at their genesis, it should be understood that Ramsay was born at Ayr, in Scotland, in 1668, and seeing

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that he delivered his discourse in 1737, he was then approaching his seventieth year, a period subsequently to which considerable Masonic or other activity might be scarcely expected ; but there is abundant evidence that no such activity existed at any period of his life. On the eve of his Oration he was in correspondence with a great Cardinal Prime Minister of France, leaving it to his decision whether he should be concerned actively in the Craft at all. The decision has not transpired in a direct manner, but the Oration was the last public sign of Ramsay's concern in Masonry. He held the positions which I have mentioned in the Lodge which I have named, and it does not follow that he resigned, but his name is heard no more. We do not know when he was initiated, and as he died in 1743, it seems fairly certain that his active Masonic influence, whatever its extent may have been, must have culminated in his discourse rather than commenced therein. The effect of the seed which had been sown, probably with no very express intention on his part, and assuredly with no notion of the forest which it was destined to produce, began therefore to appear on the surface of history only after his death. It follows that the supposed RIT DE BOUILLON, otherwise RITE OF RAMSAY, is a figment of French imagination, and was never heard of for more than half a century after its supposed foundation. The Grades attributed thereto are 1, 2, 3, being the ordinary Craft

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Grades ; 4, *Scottish Master* ; 5, *Novice* ; 6, *Knight of the Temple*, called also—according to a recent suggestion — *Knight Levite of the Interior* and *Knight of the Tower*. With this classification we may compare that which was adopted in or near 1754 by the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE as follows : 1, 2, 3, being the ordinary Craft Grades ; 4, *Scottish Master* ; 5, *Novice* ; 6, *Knight Templar*, otherwise *Knight of the Temple*. The suggested variation is that this 6th Degree was subdivided into four sections : *Equus*, *Armiger*, *Socius* and *Equus Professus*, the alternative of which is said to have been *Grand Profès*, but this is an error, for the Grades of *Profès* and *Grand Profès* are known to have existed in distinction, the one being successive to the other. What is much more important at the moment is that neither in separation nor in union could they have been conferred at that period, for they belong to a large class which represents the theosophic tradition derived from Martines de Pasqually, perhaps through his illustrious disciple Louis Claude de Saint-Martin. I hasten to add that the significance of this intimation does not mean that the last great mystic of France was himself the founder of any Grade or Rite.

The RITE OF RAMSAY is therefore an imaginary antedated version of the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE, which itself originated in Germany. It will be dealt with in the proper place, and at the moment I need say only (*a*) that Hund received the benefit of initiation at Strasbourg, a city at that

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period attached to the crown of France, or, (*b*) according to another account, he was admitted at Frankfort on the Maine, for every event of this time, so near in ordinary history, so remote in that of Masonry, is involved in doubt and confusion. The Rite was manifestly Templar in theory; it took over, amplified and specified upon the theory of Ramsay, as we shall see when we come to its consideration. Curiously enough, at the time when the imagination of French historians decided to impute a creation on his own part to the indirect initiator of all High Rites confessing to the motive of chivalry, they did not prove wholly in agreement as to the presence of a Templar element therein, notwithstanding the alleged title of the 6th Degree.

At this point it may be useful to specify in a sentence the exact position of Ramsay: he was the father of the notion of Masonic chivalry, and the *Écossais* Grades no doubt followed his leading; the one fact concerns a question of origin, and the other of transmission. His personal theory must be rejected in both its aspects: (*a*) because Craft Masonry, having regard to its root-matter in symbolism, is a reflection of Kabalistic Tradition, and (*b*) because that tradition had no place in Scotland either at the Crusading period or subsequently. If it be said that Ramsay's theory can be held to cover only the operative side of Masonry, then we should follow the line of least resistance more simply, and with more

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reason, by regarding the Building Guilds in Great Britain as the place and point of grafting for the body of symbolism : it is inexcusable to seek in Palestine that which can be found at home. For all that I know to the contrary, and for more than all that I care, Kilwinning may be the head and fountain of the operative Craft ; the question signifies little at this date. I conclude that the Holy Land of Palestine, in which Masonic chivalry originated, was under the Chevalier Ramsay's hat.

To continue our enumeration of systems, we have not yet finished with the year 1754, to which there is also referred the CHAPTER OF CLERMONT, founded by the Chevalier de Bonneville, at or in the vicinity of Paris. On grounds of historical likelihood I am disposed to reject many allocations belonging to this date, but it is generally and not specifically in respect of the present case. So far as it is possible to construct a working theory from the disordered condition of the materials, it seems probable that the Chapter was originally instituted to confer only the High Grades, of which it is held to have recognised three : (a) *Knight of the Eagle* ; (b) *Illustrious Knight or Templar* ; (c) *Sublime Illustrious Knight*. It was, in this case, a Templar system, confessing to the same motive as the STRICT OBSERVANCE. But the alternative title of the Second Grade may not have conveyed the intimation which it seems to carry on the surface. Baron von Hund is said to have been perfected in these grades at Paris prior to the

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establishment of his own Order; but this is manifestly unlikely, if the latter was promulgated in the same year. A branch of the Chapter is further believed to have existed at Berlin in the year 1760, but by this time Hund was already at work. Meanwhile the Chapter in France had itself undergone a symbolical death and burial, from which it was reborn in 1758 as the COUNCIL OF THE EMPERORS OF EAST AND WEST, without, however, appearing to have preserved any of its original Grades. It remains only to say that its Degree of *Knight of the Temple*, otherwise *Chevalier Illustre*, and *Professed Templar* is stated by some dreamers to be identical with the corresponding Grade in the Ramsay system.

Before proceeding to the evolution which I have just mentioned, we must go back for a moment to the year 1750, which is said to have seen the foundation of the *Scottish Mother Lodge of Marseilles*, as already mentioned. The alternative date is 1748, and in either case the enterprise has been attributed to the zeal of a wandering Scotchman. The point which concerns us is that the Rite worked therein was composed of eighteen Degrees, as follows: 1, *Apprentice*; 2, *Companion*; 3, *Master*; 4, *Perfect Master*—probably of St. Andrew and perhaps in analogy with the 4th Grade referred to the STRICT OBSERVANCE; 5, *Grand Écossais*; 6, *Knight of the Black Eagle*, recalling the first Chapitral Grade of Clermont; 7, *Commander of the Black Eagle*; 8, *Rose Croix*; 9, *True*

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Mason ; 10, *Knighr Argonautic* ; 11, *Knighr of the Golden Fleece* ; 12, *Apprentice Philosopher* ; 13, *Knighr-Adept of the Eagle and the Sun* ; 14, *Sublime Philosopher* ; 15, *Knighr of the Phœnix* ; 16, *Adept of the Mother Lodge* ; 17, *Knighr of the Rainbow* ; and 18, *Knighr of the Sun*—an eloquent tribute to the appeal of the chivalrous motive in Masonry, but on the surface at least without reference to the Temple.

A list like this in the year to which it is referred might, if indubitable, exercise the ingenuity of those who believe that the High Grades are exclusively posterior to the year 1740. But the Lodge founded at Marseilles seems to have begun much more humbly—that is to say, as a Lodge simply, under the patronage of St. John of Scotland. It was not till 1762—or in this vicinity—that there is evidence of its claim as a *Scottish Mother Lodge of France*, and it was not till 1765 that it appeared in all its splendour. The system then worked had branch Lodges at Paris and Lyons, in Provence, the French colonies, and even in the Levant. But, as in importance, so in Grades also, its growth was no doubt a matter of years.

I pass therefore to the COUNCIL OF THE EMPERORS OF EAST AND WEST, the alleged transformation of the Chapter of Clermont and probably the first system presenting a colossal array of Degrees. There were twenty-five, numbered as follows : 1, *Apprentice* ; 2, *Companion* ; 3, *Master* ; 4, *Secret Master* ; 5, *Perfect Master* ; 6, *Intimate*

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Secretary ; 7, Intendant of Buildings ; 8, Provost and Judge ; 9, Elect Master of Nine, or Elect of the Nine ; 10, Elect Master of Fifteen, or Elect of Fifteen ; 11, Illustrious Elect, or Chief of the Twelve Tribes ; 12, Grand Master Architect ; 13, Knight Royal Arch, or Royal Axe ; 14, Grand Elect, Ancient Perfect Master, or Grand Elect Ancient ; 15, Knight of the Sword, or of the East ; 16, Prince of Jerusalem ; 17, Knight of the East and the West ; 18, Rose Croix ; 19, Grand Pontiff, or Master ad vitam ; 20, Grand Patriarch Noachite, or Grand Patriarch ; 21, Grand Master of the Key of Masonry, or Grand Master of the Key ; 22, Prince of Libanus, Knight Royal Arch—alternatively, Royal Axe ; 23, Knight of the Sun, Prince Adept, Chief of the Grand Consistory ; 24, Illustrious Chief, Grand Commander of the White and Black Eagle, Grand Elect Kadosh ; 25, Most Illustrious Prince of Masonry, Grand and Sublime Knight Commander of the Royal Secret, or Commander of the Royal Secret. Again there is no reference to the Temple.

Antecedent or subsequent, it will be seen that the Mother Lodge of Marseilles had only a few items the nomenclature of which recalls this list. The COUNCIL OF EMPERORS was also termed *Ancient Rite and Rite of Heredom or of Perfection*, another illustration of the Ramsay motive and influence. The holders of the highest Grades were Substitutes General of the Royal Art and Grand Wardens of the Sovereign Lodge of St. John of Jerusalem. There is a legend that the Rite was placed by

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Prince Charles Edward Stuart under the care and patronage of Frederick the Great, who in 1786 increased the number of its degrees to thirty-three. This view is now generally rejected. Another story says that in 1761 the Council granted a patent to a Jew named Stephen Morin for the propagation of the system in America. The Jew travelled with his system—Christian, of course, as it was—and reached in fine Charleston, where at the beginning of the nineteenth century there were added those eight further grades, making that total collection now professed by the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITÉ.

It will serve no purpose to debate the comparative value of these alternatives, but the second story seems as doubtful and is as much doubted as the first. In consequence of the suspicion thus reasonably aroused, there is a tendency to believe that the Council, by a natural development, and in its own country, was increased to those thirty-three Grades which in America, and so long after, were finally consolidated and became a great and influential system. The Degrees superposed somehow on those of the original Council were : 1, *Prince of Mercy* ; 2, *Grand Commander of the Temple* ; 3, *Chief of the Tabernacle* ; 4, *Grand Scottish Knight of St. Andrew* ; 5, *Prince of the Tabernacle* ; 6, *Inspector Inquisitor Commander* ; 7, *Knight of the Brazen Serpent* ; 8, *Sovereign Grand Inspector-General*. The entire series was to some extent reclassified, and even altered, but this does not now concern us ; at the



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moment it remains only to say that the additions included items belonging to the period of their collective promulgation : with perhaps two exceptions, they are not readily met with, at least under identical titles, in other and anterior systems.

Its position and influence notwithstanding, the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE is inchoate and negligible as a system. There is not only the difficulty that it preserves several Grades which have no titles of value, symbolically or otherwise, but the unreason of its practical grouping, in virtue of which the Candidate by his successive advancements is continually testifying to his incorporation under the obedience of the New and yet recurring to the obedience of the Old Law ; he is now early, now late in the Middle Ages, and long afterwards finds that he is once again in Israel under the rule of Solomon. Seeing that three only out of thirty-three degrees are conferred in the plenary sense, there should be no hesitation in adopting a more logical arrangement.

During the years of the eighteenth century which have so far passed under our review, Craft Masonry, with such *additamenta* as it elected to tolerate in specific places, was laying its foundations in continental countries other than France, and more especially, for our purpose, in the Germanic Kingdoms and States. In all countries indifferently, where a recognised position was possible even for a period, there was rapid colonisation on the part of the High Grades, as well as many in-

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ventions indigenous to particular realms. On account of its importance, I have dealt already in brief with the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE, which was, of course, Teutonic in its origin. So also was the ORDER OF AFRICAN ARCHITECTS, which conceived the pretensions and emulated the distinctive position of a learned society. Its title is explicable by an hypothesis which was adopted regarding the consanguinity of Masonry with Egypt, and so far as it was possible at that period there were attempts to study the unreadable hieroglyphics on their symbolical side. The Degrees of the system were classified in three temples, of which the first communicated those of the Craft only. The second had five Degrees : 1, *Architect*, or *Apprentice of Egyptian Secrets* ; 2, *Initiate in Egyptian Secrets* ; 3, *Cosmopolite Brother* ; 4, *Christian Philosopher* ; and 5, *Master of Egyptian Secrets*, or *Friend of Truth*. The third temple was that of the Superior Grades and was chivalrous in character, as appears by the titles conferred : 1, *Esquire* ; 2, *Soldier* ; 3, *Knight*. Few particulars concerning them seem to have become public. It is possible that the *Order of African Architects* was merged in the *Crata Repoa*, an imputed system of Egyptian initiation with which I have dealt elsewhere.

Between 1766 and 1770 Johann von Zinnendorf founded the Rite which passes under his name as a counterblast to the STRICT OBSERVANCE, from which he had been either expelled or the

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enforced suspension of its own labours had put an end to real membership. As part of his system was derived from that of the ILLUMINATI OF AVIGNON, part from the SWEDISH RITE, and as, it is said, he sought subsequently in vain to complete his experiment from the latter source, it will serve our purpose to dismiss it at this point by a brief reference to the source in question. The SWEDISH RITE, like many others of its period, owed something to the principles and influence of the STRICT OBSERVANCE, and so also did Zinnendorf, though he denounced the source of his advancement in the illuminism of the High Grades. Zinnendorf, perhaps of necessity, if denied full knowledge, was content with seven Degrees, but the Swedish system extended to twelve, including in both cases those consecrated under the patronage of St. John, otherwise Blue Masonry, which comprises the Craft Grades, 1, 2 and 3. The others follow in their order : 4, *Elect Master*, or, in the system of Zinnendorf, *Scottish Apprentice and Companion or Fellow-Craft*, under the ægis of St. Andrew, sometimes identified with *Secret Elect* of the French Rite ; 5, *Scottish Master*, otherwise *Master of St. Andrew*, or *Scottish Grand Elect* ; 6, *Knight of the East*, or, according to Zinnendorf, *Clericus*, and *Favourite Companion of St. John* ; 7, *Knight of the West*, or *True Templar*, with many other subsidiary names, and apparently in correspondence with *Elect Brother*, being the seventh and last grade of Zinnendorf ; 8, *Knight of the South*, or *Temple*

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Master ; 9, *Favourite Brother of St. Andrew* ; 10, *Brother of the Red Cross*, or ordinary *Member of the Chapter* ; 11, *Grand Dignitary of the Chapter* ; 12, *Reigning Master*, or *Vicar of Solomon*, a grade actually or hypothetically confined to a single member, being the King of Sweden, and thus communicated by those who instituted him, but could not themselves possess it.

Recurring to the later developments in France, the PRIMITIVE SCOTTISH RITE collected thirty-three Grades into a consecutive system, but the date of foundation is uncertain and identity of number notwithstanding there are conspicuous variations from the Ancient and Accepted System. A SCOTTISH PHILOSOPHICAL RITE was also established in 1776 and drew from various sources either thirteen or eighteen degrees without apparently offering inventions on its own part. Finally, to make an end of these records, the year 1805 saw the inauguration of the MASONIC ORDER OF MIZRAIM and the year 1839 that of the Oriental Order or RITE OF MEMPHIS, the first communicating ninety and the second ninety-five Degrees. While in each case the great familiar Grade names and titles recur inevitably, these stupendous systems, their content notwithstanding, share only in common that which they drew from the past, and while of course much can be accounted for in this manner of derivation, there is yet more which is referable to fertility of invention, whether much or little value may attach thereto.

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Outside these things there is the cloud of witnesses in the occult and mystic Rites, of which it is useless to speak in the present place, because they are *sui generis* and must therefore be treated historically in connection with their respective claims.

Trivial, imperfect and unadorned, since it offers no opportunity to literature, the sketch which has been here given serves one purpose, outside that of information to those who know nothing of High Grades on their historical side; it illustrates the peculiar difficulty with which I am called to deal, and this is the creation of some canon of criticism by which to distinguish things that are of the matter of Masonry from things that are foreign thereto, and among all and sundry those which bear some traces of the term of our research, being the presence of the Secret Tradition, and separated therefore from that indiscrete chaos which is of modern device only.

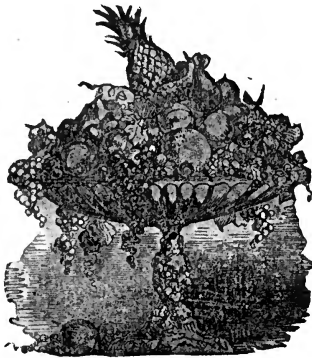
Among the first things that will occur even to the unpractised mind, there is the extensive propagation of Grades which took place outside the establishment of the great Rites themselves. And speaking generally of the whole period which saw the construction of High Grades, the second question that arises is whether there is or could be any warrant for the enormous multiplication which occurred. In a sense such productions must stultify themselves, because the possible variants of assumed Craft completion are not in-

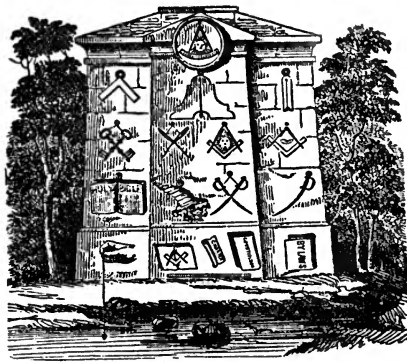
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definitely great. They impair also the strength of the one or many which may possibly tend to greatness, by suggesting at each stage in succession that there was no finality in the results which had been already reached. At the same time it is certain that the strongest appeal will be found, with few exceptions, in those that were early rather than late in time of production. A third point which will be noticed as we proceed with our subject is that—once more with few exceptions, but these are notable—the High Grades were anonymous, like the Craft Grades. They may lie here and they may lie there under a certain quality of suspicion in respect of authorship ; they may have received there or they may receive here a definite attribution. It is antecedently credible enough, though it is not true in fact, that the Chevalier Ramsay composed grades in illustration of his especial theory concerning the origin of Masonry. It is difficult not to connect the name of Baron Hund with the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE on the side of Ritual production as well as the executive side. But the *Rose Croix* and the Grade of *Kadosh* are without father or mother. There came a later time in the fervour when, under the banner of Masonry, there were collected intellectual interests from the four quarters, and with no disguise whatever people proceeded to the manufacture of Grades. They established Rites, much as we now found charities, and practised and proclaimed them with a certain

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joy of the heart, paying reverence to itself. The Grades of the Occult Sciences and things on the fringes thereof are mostly of open ascription, or can be referred with certainty. These things are more interesting *a priori* and after their own manner than many of the grades of chivalry.

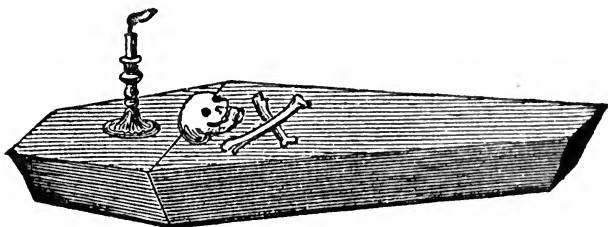




BOOK II

**Development of the High Grades in
respect of the Ancient Alliance**





THE ARGUMENT

I. OF GRADES ANTECEDENT TO THE SYMBOLIC TIME OF THE THIRD DEGREE

External events prior to this time—The law given on Sinai and the reservation connected therewith—Dreams of some early Masonic interpreters—Of Noachite Grades in Masonry—Royal Ark Mariner—Fugitive Mark—Of Mark Master Masonry and its symbolism—The two divisions of the Grade in its emblematical sense—Link and Chain—A legend of Solomon's crown—Marked Master—The Legend of Cavelum—The mystic capstone and its history—Most Excellent Master—Further concerning the Stone of Destiny—The Ark of the Covenant and the Divine Presence in the Temple—Adonhiramite Masonry—Its authorship—Grand Tiler of Solomon—The Altar of Burnt Offerings—A problem concerning the Masonic Secrets par excellence—The Grade of Royal Master—Cryptic Masonry—Proposed contents of the Secret Vault—Master of all Symbolic Lodges—The conclusions of this section.

II. OF GRADES SUBSEQUENT TO THE SYMBOLIC TIME OF THE CRAFT DEGREES

The event of the Craft Legend, and its memorials in the High Grades—Grades of visitation and judgment—

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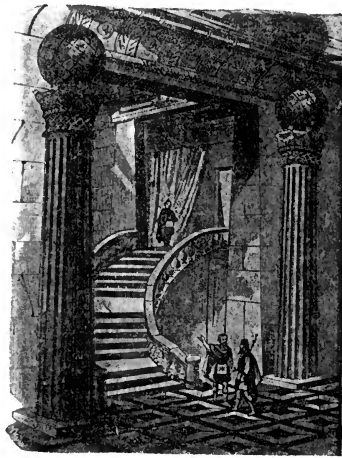
Remedial Grades—Grades of completion—Motive of the Kadosh Grades—Jacobite motive in Templar Grades—Further concerning Adonhiramite Masonry—The Cryptic Grades as an introduction to the Royal Arch—The Collection of L. G. de Saint Victor—The Grade of Perfect Elect Mason—Its subsurface design—Place of the Grade in various Rites—The Grade of Second Elect, or Elect of Perignan—Elect of Fifteen—Its Legend—Grade of Lesser Architect—Curious point in its Symbolism—Mystic aspects of this Degree—The work accomplished therein—Consequences of the catastrophe recited in the Craft Legend—Grade of Grand Architect—Suspension of the work—The Temple in the process of its materialisation—A new school of Architecture—Grade of Master in Israel, or Superintendant of buildings—Evolution of the School—Presence of the Harodim motive—The Work on Mount Lebanon—Grade of Perfect Master—Mausoleum of the Master Builder—Further materialisation of Doctrine—Grade of Sublime Knight—Its identity with Master Elect of the Ten Tribes—An Anomaly of Chivalry—Grade of Chief of the Tabernacle—The Son of the Master Builder—Anomalous commemoration of the Levitical institution—The Tabernacle in the Wilderness—Grade of Prince of the Tabernacle—Further anomalies—Grade of Most Excellent Master—A sequel to Marked Master—Further concerning the Stone of Destiny—A Grade of completion and consecration—Confusions of the Symbolism—Installation of the Ark of the Covenant—Manifestation of the Shekinah—Position of the Grade.

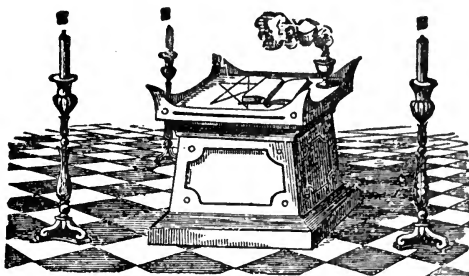
The Argument

III. THE SECOND HOUSE OF DOCTRINE AND THE GRADES BELONGING THERETO

An interim general conclusion—Question of the Royal Arch—State of the Mysteries in Israel after the destruction of the First Temple—The Cryptic Degrees—Grade of Super-Excellent Master—A retrospect of Jewish History—Of Masonry in Babylon—Prince of Babylon—Knight of the Brazen Serpent—Grade of Excellent Mason—And its sequel—Symbolism of the Royal Arch—Affiliation with the Grade of Mark Mason—Its strength and weakness—Forms of the Grade—Connection with Christian interests—A Rosicrucian analogy—Comparative value of the Codices—The discovery made in the Ceremony—Of sorrow and joy in Masonry—Grade of Prince of Jerusalem—Its historical aspects—An epilogue to the Grades confessing to the motive of the Old Law.







BOOK II

Development of the High Grades in respect of the Ancient Alliance

I

OF GRADES ANTECEDENT TO THE SYMBOLIC TIME OF THE THIRD DEGREE

HAVING regard to the inward and spiritual significance of the Craft Grades, it is difficult to suppose that another epoch in the life of Israel could have been selected with equal intellectual propriety for the expression of that symbolism which is found in the central Legend. And yet we have to remember that great external events—with treasures of meaning behind them—had gone before the epoch. I have mentioned the giving of the Law on Sinai as a singular but unnoticed instance of an implied reservation of doctrine; the occasion thus afforded has been overlooked by the makers of Masonic ritual, who—to speak with sincerity—have given us comparatively few instances of deep consideration in the worlds of allegory and parable. The exception *par excellence*

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is of course the culminating Grade of the Craft, which—in comparison with the High Grades concerned with the development of Masonic implicits under the ægis of the Old Covenant—is even as a great sun about which revolve a few considerable planets and a cloud of asteroids ; if many or most of them were drawn back into their source at the centre they would be scarcely missed, either in respect of their historical or symbolical elements.

The great spaces of time which preceded the Third Degree were, however, by no means destined to remain vacant, and if some of them have been peopled only with mere puerilities they are worth a word in passing for the sake of chronological completeness—of course, of the emblematic kind. It was left for early interpreters and dealers in the origin of things to dream of Masonic principles as a part of Adam's beatitude in the Garden of Eden ; no true Grade fortunately offers the picture of a Lodge in Paradise, though Edenic motives and allusions are not wanting here and there in some ritual examples of the lesser systems. But it is otherwise with the memorials of the Deluge, and the Degree of *Ark Mariner*, which, both in its early and modern forms, confuses many issues of symbolism, presents Noah as the Master of a Lodge, with Japhet and Shem acting as Wardens therein. The period is just subsequent to the Deluge, and I suppose that the implied place is in the shadow of Mount Ararat. It is naturally a memorial of deliverance,

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outside which it has no office or meaning. The waters that overwhelmed the world suffer a simple comparison with the flood of human passions, and the ship of signal providence which floated on their surface typifies the greater ark of our final salvation—shewing the implied completion of Masonry according to the mind of the Grade. Thus is the “ship of the soul” shewn to be voyaging and voyaging; thus also do the most trivial and irrelevant degrees in Masonry reflect at a far distance the high quest of the Mysteries. And the lesson brought away by the Noachite Candidate after his anomalous experience is that the Divine judgments in respect of those who do evil are counterbalanced by the Divine mercy which awaits others who persevere in the direct path; there is safety now as there was in the days of Noah, and there is a surer ark of refuge. The instruction which hints at this explains nothing concerning it, and I should estimate that those who compiled it were like men who see light at the end of a troubled dream but do not know what it portends or the quarter whence it comes.

The Noachite motive which governs the degree of *Ark Mariner* perpetuated its particular inconsequences in that of *Fugitive Mark*, which has still less title to existence and has no consanguinity with that from which it depends. It explains certain simple means by which Masons recognised and helped one another in times of persecution or other distress. Why it should be

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referred to the age of Noah and why the Master of the Lodge who communicates the exploded secrets to Candidates should act as the patriarch's vicegerent and work in his name, are points that override explanation. There is a very profound connection between the diluvian myth and the Secret Doctrine, for which it represents the shipwreck of the old initiations that had passed into utter corruption, as we shall see towards the term of our research, but the explanation of these things is not in a Noachite Grade, nor indeed in official Masonry at all.

We have not, however, completed our explanation of the Noachite motive, at once so curious and inconsequential. It will recur once and for all as a kind of unintended sequel to the Grade of *Mark Master Mason*, which will shortly intervene for our attention. It represents, however, a long distance ahead in symbolical time, and this space is not entirely devoid of Masonic legend and symbolism. The great epoch of Abraham, as the father of all Israel, and the captivity in Egypt are passed over in silence ; so also is the Exodus, and so—as I have said—is the opportunity offered by the sacred mystery of Sinai. There are, however, two Grades which commemorate the institution of the priestly order in Israel, but they must be considered at a later stage because of the intellectual confusion which has imported them into the period of the First Temple. We are left therefore with the ORDER OF THE SECRET MONITOR,

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called also that of Brotherly love, which is concerned with the friendship subsisting between David and Jonathan and has practically no emblematic aspect. It is probably of American origin as here known among us, but towards the end of the eighteenth century an *Order of David and Jonathan* existed in Holland. It is devoid of Masonic elements, as it now stands, except in so far as it is held to strengthen the bonds of fraternal affection which should exist among all Masons : it is, however, quite negligible in this as in other respects, and recalls the ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR in pseudo-adoptive Masonry, which is also American and also worthless, even after its own kind.

The Grade of *Mark Master Mason* is a methodised attempt to sustain the supposed claims of the operative Craft as demanding recognition side by side with those of the Emblematic Art. The Candidate has served *ex hypothesi* an allotted period of the active kind, and he aspires to an official position, being that of a leader in the work. The work itself is literalised ; it is of course that of the Temple, and is comparatively in an early stage of its fulfilment, though the designs which rule it are in an advanced stage. The Master of the Lodge represents no historical personage, imputed or otherwise, and the Lodge itself—or that which is done therein—would deserve no consideration at my hands were it not for a remarkable transformation which takes place

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as the ceremony of reception proceeds. In virtue of this the Lodge, which is insistently operative at the beginning, closes in the highest form of symbolism. The time is antecedent to that of the Craft Legend. Symbolically, of course, the Grades of *Entered Apprentice* and *Fellow Craft* are—in respect of the Candidate—before everything, but their priority concerns qualification only, as they have no place in symbolic chronology. They correspond to the Number Nothing which precedes Mother Kilwinning on the Roll of Scottish Lodges.

The Postulant for advancement in the Mark has a specific labour to perform, and as he does so also he suffers, passing through an ordeal of condemnation, which is followed by vindication and victory. There are symbolic elements in the Ritual which call for particular notice.

The Grade of Mark Masonry contains a profound symbolism under a trivial and almost grotesque guise upon the surface. It sets out—as we have seen—to reinstate operative Masonry as an essential part of that Craft which is operative only in speculation ; but it ends itself in symbolism, and as symbolism it stands almost alone in the treasury of Masonic regalia. It is concerned by reason of its professed motive with specific details in the mystery of building, and although it is now conferred only upon Master Masons, it is clear that it arises from the *Fellow Craft* Grade, because in the order of emblematic chronology it

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precedes—as we have also seen—the Legend of that catastrophe which is memorialised in the plenary Degree. Therefore the House of Doctrine is not, it should be understood, made void ; the mystic temple is indeed in the course of its erection ; and the design is to advance aspirants in the secret ways of knowledge who can shew that they possess the capacity. With this intention there is a tacit undertaking on the part of those who know to ensure the rejection of the true Craft work, in order that its vital necessity may be more fully manifested in the end. He who can furnish the one thing wanting and needful which supports the fabric is he who by tradition—or by intuitive knowledge—is acquainted, actually and essentially, with the whole artifice of doctrine. And, as it so happens according to the law of the ceremony, he is a novice and unknown ; but he proves in the most conclusive of all manners that he is singularly equipped with skill—with the sagacity to discern the secret in virtue of which the external or official houses are maintained by the virtue that is within. It is not of necessity, or indeed *ex hypothesi* possible, that the whole Secret Doctrine is here typified ; it is rather such a measure of informing life as is sufficient for one side of the manifestation. Taking it in connection with the Craft symbolism, an important inference is that in a Spiritual House which is conceived after one manner, executed in another, destroyed as a visitation in judgment on the Sons of its

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Doctrine, and restored in shadow or similitude, there was here and there an original column, an architrave, a piece of the groined roofing, which was perfect after its own kind, and as such presented some partial image of all that might have been. It will be remembered that the central Legend leaves the task unfinished and the whole project in chaos: the dead secret is buried with great pomp, and there is no true story after. To this extent the Craft Legend speaks for itself on the symbolic side, and from the moment that the key is provided it speaks eloquently for ever. The Mark Grade is much more involved and cryptic, with a particular application only, but the full significance of its symbolism scarcely appears in that codex of the Ritual which prevails under the obedience of the Grand Mark Lodge of England, where the procedure, for a somewhat obscure reason, is literally upside down. It is worked otherwise in Scotland, and especially by the Mother Lodge of Kilwinning.

I have intimated that the Grade carries a significance that is profound under a surface that is slight, while here and there it conveys even a grotesque suggestion. It has never been regarded in the spirit of interpretation or that of informed criticism, and I conclude that its more inward aspects, as I have referred to them in this place, may scarcely have entered into the heart of those who hold it. It is separable into two main parts, of which one comprises the accidents but the

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other is the root and essence. The first among these draws in a plenary sense on the resources of symbolism and the dramatic form of ceremony, so that it may impress upon all recipients its integral connection with the operative Craft of old. It is as if it were a ritual specifically devised to make an end of hypotheses like those of Ragon, of Mr. R. F. Gould and myself. It has no consanguinity at all with the symbolic Grade of *Master*, though it has become expedient and therefore right that it should be communicated at this day only to those who have attained that Degree. Its recognition by the Craft would involve its return into its proper class, as a side issue from the Grade of Craftsman. We must remember once again that the Master Grade is, speaking symbolically, a matter of substitution and anomaly by an act of intention therein ; that of the Mark is anomalous after another manner, a substitution of a different kind, and no pains are spared to make both facts evident to those who have eyes for symbolism.

The second of those two divisions which I have mentioned above, and have characterised as the essential parts, must be sought more especially in certain choric and supplementary portions, if I may be allowed so to term them. Therein that operative motive which has seemed to be the cause and impulse of the whole passes into complete dissolution, and we are in the presence of what I have called high symbolism, as such indeed

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it is, though some of it looks strangely enough, since it belongs to another order of religious ideas. Therein we are made acquainted with the spiritual and mystical nature of the work produced by the craftsman and with its relation to the Divine World. We are told over again—but this time without veils and evasion—concerning that which was designed, and where and why. The ethical side of Masonry itself dissolves with the literal, and we are in the presence of that which the Spirit saith unto the assemblies.

As in things essential, so also in those that are of accident the symbolical note of the Mark working appears; it is therefore present with and without design. An instance of the secondary kind is the remote character of the allusions to a Master Builder as to one who already and long since has attained the hour of his reward; *passus et sepultus est*. This is of course by way of anachronism, or may be so interpreted, but it serves a purpose otherwise by reducing the literal side further. For the benefit of those who possess the Grade according to the ordered right of Masonic initiation, it should be stated that the guide to the meaning is in that work which the Candidate and Craftsman accomplishes unaided by his own skill; but for those outside the mystic circle the clew is that the Candidate excogitates the implicits of his own mind, and provides that without which the spiritual building cannot stand alone, or rather the especial part thereof with

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which the ceremony is concerned. It follows, and I affirm therefore : (1) That which qualifies to preside is knowledge, and this is the gift of God. (2) That such knowledge is related to the spirit and meaning behind the veils that are without, in the absence of which spirit the external pageants of doctrine cannot stand because they do not signify essentially. (3) The period for the acquisition of knowledge is six days, and after that is a Sabbath, in which the soul contemplates God and the eye of God looks upon the soul. (4) The analogy of this is to be sought in that which Zoharic theosophy signified by nuptial intercourse on the Sabbath. (5) The six days are divisible under two heads, and three of them are embraced by the Craft with its legitimate extensions and the supplements thereto belonging ; they are the memorial of that which is sought. During this period the soul of man is indeed pursuing what is lost ; but he knows not what he does, because he knows not that which he is seeking. (6) The second trinity of days is represented by the High Grades, and in these he finds—not, indeed, that which he seeks but the true intimations concerning its nature. The High Grades impart this nature after their several manners, and it may be said that he knows therefore in part. (7) The seventh day is the Sabbath, and therein that which he has sought previously without he has come to look for within, and—supposing that he is properly prepared—he finds it in the state

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of contemplation which I have mentioned. There are no Grades corresponding to this state in Masonry, but the witness is always in the world, and I have met with it in another place. This mystery cannot be received by the un-instructed; to them it is a rock of offence. The Mark Mason should therefore remember (*a*) that there is a Stone which was rejected by the builders, and (*b*) that this Stone became the head of the corner.

A supplement to the Mark Degree which has almost passed out of knowledge, and is not included by Ragon in his *Nomenclature of more than 1400 Grades*, though it is still preserved in at least one group of Rites, passes under the title of *Link and Chain*. It is preposterous in respect of attribution, as it now stands third in the Noachite series, and this is scarcely explicable even by the illiterate spirit which governed the co-ordination of the Rite in question. It is said that under another obedience it was once conferred in a *Royal Arch Chapter*, but this would increase the anomaly, as the Arch is a Grade of the Second House of Doctrine, having no connection as such with a diluvian motive. Noah and his sons are represented as guardians of the great Ark of Refuge; it has passed already into symbolism, and has become a type of that covenant signified by the Bow of Promise, נש, the Mystical Rainbow, and is thus the precursor of another and later covenant, Ark of a higher Dispensation, over

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the Mysteries of which presided the Holy Lodge, with ceremonies that imagination bodies forth, but they are unhappily wanting to Masonry. There is no explanation of the title *Link and Chain*, and no correspondence therewith in any part of the ceremonial. It is conceivable that it may be meant allegorically as referring to the bond of union created by the covenant, the rainbow sign of which unites heaven and earth. In a much deeper sense the rainbow is that link and chain which connected the later initiations with all that was holy and good in those which were overwhelmed by the catastrophe called the deluge mystically. I am acquainted—as I have intimated—with very high super-Masonic Rites, which represent the Ark of Noah as carrying the sacred deposit of the old arcana from the one epoch to the other across waters of destruction, the living types of the archaic wisdom being symbolised by the animals of the Ark.

As the imputed period of the *Link and Chain* is that of the First Temple, it remains that its Noachite character is a singular fatuity of arrangement. It is difficult to understand the intellectual confusion of some makers of rituals; nothing can be more absurd than the anachronism of officers who represent Noah and his sons communicating to their Candidates a legend concerning King Solomon. The story is that the Jewish monarch, when inspecting the building of the Temple, lost from his crown one of the jewels

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which formed the Sacred Name. It was ultimately discovered by that skilful craftsman with whose history we are made acquainted in the Mark Degree. The symbolic time of the occurrence is between the recognition of his work of art and science, and its final super-imposition in the sacred place which it was designed to occupy. I must suffer the responsibility of my own office in the construction of symbolism, for although the legend is tempting I fear that it rests on fantasy rather than solid meaning. The fabled jewel was an amethyst ; its loss is not reported to have carried any consequences, while its recovery occasioned only the inscription of its name on that particular work of skill which had been shaped by the craftsman. Had we met with the story in Zoharic records, a little management of the incidents would have perhaps enabled us to see that the loss of the jewel, which in the Masonic Grade is represented as a bad omen, really signified the loss of the true pronunciation of the Divine Name and the consequent widowhood of the Sacred Word. We should understand thus that the jewel has not been till this day restored to any crown in the world. As the password of the *Link and Chain* itself signifies, it is still a hidden treasure.

An order of symbolic chronology does not offer the opportunity for a very strict succession, and if I proceed to dispose at this point of the Grade entitled *Marked Master*, it is without

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prejudice to the fact that it might have come earlier or even later in the series, with a limit on both sides. The Degree at the present day is known only in Scotland, unless it has passed to America from that country ; it seems, moreover, to be conferred automatically as one of a series rather than worked in Lodge. If legends of the Masonic kind counted in the historical sense for anything, one might be disposed to think that Scotland was also the place of its invention, but nothing attaches to the speculation. It has a curious and ingenious legend, which belongs to an early period of the Master-Builder's connection with the enterprise of the spiritual Temple ; it is, however, anomalous enough, for it is in opposition to the spirit of the Craft and the entire Masonic motive. For the one and the other, the traditional builder is always the Master-Builder, the kings who are described as his coadjutors being only employers and patrons. On the other hand, the legend of Marked Master represents him as being in the first instance subordinate to *Cavelum*, one of the royal kinsmen, who was in charge of the operations prior to the arrival of that artist whose genius and fidelity have filled the world of Masonry with praise for ever. This is the anomaly on the surface ; but that which follows, also on the surface, is worse, for it is a blot on the scutcheon of the Builder. He is depicted as discontented and jealous because of his inferior position, and his negligence led to a fatality

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which wears almost a homicidal aspect. A particular coping-stone had been set over the northern gate and under the supervision of the Master had been fixed so badly that it fell from the height specified, its collapse destroying the Intendant-in-Chief of the works. A further examination of the legend shews, however, that the anomaly and impeachment are little better than pretexts, which serve to connect the stone with early symbolical Masonry. It is really a legend of Paradise, for on that stone there once stood the angel with the Flaming Sword at the expulsion of man from the garden. It was called the Stone of Destiny, and if such was its purpose, as I have said, on the side of severity and judgment, on that of concealed mercy it became in later days the altar upon which Abraham prepared to immolate his son Isaac. The dual memorial of enforced suffering, of resignation and sacrifice, was somehow preserved in Jewry, and at many points and corners of the mystic Temple it was sought to erect it in fine, but there was no place found for it except on the coping-stone of the gate already mentioned. The death of *Cavelum* seems thus to suggest a working of fatality rather than of negligence. Whether it was culpable neglect, or in either case, there follows the curious and anomalous intimation that in grief at the death of his kinsman the great King in his wisdom walled up the North gate, a remarkable suggestion, seeing that it was a place of egress upon that memorable

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occasion—which is in the mind of all Masons—when the bond of union in treachery found its victim. Whether the coping-stone was reimposed subsequently, is not stated.

I have omitted to mention that it was also that stone which served as a pillow for Jacob when he saw the Ladder of the Soul's Ascent and the angels going to and fro thereon. Having regard to the continuity of its presence in Jewry, it is perhaps only by omission or forgetfulness that the symbol is not identified with that rock which followed Israel into the Promised Land ; and then there is little question that the suggestive—almost eloquent—symbolism would have been taken over and put to its own purpose by Christian Masonry—for that rock was Christ, and on such a stone as this did He build His Church, not indeed the Church of vicissitude, the Church prevailing in warfare and sometimes prevailed against, but the Church spiritual and unseen, entered in the higher consciousness and established therein for ever.

Probably its untoward intervention in the case of the first Intendant hindered this ascription to the legendary object. In any case, we are told expressly that it was not utilised for the later Temple, though it continued to be preserved as a Palladium, till it was, at a later period, carried by a cohort of emigrating Jews, under the leadership—past all expectation—of the prophet Jeremiah, and was taken so far that it arrived at last in Scot-

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land and was set up therein. The reader will be able to identify it when I add that the Stone of Destiny was rifled by Edward, king of England, who carried it to London and placed it in the coronation chair. It doth not yet appear what shall betide it ; but when man returns to Paradise its symbolical history may be completed, for the angel, with sword reversed, may again stand upon it and welcome him in.

Having regard to the multiplicity of Grades, it will not be unexpected that a kind of superincession in respect of subject and motive should take place occasionally among them. There are, for example, two groups which are apt to cause some confusion in this especial respect : there are (a) those Grades which pass under the name of *Adonhiramite Masonry*, and (b) the *Cryptic Degrees* leading up to the *Royal Arch*. The first has interesting points as a constructive effort in a series, and seems to have originated with the idea of introducing a casual and unwarranted successor to the Master Builder in the person of *Adonhiram*, who was brought from the forest of Lebanon, where he supplied the wood, to take a share in the operations at the Temple itself. But this alteration was made in the days of the Builder. As regards the *Cryptic Grades*, their importance depends from that of the *Royal Arch*, and if the latter could not stand such explanatory aids must needs share in its fall. Now it happens that these Grades are a part of *Adonhira-*

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rite Masonry, being concerned with the personage in question after his arrival in Jerusalem; but this notwithstanding, they do not form part of the series above mentioned, the authorship of which is ascribed variously to L. G. de Saint Victor, to Baron Tschoudy and to unknown hands. In dealing with the claims of both, we must remember that the proportion of Ceremonial Masonic literature belonging to the Secret Tradition is quantitatively small in comparison with constructions and extensions by various persons who followed the simple way of excogitation under the light of the logical understanding. All that is of reasonable derivation in this manner enters into the tradition, and must be separated from other growths of the Mystical Tree which are the product of arbitrary grafting. At the same time it requires to be distinguished from the native-born blossoms and fruit of the tree itself. But it may also happen that some of the curious graftings are not without importance after their own manner; at least they are all, unless they are mere waste products, preoccupied with one or another phase of the great subjects, and many which count as the least according to ritual measures reflect something from those subjects—if it is only their shadowed light remotely. We shall be passing therefore in our progress through worlds of allusion, through worlds of similitude, and by the time that we attain our bourne the quest already inaugurated will have proved one

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of many adventures. Moreover, as this experiment has never been proposed previously, the tales will be not of old travel.

The next Grade which concerns us is, however, that of *Grand Tyler of Solomon*, or *Mason Elect of the 27*, the subsidiary title, undignified and undecorate, being one of the fantasies which characterise occasionally the less important of the High Degrees. Under the English obedience it is preserved, or rather interned, in the collection of the Allied Degrees, but the following outline is derived from another source. The ceremony takes place symbolically beneath the site of the First Temple, and it may be regarded as an initial intimation concerning the existence of those penetralia, out of which arises the chief office of the Grades called Cryptic, which—as we have seen—are a part of Adonhiramite Masonry. The period is of course that of the Sacred Lodge, and this is the only occasion when the ceremonial officers represent the triad of the Headship *in propria persona*. The precise symbolical time is a little prior to that of the Craft Legend. I conceive that there were no accessory masters recognised in the mind of the maker. The proof is that, according to the traditional story, the Degree was constituted out of a *Fellow Craft Lodge*, twenty-four Craftsmen being chosen to participate in the deliberations of the Secret Council convened in the as yet unconsecrated vaults, whereas if there had been ordinary Masters that Council would

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have been formed from them. It is in this manner, that is to say, by the addition of the three Grand Masters to the cohort of craftsmen, that we obtain twenty-seven, the number of the *Elect Masons*. The hope expressed by the closing is that the ordinary members of council may yet become Master Masons and receive the communication of that which is reserved to those alone. It is obvious that if the general Grade had existed by the hypothesis of the account, the Lodge would have been opened therein for the purpose in hand.

The business transacted is related to the progress of the building, and at the time of the Candidate's approach the three Grand Masters are taking counsel together on the plans for the Altar of the Lord, while he himself certifies, in testimony as to his qualification, that he has been at work on the edifice above. The only symbolic importance is that which may be held to reside in the plans of the Altar—that is to say, concerning the fitting place of the mystic sacrifice which goes on for ever, the sacrifice of life to the attainment of the one term and the sacrifice of false, illusory, or relative knowledge to that which is true and absolute. The decision—but there is no decision in reality—does not signify, because the Grade is far from the goal.

As regards the arcane communications in the *Grand Tyler* Degree, there is no need to say that they are substitutes after their own manner, but

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they lead up to the pretext of the *Royal Arch*—that pretext which is at once so suggestive and unsatisfying. It is suggestive because it certifies abundantly as to the source of the symbolical mystery, and it is unsatisfying, many claims notwithstanding, because it perpetuates, as already shewn, the doctrine of loss instead of that of restitution or the hope of attaining this. In a sense which will be understood by Masons it is, however, given pure and undefiled.

The Tyler Grade offers otherwise, and still in connection with the question of verbal formulæ, a point of some interest, though it shews how the inner meaning of Craft symbolism was missed by the makers of many later rituals. It follows from the Craft Grades that a part of their instituted secrets, being that which is symbolised by the verbal formulæ, was in possession of three persons, whose identity is not stated; but no inference leads us to assume (*a*) that the King of Israel was in possession of the other secrets, being those attaching to workings which *ex hypothesi* were purely of an operative nature; or (*b*) that there were three operative Grand Masters, one of whom was the King of Tyre. On the contrary, there is everything in the symbolism, in the legend, and in a certain closing of the Lodge, to veto such an inference explicitly, more especially in respect of the building plans. The other ascribed Masters were not of the building art, and could not, with regularity of logic, be imported therein when the

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art was spiritualised. It may be assumed concerning them that they had their own mysteries, but these were, or should have been, the secrets of Kings. In the present Degree, however, they both appear to be in plenary possession of the building mystery, because of their accredited position of supereminence in the Sacred Lodge. In a word, they were something more than the first patrons of the art. The question is, what was in the mind of the symbolist that he should inhibit the communication of secrets, the fact of which is paraded to those whose advancement takes place ; while, as if by precaution against the future, the mysteries are reduced into writing and are concealed in a cryptic place, which—the loss notwithstanding—is not opened for centuries, and then proves to contain a shadow in place of the substance ? We may perhaps find some light on the subject when the message of the Grades under the Old Alliance has been collected into a summary form, at the end of our research.

An illustration of the superincession that I have mentioned previously is given by the next Grade, being that of *Royal Master*, which in respect of its motive is almost identical with the *Grand Tyler of King Solomon*. It is also an integral part of *Adonhiramite Masonry*, and is concerned with the attainment of the Great Secret communicated to a Master Mason. The time is prior to the completion and dedication of the Temple, nor can the stage of the Mystic Work be more

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than approximately inferred. There is a suggestion, or at least a speculation, as to what might happen if one of the Masters were to die ; but it is affirmed that precautions have been taken to insure the perpetuation of the secrets, no part of which will be communicated till the dedication is an accomplished fact. The Candidate represents *Adonhiram*, who, according to this part of his story, questioned on a certain occasion the Master of all the Mysteries embodied in the art of Spiritual Building as to the time at which he should receive—from the hands of him or another—the great Craft Secret. He was told that, if found worthy, it would be imparted on the completion of the Temple. In the meantime its concealment had taken place under the circumstances described in the previous Degree, and, according to one of the recensions, the duty imposed on *Adonhiram* is to work for the preservation of that mystery which has been so far denied him. The Candidate who personates him receives the Secrets of a *Royal Master*, but these are little to his purpose.

The Grade itself is the product of an extraordinary confusion of ideas and incidents, and though I have located it in the present section, part of it is referable to the next ; its proper concern is the completion of the vessels pertaining to the House of the Lord. In the first act of the ceremonial the Master is apparently alive, and is represented by one of the officers ; in the second,

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his seat is vacant, the substitute does not appear as in the former part, and it is made plain that the great prototype will return no more by that which is communicated to the Candidate.

Some annotations on the Grade of *Royal Master* indicate that the ceremonial takes place in the cryptic part of the Temple, like that of *Grand Tyler of Solomon*, but it is abundantly clear from the Ritual and its rubrics that the convention is really held in a public part of the building where the ordinary craftsmen are at work.

The ritual which next concerns us, being that of *Select Master*, takes us again to the vaults, which tradition supposes to have existed immediately beneath the site of the Holy of Holies. The degree is really a variant of *Masons Elect of 27*, or at least it is an offshoot from the same root. It has also striking analogies with the *Royal Arch of Enoch*, which is really a Cryptic Grade, though it has been collected into another series, under a distinct obedience. The accidents embodied by most of the dramatic part are not of our concern. According to one of the codices, the crypt is a chamber with nine arches extending from West to East, but the ninth alone is completed. It is this which is designed as the depository of the Masonic arcana, together with models of (*a*) the Ark of the Covenant, in which the arcana were placed; (*b*) the pot of manna; (*c*) the Rod of Aaron; and (*d*) a copy of the Book of the Law. But another

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codex, which seems to approach more nearly the original form, so far as we can presume concerning it, affirms that there were three arched vaults one beneath another, and that in the last or lowermost was the resting-place of the mysteries, as follows : (a) The Masonic arcana, the promised communication of which was rendered impossible by the memorable event recorded in the Craft Legend ; (b) the Sacred Law ; (c) the crowns of the two Kings, as if after that event they had laid them aside for ever ; (d) the coins of the reign in Israel ; and (e) the embalmed heart of the Master.

It should be understood that at the symbolic time of the Grade the vault was vacant in respect of these objects, and the Master was still alive. The enumeration is therefore to this extent in advance of the occurrence, and the so-called Historical Lecture simply delineates a preconceived plan to deposit arcana, in the expectation that they might some day prove of benefit to Masonry. The object is otherwise to sustain the tradition of the Royal Arch, and whatever the value *per se* which is resident in these Grades of *Adonhiramite Masonry*, it is certain that in the absence of some of them the most striking ceremonial part of the Holy Order is scarcely intelligible. As regards the things that are deposited, it will be seen that there is one secret surrounded by four hallows—but some of these confuse the issues.

In conclusion, both within and without

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Masonry, the mystery of symbolical building becomes sometimes a very great mystery, and if it should seem that I affirm now in too magisterial a manner that the internment of mysteries as here indicated does not differ generically from the internment indicated by the Craft Legend, it is on the understanding that I shall come back to this subject carrying a fuller light at the close of our research.

The close of this section brings us to the Grade entitled *Master of all Symbolic Lodges*, about which the most characteristic confusion exists in the ordinary sources of reference. In Woodford's *Cyclopædia of Freemasonry*, which is one of the most negligible hand-books produced in the whole range of modern Masonic book-production, the Grade is identified with that of *Prince of the Tabernacle*, being the 24th Degree of the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED RITE, than which nothing could be more dissimilar. Mackey preceded this with a statement on his own part, while Kenneth Mackenzie identified it with the 20th Degree of the same system, being *Venerable Grand Master AD VITAM*, which is also distinct entirely. It is in reality the old degree of *Past Master*, as it is said to have prevailed in the so-called York Rite, and there should be no need to add that, as such, it has no analogy with the ceremony of installing a Master in the chair of a Craft Lodge. It is still communicated in Scotland, but probably *pro forma*. Under the obedience of

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the system which preserves it, the Lodge is opened first of all in the Grade of *Fellow Craft Mark*, but the imputed Mark relation is entirely arbitrary. In France, with as little reason, it is connected by commentators with the Royal Arch series, to which it does not offer even the shadow of a preface.

Putting these questions aside, it is remarkable in one sense, because the Candidate himself is elected to the chair and office of the Master. The reason, which does not appear in the ceremonial part, follows from information embodied in the Historical Lecture ; it is recited there that during the rule of the Sacred Lodge there were no Masters outside the governing triad, as I have indeed maintained independently on my own part. It was therefore proposed to confer the degree of Master upon a certain skilled craftsman. Twelve of these were selected as Postulants, and sent to take up their station behind the Temple with their faces turned to the East. The time was prior to sunrise, and he who first beheld the ascent of the day-star should be acknowledged as a Master. It is another legend of a Golden Dawn, and the name of the Elect Fellow-Craft Mark was *Adonhiram*. This also is therefore Adonhiramite Masonry ; but we know from the Grade of *Royal Master* that he did not receive the arcana, and as regards those of *Symbolic Master*, they are again to no purpose of the Craft.

It may serve a subsidiary object in the in-

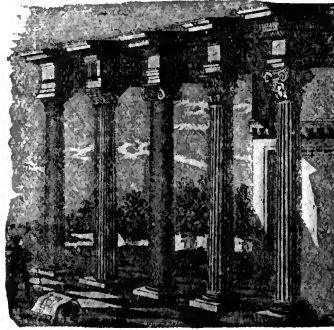
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terests of clearness to establish a brief distinction regarding the modern classifications of the *Cryptic* and *Adonhiramite Grades*. The former are worked in England under the obedience of a Grand Council, and include (a) *Most Excellent Master*, of which something will be said subsequently, but it is neither *Cryptic* nor *Adonhiramite Masonry*, and its inclusion is therefore an instance of the unreason which governs most collections of Grades into a sequence of Rites ; (b) *Royal Master*, with which I have dealt already, and so also with (c) *Select Master* ; (d) *Super-Excellent Master*, which offers another anachronism, as it belongs to the period which precedes immediately the erection of the Second Temple : again, it is neither *Cryptic* nor *Adonhiramite*. The Grade of *Grand Tyler of Solomon*, which is essential to the series, is omitted and interned, as I have said, elsewhere.

To *Adonhiramite Masonry* belong (a) *Secret Master*, (b) *Perfect Master* and (c) *Intendant of Buildings*, which are included in the groups worked under the ægis of the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE. We shall meet with them again in due course. L. G. de Saint Victor collected under the general title (a) The Craft Grades 1, 2, 3—by the arbitrary assumption which I have mentioned ; (b) *Perfect Master*, as above ; (c) *Elect of Nine*, also taken over by the Scottish Rite ; (d) *Elect of Perignan* ; (e) *Elect of Fifteen*, which now figures as the tenth in the series of the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE ; (f) *Minor Architect*, or

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Scottish Apprentice ; (g) *Grand Architect*, or *Scottish Fellow Craft* ; (h) *Scottish Master* ; and (i) three Grades of Chivalry, as follows : (1) *Knight of the East*, (2) *Knight of Rose Croix*, and (3) *Prussian Knight*. These, of course, have no connection with the Adonhiramite motive, if such a motive can after all be definitely affirmed to exist.





II

OF GRADES SUBSEQUENT TO THE SYMBOLIC TIME OF THE CRAFT DEGREES

IT was antecedently unlikely that the memorable event recited in the Craft Legend should pass without further memorial on the part of the High Grades, and the Rites extant which offer an extension of the subject may be separated into three divisions for convenience of treatment and also for coincidence of symbolism. They are— (1) those which concern the visitation of the crime itself on the heads of the guilty ; (2) those which provide a remedial measure in respect of the evil created by the confusion that followed the act ; and (3) the sole Grade, which sets forth after any manner the completion and dedication of the work. An extrinsic importance resides in the first series, as its content responds to the motive which inspired the *Kadosh* Grades, their thesis in common being that there was a legal, equitable and holy vengeance to be accomplished at all costs, though its nature and object varied. Either naturally, if

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they were prior in historical time, or by imputation in the contrary case, the Craft judgment is the root-matter of them all, but we shall see in their place how this was afterwards adapted to give expression—like the Craft itself, and especially the Craft Legend—to the Jacobite political design, and again to the vindication of the Knights Templar as the veil of a revolutionary propaganda in France and elsewhere. Though they cannot be overlooked, I have indicated that these things are extrinsic to our proper term. The same must be said in respect of Masonic vengeance as conveyed by the first part of my triple enumeration of Grades ; but it is otherwise with the second series, in which we shall find an opportunity to decide whether there has been anywhere in High Grade Masonry a valid attempt to deal symbolically with a vital symbolical problem, or whether we have evidence of a difficulty present in Masonic consciousness, but apart from any adequate power to adjudicate thereon.

I will now take the series in their order as indicated, without further preliminary reference to that which has been classed as third, since we shall find little to detain us therein. I must explain, however, that at the beginning we are still dealing on the surface with Grades of Adonhiramite Masonry, but though I must not confuse issues, which already are none too simple, by questions of textual criticism, those who will be at the pains to consult the old codices will confirm

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my own decision that much of what passes under this name in express collections—and is included in an enumeration that I have given—has no correspondence in motive with the Degrees which have been met with already and considered under this title. So far they have dealt with the symbolism of the Altar of the Lord and the Holy Vessels, with the mystery of the Cryptic Vaults and the secrets hidden therein, with an ambition on the part of the craftsmen, during the days of the Master Builder, to learn the arcana at that time reserved in the Sacred Lodge, and the way, in fine, that the Headship adjudicated thereon. Upon the surface of the *Cryptic Grades*, and by implication in those which preceded it, the intention—as I have said—was to lead up to the *Royal Arch*, or something of an analogous nature conceived independently in the mind, to account for the alleged preservation of a secret which is of the imputed order only and for the prevalence of a substituted Mastership, when it is obvious that a real Grade of the kind did not exist outside the headship either in the days of the Craft Legend or before that period. I regard the device as bearing some marks of subtlety, and it is this which constitutes the interest and importance of *Adonhiramite Masonry*. But some codices which pass under the general name are foreign—as I have just indicated—to the tradition, and their sole title to inclusion resides in the fact that they relate further episodes in the history of

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Adonhiram himself; that they substituted this name, without an assignable reason, for that of the Artist in Chief; or that they took over Christian Grades of completion with the idea of presenting a plenary Masonic System. The collection of L. G. de Saint Victor, which under the distinctive title is that which is best known, is responsible for the childish device in the second case, and for the codified supplements in the third. It is a little difficult to speak with certainty on the question of origin, but there is reason to believe that he contributed to the series three Grades of importance, as previously they appear to have been unknown. These are: *Elect of Perignan*, and *Minor* and *Grand Architect*. Outside these, his Rite contains nothing that is not otherwise available, and for the most part is not only well known but recurrent. In those which concern us the events are all subsequent to the Symbolic time of the Third Degree, and seeing that his authority is of itself perhaps negligible in respect of the Rite as a whole, we shall be able to deal with all its sections in their proper places without further reference to himself.

The immediate event which must be held to follow symbolically after the catastrophe delineated by the Craft Legend is the chastisement of the sin which cried to heaven for vengeance, the Craft reference to the subject being held apparently insufficient. If we were dealing with an historical event, or with a legend to be understood literally

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at its proper value, it is obvious that the task of extension would be quite simple. It is far otherwise in the case of a symbolic building, a catastrophe in which the personal element is only a veil and evasion, and a punishment which for these reasons must be also impersonal. The Legend itself deals with a mystical sacrifice ; but the Masters who created it were not succeeded by Masters, and the sequels have misconstrued everything, have also literalised everything, and in place of type and allegory they offer a feast of blood. Let us take, for example, the Ninth Grade of the SCOTTISH RITE, which is in substance identical with the *Perfect Elect Mason* of some other systems, and is perhaps better represented by the old French source from which I have derived the latter. In both cases, of course, it is a Grade of the Dagger, which carries no symbolical significance whatever, but the veiled intention appears very plainly upon the surface of the French version, and certainly seems part of the revolutionary propaganda which has been credited to some Lodges at this period. The time follows immediately on the period of the Craft Legend, and the fatality recorded therein has reduced the imputed Masonic headship from the triad to the duad, substituting an imperfect number for that of perfection. What was left may have been a spiritual body, but it was a body without a head. The tradition is therefore broken, yet it is not a Lodge of Mourning for the loss or suspen-

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sion of Knowledge, nor an Emergency Lodge to consider the course of procedure over the arrested labours of the Holy House of Doctrine ; it is not even a Lodge of Sorrow for the vacant place in the Trinity ; it is purely and simply a Lodge of Detection and Visitation. To exhibit the unity of this purpose, the surviving Kings are seated on a single throne. The crown of one is enriched with precious stones, but there are no jewels in that of the other, as if to suggest that only in one case the understanding of true doctrine enlightens the wearer's mind. The question throughout the Grade is the vengeance to be wreaked upon *Abiram*, the traditional chief murderer of the Craft Legend, and the spectators are incited thereto, among other devices, by a picture of the Master's Son. The Candidate for the perfection of the Grade, having first been accused of the crime, appears as the discoverer of the assassin's retreat and his imputed object is to learn from those in authority whether he shall bring the guilty person dead or alive. A subtlety follows in the Ritual, for he is directed, if possible, to adopt the second course, while the subsequent procedure imposes the use of the poniard as the title to admission in the Lodge in the capacity of an *Elect Mason*. Moreover, the Postulant's obligation binds him to sacrifice to the shade of the victim those who reveal the secrets of the mystery. The consummation is duly attained in the violent death of the assassin, and this consummation is rejected

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by another subtlety. Yet the Ritual proceeds to reward the zeal and courage of the Candidate.

The technical blunder of this Degree is the notion of a simple murder, but I think that it helps to reveal the concealed intention, for which three victims would at the moment have been useless. When the closing is taken, certain words of the Master are significant as a key to the design, for they call on the brethren to remember the zeal of those nine Elect Masters who undertook the mission of requital. What is the purpose of the counsel? The answer is: In order that we may imitate them. It seems certain that the vindication of the Builder by the destruction of his prime murderer is identified in its import with the vendetta of the *Kadosh* Grades, and that as he is a pretext in the one case, so is Jacques de Molay in the other. It will be seen, in conclusion, that the Grade of *Perfect Elect Mason* is a direct—though unauthorised—derivative, an excursus, or a supplement of the Grade in culmination of the Craft. This is its claim to existence, and this is granted concerning it; but the price paid is the debasement of the Craft itself. My readers who are Masonic brethren will already, perhaps even long since, have begun to realise that a great counsel of prudence dictated the rejection of many of the High Grades by governing bodies like the Grand Lodge of England.

The alternative names of *Perfect Elect Mason* are *First Elect* and *Elect of Nine*. The Grade

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was included in the Rite of the EMPERORS OF THE EAST AND WEST, and in that of *Écossais Primitif*. The Candidate personates the chief or leader of the nine elect Masons who were sent in search of the assassins. But according to another codex it is as a mysterious and unknown person that he announces the discovery of the retreat of *Abiram* the chief murderer, and this is more in consonance with the reason of the ceremony—as being accused himself of the crime he could not have been an authorised detective. It is for taking subsequently the part of executioner that he is somehow incorporated with the Nine. The arrangement is sufficiently confusing, but it signifies little.

The sequel hereto is the Degree of *Second Elect*, otherwise *Elect of Perignan*, which was the name of that unknown who took the Nine Elect Masters to the retreat of *Abiram*. The Candidate enters in virtue of his previous advancement as one of this number. There is not even the shadow of importance in any part of the ceremonial, which presents what happened immediately after the blood of the first murderer had been offered to the manes of the Master. As regards his accomplices, they are said to have taken refuge in Cabul, and there to have perished miserably. Nothing remains in consequence but to expose the head of *Abiram* as a warning to all traitors and to announce the Sacred Word allocated to the vain observance, which word is said to signify: Praise be to God that the crime and

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the criminals are punished. As there is no need to conceal this word, so there is none to disclose it, but it will not be impertinent to mention that it means nothing of the kind. It may be added for the information of Craft Masons, that at the time of the memorable event the North gate is said in the catechism to have been open and guarded by one of the triad ; to that at the East there is no reference. This statement contradicts the Grade of *Marked Master*. There follows in due order the *Elect of Fifteen* as a sequel to both of the preceding, and as nothing attaches to their harmony, so this offers a variant in contradiction, which seems curious in a collection of Grades. So far from the two other malefactors having perished in Cabul, which it should be understood is the city of the Old Testament, and not the province or city of Afghanistan, they are alive in the unknown kingdom of Geth, of whose ruler the suzerain is Solomon. That monarch therefore dispatches fifteen zealous Masters, including the nine, bearing letters to the royal vassal, in which it is demanded that the murderers should be given up. All this is done accordingly ; they are brought to Jerusalem, put to a death of torture, and their heads, with that of *Abiram*, are set over the doors of the Temple.

As no other legitimate victims are now available, it is not regarded as inequitable that the Candidate—though in some collections he has been justified, acknowledged and advanced through the

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previous Degrees—should in that of *Lesser or Little Architect* undergo one further test to free himself of all suspicion that he has been concerned in the death of the Master. And it is at this point that the melancholy procession of ceremonies passes for a moment into a certain kind of symbolism; or at least those who constructed it conveyed suggestions and allusions, though perhaps scarcely knowing what they did. The examination of the Candidate consists in partaking emblematically of the heart of the victim, which in another Grade—or that of *Discreet Master*—is said to have been deposited by Solomon in a golden urn. But the proposition and its fulfilment do not connect with the old hypothesis and rite of the Blood Covenant, for the heart is a spiritual heart contained in a mystical urn, and the elements of which it is composed are milk, flour, oil and wine. Hereof is the cement which binds the stones of the Temple together—as when it is said in other and greater Mysteries to Postulants who are already illuminated: *Transmutemini, transmutemini de lapidibus mortuis in lapides vivos philosophicos*. The milk is mildness, the wine strength, the oil wisdom, and the flour goodness. These were the virtues of the Master, and the allusion is not therefore, as an illiterate codex says, to the staff of life and its adjuncts.

The catechism of the Grade further shews the mystic interpretation of the whole Temple work, though the wording is a little confusing. The Candidate is symbolically received in a circle, which

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signifies the infinite immensity of the Divine Being. The analogue of this circle is a parallelogram, in which also the Candidate is symbolically received, and this signifies the tomb of the Master—that is to say, it is finite dimension. The Holy of Holies is represented in the Lodge by a triangle within the circle, having the Blazing Star, wherein is the letter G. The Candidate is, in fine, said to be symbolically received herein. Whether realised or not, there is symbolism in these indications.

To make an end of this matter, a word is shewn in the Temple which, it is said, cannot be pronounced, yet it was uttered once at a certain mournful discovery with which Masons are familiar. One of the labours of the Grade is to work at the triangle on the tomb of the Master. It was inscribed in the centre with the letter G = God, and at the angles were S = Submission, U = Union, and G = *Gomez*, the last being the mistress word and the first uttered by man when he opened his eyes in Paradise. There were also three letters emblazoned on the tomb itself: M = *Moria*, being the true name of the mountain on which the Temple was built [for this another version substitutes *Gaboan*, but it is certain that the true Temple is and can be erected only on the Earth of Paradise]; A = *Adonhiram*, according to the collection of Saint Victor, but it should be replaced by another initial, representing a greater name. S = *Stolkin* or *Sterkin*, said to be in reality *Shoulkain* = *Fimbria possessionis*, but this is probably a gratuitous

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reading, and in any case the attributions are one and all impossible as explanations of the initial, for they represent, in their several forms, the imputed name of one of the three assassins.

Turning to another subject which connects the Grade with the second of my series, the Discourse attached thereto mentions that after the catastrophe of the Craft Legend the work went on carelessly, for the Royal Master was in quest of a new Architect. With this object he assembled in his palace the most worthy among the Lesser Masters, but we have not yet seen that any of these had been appointed. By the plans that are set before him, he understood that the first elevation of the Temple had already attained perfection ; this being so, he ordained that the same proportions should be observed for the second elevation, and that the Masons should appoint their own Master Architect.

In this way, as I have indicated, my first series begins to dissolve into the second, with which we shall now be concerned in the next place, and the Grade of *Grand Architect* constitutes herein a continuation or extension of the former Degree. It is serviceable only as an illustration of that instinct which made the old students realise how the death of the Master Builder had left everything in confusion, as if the official royalty remained, but the priesthood had departed. The Craftsmen have exhausted the plans and the King's ordinance, with which we became ac-

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quainted in the previous ceremony, that the model of the first elevation should be followed strictly in the second, has failed to remove the difficulties. It will be seen that the antithesis of the work of philosophy is here proposed, and in place of a mystery of building we have only the common question of raising an ordinary edifice by a bungling artifice in the absence of a skilled master. It is unintentionally significant as shewing the consequence which might be expected when the work is interpreted literally ; it is like the monitors in a school of theology taking the chair of doctrine on the demise of the doctor of Divinity. We shall see in the end that the edifice was declared to be very good by the decree of an uninstructed royalty, much after the same manner that Don Quixote pronounced upon the excellence of his helmet. We are presented in any case with Solomon's Temple literalised. The situation, such as it is, is saved in the present instance by *Moabon*, who presents what is passed as a suitable plan, and this Craftsman is personated by the Candidate, who is received as a Master Architect. The title sounds almost like a device of quiet derision, but it is no doubt to be taken seriously. Fortunately, not one of the Grades suggests that any person comes forward with a perfect and comprehensive design. *Moabon* is a name which has already figured in the series and has even been used as a password. Some enemies of Masonry, who on the ecclesiastical side have constituted

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themselves exponents of the Craft and its developments, have not failed to point out that this personage was a son of the race issued from the incest of Lot, but as no conclusion is drawn, the folly of the unextended point may be left on our part.

It remains to say that the Grade of *Grand Architect* supposes—as its general purport—the foundation of a school of architecture for the furtherance of the work in the Temple and for the progress of the Royal Art. In other hands it is not outside possibility that this might have been put to the use of symbolism in consonance with the general design ; but those who invented the Ritual knew as little of that design as did the conspiring craftsmen concerning the sacred plans hidden in the heart of the Master. The conspirators destroyed the Master, and makers of Grades like this have murdered the symbolism.

The things which are implied and explicated in the Grade of *Grand Architect* developed further in that of *Superintendent of the Buildings*, or *Master in Israel*, though the second in modern collections is made to precede the first. The school of architecture which I have mentioned is here shewn to be composed of five leaders, representing the five orders in chief, and this on the surface is of course the pity thereof, those who invented it having forgotten, because of their zeal, that the King of Israel who is concerned in its formal institution could not have been acquainted with the divisions. Anomalies of this kind are ridic-

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ulous rather than important, but they help to show the illiterate spirit which moved upon some back-waters of the High Degrees, and intending to say: *Let there be Light*, evoked nonsense only. The chief officers of the Grade are Solomon, a certain *Tito*—otherwise *Prince Harodim*, who occupies an important place in the degree of *Provost and Judge*—and *Adonhiram*, the son of *Abda*, who seems to have been co-opted to the seat once filled by the Master Architect. The charge of the workmen on Mount Lebanon had been previously deputed to him, and he reappears in the Grade of *Secret Master*, which is concerned with other measures adopted by Solomon, after the death of the chief architect, to supply in the best possible manner that loss which on all hands is admitted to have been irreparable. Seven presumed experts are here appointed to take over the duties which had devolved previously on one alone. It is with this object that *Adonhiram* is brought from the district of Lebanon to Jerusalem, and he is constituted the first Secret Master. But according to other Grades he had been so transferred already.

It is obvious that we have nothing to expect by way of assistance from any classification of Rites, nor do titles of Grades exhibit a reasonable adaptation to the presumed succession of events. Whether the degree of *Secret Master* should precede that of *Perfect Master*, may perhaps be a moot question on the evidence of the names, but

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it was so allocated in the COUNCIL OF EMPERORS OF THE EAST AND WEST, and so it remains to this day in the grouping of the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE. It follows that the King of Israel was long preoccupied by the difficulties of the building scheme before it occurred to him that a great mausoleum should be erected to the memory of his Architect, which is the subject presented to the Candidate's consideration in the Grade of *Perfect Master*, as it is otherwise in that of *Sublime Master*. *Adonhiram* is the ruler of the Lodge; the mausoleum is constructed in a hidden place—as if a final concealment of doctrine: and the procedure of the ritual describes the ceremonies which marked the completion of the work. Those who remember the symbolism, so brief, so restrained, and yet so eloquent in the Craft Legend, should be in a position to appreciate how it suffers by its reduction herein to the terms of monumental Masonry. The whole Masonic subject suffers in the same way, for the lesson of the Craft is that the manifested House of God, that House which, according to its symbolism, is in some sense made with hands and yet is the true House, though it is builded by the elect in their hearts, has never been constructed—in the external sense—on earth. Many ritualists who had heard the expression but did not understand its meaning, continued to devise edifices for celebration in ceremonial workings, but they are all negligible and nearly all are neglected.

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Seeing that the canons of historical evidence adopted by the High Grades regard it as a tenable proposition that the King of Israel should be instructed and capable of instructing in the five orders of architecture, I infer that there is no difficulty in imagining that he was qualified to communicate at need the degrees of chivalry some ages before it was instituted, and we need not therefore be surprised that the supplement to *Master Elect of Nine* and *Master Elect of Fifteen* should be the Grade of *Sublime Knight*, or alternatively *Chevalier Elect*. When Solomon decided to institute this Order he selected twelve members from among the Elect Masters, formed them into a chapter, and appointed them as presidents over the twelve tribes of Israel. It is an old folly, as that which is now the eleventh degree of the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED RITE constituted, under the name of *Elect of the Twelve Tribes*, the sixteenth Grade in the Metropolitan Chapter of France, and of course goes back to the COUNCIL OF EMPERORS OF THE EAST AND WEST. The recipient of this Grade becomes a Prince *Ameth*, which signifies truth in Hebrew. The incautious originator of this Grade took one lesson too lightly from those romances of Knight-errantry, books of the Holy Graal, and so forth, which in all times and climes and tongues and peoples and nations beheld the institutes of chivalry, and supposed that there was Knighthood everywhere. The anachronism seems graver in one case than another, and yet most

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Masonic rituals are products of the romantic spirit.

As a conclusion to this second section or series, there are two Grades which require to be mentioned briefly. One of them is *Chief of the Tabernacle*, which is said to have been instituted after the visitation of their crime on the murderers of the Master Architect. The Candidate personates his son, of whom we have heard shortly in the *Perfect Elect Mason*, and it was on his image that the nine avenging Masons swore to fulfil their mission. With the usual disregard of logic, the principal officer of the Sanctuary is High Priest Aaron, and the Grade commemorates the institution of the Levitical order; the Lodge is a Hierarchy and the members who compose it are Levites. The ceremony refers to the erection of the Tabernacle in the wilderness; the Tabernacle itself is represented in the centre of the chief apartment, and the standards of the Twelve Tribes decorate the walls. The Grade is termed by some of its exponents the first degree of the Mysteries, and it leads up to that of *Prince of the Tabernacle*, which is concerned with the same period of Jewish history. This notwithstanding, the Candidate is required to certify that he has shared in the building operations at the Temple of Solomon for a period of nearly six years, and he undertakes furthermore to work on the twelve commandments comprised in the Tables of the Law—but whether in the spirit or the letter we

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are left to determine for ourselves. The difficulty created by this enumeration has caused some idle commentaries, a connection being supposed not only with the twelve tribes of Israel, but with the twelve Labours of Hercules and the twelve apostles. The intervention of another class of experts would possibly have furnished an instruction on the analogies of the twelve zodiacal signs.

Though considerations of chronology have led me to postulate a third series of grades as subsequent to the symbolic time of the Craft Legend, there is only the shadow of one Solitary Degree connected with the consecration of the First Temple; it is that of *Most Excellent Master*, which depends so closely on the Grade of *Marked Master*, and is so much a sequel to its working, that the one should have followed on the other, could I have consented to waive the question of symbolic time. It carries a sonorous title, but has little to justify the official dignity which it pretends to confer; it is, however, a familiar Grade, generally known to collectors and still communicated under different obediences in England and Scotland. It extends the information afforded in the Grade of *Mark Master* concerning the Craftsman's work of skill, and testifies that its proper institution was to commemorate the completion of the Temple, when a place was in fine found for the miracle of art and order. The Grade of *Most Excellent Master* celebrates in this manner the completion of the whole edifice. It is thus

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the only Ritual of Masonry which attempts to say *finis coronat opus* in respect of the First Temple; and seeing that those who were acquainted with the secret implicits of the Craft Legend would not have regarded that event—supposing them to have been engaged in the manufacture of High Grades—as a festival of joy, it is not surprising that the compilation here noticed is without symbolical importance, and does anything rather than betray the hand of a Master. The work of the hand is moreover, muddled, for the catastrophe of the Craft Legend is represented as, for all practical purposes, coincident with the completion of the building work. As to this, I need not say that all symbolism and all inner meaning of the Legend depend upon the opposite fact—that it was prior to the perfection of the work—and this is, moreover, the only construction that can be placed upon the words of the story. The reference to the consecration of the Temple is contained in the last discourse addressed to the Candidate, when it is stated by the Master of the Lodge that the Degree was instituted to mark the event in question, while a brief summary is given of the account in Scripture. The work appeared very good in the eyes of Solomon; so he also knew nothing.

Those who are at the pains to consult the Ritual itself may be disposed to consider that I am scarcely generous, if they come across that codex which contains the dedication section; on

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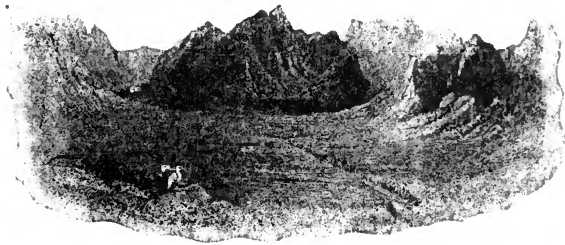
the other hand, should they meet with one of the reduced texts, they will scarcely understand my strictures on that which is omitted in their version. Dealing with that recension which does refer to the dedication, I should add that it also mentions the installation of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy Place, and the glory of the *Shekinah* which was then manifested therein. It should be understood that this glory represents the grace imparted to Israel through the appointed channels, which was another quality of grace and another testimony of Divine Presence than the grace and the Presence which—on the hypothesis of the Secret Doctrine—might have been granted to the people mystically chosen if they had not made void the First Law of Sinai by the trespasses of the Golden Calf, and if those who built in symbolism the mystical House of the Lord had not, by the hypothesis of the Craft, conspired to suspend the Law of the House. The evidence of these things is contained in the *Sepher Ha Zohar*.

This explanation notwithstanding, the bald recital of facts in the Grade here under notice is not to be held exonerated, but it is very difficult to say how far a consistent Dedication Rite would have been possible in Masonry. It is almost certainly *nihil ad rem veram symboli*, but if it were possible to tolerate its introduction the story should either have borrowed nothing from the account in Scripture or should have interpreted it from the Masonic standpoint.

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The Grade of *Most Excellent Master* does not appear in the French tabulations of Rites, at least under this name, and there is some reason to suppose that it never entered the continent. It constitutes in England a kind of ceremonial and dramatic preface to the Cryptic Degrees, with the symbolic content of which we are now acquainted. It is communicated under another obedience in Scotland, where it seems to have suffered from illiterate editing, and it is comprised in one of the innumerable subsidiary Masonic systems which prevail in America. The suspicion, I may add, that the *Cryptic Degrees* originated across the Atlantic has no foundation whatever.





III

THE SECOND HOUSE OF DOCTRINE AND THE GRADES BELONGING THERETO

WE have seen enough to enforce the general conclusion that those ceremonial Masters who undertook to carry further the experiment of Masonry within the jurisdiction of the Old Law were anything but experts in symbolism, and for the most part anything but initiates of Secret Doctrine. We shall learn later on that a few who held some kind of authority as interpreters of the mystic and occult sciences had the wisdom not to interfere with the scheme of things as they stood already in the Craft under the Ancient Alliance. But, as we have also seen, either the *Royal Arch*, if already in existence, had to be justified somehow, or if still in course of development—which is scarcely possible—it had to be introduced gradually. When the power of symbolic creation was at its lowest ebb, when the spiritual side of the subject was least realised, the tendency was to depend

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more and more upon the narrative part of Holy Scripture. Some of the historical lectures attached to the new degrees became little more than exponents of the *Book of Kings*, while the quality of invention brought into the ceremonial parts was of the poorest and most negligible kind. The first imputed necessity—in the class to which the consideration is here and now transferred—was to exhibit the state of the Holy Mysteries in Israel immediately before and after the seizure of the Sacred Vessels and the destruction of the First Temple. It was in this manner that there came into existence the Grade of *Super-Excellent Master*, which is now included in the *Cryptic Degrees* as a kind of epilogue, though it has no connection therewith. It is also supposed to be an illustrative supplement to the Grade of *Select Master*, which symbolically and historically is alike untrue. It is devoid of all symbolism and even all note of intention.

It may be mentioned, to say something which shall be indicative concerning it, that in the course of the ceremony a square is formed by the brethren, and is designed to represent the encampment of the Israelites, having the Ark in the centre and three of the twelve tribes on each side. A triangle and circle are next made for symbolic reasons. This is of no account in itself, and is significant of nothing except the fatuity of the whole proceeding, being prior to the entry of Israel into the Promised Land and therefore void

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of relation with the destruction of Zion or the epoch of the captivity in Babylon. However, for some unearthly reason the ceremony as a whole is supposed to contain historical allusions to the taking of Jerusalem and the demolition of the Holy Places by the officers of Nebuchadnezzar. Of the untoward event itself the historical lecture gives a moderately faithful account derived from Holy Writ, and explains that it is a preparation for the pious scheme of the second building of the House. If this must be held to be true in the sense that destruction of necessity goes before rebuilding, I suppose that nothing really follows therefrom in the ceremonial order, and that the grade herein, as well as in other respects, is entirely nugatory. It is not even vanity ; it is nothing.

But when the children of Israel were taken into captivity, though they forgot the Law and the Covenant, we have authority for saying that they did remember Zion, and the hypothesis of High Grade Masonry presumes that, however imperfectly, they had Masonry also in recollection. There were learned exiles in the city of Naharda on the Euphrates, and among these some kind of Lodge was maintained—probably a Lodge of Mourning. Thus was the tradition kept green till the time of Zerubbabel, prince of the unhappy people. I will pass over such curious impertinences as the Grade called *Prince of Babylon*, or *Suspending Cross of Babylon*, in which the Master

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of the Lodge personates Nebuchadnezzar, and the Candidates, who should be three in number, represent the three children and go through a highly substituted fiery furnace. This, again, is nothing in itself, and in the sequel it leads to nothing. It should be understood further that two kinds of chosen people are alone capable of receiving or representing Freemasonry—by the hypothesis of the Grade; these are the Elect of Israel during the time of their election, and the Gentiles confessing to the Law of Christ. It is a glaring anomaly that the great oppressor of Jewry should be represented as presiding over a lodge, *in partibus infidelium* or otherwise, and the imbecile Ritual-maker who introduces the Christian reference is beyond the pale of criticism. I must also postpone such matters of simple detail and unpretending issues as *Knight of the Brazen Serpent*, which describes the stress and slavery of the Jews under the burden of their captivity, and praises the sweets and mildness of liberty.

The actual introductory Degrees which symbolise the events that led up to the building of the Second Temple, and are as phantom voices crying in the wilderness of desolation and unrest, are those of *Excellent Mason* and of *Super-Excellent Mason*, which is the second part or sequel. Even at the present day they are practised in some unobtrusive manner as preparatory to the *Royal Arch* in Scotland. They are supposed to take place in Babylon, and are grades of caution and

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testing, which are devoid of any symbolism, as they are indeed of any other significance. The titles are arbitrary, and yet if we can accept the term to which they lead up, it must be said that they serve their purpose. They serve it, I say, indeed, but it is in the way that the mere shadow may be taken to represent a reality which is not with us under any Masonic obedience. It is another instance, and such instances are many, of an opportunity that has been missed. Those who imported some parts and some messages of Secret Doctrine into the building mystery left great gaps everywhere, and the attempts which have been made to fill them are testimonies to the fact that those who came after were keenly alive to the vacancy ; it is not so surprising that what they had to offer proves inadequate ; rather it is a matter of satisfaction and also of some surprise that they were able to furnish any substitutes at all. We must therefore be content with what we have, until a time comes when the new spirit in Masonry shall give life to the dry bones. I look then for that which has been sown a natural body to rise as a spiritual body, full of grace and truth.

The period of the exile in Babylon represents a total loss in Israel. The *Shekinah* which was a substituted glory, reflected from supernal heights that as such were closed for ever to the people, had been removed once and for all, as the consequence of that undoing which had been brought about on their own part by their own act. The

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palladium of the Ark has perished in the fires of siege, and the Book of the Law was so lost that it had passed out of memory ; its spirit Israel had never had since the first Tables were broken by Moses, and the letter was itself interned, according to Masonic legend. It will be remembered that the crypts beneath the Holy of Holies contained this book—as if it were part of the Mysteries—and also the Hebrew letters—as if against that coming time when the people should have forgotten their language.

I pass over such puerile inventions as the spurious Grade of chivalry called *Knight of the Sword* and its companion, *Prince of Jerusalem*. We come in this manner to the *Holy Order of the Royal Arch*, the position of which is at once of such utter importance but so involved and difficult. In the first place, it stands alone in its series. It is obvious that the Grade of *Super-Excellent Master* must be set aside once and for all, and so must the other Degrees to which I have alluded briefly. Events in Babylon do not concern us, and when I have said that the Grades of *Excellent* and *Super-Excellent Mason* are introductory to the Arch, I mean only that they intervene for the sole purpose of filling a vacant space in symbolical time. Now, the *Holy Order*, seeing that it stands alone, is not complete in itself ; it is a Degree of the Second Temple, but it represents the beginning of the work and not the completion thereof. It certifies to the preservation of the secrets which, according

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to the *Cryptic Degrees*, were deposited in the place of safety beneath the Holy of Holies, against the coming of the evil time and in the hope that this time would pass. Out of all expectation in the normal mind of Masonry, we are taken back to the symbolic episode in chief commemorated by the *Grade of Mark Master Mason*, though it is not of the *Cryptic series*, while the connection is of implication only and not of expression. Let the initiates of both Degrees remember that which was completed, owing to the skill of a novice. The analogue of that which was lost and found, the jewel of art, which is put to a high use in the *Mark Grade*, but without specifying in what quarter of the Temple, is removed from its setting in the Holy Order, and an entrance is thus secured into a House of Mystery. The symbolism in both cases calls for careful comparison; the *Mark* on the one side is not—as I have hinted—without a certain touch of the grotesque, which is calculated to misdirect the mind, while the *Arch* on the other introduces a great discovery by what seems almost an act of vandalism. That which is fantastic in the first gives place, however, as we have seen, to a very curious veiled commentary on the mystery of doctrine, and that which, in the second, seems violent, opposed to the law and the order, and not unlike the work of clumsy artificers, is only a pretext to reveal at a vital moment the treasures of a Secret House, which contains the Secret Doctrine. The operatives

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concerned in the act were working more wisely than they knew, and it is not therefore *absit omen* in respect of the emblematic picture. I consider that the *Grade of Mark Master* is a preface to the *Cryptic Grades*, and—with those intervening—the *Royal Arch* is a necessary supplement thereto. When their integral connection is understood, those only who hold the first will be considered qualified to receive the others. They will then be in a position to understand some part of the strength and weakness which attach to the Grade of Exaltation; and if they can realise, by other lights which are afforded in this study, the true position of the disinterred symbol, they will understand that those who devised the *Holy Order*—as it is somewhat inscrutably called—should have gone much further, or perhaps deeper, for their epilogue to the great Craft Grades. Yet it serves its purpose in symbolism.

The historical side of that symbolism is also worth noticing in the whole connection, and it must be remembered in particular that the *Royal Arch* is not to be judged entirely by the modern form under which it is now worked, and in virtue of which it is a little anomalous on the surface. It is likely on that surface to suggest (*a*) that it was originally an undisguised Grade of Christian Masonry, or (*b*) that it has been unintelligently edited in a Christian interest. The same observation applies to the Mark itself. Personally, I do not consider that either they or the Craft Degrees,

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by the intention of their outward symbolism, were ever Christian Grades, in the proper understanding of the term, but they had an exotic Christian implicit. They were the work of a school which in a sense—and for its ritual purpose — stood behind Christianity, but was absolutely and essentially Christian, and it intended to lead in the direction of Christian Masonry. At the same time, this school was much too enlightened to confuse the issues idly by an open intermixture of the two Covenants.

So far on questions of critical comparison, and now on the deeper side of the inward meaning ; the work of the Arch symbolises an examination of the grounds of doctrine, which is old ground, worked at a previous time and now sought with the certainty of recovering treasures once interred therein. It is therefore an operation confessing throughout to the motive of quest, and as the symbolic and dramatic intention both require that something should follow in attainment, the discovery follows in fine, or in truth quickly. That which takes place is in strict symbolic analogy with the opening of the tomb of the *Beloved Frater Christian Rosy Cross*, though the identity does not appear precisely on the bare surface. The disinterred treasure is not, however, the secret life which informs doctrine ; it is a similitude only, and therefore the great horizon extends in every direction for the explanation which remains to be made in the High Grades

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—as, for example, in that of *Rose-Croix* and in *Knight of the Holy Sepulchre*.

It is to be hoped that a canon of criticism will be established ultimately to determine the comparative value of existing codices ; that which is worked under the protection of the *Grand Lodge of England* is the latest and, as it seems, the faultiest of all. The Ritual which is in use by the *Early Grand Rite of Scotland* has more archaic elements, but it has been tampered with to support the claims of that body. It is interesting on account of some additional discoveries which are made in the course of the working, and there are peculiar details which much increase the symbolism ; but it is impossible to speak of them in public, as they concern the technical and official mystery of all true Freemasonry. There is, further, a suggestion that what is in fine communicated to the Candidate in the Chapter of the *Royal Arch* has something more behind it which is not in any wise imparted, and by all available warrants, within and without Masonry, we know that this is true.

I have said already that the Grade leaves the building design still among the problems and achievements of the future, so that neither in Craft Masonry nor in this supplement thereto is a perfect House of Doctrine erected. Here there is not even an external building as a working substitute. The entire scheme is left an open question, an unfinished proposal. The Craft, however, ends

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in loss and sorrow, and the *Royal Arch* in joy ; but whether in the latter case there were found to be true plans—which had been made in wisdom—does not appear. It is for this reason that the Arch cannot be held philosophically to complete even the Craft, and more therefore than ever must we look to the High Grades.

And now in conclusion of this matter, with whatever brevity and meagreness, we do see that some of these Grades—under the obedience of the Ancient Alliance—have commemorated in their bungling fashion an external and literal extension, even the shadow of a completion, in respect of the First Temple. It had ceased to be a House of Doctrine and to mean anything in symbolism ; but the course of ingenuity did not extend so far even as this in the re-building of the Lord's House. The scheme of the Second Temple might have ended only in the world of dreams or the world of the heart, were it not for that solitary Grade which is entitled *Prince of Jerusalem* or *Chief of Regular Lodges*. The existence of the Second Temple is presupposed therein, for the Prince of the People has revisited Babylon to certify concerning the fact. The Grade commemorates the discussion which arose on the subject and the decision of Darius thereon. These things are recounted in the apocryphal *Book of Esdras* and do not concern us here. The Grade is therefore by implication one of restoration, celebrating as it does the return of the Jews

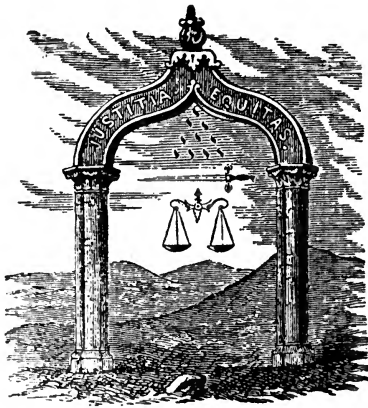
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to their Promised Land after the long captivity. According to its own lights, it is literally and purely an historical episode dramatised, but it is bankrupt in respect of invention. Some commentators—from whom I should wish to be disassociated—have thought it worth while to reproach it with manifest inaccuracies in respect of the account which it follows, but this is really puerile, as the same criticism applies to all Masonic Degrees. On my own part, it need only be said that it contains no symbolical elements; yet is it the epilogue to all the Grades which confess to the Ancient Alliance; so far, therefore, as it may be held to follow from them all, the end is fatuity.



BOOK III

Of the New Alliance in Freemasonry





THE ARGUMENT

I. OF CHRISTIAN SYMBOLISM IN CONNECTION WITH TEMPLE BUILDING

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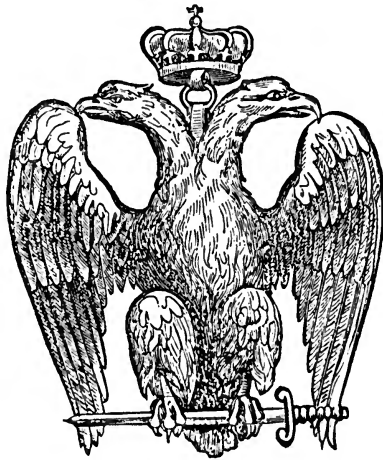
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BOOK III

Of the New Alliance in Freemasonry

I

OF CHRISTIAN SYMBOLISM IN CONNECTION WITH TEMPLE BUILDING

THE lesson in chief of the High Grades, so far as their consideration has extended up to the present point, is that those who would add to the memorials of Secret Doctrine—as implied and expressed, for example, in the Craft Degrees—should be either in the chain of tradition or should at least have the spirit of the doctrine. But traces of these alternative conditions are comparatively few in the mass of ceremonies and rituals which have been put forward for the extension, illustration and completion of the Craft within the limits of its own motives—that is to say, under the Old Law. The device of the *Cryptic*

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Degrees connected with the name of *Adonhiram* has the merit—here and there—of considerable ingenuity, but as I have stated, and as it is otherwise plain, they stand or fall with that which—formally or informally—they exist to justify. So therefore as regards the *Royal Arch*, those who are acquainted with the peculiar traditions—largely independent of Masonry—from which this Order depends and the light which it casts thereon—and I in common with these—must either hold that its claim crumbles to ashes or alternatively that the situation is altered by one deep consideration to which the Craft in England has not so far felt called to confess. It crumbles to ashes if we conclude that the secret imparted in the Arch, as the restoration of what was lost in the Craft, is no better than a hollow pretence and a mockery which leads nowhere.

Now I shall be exonerated from supposing that the communication of a formula which—shall I say?—is not of the cryptic and undemonstrable kind in place of something which is remote, is in itself a fatal flaw, and this is a part at least of what is suggested by the impeachment. On the contrary, it is precisely because there is evidence on this very account of a certain profundity in the scheme of the Grade that the consideration itself arises—I mean, the intervening view which, as I have intimated, may save the Grade. The apparent flaw is not in the selection of a symbol which is perfectly

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patent in its character, as if it had suffered the Shakespearean sea-change into something rich and strange, but in the history attaching to the subject-matter of the choice and in the inability implied by the concept, to endow that which is old with a new meaning. I am aware that it will be difficult for non-Masons to follow the point at issue, because something is of necessity omitted, and on the side of the Secret Tradition—apart from Masonry—I am dealing with matters outside common knowledge. If they will realise, however, that the formula itself is no part of their concern, and that they can therefore set it aside as a species of $-x$, the rest can, I think, be made plain.

It is to Masons themselves that I have spoken of an apparent flaw in the symbol, and it is my intention to shew that behind the surface imperfection there shines the hidden light which it is possible to reflect on the Grade. To those who, besides being Royal Arch Masons, are acquainted with the Secret Tradition in some of its phases, I will say further that they, without any more express intimation on my part, should understand why the symbol is, *qua* symbol or formula, deficient in the life of new meaning, which is the charge that I have expressed against it, though not in my own name.

To summarise the impeachment after another manner that will be intelligible to any reader, the symbol, formula, or concept with which we are dealing was not part of the Hidden Tradition

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at the period with which the Mystery of the Craft is concerned, and it could therefore never have been the true Masonic secret.

We must now go back a little distance on our path, that I may come to my proper point more simply.

The consanguinity between the Grade of *Mark Master Mason* and the *Cryptic Grades* has not been observed previously, nor has it been generally realised that the *Order of the Royal Arch* bears every appearance of having come out of the Cryptic mint—or *vice versa*, as the point of date may determine. Yet the most curious fact of all is that the Cryptic Grades did not include the Arch in any scheme of their degrees. They took over the Craft Mystery, recognised the loss commemorated therein, adjudicated without any specific expression thereon, and devised among other things the Grades of *Royal* and *Select Master*, shewing after what manner the Masonic arcana were interned in the Vaults of the First Temple to secure them against possible loss thereafter. It is these arcana which are recovered in the *Royal Arch*, or rather it is the most important among them, and for reasons already established it is not the real thing, for that, by the symbolical hypothesis, was interned with the Master Builder. We have heard already that the Secret Tradition was committed to certain elders by Moses, that it was preserved and transmitted in Israel. But it was not always maintained in its fulness because of the

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captivity in Babylon. The recovered mystery was therefore $-x$ the loss in Israel, to use another form of symbolism which offers a very strict analogy.

Now those who established the *Grade of Royal Arch* knew what they were doing. It has a trace of the Master's hand, and could not have been produced without a knowledge of the Secret Tradition in that aspect to which I have already alluded. Apart from this, the specific formula would not have been adopted. They perpetuated the Masonic loss by means of a variant substitute with an ulterior purpose, which was part of a design to communicate later on the Mystery of Christ as the fulfilment of tradition in Masonry. It represents exactly the same design as that of the *Adonhiramite Grades* which pass direct from the various clumsy devices for the completion of the literalised Temple to the resurrection of the Master in Christ, and then to the *Grade of Rose-Croix* as the only solution of the Mystery concerning that which was lost of old.

The proof positive in respect of the Arch could be given in two lines, were it permissible so to do. It is not, and I can say only that $-x$ becomes $+x$, or the Word restored, and the equivalent or synonym of this is *Christus Jesus Dominus Noster, Immanuel*, God is with us, I.N.R.I., *Salvator Mundi*, etc. This is the deep consideration by which the Arch is saved, not by its essential merit—which is another question—but by the

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mystery of its accepted and even primitive formula. To those who can follow me, it is demonstrative evidence that the Arch came out of the same mint no longer as the *Cryptic Grades*, but as the Craft Grades, which mint is that which was founded by Picus de Mirandula, William Postel, Reuchlin, Archangelus de Burgo Nuovo, Baron Knorr von Rosenroth, for the purpose of melting the *Zohar*, with the works of the scholiasts thereon, and reproducing them as the Sacred Kabalah Christianised. From this point of view Masonry is in its completeness the fulfilment of tradition in Jewry. In other words, it was actuated by a design to put forward the Mystery of Christ as that which was always concealed in the tradition of Israel, and as that which would give the new meaning.

If this interpretation be rejected by Craft Masons, they must reject also the Arch, the formula of which is either the withdrawn Word or it is not. If it is, I hold my proofs; but if not, the Craft stands alone—an unfinished experiment and a story of loss which carries no hope with it. We have, on our part, to remember that the Sacred House of Masonry is a House of Israel and also a House spiritual. If the missing secrets were, for example, arbitrary signs and words used between builders, they could be no concern of ours, and it would be idle to make legends and mysteries out of such a subject-matter. The institutors of the *Royal Arch* knew well enough

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that they were of another kind, and they offered a solution under veils which was taken over by Christian Masonry, and not one of a thousand Grades has found a tolerable alternative. It is this, therefore, or nothing, though the Craft cannot see as such, and as such it cannot understand.

And now, addressing for a moment the High Grade Masons, it may be said in summary that as between the Craft and the Arch there intervened the *Cryptic Grades*, so between these and *Rose-Croix* there intervene the *Royal Arch* and the great *Écossais Grade of St. Andrew*. The Arch in like manner is an indispensable prologue to the *Holy Order of the Temple*, another important and highly symbolical Grade, in which chivalry is spiritualized. The succession is as follows : 1, *The Royal Arch* ; 2, *The dual Grade of Master and Perfect Master of St. Andrew* ; 3, *The Grade of Rose-Croix* ; 4, *The Military and Religious Order of the Temple*, to which at a later stage of our research we shall add the Grade, also dual, of *Knights Beneficent of the Holy City of Jerusalem*. The proof positive of the succession is that the secret put forward by the *Royal Arch* is completed by that of the *Rose-Croix*, the *Temple* and the *Knights Beneficent*. These three Grades communicate three mysteries, but these three are one.

The greater the importance attributed to the *Royal Arch*, the more certainly is a completion in Christianity implied, and I only regret that it is

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impossible for me to state the full reason in public. Those who are Masons can, if they choose, co-ordinate various references which I have scattered here and there through the text of this inquiry, and they will see things as I see them. It follows—and this we shall find more plainly—that we have to go elsewhere for the termination of that which was begun so wisely in Craft Masonry.

It must, however, be understood before all things, and I therefore reiterate that the Masonic Mystery was from the beginning a Divine Mystery, that it was never really concerned with the erection of an external building, though this, at the same time, was the veil of the project. Every Mason can satisfy himself on this point by a simple process of exhaustion. He can put to his heart—as I have intimated—the question whether he is really concerned, directly or indirectly, in details regarding the Temple of Solomon; whether he can reasonably attach any importance to an alleged secret in respect of the plans of its building; whether he can rule intellectually that the term of such a secret has any office at this day in his or another's respect. And seeing that our sole source of information within the sphere of history concerning that Temple is found in the *Old Testament*, he must know indubitably that the Masonic Legend can have no foundation in fact, and would not *per se* signify if it had; that the recital is an allegory;

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that its importance and value correspond to the meaning which lies behind the allegory; and that if this is a folly at the root, a morality at the root, or a platitude, then we have come so far to find nothing but one of the eternal varieties of Vanity Fair.

It is therefore, to speak with extravagance, the Secret Doctrine, the spiritual meaning, the quest of the Word of Life, the search after the noumenal experience within the veils of doctrine—it is these or death. We are not really concerned with morality, because all this is assumed, as the higher mathematics presuppose that the student has been grounded in the common rules of arithmetic. It is even in a secondary sense only that we are committed to the Masonic virtues and all the unwritten *haute convenance* which they carry with them in their train, not forgetting that those virtues lead to overmuch ceremonial boasting, couched in rather nauseating language. Above all, we are not concerned with the Old Law or the Old Temple, or with anything indeed but the Old Wine of the Doctrine, as against the comparative water of the old official religions, the indiscriminate providences, the rough ashlar of the exoteric priesthoods, which for many thousands of years have held a patent to establish the Kingdom of Heaven, and have tried as honestly as they could, but have failed always, even as external Masonry has preached the love of brothers and has not understood that love must

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be declared in the soul before it can sanctify the body or rule in the material mind.

Of these things therefore enough : the Masonic concern is a mystical House, and as such it was inevitable that Christianity should intervene ; there has been ever a Holy House and a Temple in Christian Symbolism, under the warrants of a new and eternal Covenant, for, as it is said by St. Matthew, the House of Jerusalem was left desolate. We know that in the new House Christ was the corner-stone, but the foundation was the old foundation—that is to say, it was in the prophets ; and next it was built on the apostles, being a Holy Temple, a Temple in the Lord, a living Temple, a habitation of God in the Spirit. That Spirit spoke unto many churches, many holy houses, many assemblies of the Elect, and sometimes there was preaching on the house-tops, sometimes there was publishing in the light ; but the honour of the House was with the Builder, Who incorporated living stones, so that the Church was one internally, and behind the public instruction there lay the secret knowledge—those Mysteries which are communicated only as on the breast of Christ to St. John, or when the seals of the hidden book are broken by the mystic Lamb. The hint of these things is everywhere, and was explicated nowhere till the Secret Doctrine itself began to be formulated in part by him whose identity is veiled, or otherwise, under the name of the Areopagite. Through all the centuries I

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believe that the wonderful counsel of Dionysius created a precedent for conduct respecting all that which must be reserved from the profane and all that which could be put forward under bright and shining veils, true without and within—sanctification by divine ceremonies of rites and sacraments, transmission of divine oracles, communication of deifying grace by the mode of the hierarchy, discipline, in fine, of the Mysteries—all dealing apparently with the authorised offices and procedure, yet all suggesting and all insisting on deeps of mystical doctrine, on wells of mystery.

I am not going to summarise the centuries, so that the succession of tradition can be traced, but if we come at once to the religious state of Western Europe just prior to the inception of the High Grades, we shall, I think, see that all the ground was prepared and all the time was ripe for the kind of manifestation which took place. The passion for occult and mystic science had spread with the facilities of printing from the close of the sixteenth century, and in or about the year 1740 it was perhaps more in evidence than ever, though it is by no means certain that the quality of its predisposition was of the highest kind. Indeed, the great names were then already splendours of the past. In mysticism there were Molinos, Fenelon, Madame Guyon, and many lesser lights; in occult science there were amateurs innumerable, pretenders there were not a few, but it is questionable whether there were masters, though, for

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what it was worth, there was at least one adept of theurgic art who suggests greatness after his own kind—I mean Martines de Pasqually—and at a later period in mysticism many beautiful and tender, almost divine, memories are gathered about the name of L. C. de Saint-Martin. But the fact with which I am dealing is not itself of especial consequence ; it is far more to our purpose that the living interest was there and that the movement, if I may so term it, was a part of the larger movement and the life, a part of the quickening towards the great coming upheaval. It was part also of that remaking of the intellectual world in France and elsewhere which was beginning on every side.

Now, in so far as there was a growing consciousness of Secret Doctrine—and certainly the claims concerning it were many and strenuous—in so far as there was realisation, effectual or not, of something that had existed in the far past and had been from the far past perpetuated, had been manifested in many forms within the circle of the secret sodalities, or had given hints of things much higher from the holy and exotic places of religion—even from the Church itself—it was evident to all who were concerned, and above everything to those who were dedicated, that the Church—with its titles, its sanctity, its own indubitable means of knowledge as to the deep things within doctrine—was impossible for all these, so to speak, independent interests—im-

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possible as an asylum, almost impossible even as a tent in the wilderness, or as a tavern by the way. I am not offering here the preamble of an indictment, or seeking to justify one side at the expense of another ; it is a question of fact, and the explanation for the present purpose can remain in other hands.

It came about in consequence that when Symbolical Masonry passed from Great Britain to the Continent, it was obvious to all eyes which had opened in the transcendental world—whether to things great or small is again indifferent—it was obvious that something which belonged to such people had arrived suddenly in their midst, and something also which might serve as a refuge. The consanguinity was so great and the likeness was so strong that the place of refuge passed speedily under a similar ban to that which had befallen certain phases of mysticism, with all the occult schools and too slightly hidden academies. It is only in this way that we can account reasonably and at once for the strange collective phenomenon of the Higher Grades—a monstrous and inexplicable growth on any other hypothesis. Masonry became and remained, for what on the whole is a considerable period, the standard under which all the forces were enrolled, that otherwise had neither means for incorporation in common nor shadow of external authority. It does not signify at the moment—for I am simply establishing a point—that the true ends of

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Masonry were to a certain extent clouded, or that mystic knowledge assumed for the moment another and deeper veil. There can be no question that the scheme served its purpose, and the better because it was informal, was in a sense self-developing, and largely the result of a natural and scarcely conscious gravitation.

While many strange interests were thus consolidated, strange memories were also awakened and new dreams began. Now, there is little doubt that the move was a bid for freedom, and that—marital connection or other consanguinity—the Masonic link and chain carried with it something of legality and sacramentalism, a certain liberty within a certain law and order. In more general terms, it was after the manner of a charter. The incorporated elements were many, and yet, curiously enough, they were none of them incompatible; they were in truth so many, so diverse, and yet so distinguished one from another, that Masonry really became a house of many marriages; and although, seeing that the elements were some trivial and some important, there was a good deal of unequal yoking, yet there was nothing in competition, and all these strangely assorted elements could dwell together in unity. Unfortunately, the nature of the tie was so elastic that when the unbound Lucifer of the Revolution was in search of housing there also he came, and the conspiracy in politics had a seat in the motley council beside the peaceful conspiracy for the



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promotion of occult science. Thinly veiled Grades of assassination distributed their consecrated daggers in contiguity to those other Grades which dispensed in symbolism the Mysteries of Divine Union. And between the one and the other there was more than the easy and not too living burden of brotherhood in Masonry ; the one had a remedy with hatchet and knife and guillotine for those wrongs which were in the memory of the other.

There was a heavy debit on open account against the Church of Rome. Long before *Kadosh* Grades were invented or transformed with a view to convert the slaughterhouse into a sanctuary and to prepare the shambles as a palace for the Prince of Peace, the High Grade interest had taken over the Templar hypothesis, and those who mourned the death of the Master Builder remembered Jacques de Molay. Grades of magic, Grades of astrology, Grades of alchemy and of Kabalism remembered the fate of magicians, readers of stars, and the long crucifixion of Jewry at the hands of State and Church, while if alchemy escaped proscription on the part of inquisitions and councils, there were at least the greed and consequent tyranny of kings, typified by the ordeal and practical martyrdom of Alexander Seton. There were also the new revelations and the new religions, with their bids to make for recognition ; and supposing that there were anything within the ORDER OF THE ROSY CROSS which corresponded to its literary manifestations on their bare surface,

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Rosicrucianism—amidst the elements of revolution—may have brought over some remanents of its dull and egregious feud with Rome from the first decades of the previous century. I do not know ; I am sure only that I care utterly nothing : if the Rosicrucians had received into their heart that quality of adeptship which is indicated by their unpublished memorials,—and is so remote from the printed texts,—such a feud could concern only questions of procedure, questions of high ends too long and long forgotten ; for it is very sure that much which is sought in the experiences behind Secret Doctrine has been the inheritance of Latin Christianity from that period which was prior to the ill-starred division of East and West.

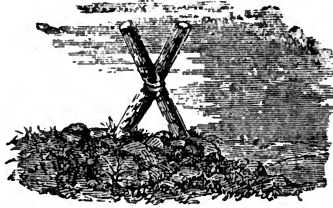
But this is by the way only ; at that period of intellectual unrest, all doors were being opened and all paths tried, and the Church which claimed to be the one door and the one path into truth had forgotten for the moment some of its highest treasures, had forgotten that it held some at least of the very objects for which so many quests were created, and was powerless to deal with a situation which it had largely helped to create.

I think that many cohorts which in the Secret Orders represented the divine spirit of quest had also forgotten, or more probably never knew, that higher initiation which neither testifies nor protests ; but here again it was no day for the still small voices, and in the proposed reformation of the whole wide world, those who knew that

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healing, emancipation and materials for reconstitution are within, were not likely to interfere on their own part or to be received as the saviours of a social order which they knew to be perishing, whatever resurrection awaited it. Yet it is at this very point—and the fact is curious to note—that the new spirit, like the presage of a deeper realisation concerning the new and eternal covenant, passed over the zeal of Masonry, and when the religious life of the Continent seemed for a moment in the throes of dissolution, when all things made ready for the coming reign of reason and of terror, breathed over it the Word of Christ as the Word of Masonic perfection and the Completing Word.





II

THE GRADES OF ST. ANDREW

IT should be explained in the first place that these Grades are numerous, but with few exceptions they offer nothing to our purpose. A mere enumeration of names in respect of the whole collection will be therefore sufficient at the moment. There is firstly the *Grand Écossais*, otherwise *Grand Scottish Chevalier of St. Andrew of Scotland*. It is identified with *Patriarch of the Crusades*, *Grand Master of Light*, and also with *Knight of the Sun*, but there is an entirely distinct Degree which bears the last title. It is said in its traditional part to have been established at the time of the Crusades by certain Knights who had assumed the cross. Four variations or counterparts of this Grade, passing under similar and sometimes identical titles, have been incorporated by the RITE OF MIZRAIM; they are also found in the collection of archives called *Écossais primitif*, and in that which is known to students under the name of *Frère Pyron*. There are, moreover, *Apprentice*,

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Companion, Master and Favourite Brother of St. Andrew extant in the Swedish system, and several detached degrees which are known only by their titles.

IN THE RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE the fourth Grade was that of *Scottish Master*, which in one of the transformations of this system was split up—as we shall see immediately—into *Master* and *Perfect Master of St. Andrew*. It is this which I regard as so important that it deserves consideration apart in the present section ; it is the next regular ceremonial and mystical step in Freemasonry after the *Royal Arch*.

We must in the first place put aside those implications which derive from the motives accredited to the apocryphal RITE OF RAMSAY, namely, (1) a concealed intention connected with the Stuart cause, and (2) a Templar explanation of Masonry. There is a variant of the *Grade Écossais of St. Andrew* which confesses to the one, and the STRICT OBSERVANCE led up to and closed in the other. In the variant the Candidate is supposed to suffer decapitation and thus reproduces ceremonially the passion of King Charles I. The most dedicated partisan of symbolism must beware of pressing this incident into service on any mystic side ; the preoccupation, by a process of exhaustion, remains purely political, even as it begins, because it can be nothing else. It is of course understood that as the Candidate is not slain he dies of necessity symbolically and is returned in symbolism to life.

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The occult inference is therefore that after the same manner would the martyred king be vindicated and restored to his state and place in the person of a younger Charles Stuart. It is thus a substituted resurrection, with reference to a foreshadowed restoration, and on this understanding is to be grouped after its own manner.

The legitimacy of the House of Stuart, having regard to the quality of its competitors, who were the personages at that time in possession, may have deserved many Grades to impress upon prepared spirits the necessity of its restoration, but the subject of Masonry is no earthly royalty coming into its own or laying just and holy claims upon inalienable rights. And it comes about in this manner, since these things are far from the goal, while some others are idle or fantastic, that there is only one imprescriptible *Grade Écossais of St. Andrew*, which is the perfect Master Grade, though on the occasion of the Convention of Wilhelmsbad it was, and has since remained, divided—as I have said—into two parts or sections. In majesty of conception—simplicity, severity and restraint of presentation—in native dignity of language, it offers a worthy supplement to the Craft Grades. It is regrettable only that there is no dramatic element, though there was never a greater opportunity. It has—if I may so express it—certain canonical marks and seals by which it is distinguished from the mass of reputable apocrypha with which we have been

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dealing in the past, and from many idle inventions which will have to be noticed in the sequel.

It should be explained that it is a Christian Grade *ab inceptione*, though it deals, as we shall see shortly, with the three catholic epochs of Temple building; but it develops its implicits logically, moving from a grave and unadorned beginning, co-ordinated with all its Craft antecedents, to a true and holy end. It seems right, however, to state that it presupposes the root-matter of the *Cryptic Grades*, and this suggests either a lacuna in the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE, from which it has been derived, or some elements incorporated by the Craft system of that Rite with which we are now unacquainted. We meet with these gaps and interstices at many points in the study of Masonic Rituals.

After making every allowance, with the liberality of a philosopher, I think that the dual Grade is a great loss to our English High Grade System, and this reminds me that I have omitted to mention formally—but it follows as an inference—that it is quite unknown in England. One of its remote derivatives or variants, borrowed, I believe, from the Adonhiramite Masonry of Saint Victor, is buried in the RITE OF MIZRAIM, which has an English custodian, but those who may receive its communication are not likely to see it, and those who are concerned should understand that all Grades which pass under the name of the ANTIENT AND PRIMITIVE RITE, the RITE OF MIZRAIM and

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the MASONIC ORDER OF MEMPHIS, have edited all the materials derived from earlier sources to expunge their vital principles for the benefit of Jews and infidels.

The advancement which is offered to the Candidate in the *Grades of St. Andrew* is the work of co-operation in rebuilding the Holy House of the Almighty, the House of His service, the place of the treasure of His wisdom; and the reception recalls what I have termed three memorable epochs in the history of the eternal Temple. The personal story of the Candidate is that he has escaped from captivity, from long duration and exile; there is little specific reference to its nature or circumstances, though externally there is an irresistible inference implying a symbolic veil. It is only to be understood at the root as the captivity of the senses, because this interpretation consorts with the whole spirit and intention, while at the close of the second part it passes into expression without veils or evasion. The qualification which the Candidate brings is that he has been at work on the plans for reconstruction, and in this respect the similitude adapted is the rebuilding of the Second Temple. But the Grade began with the New and Eternal Testament open on the altar, and we know, as he also should know, that he is moving through scenes of the past. He beholds at the beginning of his experience the ceremonial presentation of the First Temple in ruins—that House

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of Doctrine conceived in the mind of the Master but never completed on earth—an eloquent illustration of all which the Secret Tradition discerns behind the literal text of Scripture, on the surface so diverse therefrom that it seems in contradiction thereto, but in reality upon the basis of the one story another which is deeper is raised. It is in this manner that the sense as registered within does not reduce or make void that which is without.

The Candidate, by the instruction which he receives, begins to realise that he is among those who are divorced from all interest in the restoration of that which was destroyed materially. The inward lesson of the event is in fact imparted by the concurrent explanation of the public defection which led to the captivity in Babylon and the defection within the sanctuary which interned the vital secrets of Masonry.

The lapse in Israel is described as the propagation of discord and the abandonment of the law and the order. Now, we know precisely at what time in mystic chronology the secrets were laid to their rest, but the Grade intimates that in some undeclared manner they were still the palladium of the people, which I interpret to mean that the shadow of the receding presence was cast for a period behind. It may be also a covert allusion to the perpetuation of the Secret Tradition. In the days of Jedekiah the shadow had itself withdrawn, and hence Babylon—with all its waters of Marah. As it follows

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from the *Cryptic Grades*, *Grades of Adonhiram*, and even from systems which hold a higher authority, so herein—the foundations of the Temple remained, but the secret things below have been already recovered, and this is another reason why the *Perfect Master of St. Andrew* presupposes an introductory part.

There is a very curious instruction, however, in this place, the purpose of which is to accentuate the spiritual nature of the entire design. The Candidate, having signified his ambition and having certified to his share in the plans, finds speedily that the past to which I have alluded is indeed the past, and that there is no intention to reproduce it. It is only in symbolism that he raises, as we shall see, the Altar of Sacrifice and beholds the buried mystery unveiled, for he has been told previously, in the discourse of the Master, of that which concerns the work of symbolical Masonry in the building of the Second Temple. He hears also the mystic explanation of the Sword and Trowel, and understands that these things are the emblems of an æonian struggle between good and evil ; it is spiritual man fighting with enemies that are not of this world. The mystery of a spiritual Temple which is still to come is also prefigured in the discourse ; it is that which all sanctuaries have shewn forth—the House not made with hands, and, so far as the Candidate is concerned, he being regarded as one of the living stones, his share in the enterprise is so to work that in himself he shall

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attain perfection and may thus be incorporated truly in the Holy House for the world's good and for his own advancement. The one by the hypothesis is not without the other, and this is the law of solidarity. We must remember in such connection that not only is there a Temple designed for the glory and service of God or for the use of humanity, but that humanity itself is the Temple in course of erection. It is built up in the progressive perfection of its parts, and in so far as the great work is retarded and still unfinished, it is because the materials are returned continually to the overseers for that improvement which is necessary to ensure their acceptance.

As a part of this lesson, the Candidate hears the old Second Temple story of the Sacred Fire, and begins on his own part, and independently of any instruction, to discover that it has been always concealed within him, after what manner it was defiled, and how it may yet be made acceptable to consume that sacrifice which is of his proper offering, but is also himself. It is then and then only that he finds the sacred vessels, that he reads the mystic inscription, and is directed to restore to its proper position, upright and self-supporting, that Altar which has been overthrown by the opponents of law and order.

The mystic inscription communicates that which was lost with the life of the Builder ; it is identical with the intimations contained in the *Royal Arch*, but it is described, more wisely than

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in that, as a symbolic discovery ; and the fact that—for us and for our salvation—it is not complete in itself is shewn by the addition that is made to it in the second part of the Grade. To adopt on a second occasion the same veil that has served our purpose previously, — x becomes + x at the close of all, and the Word is the Word of Christ, or at least one of its synonyms.

The first part of the Ritual is, however, the story of the First and Second Temples, but in the sequel that symbolism is said to dissolve ; there is a passage to the realisation of a spiritual Temple only and to the Law declared in the heart. The change comes about with no other break or intervention than the usual ceremonial formalities which are particular to Grades and Degrees, and by which things that belong to one another are separated from one another officially. The subject is still the continuation and completion of the work in the paths of perfection, and still is the Candidate to aid in reaching the term. His name was once G*** but is now N***, and as one is a perpetuation from Grades introductory to the *Royal Arch*, so the other connects with the tradition of the Knights Templar in their modern reinstatement. To us neither signify, save as memorials only. But the mystical gradations in age which mark the progress of the Candidate at various stages shew that he has passed a definite distance on the way of his ascent ; he counted seven years of initiation at the beginning

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of the system, and now he counts nine. He is in the Grade of types dissolving, of shows giving place to the things by all foreshewn, of omens yielding to that which has been presaged from afar.

If we regard Masonry simply as a system of symbolism, in which great truth is communicated under great veils, we can still speak of the period typified by Solomon's Temple as an era of repute and glory in Masonry. It was that of the Holy Law and Most Holy Doctrine in Israel, of saving obedience under the First Covenant interpreted at the apex of both; the veil, although a veil, was a veil of splendour. But there was another period to follow, which was one of decay in Masonry, when the Temple was destroyed. The destruction and the demolition, the exile and the bitter waters, carried, however, seeds of redemption within them. A new spirit of the age in Esdras and Nehemiah brought about emancipation for the people and restoration for their Holy House. Now, the works which went before the rebuilding were those of probing the old foundations, a recurrence to the root-matter of doctrine, a quest after the mysteries of experience too long forgotten and interned in the *corpus doctrinale*; this is described in the Grade as exploring the tomb of the Master Architect for the recovery of that which he had taken with him, and I know of nothing in formal mystical expression which is put with more exact justice.

The Candidate has already in his own person

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followed the paths of exploration, though he knew not that which he did, and he recovered nothing but himself. He now beholds a glorious resurrection of the living symbol encompassed by Masonic virtues, though he is still left to divine more than he is told. The Mystery, as I have intimated, is Christian, and it represents, in its two Grades, Judaism dissolving into Christianity. In a word, therefore, the Master Builder is brought from death to life, but by his resurrection he rises as Christ, even as the Law of Israel is raised, transfigured and ascends, drawing all things after it, into the Law of a New Covenant and an Eternal Testament. In that which remains to him of the past, the Builder's name is expounded in a manner which will be understood by Masons, and it is then replaced by a divine formula: *Homo Jesus Rex Altissimus Mundi*. It will be understood that his next instruction is in respect of the final Temple which is still to come, which will be created to the glory of the Grand Architect of the worlds. This is the heavenly Zion, of which the Candidate beholds the vision, for that spiritual city—which has no temple therein because it is itself the Temple—is perfected humanity, and the design of the ceremonial is to join time and eternity, death and immortality, reason and faith. The correspondence of the formula which I have quoted is INRI, as the completion of יהוה is יהושה.

Now, I submit that this is a great, illuminated

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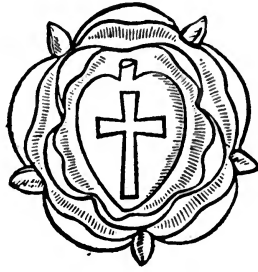
and enlightened Rite, which is a perfection of Masonry, and if its object on the surface may seem still and only to adorn those who partake of it with all the Masonic virtues, such virtues have assumed a spirit which is higher than the region of ethics. It is the spirit of that religion and that morality which have reference to the perfection of man both here and hereafter, to the development of his possibilities for what is good and great, and to his union with what is highest in the universe. It is this fundamental essence and object of religion, apart from all the higher research of the paths which lead thereto, that is everywhere affirmed, by even its most ordinary exponents, to be inherent in the nature of Masonry, and to be "inwrought in the whole system of Masonic ceremonies."

Masonry is therefore dedicated to the realisation of an ideal state ; even on this hypothesis, it looks to see the good things of the Lord in the Land of the Living ; its watchwords are development, progress, the higher life ; it is identical in its aim with those forces, within and without ourselves, by which we are enabled "to fulfil the law of our being." So far as its desires are unrealised, it formulates the aspirations of humanity. Its powers are great, its capacities greater still ; in no general sense has it ever applied its strength for an unhallowed or evil purpose ; it has accomplished much real good ; few institutions, in this country at least, can boast a more stainless

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charter or a whiter page in history ; alike by its resources and its nature, it is eminently a suitable instrument for the eventual accomplishment of an universal good. Essentially and avowedly devoted to the "highest interests of humanity, both here and hereafter," it would not be *a priori* impossible that in its original scope it transcended ethics, if within its own memorials we had not, as we have indeed, the full evidence thereof. The end intimated by these is that which I have already termed the perfection of man—that is to say, his integration—the supersensual, divine union of the human consciousness with God. And this is the broad bond of union between Masonry and that intellectual science which is termed Mysticism in the root-matter of both. But that which has been lost by the one is that which remains to the other, and this is the means to the end, the path of the induction of that experience which lies behind the Secret Doctrine and constitutes its evidence.





III

THE GRADE OF ROSE-CROIX AND ITS VARIATIONS

THE supersubstantial bread of the High Grades has not only a great variety of forms and patterns, but it is not consecrated or laid upon any single altar otherwise than in a single form, so that those who are in search of its sustenance in the multiple and plenary sense must visit many Temples and confess to many obediences. The Rite which communicates the perfect *Grade of St. Andrew* is followed in the system to which it belongs by two holy and glorious Grades of Masonic chivalry ; but between these and their antecedents a gulf of symbolical time extends. It calls to be filled on all grounds of high reason and of symbolism ; it is filled actually, and after most wonderful manners, by two other ceremonial pageants. In this manner there arises that schedule or list of Grades which I have given already as the true succession in Masonry, embracing its *Alpha* and *Omega*—so far as they have passed into expression—with

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all that intervenes between them. But one of the two ceremonies of which I am now speaking, belongs to a distinct collection, while the second stands apart from all those arbitrary sequences with which we are over-familiar in Masonry, and constitutes an Order by itself: I refer to the *Grade of Rose-Croix* and to the *Military and Religious Order of the Temple and Holy Sepulchre*. The position of the first is taken as the opening of my literary Lodge of Research in the Grades of Christian Chivalry, as we shall find that the Order of *Knights Beneficent of the Holy City of Jerusalem* is the full and perfect closing.

That message, those mystic tidings, of the *Perfect Master of St. Andrew*, conveyed by a pregnant intimation that the artificer, the builder, the maker of temples, palaces and the Cosmos, of whom it could be said—as of Christ—*passus et sepultus est*—arose in the symbolism as Christ—that message is the prolegomenon to all that follows in Christian High Grades, of what kind soever: it is also their summary; it conveys in outline all that they impart in detail; it is the implicit of all, and it is the term. Since it must be said, I will say at once that the *Grade of Rose-Croix* suffers, amidst its beauty and its splendour, from the serious anachronism which gives it the place that it holds as Master and Sovereign of the whole chapter of chivalry. The symbolic time is that of the Resurrection, and to confer upon the Candidate, who takes part in the cere-

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monial which leads up to the Masonic recognition of this great event in Christendom, a mystical Knighthood of the Pelican and the Eagle, so that he is enrolled in Christian chivalry—this is, of course, in the sovereign economy of reason, a mistake, a flaw, an absurdity. It is any or all of these, and yet if the spiritual nature of the whole ceremony—and the title of honour itself—be regarded, it will emerge only as an error of terminology, for the Candidate who has found that which is implied by the things that he attains in the ceremony has entered into an assembly of which chivalry at its highest and noblest is the shadow alone. The terminology is unfortunate enough, and the accolade is on the verge of a disaster, but it is only in the form at this especial point—and in a matter of words—that the Grade of Perfection, which in its symbolism is so perfect, falls short of being perfect in all.

The perfection of which I speak is partly in the things that are expressed and in the moving ceremonial of the pageant, but it is more, and it is very much more, in those which are implied, so that—as is usual in the research of the Mysteries—a great deal depends upon the Candidate, on the correspondence between the quality of his own insight and the deep intimations of the Grade. This is only another way of saying that the sense of the letter is for men of a literal mind, while the sense of the symbolism is reserved to the symbolist alone. One among the external aspects of the

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Grade of St. Andrew may be taken as an illustrative point. What office is fulfilled by that Saint in its long ceremonial instruction? The answer is—none whatever; and his introduction was obviously an arbitrary device to connect the mystical thesis with Scotland through the patron of that country in the hierarchy of blessed men. What purpose is served by the arbitrary intervention of the motive and adornments of chivalry in the *Grade of Rose-Croix*? The answer again is none. If it be said that the chivalry is spiritual and that the highest side of a noble institution is presented therein to the Candidate, that is true so far as it goes; but there are higher aspects to all the good subjects and all the great institutions, which fact does not, however, constitute a warrant to import them out of reason and in opposition to the sense of history.

This element could therefore be well spared from the Grade, nor is it the only one. But in all cases I am dealing only with accidents; let us therefore have recourse to the essence, to that which is of life in the symbolism, and we must prepare to approach it from a gate that has not been previously opened in the world of interpretation.

The *Perfect Ceremonies of the Knight of the Eagle and Pelican and of Sovereign Prince Rose-Croix de Heredom*, are ceremonies of death and resurrection, and they are the story of the spiritual life of man under the light of the Christian Mysteries. The Word is lost in death and is recovered in a glorious

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rising. In another aspect, death must be tasted in its bitterness because the Word is lost in life, but that ordeal is the way of the Word in its return. Therefore, by the hypothesis of the Grade, the Word is lost in the death of Christ on Calvary ; it is buried in the rock-hewn sepulchre, even as it was lost with the Master Builder of old and was laid to its rest with his remains in a Holy Place. The old order passes therewith, the voices cry : Let us go forth ; and the veil of the old Mysteries is rent—to shew that they can cover no longer the truth of things with the drapery of their symbolism. But thereafter Christ rises, and in that resurrection the Word is restored in its fulness ; another altar is set up, and a new veil is woven, which bodies forth more perfectly those Mysteries that during the natural life of man are communicated only through the sacraments of Nature and Grace.

This is one of the meanings within, and it is only here and there that it passes into outward expression. We are dealing with no drama of Calvary and of what followed thereafter. The drapery of the symbolism is very curiously inwoven. The hypothesis which I have attempted to outline is itself merely a veil, and this will be obvious on reflection, because in the literal understanding of the great drama of redemption the descent into Hell is not that part of the Divine scheme with which humanity has a living concern on the surface, and it calls for no special

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memorial in connection with the Masonic quest. Its mystic import is perhaps too deep for Masonry : it belongs to another realm. That which takes place during the mystic period is not in correspondence with any emblematic or other activity without. The notion that anything could be done to expedite the resurrection of Christ and to quicken the dawn of Easter is so much outside reason and the orderly sense of symbolism, that no one, by the normal exercise of the reflective faculty, can suppose that the ritual intends to convey this suggestion. The loss is represented therein as personal to the fellowship of the chivalry, and is something for them to retrieve. A quest is undertaken, which is the integration of the Candidate in the consciousness of that which is lost and in the way of its recovery. But when this quest is instituted, it is found that it embraces the entire symbolic period of manifest existence. Between the declaration of the loss in the office of opening the chapter and the ceremonial perfection of the recovery in the closing office, there intervene the several symbolic periods of the world, and that which is expected to follow is the Second Advent. The deep significance is therefore that the Divine is buried in the manifest, that the Word is lost therein, that it will be recovered at the end of time, which is the world of resurrection. This cosmic period is held to correspond in symbolism with the space which elapsed between the death of Christ on the Cross and the manifestation of

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Easter, which has a side of truth in mysticism, but the comparison should not be instituted because of other things which are involved by the mystery of the ascent into heaven.

I must not take this almost unrealisable question further ; it is much too difficult for discussion in the present place ; and I do not feel that I carry the full warrants on my own part. It belongs to a region in which the historical side of Christianity dissolves in another light. The analogy between the three mystic days in Hades and the Divine Immanence in the universe is not therefore established by me but by the unknown maker of the Ritual. I take up no brief for its defence, but that which I know to be true on the side of the microcosm must indubitably obtain by analogy on the macrocosmic side. In the sense that it obtains, and in so far as the resurrection connects mystically with the Second Advent, it is included in the mystery of the words : And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me. It is the indrawn state of the cosmos. In respect of man on the path of adeptship, the descent into hell does take place between mystical death and resurrection : it is the salvage of that in his human life which can be taken up into the Christ-Life.

This is, however, the story of the Grade so far as it connects with the universal side of things, and as such the closing of the Chapter corresponds to the idea of the Second Advent as an accomplished

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fact. But I have said that there is a human side, and as to this the Ritual represents (a) the loss of Divine consciousness in man by reason of that mystery which is termed the Fall ; (b) the search after the Christ life, by which the consequences of the Fall are undone ; (c) the perfect attainment of certain theological virtues, by which that life is entered ; (d) the Knowledge that follows as to the mystic pedigree of the soul ; (e) the discovery in that pedigree of the Lost Word. The lesson is that those who can get to realise the royal and divine descent of our imperishable nature will come to know Christ, which Knowledge constitutes the possession of the Word.

This is the symbolism in its second aspect, but there is another and still deeper side of the whole subject. The loss is the loss of the individual in this life, encompassed by the darkness of material things and ever seeking in the darkness. But his steps are guided therein, for an angel goes beside him and leads him through the paths of virtue to the valley of mystical death. When he has passed through this trial, his own ascent commences by a ladder which is that of Jacob, on which he learns whence he came and in the proper understanding of the Grade discovers that Christ is within him. Finally, for those who can see no further than the external elements of religion, the whole Grade is a moral instruction on the pursuit of the Christian virtues, in the attainment of which the Postulant comes to realise that Christ is indeed the Word.

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Much of the symbolism becomes of no effect in this presentation, but it serves some purpose when the Candidate is imperfectly prepared.

I conclude that the opening commemorates the intimate correspondence between the death of Christ and that of the Master Builder ; it gives, therefore, the reason of that resurrection which is commemorated in the *Grade of St. Andrew* without fully explaining the mystery. On the other hand, the *Rose-Croix* closing only intimates the resurrection without declaring it.

The title *Rose-Croix* will readily suggest the Cross of Christ ensanguined by the blood of our redemption, but this is rather the symbolism of the *Red Cross of Rome and Constantine* and not that of the 18th Degree. The reference is to the Rose of Sharon, regarded as a type of the Redeemer, and behind this there lies for some of my school the inmost meaning of the Grade, being the connection between this Rose and the Cubic Stone, so that it can be said at one stage of the ceremony that the Stone becomes the Rose. I believe that I have offered enough by way of interpretation without entering into another path through which few are likely to follow me, as it belongs to an unfamiliar world of mystic symbolism. I refer to that of transcendental Alchemy, which sometimes represents the Hermetic Rose as issuing from a bare mountain. The rock therefore gives forth the emblematic flower. So also the quest of Alchemy is the quest of a Stone,

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which is the Stone of the Wise and an ineffable treasure. By the hypothesis of the Art this Stone becomes red at a certain stage. In mystic Alchemy the Stone is Christ, as it is said in the New Testament that the rock was Christ. So also is the Stone which was cut out of the mountain and filled the whole earth. Those who would follow out these suggestions must go further than I can now take them. They may find that the mountain of Alchemy is the mountain of initiation; they will then remember what I have said of the Mountain of Heredom, and in fine that the Sovereign Prince *Rose-Croix* is a Prince of *Heredom*.

The implications suggested by the latter title are very curious on the historical side, apart from the symbolism which I have sought to connect therewith; it involves the whole question of the Grade in its origin, about which it is impossible to reach any reasonable conclusion in speculation and much less in certainty. It is fortunately unnecessary to my subject, but there are a few matters of fact which may be briefly made clear. The *Primordial Rose-Croix Chapter of Arras* suggests by its claim the appearance of the Grade in the year 1745, but it is referable, as we have seen, only to 1779. We have met with the bare *Rose-Croix* title in an early part of our research as describing the 8th Grade in the Rite collected by the *Scottish Mother Lodge of Marseilles*, a foundation referred to the year 1750, but I have shewn that its importance and the magnitude of the collection

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which it represented are later. It remains that the COUNCIL OF EMPERORS OF THE EAST AND WEST in the year 1754 appears to be the first High Grade body which embraced the Grade of *Rose-Croix* in its system. I set aside, provisionally at least, the claim of the ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND, for although the second of its two degrees is that of Rosy Cross, the trend of modern opinion is to conclude that it was an importation from France. But I admit that the subject calls for fuller and perhaps more sympathetic investigation. The one further point with which we are concerned at the moment is that, its name notwithstanding, the *Grade of Rosy Cross* practised by the ROYAL ORDER OF HEREDOM OF KILWINNING is almost entirely distinct, not only from the modern form of *Sovereign Prince Rose-Croix Heredom of Kilwinning*, but from all its variants of the past.

These variants are a singular testimony to the wide appeal of the Grade. Except in the deep things of symbolism, and for those who are acquainted with this science, it has nothing which should lead to its inclusion in an *Écossais* system, but when Scottish Masonry was reformed on one occasion, the *Grade of Rose-Croix* was annexed—I presume on account of the two magic names, Heredom and Kilwinning. It does not confess in the least to the motive of *Adonhiramite Masonry*, but it occupied the twelfth place in the motley collection of Saint Victor. It is foreign above all things to the psychic discovery of Mesmer,

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but the RITE OF MIZRAIM provided a *Magnetic Rose-Croix*, and in another collection it figures as a Grade of Adeptship. By the PHILOSOPHICAL SCOTTISH RITE it was annexed in an Hermetic interest; and in fine one Rite of Adoptive Masonry produced a *Ladies' Rose-Croix*.

This is only the beginning of a list rather than a full schedule, but a further purpose would not be served by its extension. It will be seen that the psychic and occult side has experienced in particular the attraction of the Rosy Cross. No one who varied the degree, and none perhaps who borrowed it, had any real notion of the history of the Rose in symbolism, or of that which lay behind the setting of the mystical flower in the centre of the mystic Cross. I must not say that the apparatus of Rosenroth had never been consulted for any purpose by one of them, who would have learned on Zoharic authority that the Rose signifies the *Shekinah*, and that there is joy in the Kingdom—*Malkuth*—when it receives influx from *Binah*, or Understanding, in the exalted sphere of which there is another and transcendent *Shekinah*, who receives the kisses of the Supernal King in *Chokmah*, which is Wisdom. But it would have conveyed little to the mind, nor when they read further on that there is a Rose of thirteen petals, because of the thirteen modes of compassion which are declared in the Kingdom of this world, would they have connected this curious number with the mystery of a death upon the cross,

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followed by a resurrection therefrom. From late classical sources they knew, indeed, that by the mercy of Venus Adonis was changed into a Rose, and one of the Grade editors drew this notion under a curious transformation into a legend of Christ ; but there was no one to tell them concerning Pierre de Mora and his three mystical Roses : the first is the choir of martyrs ; the second is, *par excellence*, *Rosa Mystica*, the Virgin of Virgins ; and the third is the Mediator between God and man. The first of these Roses is red, the second is white, but the third is red and white. According to St. Ambrose, the Rose is an image of the Precious Blood of Christ, and that Rose is mystically that Blood. It is in this manner that the Rosy Cross merges into the Red Cross, because the wood of the Tree of Life was incarnadined by the fact of the crucifixion. For according to another legend the Cross of Calvary came from a cutting of that Tree which once grew in Eden, and in the Middle Ages the Rose was a flower of the Earthly Paradise. A Latin hymn represents Adam and Eve walking in the midst of flowers and vast bosks of roses. According to St. Basil, they were thornless prior to the Fall.

This is how the desert of the literal world begins to blossom in symbolism, and in many ways that cannot be specified here does the symbolic Rose glory in the Cross of Christ, the two being reconciled as if in one body. I will say only that the Cross or the Passion thereof was

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the Cup which the Divine Master asked to be taken away, and because it remained the Christian world has had through ages and ages the chalice of the Eucharist, which is filled mystically with the eternal life of the mystic blood, as the Rose is a chalice containing Dew of Heaven. It was said of old: The Rose is the chalice, and the blood of Adonis fills it. It is also a chalice in Kabalism, and it is filled with the Wine of the Mysteries.

After these intimations it may be less surprising that although it has been something like a point of literary honour among Masonic writers to affirm that the *Rose-Croix* Grade has nothing to do with the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross, this is scarcely correct in fact. Speaking in a general manner, there is no original consanguinity in respect of ritual, because old Rosicrucianism had no part in ceremonial Mysteries—or at least the evidence is wanting. Later Rosicrucianism was conferred in Grades like Masonry and required the Masonic qualification, but there is nothing which corresponds to the 18th Degree therein. In a deeper and more mystical sense there is a concealed Rosicrucian Grade which certainly has such analogies, but to create the comparison pays a very high compliment even to the Grade of the Sovereign Princes. There remains the question of name, the identity of which it has been sought to reduce by idle and false etymologies. I am

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sure that it has been drawn into Masonry from the old legendary Order, which in one of its forms of developments was bearing witness concerning itself at the very time when the *Rose-Croix* Grade was making its first bids for recognition, and I think, further, that the magic of the name counted for something in the success which attended it from the beginning.

As regards the variations of the Grade, they can be distinguished into two branches; one of them represents the modifications and developments which led up to the ritual in its present form, as it is known under the obedience of the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE, while the other—which is much larger—signifies its several transformations—out of all real recognition—in the interests which I have enumerated above. The second does not specially concern us, but I will say a few words of both, only premising that the last hand by which the first was remodelled and modernised was presumably that of Albert Pike.

In the collection of *Adonhiramite Masonry*, the Grade—as elsewhere—is affirmed to be the *ne plus ultra* of the entire subject, notwithstanding that in every system there is found something that follows it. It is, however, a very simple ceremony, as if representing an early stage of development. The opening declares the loss of the Christian Word, but it is found by reference to the Knights present in the chapter, who have

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kept it alive in their hearts. On the introduction of the Candidate this fact is suppressed, and the hopes of the chivalry are centred on the stranger who has come among them. He performs the usual quest in darkness, with the result which we know otherwise, and a kind of Eucharistic Rite concludes the proceedings. This rudimentary specimen belongs to the third quarter of the eighteenth century, and is, I think, sufficient for my purpose. There seem even to have been systems which identified the *Grade of Rose-Croix* with that of *Knight of the East*, which belongs to the period of Cyrus and the building of the Second Temple.

To the patience and some other qualities of Ragon we owe two contributions to the subject of the *Rose-Croix* Grade, being (a) his recension of the Ritual as it was worked in France about 1860 or earlier, under the obedience of the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE, and (b) its reconstruction from his own point of view. In respect of the first, its differences from the codex now extant in Great Britain are practically innumerable, and it is of course impossible to tabulate them; but the only distinction belonging to the root-matter is the diminution of the Christian element. The result is that it has almost ceased to be a Ritual of the Rosy Cross or a completion of Craft Masonry according to the symbolism and implicits of the Craft and the *Royal Arch*. This appears, however, more especially in the so-called historical discourse and

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catechism by which the ceremony is concluded. The loss of the Word is there identified with a period of decay in Masonry, and its recovery with the restoration thereof. It is devoid as such of all Christian allusion or consequence. In respect of the second, Ragon, on his own part, attempts to extend the intimations contained in the discourse just mentioned. The loss of the Word is identified with Masonic indifference; there are dull and malodorous expatiations on the nature of man, on reason, judgment, art, science and so forth. The astronomical aspects of Masonry are in fine presented. To sum up, it is exactly the kind of performance which will have been expected antecedently by those who know Ragon and understand what is implied in his view that Nature is the path of rebirth. In the year 1860 he had got no further than Volney, Dupuis and Boulanger at the close of the eighteenth century—those voices of the arid waste of misconceived solar mythology. For Ragon the Recovered Word—which does not seem to have been exactly lost or found—is reason bearing witness to the senses—a kind of counter testimony in virtue of which illusion or the appearance of things is corrected by the father of lies. The last construction may seem rough, but I have read a good deal of Ragon, and the faculty which he praises may well ask to be saved from some of its friends.

In conclusion, as to variations of the Grade belonging to the first of my two categories, the

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EARLY GRAND RITE OF SCOTLAND has a Grade in its collection entitled *Knight of the Rosy Cross of St. Andrew*, which has some interesting symbolical points derived from early French versions, but it has suffered from indifferent editing.

The variations of the second class, which I have promised to speak of briefly, are numerous, as I have said, and it would be an idle task to take out their points in a series. We may well rest contented with two illustrative specimens chosen almost at random, or perhaps more correctly because they happen to be unknown in England.

In and before the year 1848 a past president of the *Loge des Trinosophes*, N. C. des Étangs, conceived the necessity of restoring Freemasonry to its true principles, which appear to have been nothing more novel than the love of good and the hatred of evil. In virtue of these, it was of course possible to maintain the thesis that the brotherhood was coeval with humanity. The canon of the restorer's criticism being thus defined, we can surrender to those whom it concerns the examination of the Constitution which he framed, the discourses which he attached to the Craft Grades, and the variations which he introduced into the Rituals. It is sufficient to say that his rectifications remained within the limits which might be expected antecedently—that is to say, mainly on paper. The general arrangement of his system corresponded to that of the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE ; the



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Grades four to seventeen were communicated but not worked, and from the Degree of Master he passed to that of *Rose-Croix*, which he termed the 4th Degree. Thence he proceeded to that of *Grand Elect Knight Kadosh*, which was the fifth and last of his series. *Ex hypothesi*, the Grade of *Rose-Croix* was the necessary sequel to the Craft, and its reconstruction was to harmonise it with Masonry. This was effected by expunging the Christian elements, which put an end to vulgar Masonry and rescued those who pursued it from the abyss into which it led the unwary. I do not know whether this kind of thing was held in select circles as illustrating the perfect work of the sovereign mason ; it did not prevent Des Étangs from affirming that the Grade of *Rose-Croix* originated in Palestine at the time of the Crusades, and it made him content to explain (a) that the Master Builder was the Genius of Truth ; (b) that his assassins were ambition, ignorance and falsehood ; (c) that the Master comes forth from his tomb because Truth cannot die. These are the points of the thesis developed by the Ritual, and the secret which it communicates is of similar quality : (1) that the fire of science sustains the moral life of the universe ; (2) that the fire of virtue burns out bondage and renders liberty to man. So does the labouring mountain of initiation produce the usual mouse.

The systems referred in the fantasy of their makers to Mizraim and Memphis were not

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likely to pass over the 18th Degree, and I will speak of the version which was incorporated with the second and later Rite, because it offers a peculiar example of retaining the name but transforming both the body and the soul. The *Grade of Rose-Croix* has become a catechetical instruction on Hermeticism, on schools of philosophy and on varieties of religious belief. The mystery which is celebrated by the chapter is one of dole and loss, but it has no longer the note of the Christian motive. There are vague references to an universal shipwreck, a recurring cataclysm of Nature. The sacred depository of the old traditions has perished, science has returned into heaven, and it is in this sense that the Word is lost. It seems to be recovered in an automatic manner after the statement of fact, but—this notwithstanding—the work is said to conclude in the perfection or fulness of darkness and not that of light. It is a cumbrous and heavy codification, entirely devoid of true symbolism, and it incorporates borrowed matter from alchemical sources. A better illustration of that which happens to Grades when they are wrested from their proper custodians could scarcely be desired.

I have used for the purpose of this brief reference that codification which was adopted by the ANTIENT AND PRIMITIVE RITE when the system of Memphis was reduced to 33 Degrees, as a condition of its recognition by the Grand Orient of France. It has conspicuous differences from

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the version put forward by J. E. Marconis in 1862 as part of the collection included by *Le Rameau d'or d'Eleusis*. Fundamentally, however, it is the same, and especially in its reflection of the analogy created by the orthodox Grade between the Rose crucified on the Cross and Jesus of Nazareth identified as the Rose of Sharon. In both cases a spurious philosophical Degree is substituted for one which is essentially Christian, and the attempted restoration of the Word is a ridiculous pretence. I should mention, however, that as the MASONIC ORDER OF ORIENTAL RITE OF MEMPHIS subjected its classification of Grades to several alterations, it does not appear to have included the *Rose-Croix*, properly understood or otherwise, in its system at the particular moment when Marconis produced his work. It so happened that the 18th Degree of the Rite was that of *Chevalier de la Rose Croissante*, said to be of the highest antiquity and divided into three classes or Grades : (1) The Sanctuary of Masonic Secrets—which are Prayer, Obligation and Baptism ; (2) the Sanctuary of Hermetic Secrets—which are Alliance, Union and Joy ; (3) the Sanctuary of Theosophical Secrets—which are Humanity, Invocation and Light. The general purpose claimed for the institution was the emancipation of men from vulgar errors by something characterised as philosophy, the attainment of moral perfection and the culture of generous, delicate and beneficent instincts. These ingenu-

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ous aspirations notwithstanding, the explanations attached to the conventional names of the three classes of secrets enable us—in the absence of the Ritual—to conclude that this so-called Masonry was the work of fools rather than of knaves. The folly seems to be still current in France, as there is at least one anonymous writer who is willing to subscribe himself *un Chevalier de la Rose Croissante*.

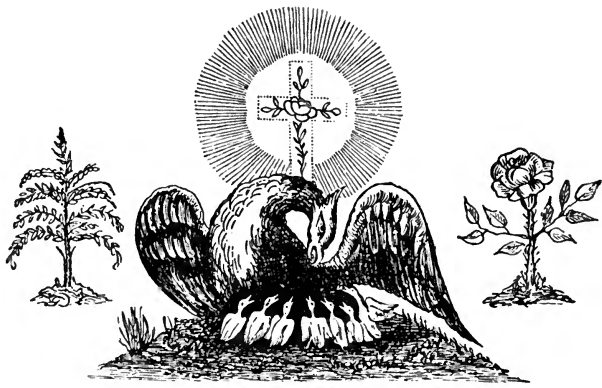
It may be added, as a point of curiosity, that there is, or there was, a modern *Order of Illuminati* working in Dresden, but under what circumstances I am unacquainted. Without any traceable warrants it represents an attempt to restore the celebrated foundation of Adam Weishaupt, but with a slender spiritual purpose in place of a political end. I do not think that it has any title to existence, but it is a harmless reflection of Masonry, and its last Grade is that of *Rose-Croix*. This is similar to the 18th Degree and is indeed its simple reduction into an exceedingly small compass. The essential parts are retained. As there is plenty of opportunity for people who wish to found Rites and Orders to develop their own intellectual and other implicits, if they have the simple ability, I think that unauthorised annexations should be rigidly discountenanced, and, judged on this principle, the *Order of Illuminati* stands condemned. As is usual in such cases, there is also a certain dishonesty, though I do not suggest that it is intentional. Recipients of the *Grade of Rose-Croix* under this obscure obedience

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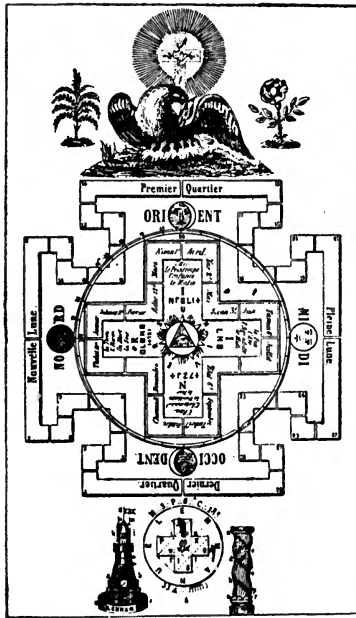
are presumably in search of the substance, but that which they obtain is the shadow. There is, this notwithstanding, a great pretence of importance in the Statutes and Regulations of the Order. Lastly, the Laws are so formed that both sexes are admitted by an association which is certainly Masonic in its character and communicates Masonic knowledge. It is therefore an adulterated and even a bogus Masonry.

For reasons which are sufficient to myself, I defer the consideration of the ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND till a later stage.





BOOK IV
The Masonic Orders of Chivalry





THE ARGUMENT

I. THE PUTATIVE RITE OF RAMSAY

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has been saved by criticism—Further concerning his reception into the Order of the Temple—The young Pretender and the Earl of Kilmarnock—Une petite résurrection des Templiers—The legend concerning Philip of Orléans—The Charter of Larmenius—Appeal to the Order of Christ in Portugal—The so-called Society of the Sirloin—Conclusions on these subjects—Mutually exclusive nature of the claim advanced by the Strict Observance and the claim of the Charter of Transmission—Probable date of this Charter—Its custodians denounce the claim of the Strict Observance—Modern forms of the two foundations—Further concerning the story of Von Hund—Werner's Sons of the Valley—The Order of the Temple in Great Britain—Of the Secret Tradition in the Temple—Of occult interest in this subject—Its root in the Levitikon—Templarism and Johannite Christianity—How this is referred back to the origin of the Chivalry—A thesis of Éliphas Lévi—Plan to rebuild the Temple of Solomon—Rivalry of the East and West in Christendom—The Oriental Johannite sect—Its imputed secret doctrine—Conspiracy of the first Templars—A scheme within a scheme—Conclusion on this subject.

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IV. THE COUNCIL OF EMPERORS OF THE EAST AND WEST, AND OF THE GRADES OF CHIVALRY IN THIS SYSTEM

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enemies of the Word—The resurrection and renewal of the Word—Deeper intimation of the Grade—Inward side of the Grades of Chivalry—A mode of substitution therein—Ceremony of consecrating a Viceroy of the Order—Ceremony of enthroning a Sovereign—The dedication of a Conclave—Further concerning the Red Cross of Constantine—Outline of its symbolism—The Grade has no connection with Chivalry—Consecrations of the Red Cross—The Hallows of the Temple—The empty sepulchre—The sepulchre in its inward meaning.

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XI. CONCLUSION ON MASONIC CHIVALRY

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BOOK IV

The Masonic Orders of Chivalry

I

THE PUTATIVE RITE OF RAMSAY

MY readers will remember what has been said of the Chevalier Ramsay in two of the earlier sections, and in particular that, having excogitated an hypothesis to explain the origin of Masonry along other lines than the evolution of an Emblematic Art of building out of the literal and material art, he proceeded, by a curious consensus of tradition, to construct Grades, and there came thus into being what passes in history, or rather in its substitutes, for the RITE OF RAMSAY. It is said further, as we have also seen, that he took this Rite to the English GRAND LODGE and endeavoured to secure its adoption. The tradition testifies that he failed, and thereafter returned to

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France, where he established it with phenomenal success. The first doubt was cast on this story by Findel, the German historian of Freemasonry ; but the criticism of the whole subject was carried much further by Mr. R. F. Gould, who has practically exploded the sequence of idle fictions. It is certain by a process of exhaustion that the Templar Masonic hypothesis did not originate with Ramsay ; that his alleged Grades were never heard of prior to the foundation of the STRICT OBSERVANCE ; that the period of his Masonic activities was brief and of the usual formal kind ; that the High Grade movement owed all things to his speculative thesis but nothing to his personal influence ; and finally, that he never brought a collection of Grades to the notice of GRAND LODGE, for the simple reason that the collection did not exist. Mr. Gould maintains that the notion of a RITE OF RAMSAY is first heard of in the *Acta Latomorum* of Thory, published in 1825. I am a little inclined to believe that there must be earlier traces of the legend, but so far I have failed to find them, because sources of reference in England to foreign Masonic literature are exceedingly imperfect. The question is in no sense vital, and we should indeed gain, comparatively speaking, little if even we could put back the legend by a period of thirty or forty years. The supposition of such a collection is an attempt to follow the line of least resistance when explaining the rise of Masonic Grades of Chivalry and especially of

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Templar Grades ; it is certain as regards the last that nothing existed prior to the STRICT OBSERVANCE, and therefore that this Rite is sufficient in itself to explain everything. But it is understood that I am speaking here so far as recognised Masonry is concerned. With the extrinsic Templar claim which depends from the Charter of Larmenius I must deal later.

The subject in its presentation so far may appear somewhat hopeless because it is of a negative kind, and as such it has naturally offered an opportunity for the kind of exploitation which is practised by those dreamers who express their reveries in the terms of certitude, and even by the makers of insincere hypotheses with actuating motives that may not be too far to seek. One school of French fantasy, noticing acutely enough the antecedent unlikelihood that the author of the *Travels of Cyrus* should produce, within or without this memorial, anything which made for signal importance by his unaided effort, has supposed that Archbishop Fénelon stood behind him in the work and communicated to him what he afterwards put forward, as if on his own authority. The notion is in itself a complete farce, and I cannot think that it even deceived the inventor. As a fact, however, the position otherwise is not quite so forlorn, or indeed so negative as it seems. If we compare the nomenclature of the imaginary RITE OF RAMSAY with that of the STRICT OBSERVANCE, we shall find that their High Grades are in such a state of inter-

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fusion that the dream in the one case is a shadow of the reality in the other. They are resolved into an *Écossais* section and two Grades of Templar Chivalry ; the first is now represented by *Master* and *Perfect Master of St. Andrew*, and the second by *Novice* and *Knight Beneficent of the Holy City of Jerusalem*. I believe that these are in the one case among the oldest, and in the other the only of their kind, for the modern *Order of the Temple* is without any historical or even legendary aspect, and it does not therefore come into consideration from the present point of view. It had another and distinct origin. The *Écossais Grades* are exceedingly numerous and offer signal differences in comparison one with another. Those which I have summarised under the titles of *Master* and *Perfect Master of St. Andrew* are, with many variations, which may seem, on the surface, to reduce essential identity, synonymous in root-matter with the fourth Grade of the STRICT OBSERVANCE, which was that of *Scottish Master*. It is this fact which assigns a particular position of great symbolical importance to the Rite in question, and this is equivalent to saying that most other *Écossais Grades* are comparatively at least negligible. They were worked under various obediences, and in some of them the term *Écossais* came, like that of *Rose-Croix*, to be little better than a titular distinction. I will give a synopsis of three, taken almost at random from the cohort, because, after their proper



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manner, they afford a representative idea of Scottish Masonry apart from that which was distinguished by the name of St. Andrew. They are also of considerable value on the side of symbolism, and are therefore to be included among the few exceptions to which I have just referred.

(1) *Apprentice Écossais*.—The reception herein followed initiation and advancement in the Symbolical or Craft Grades. The Candidate was instructed to wash his hands—like Christ and His Apostles before the Last Supper. He then made the Sign of the Cross on his forehead, using water for the purpose. It represented apparently a kind of Masonic baptism, performed on his own part and of his free will, to signify a transition in his initiated life from the Old to the New Law. There were then conferred upon him in symbolism the Seven Gifts of the Spirit, representing another Christian Rite, or that of Confirmation ; the communication was made by seven light blows on the forehead with the mallet of the Master, and these signified the voluntary acceptance by the Candidate of the whole mystic and religious responsibility of Christian Masonry. Finally, he received, also at the hands of the Master, a symbolic Eucharist, of which we have heard something in connection with another Grade ; there was communicated to him the heart of the Master Builder, and this represented, I conceive, the Candidate's integration in the love of Christ. It completed the symbolism of the Grade in so far as it constituted a reflection

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of the three great Sacraments of the Church, but there was a fourth ceremony, also Sacramental in its nature ; the Candidate knelt upon the ground before a Blazing Star, embroidered on the carpet of the Temple ; the letter G was placed in the centre of the pentagram ; he prostrated himself on his elbows, bowed his head to the ground and sealed the letter with his lips. In this manner he was held to have received the Spirit of Jesus Christ, that is to say, the Spirit of the Father through the channel of the Eternal Son in the manifestation of His life on earth.

(2) *Companion Écossais*.—The Candidate was prepared by these experiences for the still more profound symbolism of the next Grade. When he was introduced into the Temple he beheld a great Altar illuminated by eighty-one lights, which signified the operation of the Trinity in the four letters of the Divine Name, corresponding to the four worlds of Jewish theosophy. Behind and above the Altar was a transparency depicting the glory of the Grand Architect surrounded by the seven Intelligences of Heaven. The Trinity was here represented by a central triangle containing the letters יהוה. He saw also the Ark of the Covenant covered by the wings of the *Kerubim* ; the Lamb seated by a book sealed with seven seals ; the Brazen Sea, the Seven-branched Candlestick, the Altar of Burnt-Offerings and the Table of Shewbread. He was told to remove his shoes, as one on the threshold of the Holy

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of Holies. The tomb of the Master Builder was shewn in the middle place of the Temple ; he entered that tomb, which probably means that he was placed at the proper symbolical point of an embroidered carpet ; he was told that it was his destiny to take the place of the Master. But it will be observed that the emblems of the Trinity on the Altar and the presence of the Mystic Lamb are equivalent to the intimation conveyed in the *Grades of St. Andrew* and therefore that this Master was Christ. The instruction is that his advancement as a *Companion Écossais* meant that he had taken upon himself the burden, with the graces and the privileges, belonging to the Christ-life.

(3) *Master Écossais*.—So far as I can understand the available rubrics, the arrangement of the Temple was the same as for the previous Grade, but four acacias surrounded the tomb of the Master. It was still the Temple of Solomon, but under a great transfiguration, because it is evident from the symbolism that the intimations of the Word which is in Christ have filled the Holy Place. The Candidate was again directed to perform his *Lavabo* ; he made also his confession, many questions were put to him, and he was admitted among those who are at work on the completion of the Holy of Holies ; that is to say, he was at work for the manifestation of the Christ-life in the world at large. He was caused to recite the written Obligation of

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the Grade, and it was then burnt in his presence, as if his pledge were returned to him ; but this impressive formality belongs to a greater Mystery. He was appointed Intendant of the Buildings and thus became responsible for the care and progress of the spiritual edifice. The episode shews that the new Temple is only that of Solomon in a very exalted sense—in the sense, I mean, that there is one God worshipped by a form which at heart is one in every quarter of the universe. At this stage the Candidate received the name of *Moabon*, which is familiar in other Degrees, and he was proclaimed the legitimate successor of the Master Builder. It is as if he were told that in the suggestive world of symbolism the Lord Christ had been declared within him. A Masonic Ordination followed, testifying to the priestly character of true and transcendent Masonry. He was anointed with oil on the forehead, the right eye and the heart, for it is clear that such an imputed builder of such a Temple must hold his warrant from a sacerdotal source and work in a sacerdotal sense. And in this manner was he sent forth, as one who shall preach the Gospel to every nation ; but he was fortified first of all by another Eucharistic Rite, and this surely was according to the Order of Melchizedek.

I may add, in conclusion of this part, that according to the Catechism of the Grade there are three Covenants : (a) That of Mount Sinai ; (b) That of the Death and Passion of Jesus

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Christ ; (c) That of the Divine Alliance. These three are one, even as three angles form one triangle. But I think that the Divine Alliance is the Mystery of a Hidden Church, which Church is within.

In the light of such an interpretation as I have here offered, I do not know that the erudite and spiritual mind of Andrew Michael Ramsay, overshadowed by the soul of Fénelon, would have lost anything of its lustre had he been the author of these Grades. They might have been worthy also to pass under the chivalrous patronage of Godfrey de Bouillon, were the ascription not otherwise impossible, and I mention this because the alternative designation of the fictitious RITE OF RAMSAY, in the dream of its inventors, was *Rit de Bouillon*. And yet the first Christian King of Jerusalem is not so much as mentioned in the oration of Ramsay.

With the Templar Grade which is also fathered gratuitously upon the same authorship I shall deal in its place ; it belongs to the sequence which I have established as comprising within a measurable compass the entire Masonic subject from *Alpha* to *Omega*, so far as this has passed into expression. In its present form, the Grade to which I allude may be called the capstone of universal Freemasonry, but it has suffered a great transformation so that it might be brought into this exalted position.

After one further point we shall finish with

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the Ramsay complication ; I have intimated that many writers have been content to follow a vague report regarding his Masonic discourse rather than recur to the text, which is to be met with in several places ; but it is now necessary to add that most of those who have seen it have unaccountably enough failed to notice one important statement therein. Perhaps the explanation is that it appears somewhat casually, and nothing is inferred therefrom in the Oration itself. It is said that the Masonic Grades begin under the Law of Israel and end in the Law of Christ. A very curious dilemma is the consequence, and I shall proceed to set it forth clearly, so that those who are of authority in Masonry may take their choice among two clear alternatives. It follows from the statement either (*a*) that if Ramsay referred to the three Craft Grades and these only, then the 3rd Degree at his period was not in the same state as that with which we are acquainted, and of this it will be remembered that I have reported other rumours, indicating the possibility of Christian elements therein ; or (*b*) that there were attached to the Craft some supplements and extensions which would correspond to our present use of the expression High Grades, which Grades were Christian. In respect of the first alternative, the inference can only be that the Craft Grades have been edited to expunge certain elements, and there is no difficulty in my own mind as to the time when

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this alteration took place or the influence which was at work in the matter. I do not propose to say anything more specific, as this is not a polemical treatise, but I register the fact that— if the time should come—there is that to indicate which will cast an unexpected light upon some buried episodes in the Masonic past of England. This is without prejudice to my previous statements that (*a*) the Craft Grades belong to the Ancient Alliance, and (*b*) are not to be separated from it, so far as their symbolism is concerned.

In respect of the second alternative, those who believe that there were High Grades worked in connection with the Craft prior to 1737 may be asked to produce their evidence. I have made it plain already that, from my point of view, the root-matter of Grades outside the Craft is inherent in the Craft itself, but I question very much whether they had been explicated at that date, with the possible exception of one Grade entitled *Heredom of Kilwinning*, to which much importance attaches; but of this I shall speak later. Readers of Masonic literature, more especially of the French variety, will find that many High Grades are referred so far back as to the year 1735, but there is no particle of evidence to support the ascription. It remains that Ramsay's Oration, which exercised in the eighteenth century so profound an influence upon higher Masonic developments, may not even now have come to the term of its office.

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As something which arises from the subject here under notice, a word may be added to correct a persisting impression regarding the dedication of Robert Samber to the tract entitled *Long Livers*. It appeared in the year 1722 under the pseudonym of *Eugenius Philalethes*, and has been taken to constitute evidence that prior to the date in question there were Higher Degrees in Freemasonry. The dedication distinguishes between those in the ranks of the Brotherhood "who are not far illuminated," who stand in the outward place, and those who have "greater light" are of "the higher class," are "illuminated with the sublimest mysteries and profoundest secrets of Masonry." It is intelligible that these statements should mislead Masonic research, which does not include either a knowledge of Hermetic technical terminology or a literate acquaintance with the peculiar general style adopted by alchemical writers. The distinction established is between the porchway or entrance of spiritual or occult illumination, and the secret light of the *adytum*. It could be paralleled a hundred times over in the books of the adepts when they are speaking of comparative stages of advancement in the Christian Mysteries, in those of Alchemy itself, or any other of the mystic pathways. The degrees to which it refers are, once more, those of inward light, and not of advancement in any Grades of Instituted Mysteries.

It would be far more convenient to my purpose

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if I could accept the current opinion which obtains among a certain class of thoughtful Masonic students on the text here in question, but my conclusion is that Robert Samber was referring—and this only—in a characteristic Hermetic phraseology to the superior knowledge of a small private circle of alchemists, and possibly of Rosicrucians, who also happened to be members of the Masonic fraternity. It is obvious that his subject and the mode of its expression would be unintelligible to the Brotherhood at large, and supposing that any High Degrees existed at the period in England, I am entirely assured that they were not Hermetic in the particular sense which is attached to that term by those who use it with knowledge. The author was speaking to alchemists as one who was himself an alchemist, and as a Rosicrucian, real or assumed, to Brothers of the Rosy and Golden Cross, actual or imputed.





II

THE THEORY OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE

AFTER every allowance has been made for the conclusions and the inferences drawn from the considerations of previous sections, much remains dubious regarding the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE in respect of its origin. The question of date is not in a satisfactory condition, or at least to my own mind. If I say that it was promulgated definitely in the year 1754, I do little more than specify that period which French and other record makers of Masonic history have chosen on the Continent, and which all our Masonic Cyclopædias and kindred echoes and reflections have been content to copy when it has not happened sporadically that a more arbitrary alternative has been drawn from some region beyond mortal thought. On my part, I must be content with what I have in respect of the year in question, because there is a slender likelihood that the available sources of

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information may be correct herein, their superiority to all references notwithstanding. It was certainly in embryo for a considerable period previously, as shewn by the careful summary of existing evidences in the larger work of Mr. R. F. Gould. The last word—and perhaps the most important of all—remains to be said on the subject. With an open mind, therefore, as to whatsoever may be discovered hereafter, I will proceed to my next point, which is another exalted uncertainty. Subject to the settlement of dates, the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE was the first Masonic system which claimed to derive its authority from Unknown Superiors, irresponsible themselves but claiming absolute jurisdiction and obedience without question. The alleged alternative competitor is the RITE OF THE ELECT COHENS, whose Unknown Superior was however in the spiritual world, from which he passed into occasional manifestation and dictated secret knowledge. He was termed the Unknown Philosopher, but as we shall see in its place the information that reaches us on this subject comes from a source which neither is nor should be credited too readily, apart from written warrants, while it is not a source which is in the habit of supplying such warrants. For what the question of dates is worth, the RITE OF THE ELECT COHENS does not, however, go back to the year 1754. It is just to add that it was at no time really in the market as a competitor with the larger and

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greater Rites, though it included the Degree of *Rose - Croix*, while the Unknown Superiors of the Observance were undoubtedly a governing body, though they may have stood only for Baron Hund and his coadjutors in the work of direction.

It is not my intention to review the inscrutable problems which are involved in the foundation of the Rite. The trend of modern opinion, after a fairly careful review of the available facts, is to conclude that it was not, at its root, the invention of Karl Gotthelf von Hund. According to his own story, when he attended a convention at Altenberg, he was received into the Order of the Temple at Paris, in the presence of Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender, and was referred for further instructions to C. G. Marschall von Bieberstein, an alleged Grand Master of the German Templar Province. This is stated to have occurred in the year 1743, when he also made the acquaintance of Marschall, but only to learn that the latter had destroyed his records with the exception of the list of Grand Masters, shewing the perpetuation of the Order, and the Roll of his Province. On the occasion of his reception, Hund was told to regard himself as successor-designate of Marschall, and he did nothing till the death of that personage in or about the year 1750. He then assumed the position of Provincial Grand Master, and, finding no one at hand to whom he could refer for

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guidance, he decided to proceed with the Order on his own authority. In this manner the honour of von Hund is saved, and the story of the perpetuation of the Knights Templar, of the Unknown Superiors and of the partition of Europe into nine great Provinces of the Order, is referred back to a realm of mystery.

One is anxious—if possible—to concur in this salvage not only on the ground that an impartial study of the evidence has convinced several that Baron von Hund is not to be classed with impostors, but because (*a*) if he was the author of the Rituals comprised in the Rite, and in particular the Grade of Scottish Master, they are the strongest testimony as to the spirit by which he was actuated; while (*b*) if he drew from others, then the Rite, with its claims, was derived to him, and the responsibility was rather with them.

In connection with these considerations, and perhaps in opposition thereto, there remains the indubitable fact that the story of Hund's reception as a Knight Templar rests on his sole authority, and the question which arises is whether there is any tolerable reason for supposing that some form of the revived Order was working at that period. We may set aside out of hand the suggestion—not that it has been made seriously—of a special foundation on the part of Jacobite intrigue for the benefit of its own ends. It seems impossible to suppose that a device of this kind would have been held

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tolerable for the purpose, and to the complete absence of likelihood must be added the more positive fact of an absence—also complete—of external evidence on the subject. I conclude, Prince Charles Edward and his alleged co-adjutor in Masonry, the Earl of Kilmarnock, did not found an Order of the Temple. Let us now glance at the other historical possibilities.

(1) In the year 1682 there was established a small private society within the court of King Louis XIV., for the pursuit—under necessary precautions—of certain scandalous vices. Whether it had an official name is uncertain, but it was called, perhaps in derision, *Une petite Résurrection des Templiers*. It was promptly crushed by the King, leaving no record behind it, and persons of the tastes to which it ministered pursued their courses individually. This episode therefore does not come into consideration, though enemies of the Templar claim in Masonry have sought to press it into their service.

(2) In 1705, during the minority of Louis XV., Philip of Orléans is credited with a design to restore the Order of the Temple, and he took into his council the Italian Jesuit and antiquary, Father Bonanni, who drew up the Statutes and fabricated the famous Charter of Larmenius, being the Roll of Grand Masters from the time of Jacques de Molay to that date. Thereafter—as it is also said—there was an attempt to obtain recognition from the *Order of Christ* in Portugal,



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which was—as it still is—the actual successor of the old Knights Templar in that country. The experiment proved a failure ; an emissary of the royal prince is said to have been cast into prison and was ultimately deported to Africa, where he died. But the Order continued in France, and for some obscure reason is thought to have concealed itself—and certain supposed political projects—under the veil of a *Society of the Sirloin*. In 1792 the Grand Master was the Duc de Cossé-Brissac, who was succeeded in 1804 by Doctor Fabré-Palapat. It is from this period only that the revived Order of the Temple begins to have a certain history. I do not believe in the story of Philip of Orléans ; I do not believe that the Charter of Transmission is a genuine document ; but, to exercise even and impartial justice, I believe as little in the hand of the Jesuit therein. The Charter probably belongs to the end of the eighteenth century rather than its beginning. Let us suppose, however, that I am mistaken in this drastic view, and that in 1743 there is a bare possibility that the foundation of 1705 could have numbered the Young Pretender and some members of his suite in its ranks.

(3) In this case the claim of the STRICT OBSERVANCE could not have been put forward, at least in that form with which we are acquainted, and which, as a matter of fact, is the current, popular tradition at the present day in the ranks of High Grade Masonry. For the rest, this claim does not

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depend from a solitary document which no one has seen in England, the present whereabouts of which is utterly unknown, which has been pronounced upon by a number of critics, the great majority of whom have never set eyes upon it, which has been condemned more especially on *a priori* grounds, which condemnation is in fine justified, but not by the reasons given. The STRICT OBSERVANCE depended for its warrants on the sacred ground of romance, which is sometimes that of tradition, and in particular on the four legendary foundations made by Jacques de Molay on the eve of his martyrdom. Against this the Charter of Larmenius can stand no comparison ; it has the misfortune of being less or more in evidence of the indirect kind, and the revival under the pretended obedience of Philip of Orléans falls therewith. The point, however, which concerns us is not the exercise of a somewhat fantastic preference between distinct, competitive and exclusive claims ; it is rather the simple issue which follows from the simple fact that they do exclude one another. The revival which is based on the Charter did not fail to realise the point, and it seems, in its own late day, to have condemned the alternative claims as spurious, though it is rather by a tacit implication, of which I shall speak later. After such manner, and perhaps of necessity, did these Templars love one another ; the STRICT OBSERVANCE at the time was then *in articulo mortis*, and it is not on record that it replied ; a rejoinder under any circumstances

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would have been regrettable on the part of a Rite which had nothing to gain by recognition on the part of its rival, and nothing to lose by a condemnation arising from such a source. I must not, however, be interpreted as saying that the Order which became known in France under the Grand Mastership of Dr. Fabrè-Palaprat was in all respects contemptible. I must speak of it in a more especial manner at a somewhat later stage ; my fantasy at this moment concerns only the matter of the supreme folly which led it to depend from a document, and such a document as the Latin Charter, rather than from a glorious faith in myth. So far as I am aware, it has never been established in this country. The obedience which is represented among us at this day by the mono-grade of the *Military and Religious Order of the Temple*, which is a sacred, beautiful and moving ceremonial, containing high elements of symbolism, has no connection whatever with the Larmenius claim. The Templar Grade of the STRICT OBSERVANCE is not indeed among us here in England, save in respect of custody, but it is represented abroad by that which I have described as the capstone of Universal Freemasonry, namely, the dual Grade of *Novice and Knight Beneficent of the Holy City of Jerusalem*. In my catholic sequence of Grades this term of all is preceded by the *Military and Religious Order* ; for in a certain sense the two are related to each other, and even belong

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to one another, representing distinct periods of legendary time and a true succession in motive.

(4) It seems to follow very clearly from what has been said here that the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE drew nothing from a Templar revival already existing in or before the year 1743 ; I do not like to suggest, I do not in my sincerity believe, that the story which was told by von Hund to the High Grade Masons at Altenberg was an unqualified invention on his part ; it is, however, a vague story ; there is very good reason to suppose that he was mistaken regarding the identity of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, and he was not clear on the subject. He did not know, or failed to remember, the name of the Lodge or Chapter in which he was received ; he was silent respecting its locality ; there is nothing to certify that his reception was according to the method of ritual, though it is a reasonable inference. The Grades of Chivalry were probably in course of manufacture, and among them there may have been already a design in respect of some Templar foundation. Documents, rolls and so forth may have been produced in consequence. Some form of knighthood may have been in provisional and embryotic working order, and the little that was told the Postulant may have represented all that was then evolved. That form of Masonic Templar Knighthood which is now known as the *Military and Religious Order*, and the antiquity of which is considerable, did not,

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so far as we can tell, at any time exist in France, and even had it been at work in Paris in 1742, the fact would not materially assist us in estimating the claim of von Hund, because it has never pretended to possess titles shewing the perpetuation of the Templars by means of a list of Grand Masters, and it was never divided into provinces. He may thus have been deceived altogether ; on the other hand, I may be in error on my own part, and he may have justified to himself after some manner a certain conscious inaccuracy on an alleged point of fact. I do not know, and I must not rule too clearly on a case which is largely of sentiment ; but nothing must reduce the clear issue that the Templar revival under the ægis of the Charter of Transmission gave nothing to the STRICT OBSERVANCE—most likely for the best of all reasons, that it was not as yet in existence ; all else can be left for the time being at least in the hands of personal predilection. The connection of the Young Pretender with Masonry is like that of Emmanuel Swedenborg ; it arose in the one case from the adventitious presence of a Jacobite interest in certain Continental Lodges, and an attempt made in these to interpret the legend of the Master Builder in the sense of the ordeal and martyrdom of King Charles I. In the other it arose from the attempt, also adventitious, to turn the doctrines of the New Jerusalem into pseudo-Masonic Grades. Swedenborg almost

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certainly was never made a Mason, and the story of the Young Pretender's initiation is in much the same position. It is indeed stronger, as he is said to have denied it, and this at a period when he could have had little or no motive beyond a respect for the truth.

(5) A word should be added in this place concerning the chief literary memorial of the STRICT OBSERVANCE legend—I mean Werner's dramatic poem entitled the *Sons of the Valley*. Jacques de Molay is represented herein as founding the four Masonic lodges which were to perpetuate in concealment the suppressed Order of the Temple, and the name of Aumont, a prior of the Temple who carried the Rite to Scotland, is also mentioned. On the surface, therefore, Werner drew nothing from the revival connected with the name of Fabrè-Palapat, which may have been (*a*) because it was utterly unknown outside Paris, but more probably, as already intimated, (*b*) because it was non-existent when the poem was first written. But, this notwithstanding, there is one passage in the poem which is almost verbally identical with a speech of the Eminent Preceptor in our modern Ritual of the *Military and Religious Order*. I make no pretence of explaining this fact, but it seems fair to state it for what it is worth.

(6) There is unquestionable evidence of some Order of the Temple in Great Britain during the year 1779 or 1780, when there is a record of a reception therein. This took place in

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Scotland, and has been frequently cited, but the particulars do not enable us to form any opinion as to the nature of the Ritual, or from what source it was derived. There is, however, no real doubt that it was some form of the *Military and Religious Order*, which was therefore established in Scotland prior to that period and concurrently also in Ireland. A Templar Grade was also conferred at Plymouth in 1778.

(7) There is now one matter that remains, and I shall treat it shortly here, as it calls for later reference. When Ramsay first propounded his thesis concerning the revival of Masonry in Palestine at the period of the Crusades, he too had a thesis of transmission ; it was not from or through the Order of the Temple, but he located the revival in the East because he believed that in those parts there had been perpetuated some form of the ancient Mysteries from the days of Noah and the Flood. This was a favourite dream of archæology at the middle period of the eighteenth century. We have every means at the present day to set upon such a dream its proper value, but the point is that it obtained then, and hence the Oration of Ramsay was an attempt to marry the Rites of symbolical Masonry to Rites held to have existed at remote periods of antiquity. When the revivals of Templary were initiated later on, people like Hund were actuated by a similar predisposition, and, whatever its foundation in fact, this attempt

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to connect the old chivalry with some form of the Secret Tradition is that which has justified me in dealing at some length with the question. It is this which at the present day constitutes the talismanic attraction of Knight Templary for occult circles in France, and even in England. The basis must be sought in the history of the forged heretical gospel called the *Levitikon*. This document came into the hands of Dr. Fabré Palaprat, and was utilised by him to transform his orthodox and catholic foundation into a species of Johannite Christianity. The result was that the foundation split; that which had orthodoxy on its side, and in the logic of the case should have counted as the original foundation, is not heard of thereafter, and probably fell to pieces at once. What has become of the heretical branch, and whether it exists at the present day in France I do not know, and little interest attaches to the question; but the occultism of that country has taken over the Johannite folly and has developed a complete thesis concerning that which lay behind, not indeed the revival of the Order but its original establishment in the twelfth century. The view is thus developed by its chief exponent, Eliphas Lévi, in his *History of Magic*; but I should explain that I am reducing the account within reasonable measures, and am thus presenting its essence rather than a literal version.

The Knights Templar were a body of conspirators, and in revealing—as the author pretends



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to do—the secret of their fall, the Pope and King, who condemned them, come forth absolved. The professed object of their foundation was to protect Christians during their visitation of the Holy Places in Palestine; the concealed object was the rebuilding of Solomon's Temple on the plan of Ezekiel. The Judaizing mystics of the early Christian centuries had foretold this reconstruction, and it had long been the secret dream of the Eastern patriarchs. The Temple of Solomon, so rebuilt, and consecrated to the Catholic worship, would become the metropolis of the universe; the East would bear away the palm from the West, and the patriarchs of Constantinople would arise as masters of the papacy. The title of Templars is not explicable by the alleged fact that a house was allotted to the chivalry near the Temple of Solomon, for this edifice had been destroyed as well as that of Zerubbabel, and it would have proved difficult to identify its site. As a fact, the house was in the neighbourhood of that spot where the armed emissaries of the Eastern patriarch intended to rebuild the Temple. The Knights took as their model the military masons of Zerubbabel, who worked with the sword in one hand and the trowel in the other. Their own inward design was not exactly one of ministration to the ambition of the patriarchs of Constantinople. There existed at that period an Oriental sect of Johannite Christians, who claimed to be alone

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initiated in the deep mysteries of the Saviour, alone acquainted with the true history of Jesus Christ. The Gospel accounts were allegoric, and their own construction was the result of a gleaning from Talmudic and other Jewish traditions. It will be sufficient to state concerning it (*a*) that Jesus was initiated by the priests of Osiris and (*b*) was recognised by them as the long-promised incarnation of Horus. The tradition as a whole was fathered upon St. John the Evangelist, who was the founder of the secret church. Its grand pontiffs assumed the title of Christ; he who was in possession of the office at the establishment of the Templars was known to Hugues de Payens, the first Grand Master; the latter was initiated into the mysteries of the pretended Church and was designed to succeed the pontiff. The chivalry was thus infected from its very beginning; its designs, however, were enveloped in profound mystery, and according to external profession it was unimpeachably orthodox; on the surface—that is to say—it was Catholic and also Roman; but it was in secret Johannite. Such an ambition carried all the seeds of destruction; the projects were divined; the Pope and King gave the signal to Europe; the conspiracy and those who represented it were overwhelmed by one master-stroke. It was impolitic, notwithstanding, to delineate the nature of the plan which had thus been extinguished, and the legal processes substituted

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infamous and fantastic charges. But in breaking the sword of the Knights Templar it was changed by the suppression into a poniard ; occult Masonry was established on the ruins, and the proscribed trowels of the Knightly builders were dedicated henceforward only to the erection of tombs.

Such is one side of the history of High Grade Masonry when it falls into the hands of a professed occultist, and one who, moreover, was a personal friend of Jean Marie Ragon. Out of this precious stew—which belongs to the year 1860—there has been drawn, by a distillation of the dregs, the particular broth of Papus and the pseudo-Martinists, who have fastened on Masonic Knight Templary as the kitchen in chief of the brewing French Revolution. It will, I suppose, be unnecessary to say that the account of Eliphas Lévi is neither history nor decent fiction ; it is not the mere Johannite fiddlesticks of Fabré-Palaprat ; it is not the washings of the *Levitikon*—which was a post-Revolution discovery ; it is not even the bourgeois construction of Ragon, who would have seen Jesuitry in the pan ; it is the idle and dishonest invention of one who made his history according to the mood of the moment, and was more insincere if possible when it occurred to him to sustain the orthodoxy of Latin catholicism than when it served his turn to jeer at it. *J'ai voué ma vie à la vérité*, he said in *La Science des Esprits* ; this is the kind of truth, and this is how it is unveiled.

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What I have termed the historical possibilities have involved various matters which, in a strict sense, scarcely enter into the title, but they have arisen in a natural manner from that which is included therein. A word must now be added on the Rituals in use by the ORDER OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE, so far as the High Grades are concerned. There are no available manuscripts, but there is a single summary account containing (a) the Reception of a Scottish Master, together with a short instruction by way of question and answer ; (b) the Reception of a Secular or Lay Novice ; and (c) that of a Knight, with the modification used in the case of a serving brother. These, at least, are the chief sections, and with the others I shall not be concerned. I have compared their points carefully with the Rituals of the *Grades of St. Andrew*, to my account of which I refer, and with those of *Novice and Knight Beneficent of the Holy City of Jerusalem*, of which I shall treat hereafter. Of these I suppose that I am the sole person in this country who possesses, or has perhaps even inspected, a perfect and authorised copy. The result of the comparison is to establish a certain general likeness ; it is obvious, however, that certain modifications which the Rite underwent at Lyons were not only designed to efface the particular claims of the STRICT OBSERVANCE, but to enhance the spiritual message communicated in the several Degrees. In the originals the stress is laid everywhere

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upon obedience to the Order itself, fidelity to its Superiors, the renunciation of personal liberty in respect of the Order, unconditional silence and so forth. I do not regard the printed abstracts as in any sense doing justice to the Rituals, but since I have no authority for saying that they are not a reflection of their spirit, I conclude that the Knightly Grades were those of an earthly chivalry, and that they were turned by the higher initiates who transmuted them into a chivalry of God. It is, of course, possible that the abstracts were pirated versions depending from rough notes, and reflecting therefore only at a very far distance. The notes on the *Grade of Scottish Master* seem to support this view, but it is difficult to speak with assurance. The great vogue of the Rite during a period of thirty years is inexplicable on the texts as they stand, and I conclude, therefore, that they must have been nearer to the form of their revision than we are now able to determine. In their best possible proximity they must have been remote enough, at least from my point of view, for the later versions need no adventitious aids from dubious charters, rolls and lists of provinces to support them. It is because of their distinction that, somewhat in the spirit of fantasy, I offered my felicitations to a Rite which preferred Unknown Superiors, the legend of the four Lodges, and other matter of romance, to the forged Larmenius document.

As regards the OBSERVANCE list of Grand
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Masters, so far as I am aware, it has been never made public, and we have therefore no opportunity to compare it with the alternative succession in the Charter. The Master immediately succeeding Jacques de Molay was, however, the Prior of Aumont, as appears by all the Rituals.

As I have mentioned the provinces of the Order—though they do not especially concern us—it may be well to say that those which came into temporary existence were supposed to cover Northern Germany — numbered VII. in the schedule ; South Germany, No. VIII. ; Burgundy, No. V. ; Auvergne, No. II. ; Occitania, having its centre at Bordeaux, No. III. I am without means of knowing, but I suggest as a speculation that the first province would have been, by the hypothesis, Great Britain as the imagined location of the Rites Unknown Superiors and of the veiled Grand Master of all. The scheme was in imitation of the old Knights Templar, whose possessions and connected preceptories were divided into Eastern provinces, being—I. Jerusalem ; II. Tripoly ; III. Antioch ; IV. Cyprus : and western provinces being—I. Portugal ; II. Castile and Leon ; III. Aragon ; IV. France and Auvergne ; V. Normandy ; VI. Aquitaine, or Poitou ; VII. Provence ; VIII. England ; IX. Germany ; X. Upper and Central Italy ; XI. Apulia and Sicily.





III

GRADES OF CHIVALRY INCORPORATED BY THE CHAPTER OF CLERMONT

I HAVE intimated that the active spirit in the formation of most of the super-Masonic Rituals is that which is qualified by the term romantic, but it is not exactly of the kind which moves over the high waters of imaginative literature. It has its analogies in an especial school which took possession of certain byways at the very end of the eighteenth century in England. That was the school of Mrs. Radcliffe. The exploration of the various systems of Rites is like a journey through that wonderful forest in which la Motte sought refuge from his creditors, and the sentimental, virtuous, almost impossible, Adeline found the snares of the insidious encompassing her. The *Sicilian Romance*, the *Romance of the Forest* and the *Mysteries of Udolpho* are—in an unexpected way

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—just a little like the Craft Degrees, though I am on the verge of an unpardonable sin in thus daring to express it. I mean that, in their own order, they are those texts which constituted the imprescriptible canon of the subject-matter and established the irrevocable form. From M. G. Lewis and his *Monk*, Maturin and his *Fatal Revenge*, to the *Zastrozzi* of Shelley—even to the *Frankenstein* of Mary Godwin and the unintelligible deeps of the *Mysteries of St. Clair*, it was impossible for the cohort of imitators to escape from the keynote supplied in the archetypal monuments, or from the sentiments, the moralities and the melancholies—pleasing and not pleasing. So also the keynote, the forms, the mode, the peculiar set of moral qualities which characterise the Craft Degrees, established a central custom and habit, from which no one dreamed of escape. Mrs. Radcliffe was a genius in her way, and almost as much may be said for one or two of her disciples, but the crowd who followed in her wake had penetrated most abysses of folly and incompetence. The Craft Grades and certain wonderful supplements, their literary setting notwithstanding, are full of the shaping spirit, while some of their reflections are glorious and holy like Zion; but there is a waste outside the Holy City which they constitute, and it is a waste of all vanity and all unreason.

My fantastic analogy obtains after another manner, because there was nothing so *sui generis* when it arose as the particular kind of wizardry

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which was created by the wand of Mrs. Radcliffe. One must not say that it was without antecedents, but they must be sought in the scattered fragments of a spirit which had been instilled into many literatures, yet had scarcely been declared in any. In like manner, the ritual mysteries of Craft Masonry are *sui generis* in their own way. It may be said that they are dramatic in their form, and this is obviously true, but it is only a fragment of the truth, and to infer that their antecedents go back beyond the days of Æschylus and Sophocles would be to create a comparison in which the essence of analogy is wanting. Both of the literatures which I have been contrasting previously belong to the order of creation, and in so far as they were new creations they were apart from antecedents; to this extent they are of the nature of a mystery; we do not know how they arose in the mind of those who produced their archetypes. The romances of Mrs. Radcliffe issue in fatal explanation, and this is the pity of her work; but the Craft Grades—and their canonical successors in the sequence which I have established—issue in a deeper mystery, and this is one side of their greatness. The High Grades also, whether good or bad in themselves, are like the first editions of anonymous books which have appeared without an imprint, or with an imprint that is manifestly of false pretence. There is, so to speak, no date on their titles, and although, by a process of exhaustion, we can place them within

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a certain narrow period of years, the ascription is the more speculative—and subject to correction—as it attempts to be the more express. We have met with this difficulty already regarding the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE. The year 1754 is, under certain reserves, a working hypothesis regarding the time of its appearance; but we have to account as we can for the decade or so which elapsed between the date on which Baron von Hund certifies that he received the Order of the Temple from the Earl of Kilmarnock and the date when he appears as Provincial Grand Master of his Rite ruling over the *langue* of Germany. The CHAPTER OF CLERMONT also passes as an institution of the year 1754, but if it were possible to put this date back by about the decade which I have specified, we should be then in a position to account, on the surface, more simply for the story of Hund, and might regard ourselves as having saved the situation in respect of general probabilities as well as in respect of his honour. But the mysteries of dates and origins usually involve a certain playing with fire which is likely to leap up and scorch an interesting hypothesis at some unexpected point; in the present instance we shall find that what looks at first sight like a line of least resistance may raise insuperable difficulties of its own. I propose to consider the possibility, but in the first place that which would follow therefrom. There is no question that the CHAPTER OF CLERMONT worked certain Rituals, and if—as

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occasionally suggested—it were this body which received Baron von Hund into the Order of the Temple, it is clear that it must have had the Templar Ritual. No one has seen it, any more than they have seen the chivalrous Grade of the imaginary Ramsay Rite. The Chapter had, moreover, not only a name, but a clearly defined local habitation, and there could be no difficulty about the recipient retaining the means of communication therewith. In like manner, if he were, as the story shews, its accredited representative in Germany, there can be no question that he would possess its Rituals or could at least obtain them at need. This notwithstanding, it follows from his account that he lost all touch with his initiators, that after strenuous attempts he failed to link up the chain, and in the end set to work in despair to establish his Rite in Germany apart from all assistance. If this is true, we can understand how his theory of Unknown Superiors governing the Rite came into existence after a very informal manner, and we can concur with his defenders who believe that he was more anxious to find them than the most curious and sceptical among those who were under his obedience. The story is credible enough along its own general lines—that is to say, on the supposition that he was mysteriously initiated, by whom he scarcely knew, and was then commissioned into his own country for the work of the Order therein. It fails along its particular lines, because he says that he was accredited in

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Germany to a certain von Marschall, who was German Provincial Grand Master, but proved to be without archives, without direction, and unwilling or unable to disclose anything. However we may determine the issue in respect of Hund's personal veracity, with which I have already dealt, it seems certain that whatever he received was not from the CHAPTER OF CLERMONT.

Let us now go a step further and ascertain more particularly, if we can, the Degrees which were conferred by the Chapter in 1754, when there is reason to believe that it was undoubtedly in active work.

It is a part of that ubiquitous mystery to which I have adverted that we are likely to come out of this consideration in the dubious state which obtains in other respects. The Chapter is said to have been founded by the Chevalier de Bonneville, in regard to whose identity there is only one fact certain, namely, that he is not to be identified with that Nicholas de Bonneville who wrote *La Maçonnerie Écossaise* and a few other works of interest. The latter was not born until 3rd March 1760, when the CHAPTER OF CLERMONT, at least under this name, had ceased to exist. Thory gives the original Grade content as (a) *Knight of the Eagle*; (b) *Chevalier Illustré*, or *Templar*; (c) *Sublime Illustrious Chevalier*. This was in 1815, and this we have seen already. In 1825 an American author, who had made the High Grades an especial study, certified that they

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were : (a) *Novice* ; (b) *Écossais* ; (c) *Knight of the Temple*. Another variation substitutes as follows : (a) *Scottish Master Elect* ; (b) *Knight of the Eagle* ; (c) *Illustrious Templar* ; to which there was added a little later on (d) *Sublime Knight*. There are yet other enumerations, but among these I will mention only : (a) *Maitre Écossais* ; (b) *Maitre Élu* ; (c) *Maitre Illustre* ; (d) *Maitre Sublime*.

There are the following further involutions, respecting variations of title : (a) whether *Maitre Écossais* was identical with the 4th Degree of the STRICT OBSERVANCE ; (b) whether *Maitre Élu* was identical with *Elect of Nine*, this in its turn being the same as *Elect of Perignan* ; (c) whether *Maitre Illustre* was identical with *Knight of the Holy Sepulchre* ; (d) whether *Maitre Sublime* was alternatively *Knight of God*, and if so, with what Ritual this otherwise unknown Degree should be preferably identified ; (e) whether *Knight of the Eagle*, according to one enumeration, was the same as *Master Elect* according to another ; (f) whether *Sublime Illustrious Chevalier* was an alternative title for *Maitre Sublime* ; (g) whether one of these Grades represented a novitiate and was sometimes called *Novice*, being equivalent at the same time to *Knight of the Sword*, *Knight of the East and Red Cross*, or *Suspending Cross of Babylon* ; (h) whether *Illustrious Knight* was the *Knight Templar Grade*. It is understood that this wonderful enumeration does not present my personal speculations, but a selection from con-

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flicting statements on the part of various late and early classifications.

I do not know whether there is any person in Europe who at this day can legislate with knowledge on these points, but some years ago Mr. Kistner, custodian of archives belonging to the Grand Lodge of Brunswick, affirmed that the CHAPTER OF CLERMONT worked also the Craft Degrees. When he gave some particulars of the Rite in the *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, he adopted the last classification which I have offered in my schedule, and adds that the *Maitre Illustré* had to take vengeance on the murderers in the Craft Legend. This seems to identify the Grade with *Elect of Fifteen*, which would then have been—as it now is—a sequel to the previous Grade of *Maitre Élu*. We should dispose in this manner of the ascription in respect of *Knight of the Holy Sepulchre*, which is due to Mr. Yarker, and, like his other remarks on the Rite, seems to be an excursion at large in the realm of fantasy. It is to him, for example, that we owe a revolutionary account of the date to which it should be ascribed. He affirms: (a) that the CHAPTER OF CLERMONT was taken to Hamburg in 1742; (b) that von Marschall, the predecessor of Hund, was received at the same period, or a year earlier than Hund; (c) that in the year mentioned a certain Baron von Wieler—who was a person of importance in connection with the STRICT OBSERVANCE, and is well known in its history—

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claimed to have received the Degrees in 1743 from Lord Raleigh, the ceremony taking place at Rome in a church of the Benedictines and with two monks in attendance; (*d*) that out of the Chapter sprang the STRICT OBSERVANCE.

Mr. F. Kistner has had better opportunities of knowledge as custodian of the archives at Brunswick, but as it is well to be frank when possible, he gives expression to opinions which belong to the worst class of Masonic criticism. His thesis in chief is that the High Grades were remodelled by the Jesuits, who (*a*) turned them from Jewish into clerical Degrees, (*b*) with the object of bringing about the restoration of the Stuarts, and (*c*) the assassination of William III., Prince of Orange. A date is occasionally useful when it happens to be certain, and seeing that the personage in question was foisted on the throne of England in 1689, and was at length taken out of the way in 1702, while the Chapter of Clermont, according to Mr. Kistner's own chronology, did not come into existence until 1754, and as to any earlier High Grades there is no evidence of their existence prior to 1740, I suggest that in the case alleged the vengeance of the Jesuits must have sought to pursue their victim on the other side of the world. The High Grades had many preoccupations, but with this particular design I have not met previously.

The same authority speaks of a legend of the Rite and its origin, which is perhaps characteristic

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of the period. It was (*a*) founded by Adam, but whether in Paradise or in exile is not stated ; (*b*) was flourishing at the Nimrod period ; (*c*) subsisted under the ægis of Moses, who brought it from Egypt ; (*d*) was in the custody of Solomon, from whom, without an intermediate history, it (*e*) descended to the Templars. The Chapter was thus the heir of all the ages, but it was concerned in the Grades only with the periods of Solomon and the Knights Templar. The Rite was taken to Berlin in 1758, and—under circumstances which do not appear, but there are means of information otherwise, if the point called for consideration—it fell into the hands of an unfrocked pastor named Philipp Samuel Rosa, who reduced it to three Grades, and carried it in this form to Brunswick in the year 1762. Before and after this date it was established in other cities of Germany.

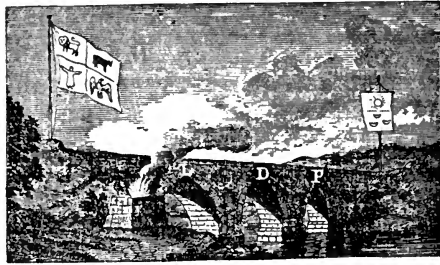
It is only under stringent reserves that out of all this formless confusion one can attempt to extract any tenable proposition at all ; the Clermont Chapter may by possibility have had a Templar Grade, but I think it unlikely, as in such case, if Hund was received therein, it must have existed prior to 1754 ; and as it is quite certain that the STRICT OBSERVANCE produced its own Rituals, there would then have been two Templar Grades at work concurrently. On the whole, I reject the proposition, and for other reasons which will appear in the next section.

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If I am correct herein, the CHAPTER OF CLERMONT is left only with *Écossais* Grades, unless there was a Degree of Chivalry of which we know nothing certainly, except that it could not have been Templar.

It has been necessary to speak of this Rite at some considerable length because of its historical importance, as a preface to a High Grade movement which was developed further, and is with us intact at this day.





IV

THE COUNCIL OF EMPERORS OF THE EAST AND WEST, AND OF THE GRADES OF CHIVALRY IN THIS SYSTEM

FRENCH—and sometimes German—High Grade criticism is here and there exceedingly simple over its implied canons. If the Craft had not been taken to the Continent of Europe in the eighteenth century, I do not personally believe that there would ever have been a very large High Grade movement, though the impulse derives from Scotland in the person of the Chevalier Ramsay. It came about very soon after the introduction into France that the Masonic mind of that country was in need of stronger food than the fragmentary Craft story. Those who could judge it on ordinary lines only knew that there was a quest instituted on account of an emblematic loss, and, like the natural mind, they stood very much in need of a sequel. There were those also who knew that it was a mystic legend, with a great meaning

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behind it, and for them in like manner it had been left incomplete ; they too needed its development and a term to be reached therein. They were all Christians indifferently, and among them were those who believed that the missing Word or formula was Divine in its character. For them there was one name only which could supply the deficiency and put a crown upon the work. This was the name of Christ, and so the Christian Grades came into existence, as it was inevitable that they should when once the principle of development had been set in motion. The destructive criticism affirms, as we have seen in brief already, that herein is the hand of the Jesuits. Those who devised this hypothesis should have seen that it involved too high a compliment from their point of view. If the Grades of St. Andrew, *Rose-Croix* and *Knights Beneficent* are their work, we owe a debt to Jesuitry which is not going to be paid in the Masonic world ; but the truth is that the importation of the Christian element has been explained in this crass manner as if the Society of Jesus stood for Christianity at large, even as at one period every alchemist was held to be a Rosicrucian, according to another mind of criticism. The preoccupation has filtered down to the present day and has still its traces in England ; it is therefore well to put on record the interesting fact that not one writer of the past who made the ascription has produced a single shred of real or imputed evidence. It

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stands at the same value as the Jacobite hypothesis, if accepted as an explanation of the 18th Degree or any other Grade which I have mentioned in this division of my work. It is also of the same value as the fashion set by writers who believe that the Craft is the sum of all Masonry, who are accustomed to speak of its purity, its inclusiveness, and who therefore set aside whatsoever is of the High Grades as worthless by the hypothesis because it is not the Craft.

We have seen that, according to one suggestion, the CHAPTER OF CLERMONT was merged into the STRICT OBSERVANCE ; I think that this happened in the same sense that the RITE OF RAMSAY suffered an identical dissolution. It is accepted more fully and with some probability that after an existence of four years the Chapter was taken over by or passed within the wider measures of the Council founded in 1758 under the title of the EMPERORS OF THE EAST AND WEST. If this be so, there is involved another fact which is significant for my purpose. By the assumed process of immergence, the COUNCIL OF EMPERORS must have taken over the Grades worked by the Chapter, and in the whole sequence of its twenty-five Rituals there is no Templar Grade in the proper understanding of the term, though there is, of course, whatsoever was implied by the *Kadosh* in its original form. I have enumerated the content of the Rite, which included the Craft Grades. From the 4th to the 12th Grade the

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subject-matter is concerned with events subsequent to the catastrophe commemorated in the Craft Legend ; the 14th, 15th, 16th, and 21st Grades are referable to the period of the Second Temple ; the 20th Grade is anomalous and belongs to the epoch of Babel ; and the scene of the 22nd Grade is on Mount Lebanon, when wood was being cut for the Temple of Solomon. They have, for the most part, been considered at due length in the sections of the second book.

The 13th Grade is the *Royal Arch of Enoch*, and, like the 22nd or *Prince of Libanus*, it carries in some lists the subsidiary title of *Royal Axe*. The implement which was used in the one case to fell the trees of the forest becomes a pick in the other for uncovering certain secret foundations. The Ritual seems to me demonstrably later than that of the *Royal Arch*, as it is known otherwise in England under the obedience of the Craft Grand Lodge, but it has curious elements which reflect the recurring notion that the Secret Tradition depends from that which in symbolism has been so long understood as the wisdom reposing in Paradise. By the common anomaly with which we have met more than once, it is classed as a Grade of chivalry, and for this reason it is noticed in the present place. Those who possess the Degree have descended through secret penetralia and have discovered the Sacred Delta containing the verbal formula which is the sum of all quest in Masonry. The Candidate pursues on his part

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the same research, and it is crowned with an identical success. In this manner he becomes truly a Master Mason, and shares in the hidden knowledge of the prophet Enoch prior to the Flood. That knowledge was received at first in a vision, was afterwards reduced into writing and placed in a Crypt, of which he who is said to have walked with God is described as the builder in chief. It was on the same site that the First Temple was erected long after by Solomon, and the excavations occasioned thereby led to the discovery of the arcana without which the mysteries of Masonry would not have come into the possession of the Sacred Lodge. So far it is possible to coerce this story into some kind of compatibility with that which is implied and expressed in the Craft Legend ; but the delirium of the account increases as it proceeds further, and the inventor forgets at the end the basis of accepted tradition from which all Masonry is developed. We are not, however, concerned with these divagations.

The 23rd Grade is that of *Knight of the Sun* or *Prince Adept*, and its authorship is referred to Baron Tschoudy. It has several equivalents or variants, as, for example, *Sublime Elect of Truth*. As the 27th Grade in the rearrangement and extension of the SCOTTISH RITE symbolises the importance of truth, so the 23rd in the COUNCIL OF EMPERORS represents the quest of its attainment. It is termed a philosophical Degree, as such

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motive would warrant ; but again it is difficult to draw any reasonable harmony out of its confused elements. The title notwithstanding, it is so far from chivalry and its period that the Temple represents Eden, the Master or President personates Adam, and the seven officers of the Grade are termed *Cherubim*. For a still more inscrutable reason, the unofficial members are Sylphs. The symbolism as a whole seems to represent the perfect day of creation, ruled by the sun, depicted in the centre of a triangle about which are congregated the angels of the planets. It is said in the great legend that God walked with Adam in the cool of the evening, which does not suggest the natural religion with which the Grade is concerned or the intention to disembarass the recipient of his conventional supernatural beliefs, which was one of its earlier purposes—or so it is at least alleged. He enters the Temple veiled, but the veil is taken away, perhaps as a sign of his desired emancipation. In its present form one of the discourses recites the history of preceding Scottish Degrees, which should have a curious effect on a Candidate who, outside his personal expectation, has opened his eyes in Paradise. If we met with this jumble in a less authorised connection one might be rougher in unveiling its claims. I should add that it has been occasionally called the *Key of Masonry*, and when incorporated, as it has also been, in a Hermetic series, it is termed *Chaos Disentangled* ; it is really entitled to another name,

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which is also Hermetic—I mean, *Chaos magna infirmata*.

We come now to the 24th Degree, which is that of *Kadosh*, but the long and chequered history attached to it is largely outside our concern. I refer my readers in the first place to my account of *Élu de Perignan* in the section on *Grades subsequent to the Symbolic Time of the Third Degree*. This and its sequel are to Masonry of the Ancient Alliance what the *Kadosh* is to Templar Masonry, —except possibly that the latter has higher claims to recognition from the ritual point of view. It is called the *ne plus ultra* of its series, and as such it is a contrast in the deeps to that which is *Rose-Croix* in the heights. I am speaking of it in the original form, as commemorating the abolition of the Templars and the murder of Jacques de Molay. Now, in the vast collection of Masonic Degrees, it cannot be denied that there are some—and even many—which are records of things negligible, and they are to this extent wanting in purpose of a laudable or reasonable kind. It can even be said of them that the commemorations are devoid of manifest or colourable intent. I believe, however, that the original *Grade of Kadosh* must in no sense be relegated to this unmeaning concourse, and if I am correct herein, the only explanation possible is in respect of a political design. It is known that at one period the Candidate was required to trample on crown and tiara ; the report comes from an enemy, and on

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the literal side I should not believe that it was true, but there is unhappily no question concerning the fact or its import. The formal execution of Philippe le Bel, Clement V. and the traitor Noffodei is another accusation, and, whether accurate or not, it is open to a construction in symbolism after the same political manner, if we realise that the proceeding in its absence would have been a vain and nonsensical observance. If, however, the episodes had arisen as an integral part of the two recognised continental Templar revivals, it might be said that it was a sentimental commemoration out of loyalty to the past of the Order ; but—notwithstanding some assertions to the contrary—it never formed part of the STRICT OBSERVANCE system, though it is said to have been incorporated in an arbitrary fashion by the Rite which at a later period appealed to the Charter of Larmenius as its chief warrant. Its content, apart from its purpose, has always had points of interest. One is the episode which connects with *Elect of Nine*—the plunging of a dagger in the symbolic heart which represents that of a traitor ; but this recurs to the object-question. Another is the mystic Ladder—similar to that of Jacob—which the Candidate ascends ; on one side it represents the seven virtues and on the other the liberal arts and sciences, as these are understood conventionally ; but there are larger and deeper meanings. It is also a Rite of Consecration, for the Candidate is sanctified by the title which the Grade confers

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upon him. It is many years now since the Grand Orient of France reformed the Grade and gave it a philosophical complexion which has been extended further under the ægis of the SCOTTISH RITE. It is concerned largely with a particular hypothesis of the origin and progress of Masonry.

I should add that in the RITE OF MIZRAIM the 65th Grade is that of *Grand Elected Knight of Kadosh*, in which the President represents Frederick II., King of Prussia, and one of the Wardens is Truth. The connection between them is for the skill of the Candidate to excogitate when he has survived his sense of the ridiculous. For the rest, he is served with diluted philosophy in place of an incitement to revolution. The ORDER OF MEMPHIS was not likely, on its own part, to dispense with the Grade, and *Knight Kadosh* constitutes an extended item in the colossal series, being numbered 31. It is a perfectly innocuous and colourless Grade of expatiation, based on the fact that the *Kadosh* signifies a holy and purified man who believes in one God, Creator and Preserver of all things, in the immortality of the soul and the perfectibility of the human mind. In respect of its dimensions the motto might be "world without end"; it is, in fine, the apotheosis of generalities and commonplace. THE ANTIENT AND PRIMITIVE RITE, which is a reduction of that of Memphis within the measureable compass of 33 Degrees, has abandoned the impossible Ritual and returned to the older form, with, however, a

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different motive. It levies a great contribution on Baron Tschoudy and his *L'Étoile Flamboyante*, carries over from the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE its legend of the four Lodges established by Jacques de Molay, and provides a lengthy historical discourse in which facts are tempered by fictions. The Candidate learns, however, that in spite of its supposed Templar connections, the *Kadosh* sword and dagger are symbols of wisdom and intelligence ; that these are used to assail intolerance, ignorance and bigotry ; and that his chief job is never to relax exertion in the propagation of the ANTIENT AND PRIMITIVE RITE. On this understanding, he tramples symbolically on the crown of Philip le Bel, signifying tyranny, and thereafter on the papal tiara, representing superstition and imposture. In such manner is he divested of all prejudice, as the Grade is itself of all reason.

In respect of the 25th and last Grade of the SCOTTISH RITE, it is that of *Sublime and Valiant Prince of the Royal Secret*. The scene is an encampment in which particular tents are allotted to the Knights *Rose-Croix*, Knights of the Brazen Serpent, Knights *Kadosh*, and others of the motley chivalries, including the Princes of the Grade. The symbolic time is that of the Crusades in respect of *mise-en-scène* and procedure, but it is a Grade of Templar heritage under the auspices of the modern spirit, not without traces of a revolutionary motive, as if it had been actuated thereby at the

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beginning till a later process had extracted most of the virus ; but with characteristic elegance of confusion the Grand Master somehow personates Frederick the Great, who is supposed to have chartered the Rite, apparently *in examine mortis*, for at the alleged period he was incapacitated and near his end. The question is indifferent to my purpose, which has no part in the patronage of Masonry by the kings of this world. The royal personage in question is also in evidence in the 21st, 31st, and 33rd Degrees. The Candidate is married to the Order and so becomes a prince. The instructions attached to the Grade include an elaborate description of the Camp and a symbolical and historical explanation of the preceding Degrees ; they are interesting on account of the authority which naturally attaches to them, in the system by which they have been incorporated, but they add nothing of real moment to the symbolism of the collection. I shall speak more at large of the Grade in connection with Hermetic Masonry, to which it has been unaccountably attached.

Three Grades remain over, and one of them is that of *Rose-Croix*, with which I have dealt at length ; it is the chief and enough glory that the COUNCIL OF EMPERORS is the first Rite or Masonic system which seems almost indubitably to have contained the *ne plus ultra* Degree. It is placed unfortunately in the series, which is characteristic of classification in the offices of all the institutes. Had it figured as the 25th Grade—with a more



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reasonable arrangement throughout—we should have had the speaking eloquence of an interesting and logical series, and a crown of all at the summit, like a glory to God in the Highest.

The other Degrees are those of *Grand Pontiff* and of *Knight of the East and West*, both of them apocalyptic in character, but one of them only is an actual Grade of chivalry. I must separate its root-matter to some extent from the manner of its expression. In respect of the first, it carries the title of greatness, but in the other it has not come into its own. Its symbolism is that of the powers of the height and the powers of the deep waging the æonian war, over which the advent of the Word will utter at the end of all that mystic *Peace, be still*, which is the formula of the Grades of Peace. By the hypothesis of spiritual chivalry, the war in question was the struggle of the *Militia Crucifera Evangelica* against the hordes of Saracenic misbelief, which in the dreams of the Crusaders was to end in the Peace of Christ and a Holy King of Jerusalem reigning over Palestine. In this sense the Ritual memorises that which they had hoped to do but had not fulfilled on earth. Its unknown maker has, in some respects, caught the spirit of the aspiration, and aims at presenting its supernal apotheosis in the higher world of symbolism. This is signified by the opening of the Book with Seven Seals and the sounding of the Seven Trumpets. The perfect fulfilment stands over till He shall come, to Whom

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it is said in the antiphon : *Veni ad liberandum nos, jam noli tardare.* I should add that an enemy of the Grade, and of Masonry in general, has affirmed that an instruction in the Ritual speaks of a bond between the Johannite Knights of the East, true disciples of St. John, and the Knights of the West, or Templars. It would be interesting if this happened to be true, but I have not found a trace of it in any extant codex.

The *Grade of Rose-Croix* is placed between that of the dual chivalry with which I have been dealing and that of *Grand Pontiff*—another Apocalyptic Mystery and Mystery of the Heavenly Jerusalem. The Candidate is in search of the road which leads to the most blessed Zion, the Zion that is above. It is a new aspect of the Great Quest of all, the exploration of the noble soul into the deep secret of faith.





V

THE MASONIC ORDER OF THE TEMPLE

WE have seen in the earlier sections that the Templar revival in Masonry followed three lines of imputed transmission, one of them reaching its development in the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE, and another through the so-called Charter of Larmenius. The STRICT OBSERVANCE survives to this day in the *Beneficent Knighthood of the Holy City of Jerusalem*, and its rival or alternative has dissolved so far at least as external knowledge is concerned. Independently of both there is that which is known to us in Great Britain as the *Military and Religious Order of the Temple*. Two testimonies therefore remain, and the third of them has been taken out of the way ; there is practically no knowledge of the one on the part of the other, while both are included in my logical scheme of Ritual legitimacy in Masonry. The succession of Grades in the sequence has throughout only a symbolical inter-relation, and each of

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them at need can stand alone, apparently complete in itself. In this respect they differ from the Craft Grades, which are obviously an unfinished experiment. So also the *Royal Arch* presupposes much that went before, and leaves everything open after. The Grades of St. Andrew offer a completion after their own manner, and there is no inevitable need for any sequel. The *Grade of Rose-Croix* is, in the external sense of symbolism, symbolically perfect within its proper lines, for therein is recited the great story of Divine Death and Resurrection in such a manner that it has become part and parcel of the Candidate's own history, shewing that, in its proper understanding, the whole pageant of Freemasonry, its Temple, the fall thereof, and all the long story of loss and ravage have been enacted within himself. If he has once taken into his heart the lesson which lies behind the luminous veils of the Ritual, one might say that he has no need to go further ; he has only to make his life the application of the great instruction. At the same time, the Scottish Master has assuredly great things to learn from the implied Mysteries of the 18th Degree, while he who has been advanced in the latter will have graduated in a more perfect symbolism if he is in possession of the *Écossais* Degrees. The *Military and Religious Order of the Masonic Temple* stands next in my list ; it is entered in England from the Chapter of the *Royal Arch*, and because of the essential relation of certain verbal formulæ

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communicated in each, the Candidate takes a right and truly symbolical step in passing from the one to the other, while that which is offered him by the *Order of the Temple* is again complete in its own kind, and yet again he would do better to possess the intermediates as they are found in my schedule.

We have now to look at the claims implied in the Grade of Knight Templar, considered in itself and in the connections which I have instituted. And the first question which will arise is the consanguinity of the Order with the concerns of Masonry, because it so happens that this has been denied. There was indeed a time when it was communicated in England to persons who were not Masons.

Now, the epistle which was addressed by St. Bernard to the first Templars was entitled by himself, or was at least called by his editors, *The Book concerning the Praise of the Nova Militia*, understanding this last term as the description of a cross-bearing sodality, which—whether in peace or war—dwelt under a banner of spiritual chivalry; but this banner was the Gospel of Christ. The Templars—like the crusaders at large—were again a *Militia crucifera Evangelica*, and the Holy House which was built of old in wisdom by Solomon is presented in the discourse as an external sign of that Mystical Temple and more Holy House of Grace to which the Order was dedicated at its foundation. The

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Temple prototype was therefore like that of Masonry ; it was erected above all in the heart. This is the first answer to those who say that the Masonic correspondences of the particular chivalric Order are obviously of an artificial kind. They are, on the contrary, a true analogy *ab origine symboli*, and the authority in respect of the Temple is its first instructor, one also who was present at that council which framed the Rule of the Order. The connection is to this extent integral, but we must remember that it does not justify in itself any single claim respecting a chivalrous pedigree of Masonry. Furthermore, it offers no presumption about the perpetuation of the Temple to modern times. It may be thought that it is my intention to deal with this embedded and inscrutable question. I can say, however, but one word, because it is obviously too long and extrinsic a research to be undertaken as a side-issue in a consideration which is practically confined to the study of symbolism. The descent of the existing *Military and Religious Order of the Temple and Holy Sepulchre* from the great chivalry of old is in a much more difficult position than general Masonic knowledge has suffered to appear, for there are—as we have seen—three lines of transmission which seem to be exclusive of one another. According to the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE, the last recognised Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, created on the eve of his sacrifice four Metropolitan

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Lodges—at Naples for the East, Edinburgh for the West, Stockholm for the North, and Paris for the South. This claim is so far purely Masonic that it exists to shew how the traditional centres subsisted in secrecy under the veil of Masonry till the upheaval, which culminated finally in the French Revolution, began to throw up things from the deeps, not only to the surface but the height, and caused that which had been whispered in the vaults to be proclaimed on the housetops, more especially from the roofs of palaces. Now the Masonic and Templar Grade, which is the outcome of this tradition or invention, has no historical consanguinity whatever with the *Masonic Order of the Temple* as this is known in Great Britain and America at the present day. It is represented by its final transformation at the Convention of Wilhelmsbad into the *Knights Beneficent of the Holy City of Jerusalem*. As regards our own Military and Religious Order, notwithstanding every effort to investigate its past history, the latter remains obscure. In respect of that body which depends from the Larmenius claim, destructive criticism affirms that the charter is a forgery of the eighteenth century, just as it characterises the claim of the STRICT OBSERVANCE as one of wilful invention. The positions of the two Masonic Grades which remain as testimonies are rather curious in this connection ; on the one hand, the *Knights Beneficent* have abandoned the Templar claim, and their Rituals as they stand

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are a little illogical in consequence as Templar memorials. On the other hand, the *Military and Religious Order* suppresses all account of its origin.

Between the two, I hold only to a certain truistic possibility in respect of the Original Templars. It is obvious that Orders may cease, and they do by the acts of Nature when, losing the principle of life, they fall into desuetude, or by the acts of violence which are against Nature, as in their sudden proscription. But in the latter case it may be held, I think, reasonably that they are not annihilated, that suppression means effacement so far as public knowledge and ostensible existence are concerned, but it does not mean extinction. In particular, if the Templars preserved, let us say, a secret knowledge—which is one hypothesis concerning them—ideas do not perish. If that knowledge on this assumption is not now with us, it is perhaps because we have failed to seek it in the right place. There are many mysteries of chivalry, and after more than a century, during which we have engarnered various materials, we have constructed no evidential theory as to that which lies behind it. We can discern, however, that in literature, in symbolism, and by various suggestions which manifest there and here, something perhaps remains *perdu* in the deeps which cast up the rough feudal knighthood as the veil of a hidden project. I do not know that, as such, it is more than part and parcel of that strange growth of secret life which characterised

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the Middle Ages. I am not prepared to believe that it was more than a project devised in the cause of civilisation for the encouragement of daily sanctity, the moving spirit in which was the Church, as we should expect it to be. I am entirely certain that some attempts to read the mysteries of common heresy into those of chivalry are as worthless as the heresies themselves. But as the Church does not, in the practical or declared part of her consciousness, cover all fields of sanctity, it happens that there is a Secret Doctrine which cannot be called hers, and yet has neither consanguinity nor connection with the protesting hierarchies. I should be the last to affirm that the Templars had any part therein, but in separation from such doctrine they can appeal to us only through our reverence towards an old ideal, the office of which has long since been voided, and their imputed connection with Masonry would seem only to signify a *mariage de convenance* with the unregenerated building guild, which is nothing to our own purpose.

On the other hand, if it were possible to suppose that there was a point of junction between Templary and the Secret Tradition, we might set aside the transmission hypothesis as a dream or a subterfuge, and yet the connection of Masonry with that chivalry of old would subsist in the common root of both. It is idle, however, to pursue a question which in the present and possibly the permanent state of our knowledge can

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belong only to fantasy. I am appealing simply to the right of suspended judgment on a point of bare possibility, and at this the matter must rest.

But out of these introductory words there rises my proper thesis—that the *Military and Religious Order of the Temple*, as it is extant among us, has Masonic consanguinities on the symbolic side which are apart from all questions of derivation in the historical sense. I do not refer to the objective symbols of the Order, for I should then have to speak of their affinities with the Hallows of the Holy Graal, and it would be, in the main, a destructive criticism. Such analogies are artificial and do not tend in the scholarship to suggest that the Graal literature came out of Templar Preceptories, or that Templarism derived in some obscure manner from the concealed things that we can recognise at the back of that literature. We shall see very shortly in what manner the Holy Order of the New and Masonic Temple connects integrally and mystically with the Holy Order and Hidden Church of the Graal, but it is so far only as both are united by the mystery-in-chief of the Christian and Catholic Faith. In the meantime an excursus for the present purpose into the realm of Templar symbolism involves a wider expression of that particular term, and the conditions of the subject begin in Craft symbolism. It should be understood, in the first place, that the design of all Ritual is of the sacramental

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kind ; its words and its actions are meant to convey something more than appears on the mere surface, and to justify the existence of ritual its inward meaning must be commensurate to the machinery that is involved. We do not go so far from the normal course of life to hear platitudes and moralities, as I have more than once intimated, so that if these appear in the literal aspect we either find that there are considerations more important abiding beneath their veils or we have passed under the obedience of folly. This being granted, as something which is matter of necessity, we can go one step further and affirm that nothing deserves to be put forward, calls for presentation, or requires the medium which we are considering, so much as the experience of the soul in the search for and attainment of the hidden treasures. It deserves—because this is the highest subject ; it calls—because if ritual is a proper mode for its expression, the urgency demands its use ; and in fine the propriety of the medium resides in the fact that ritual is a means of realisation which brings what is abstract and apart from general experience into an appreciable and concrete form. If it be asked, in such case, why the true meaning is invariably imbedded, so that it is missed altogether by the majority of simple minds, the answer is—(1) That the great things of the soul are of necessity clouded by the process which renders them visible ; (2) that the deeper the side of the mystery, the more thick is the veiling ; and

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(3) that in certain phases the science of the soul has never entered into full external expression in language. The rites of official religion offer an extreme case in point. The Sacrifice, for example, of the Mass is the greatest ritual of the whole wide world, but so profoundly is its true meaning laid to rest beneath the literal surface that amidst the concourse of worshippers there are, I am afraid, very few who can be said to discern, much less to realise inwardly, what is involved therein. Fortunately, the Sacrifice is so great and so holy, that it has the life of salvation on the external side, and therein at least the wayfaring man has no need to err.

I am addressing a mixed audience, but as it is not a class of children, they will understand the bare statement, if they do not indeed agree, that our initiations, passings, raisings, exaltings, installations and enthronements of the ceremonial kind, are steps of progress by which, *ex hypothesi* and symbolically, the mind of the recipient enters into illumination. From the beginning even to the end he is assumed to be desiring the light, and, speaking intellectually, it is claimed that he receives it in stages. That which is offered to him mystically in the Craft Grades and in the *Holy Royal Arch* is the material by which he can realise—if he be properly prepared—the higher side of the dispensation under the reign of law in Israel; but in the Order of the Temple and some other Grades of Chivalry, that which is offered him is

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the means of realising the higher side of the Eternal Law of Grace, which is in Christ. The Temple represents our passage from one dispensation to another, without intermediaries, though we know that these exist ; and it follows from this view—as I should explain next—that the Masonic qualification for the Postulant is of the root-matter of the symbolism instead of an accident or arbitrary rule in procedure. Those who were responsible for the ordination in old days may not have known what they were doing, and if so they were guided by the providence which shapes our course in the Instituted Mysteries. It will, I think, also be clear that as Candidates for Temple-reception belong already to the New Dispensation, and give expression to a firm faith therein at an early stage of the proceedings, so the Rite which they enter must, by the assumption concerning it, be presented under its symbolism as a deeper knowledge—I mean, of the spiritual kind. It does not follow that this is communicated, but without it the Rite is folly. If we can find the intimations concerning it beneath the Ritual, we must be content at need with the fact, even though we have no means of ascertaining how they came therein.

Now, we are aware that the Postulant in the Craft Grades enters a realm of double meaning which is designed to shew that behind the official House of Doctrine, symbolised on the external side in the manner that is known to Masons, there was a mystery of wisdom and sanctity which is

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represented as lost by a revolt in the camp of initiation itself. With the Master Builder perished that which, on my own warrants, I have expressed as the Word of Life and the original plans for a supposed externalisation of doctrine in the world. The first essential, however, is to realise that this did not happen in external fact, as if the Craft Legend were history written under a suggestive veil. It is a way of expressing the existence of a Secret Tradition, and that it is to be sought—among other places—in the records of Jewry. It is impermissible to put this more plainly, but in other terminology it is as if the path of spiritual experience had been replaced by a path of symbolism : a speaking likeness was substituted for the real and living image. It is also as if man had been made after the pattern of a lesser angel, instead of that of the Elohim. This is an intimation concerning what is veiled by the Secret Tradition in respect of experience. The quest proposed in Masonry is one of recovery, and the implicit hereof is that recovery is possible, or a certain method of ending the day of labour, by the ceremonial act of closing, would be only an insensate pretence, instead of—as it is—perhaps the most sublime indication of the inner meaning within external doctrine that has ever been expressed in language. In a word, therefore, the Craft Legend and its appurtenances in the Ritual proclaim that behind the external doctrine of Jewry there is a withdrawn meaning which con-

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stitutes the life of the doctrine, and its absence from the simple surface is symbolised by the subterfuge of a lost verbal secret. It is for this reason that the whole mystery is one of death and sorrow ; but it terminates with a profound indication of hope to be realised hereafter, of the restoration that is to come ; and this is embodied dramatically in the personal experience which befalls the Candidate, whose part in the allegorical picture indicates that the secret has not died, nor is that dead for which, in a sense, he is substituted. It should be understood, further, that this experience does not consist in the personation of an individual, but of a law in the manifestation of doctrine. Those who composed this particular Craft Grade, and the Legend contained therein, knew indubitably that there was a Secret Doctrine in Israel, though I do not affirm how far they had penetrated the abyss within that doctrine. It was possibly so far that I should desire to learn of them, could they stand beside me as I write, and for two reasons : (1) That I might the better instruct my brethren, but (2) that they in their turn might be willing to learn of me.

At the next stage of his progress the Candidate, in his passage through the *Royal Arch*, is confronted by a much more involved form of symbolism, and we have found that several thoughtful students have been tempted to depreciate this Masonic Order almost as a spurious pretence, because they have not understood that which it really en-

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forces. They know that it claims to repair the loss which was consequent on the catastrophe recited in the Craft Legend, but they misinterpret the message of the veiling. This, by the nature of the case, had to be maintained here as there, so that the Grade communicates—as we have seen—nothing that is strange or unknown, but, on the contrary, something that is of open appeal and universal in respect of its nature. The device is really a work of wisdom, the intention being to exhibit that the inmost secret of all this symbolical building is neither diagram nor formula, and that those who in this direction look for an explanation of the mystery are on the wrong track. It is an instruction in darker terms that behind the literal sense of the old Scriptures there lies a holy mystery of interior religion, and that those who can reach it will pass through experiences in the soul, receiving the living truth of doctrine in place of the forms thereof.

This is how the Candidate is left by the Craft Degrees and by that which is held to be their supplement and is sometimes put forward as their completion. It is in no sense all that we desire ; but at least for the present purpose we must needs be content with what we have, and though it has been tinkered out of all true knowledge by excessive editing, the *Royal Arch* really serves a purpose. For Masons in England, who know and can know little of the next steps in the true

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sequence of Grades, it assumes further importance when the Candidate proceeds thence to the experience of a Masonic Knight Templar.

In this Order *Sapientia sapienti dono data est*, but with the gift which he thus receives he is no less already familiar than with the increment which was imparted to him previously in the *Royal Arch* itself. In neither case could any Candidate of the least common intelligence regard such a communication as less than an affront offered to his understanding unless he suspected that there was some concealed reason. Perhaps in most instances the problem never proceeds beyond this dubious and tacit stage, and—because of time or circumstances—not even the shadow of a solution is suggested by reflection to himself. But it is useful at the moment to register that in a familiar mode of expression he does reach the conclusion that there is something embedded within it. There is, however, so very little leading ready to his hand in matters of this kind, that he must be forgiven for lying supine in an atmosphere of faint speculation.

As regards the gift itself, I can say only that it is contained in a mystical formula, and for this reason is rigorously analogous to the things which have been communicated to him previously. But there is also a variation representing in the mind of the Grade a defined and vital stage of progress. The Candidate has passed from the yoke of Israel to the light and easy burden of Christ. The law,

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in the *promus* of formularies, has therefore suffered transmutation, and as the change does not affect the root-matter of the symbolism, the same inference concerning it will obtain as in the previous cases. The formula in the Order of Chivalry is like that in the Craft Grade—it is the intimation of a secret and more spiritual meaning behind the surface sense of religious doctrine in Christendom. The Postulant for an entirely spiritual Knighthood receives the sacred gifts of substituted knowledge in the wonderful symbolical manner with which initiates are familiar, but as if to impress on him beforehand the fact that it is only a veil and an outward sign, the lection read in the Preceptory tells him that there is another gift in formula which is unknown to the whole world—he who receives it excepted. It is in virtue of this distinction that the soul has the root-matter of immortality, and that those who have been born again enter into that spiritual marriage with Christ which, in respect of each soul, is a singular and jealous union, apart from all others.

But, the great inattention and distraction of our period notwithstanding, the modern Knight Templar, if fully prepared, may be led to infer that there is a much more obvious and even a material, visible manner in which the Secret Doctrine, or inner side of Christianity, is set forth by the pageant of the Temple Rite. To present this shortly, we must now look at its procedure for a moment in a synthetic manner.

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It should be remembered that the Postulant has brought out of the degrees of Craft Masonry a similitude implying an assurance that the doctrinal sanctuary of Israel was intended to set forth the Mysteries of the Old Covenant in the plenary sense ; but the law of their manifestation, symbolised as a great artificer, was outraged in a rebellion ; a great wreckage followed ; and thereafter the elect of the official mysteries, signified by a chosen people, were taught only in a substituted House of Doctrine. The Zoharic form of this teaching says that when Moses went up the Sacred Mountain, the burden of the Fall was removed for a moment from his people, who would have been reinstated in the law of Paradise, but they went into rebellion at his absence and so reassumed the burden. They were put, therefore, to school under what I have termed a substituted law, represented by the Second Tables and otherwise symbolised from my standpoint by an external Temple in Masonry. This was a Sacred House ; it was before all things a true House ; but the deeper truths which were obscurely shadowed forth thereby were preserved in the heart of the few, as if within or behind the *Sanctum Sanctorum* itself. This was the inner and higher law. The succession of those few is symbolised in Masonry by the Grand Masters of the several symbolical Lodges. There are other Grades outside official Masonry which cannot be described here, in which

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the destruction of this House is shewn, so that the symbolism is much more complete, indicating that there was a second and inferior substitution, as the Word of Life became more and more concealed by the letter thereof. However, we must dispense, perforce, with this, and observe that on his entrance into the Preceptory the Candidate makes profession of the formula that he receives in another Masonic Grade, and concerning this there is extant a literature—outside the Craft and outside the High Degrees—which awaits his convenience to assure him that he carries a dismembered symbol. It is accepted, however, in the Temple, but to commemorate this fundamental fact he communicates immediately after in the shadow of the Eucharist, receiving substitutes for the *panis vivus* and the *vinum vitale*. On the administration of these he defines his official position in respect of faith and testifies—as we have seen—that he is already a Christian. As his refreshment stands, however—in respect of that supersubstantial bread which is the true Eucharist—it is the natural Graal in place of the Graal that is arch-natural, and it is the same with his status, *ex hypothesi*, regarding the New and Eternal Covenant. But he is about—also *ex hypothesi*—to enter—as again we have expected to see—into a new knowledge concerning it, though it is communicated only in symbols. He is put at once upon the quest during years of parable, years of search and

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preparation. He is supposed to come forth alive, and it is thanks therefore to God, for he has so far proved himself. But there is a place of undeclared mystery in the centre of the Temple which is guarded against his approach.

The Postulant is now sworn upon holy tidings—by which I mean upon an open book containing messages of life. It is open—that is to say, it is unsealed, as if he were about to learn its more inward meaning. Yet for a palladium during his novitiate he is told only that he is on a spiritual quest, like that of the Graal, and though he carries earthly arms he is not preparing for any earthly knighthood. It is the pilgrimage of life in Christ; it is the strife towards perfection, during which he covenants to maintain the holy and supernatural faith, that, being a part of the things which are above, it may come in fine into its inheritance by his efforts in the Kingdom of this world. In such sense, and with reference to such a conclusion, it was said of old that two should be as one, and that which is without as that which is within. The covenant signifies that beneath the external forms of doctrine a man enters into its deeper meaning, yet, so doing, in no sense departs therefrom. After this experience the Postulant is shewn the symbol of mystical death, which is also the symbol of life, with the sign of his own mortality and the sign that there is life beyond. It remains that he should look for the graces

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which are found by those who are fitted in a penitential season, and thus he completes his term as a Novice of the High Order. But the palladium even now has not declared its mystery. His experiences and his several sojournings typify the spiritual meaning of the three counsels of perfection—poverty and denudation in quest, restraint and self-denial in battle with the enemies who are without, humility and obedience in the ascetic life. In such manner is he prepared for the chivalry which is not of this world.

It is only at a later stage that he is instructed to regard the Knighthood which is conferred upon him as a grade of holy priesthood, and the place in which it is received as itself a spiritual house. He is also about this time given another nourishment in ceremonial form, to complete the symbol of the Eucharist manifested in the *Order of the Temple*, and, as I think—though I do not press this interpretation as an essential part of the mystery—to indicate that the secret of overflowing grace behind official doctrine is a deeper Eucharistic Mystery. It should be noted at least that he partakes in successive commemoration of the perpetuity of the Secret Tradition and of the channels through which it has passed.

Hereof, and presented, of course, under the veil of the higher understanding, is the Ritual of a Sainly Order, and hereof also is the deeper side of its symbolism—a part, as it seems to me,

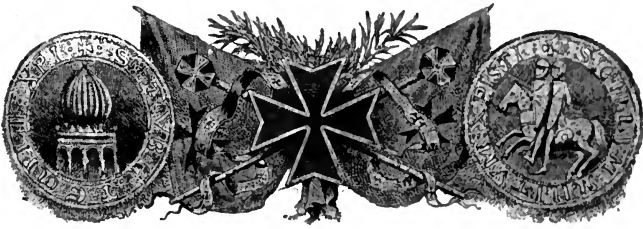
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of the great testimony that behind the two covenants which are comprised in our faith there has been always a hidden wisdom—a Secret Tradition—which informs and completes them—and of this we have other evidence all through literature and history. I have left over on purpose the last lesson of all, which is of all most pregnant and, as I have indicated, is yet most obvious. In a Rite which symbolises so much, what is meant by that Palladium of faith which is present always but explained never, which the chivalry guards so faithfully, but guards only? It cannot be a mere memory of what once took place in Palestine at the period of the Crusades, and I think that he who has an ear to hear among the initiated brethren will hearken what the Spirit says unto the Preceptories in this emblem of the Holy Sepulchre, for I disclose nothing in explaining that it is this on the external side. It reminds the few who are informed that the Captain of our salvation is the mystic Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, that till we realise what is signified therein we cannot enter into the true spirit of the Christian Mystery, and hence that the House of Doctrine is empty of its greater significance. So long as we abide in the letter we cannot be priests of the truth. But the tradition exists; the way is not closed thereto; and the cohort of this spiritual chivalry—if only it could understand and realise—if only it will in fine consent to realise,

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stooping from the pageants of this world to think and understand in the heart—is called to it in an especial manner. Otherwise, the Rite is a solemn mockery. I believe that, in the stillness of the mind, from all the Grades and Degrees which deserve to be taken seriously, there sounds a tocsin call, that in obedience thereto we may become not only a peculiar people, a holy priesthood, but that we shall take also our place in the seats of the installed masters who have truly passed the chair.

In respect of its origin, we must, I think, be content to leave the *Military and Religious Order of the Temple* in the obscurity which involves the subject. Albert Pike affirmed that it was originally the *Kadosh* Grade of the RITE OF PERFECTION, which, it will be understood, is the COUNCIL OF EMPERORS. He supposes that it was taken over and worked in these islands by the Masonic school of which Laurence Dermott and Thomas Dunckerley were the exponents and the moving spirits; but it was altered subsequently to conceal the source from which it came. The hypothesis is without foundation, and the suggested evolution is about as likely or possible as the development of *Paradise Lost* out of the *Divina Commedia*. As High Grades go, the Temple is old in this country, and, though it is difficult to have a decisive opinion under all the circumstances, my feeling is that it is not of continental origin, and, for whatever this view is worth, thus the matter must remain.



VI

THE CHARTER OF LARMENIUS

WE have now to recur once and for all to that ORDER OF THE TEMPLE which depends from the Charter of Larmenius, and it should be stated in the first place that the earliest Grand Master in evidence, *circa* 1805, was Dr. Bernard Raymond Fabr -Palaprat, who was an active Mason of his period, a deputy to the Grand Orient of France and one of the founders of a Lodge called *Chevaliers de la Croix*. We see, therefore, in what direction his interests had lain and in what school he had been formed, so far as Rites and Orders are concerned. There is thus, on the surface at least, a certain air of probability in the statement made by Clavel that the Grades conferred by the Order were originally : (1) *Apprentice*, (2) *Companion*, (3) *Master*, (4) *Master of the East*, (5) *Master of the Black Eagle of St. John*, and (6) *Perfect Master of the Pelican*. The hypothesis, however, goes on to state that on 30th April, 1808, in virtue of a special

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decree, there was a revision of names to conceal the Masonic origin, as follows: (1) *Initiate*, (2) *Initiate of the Interior*, (3) *Adept*, (4) *Adept of the East*, (5) *Grand Adept of the Black Eagle of St. John*. These constituted together a *House of Initiation*, and the last two corresponded to *Elect of Fifteen* and *Elect of Nine*, a reversal of the proper sequence. There followed a *House of Postulance*, apparently in preparation for the particular chivalry of the Temple, and herein was conferred (6) the Grade of *Postulant of the Order*, or *Perfect Adept of the Pelican*, which is identified with the Degree of *Rose-Croix*. The third House was denominated a *Convent*, and it conferred two grades not included in the previous classification: (7) *Novice* and (8) *Knight or Levite of the Inner Guard*, being really a single Degree in two divisions and the counterpart of the *Philosophical Kadosh*.

I question whether the comparison thus instituted will survive examination, but in the year 1825, being more than a decade prior to the work of Clavel, a certain Chevalier Guyot, apparently acting by authority, issued a *Manuel des Chevaliers de l'Ordre du Temple*, in which the Statutes at large are contained, and at this period the Degrees were (1) *Simple Initiates*, (2) *Intimate Initiates*, (3) *Simple Adepts*, (4) *Oriental Adepts*, (5) *Adepts—Brethren of the Grand Black Eagle of St. John the Apostle*. It will be seen that these are substantially identical with the second classification of Clavel. The Statutes speak also of *Postulants*, *Squire Novices* and

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Knights, but whether as alternative titles for some of the above or as additional Degrees, is not clear from the text. It does not follow of necessity that any of them were Masonic in character, and at the period under notice ladies were admitted into the Order as Canonesses, Sisters, etc.

The Legend of the Temple, drawn from the Charter of Larmenius, affirms that before his execution the last Grand Master, Molay, nominated Larmenius as his successor. The latter framed the document, affixed his signature thereto, which was followed by that of every later Grand Master. Larmenius further (1) excommunicated the Scottish Templars as deserters and apostates, and (2) declared that the Knights of St. John were despoilers, placed henceforth and for ever outside the pale of the Temple. It is on the assumption regarding the fraudulent character of the Charter that I have referred to the first utterance as a veiled attack on the claim of the STRICT OBSERVANCE. The second reflects the animus against the ORDER OF MALTA, which characterised Masonic Grades like *Prince of the Royal Secret*.

The association—or whatever it should be termed—was militantly Latin at the beginning, though a Mason stood at its head, and were it not for its later history I suppose that it could never have escaped the charge of originating in the *Ars vera Jesuitica*. Members, and the Grand Master in particular, were required to be of the Catholic Apostolic and Roman Faith, and seeing

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that the Charter testified to nothing but the alleged fact of Templar perpetuation, there was obviously no course but to recur as far as possible to the original rule of chivalry. There arose in this manner the Postulant's pledge of obedience by which he was bound in respect of obedience itself, besides poverty and chastity. This was in addition to the ordinary knightly undertakings concerning fraternity, hospitality and military service. It is obvious, however, that the rule was interpreted in accordance with a lax observance. There is no record that the headship interpreted the law of obedience otherwise than in respect of the Order and its legitimate concerns ; there is no record that they laid claim to the material possessions of members, the poverty clause notwithstanding ; and, finally, in respect of chastity, this undertaking was interpreted, as it could and should only be, with all honour to the purity and high sanctity of sacramental marriage, by the proper observation of which the law of chastity is raised on the practical side to a counsel of perfection. Setting apart these higher matters, I presume that there was also what I have called a lax observance regarding some other points in the Statutes. As a sequel to their reception, the Knights were enjoined (*a*) to visit the Holy Land and (*b*) the place of Molay's immolation. The latter of course was, so to speak, at their doors, but the longer pilgrimage was protected by the saving clause "so far as may be possible" ; there

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was consequently no insistence, and it was probably never performed. A nominal qualification of reception was also the possession of *quatre degrés de noblesse*, but (a) the Grand Master could confer the Order *ex auctoritate magistrali*; and as time went on (b) the term nobility was taken to signify good education and honourable employment of any kind, but preferably a liberal profession.

We know very little concerning the early history. It has been suggested that the Temple was really inaugurated within the fold of that Lodge of *Chevaliers de la Croix* which I have mentioned, but the authority is doubtful. It is significant, however, that the Lodge was founded in 1805, and it may have had such an ulterior purpose in view. Five years later there was, on paper at least, a marked activity, and the three continents of the old world were mapped out; being placed under the charge of Lieutenants-General—resident probably at Paris, as *in partibus infidelium*. The *procès-verbal* of this period is a grandiloquent document. In 1812 it was affirmed that Houses of the Order had been established at Paris, Hamburg, Troyes, Nantes, Basle, Rome, Naples, Lisbon and even New York—where the doctrine that chivalry presupposes nobility must have been read under a curious light.

At this period the institution is described as the *United Orders of the East and the Temple*. The Oriental Order was and remained in the world of the archetype; it was more especially a reference

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to the legend of origin, which origin was located in Ancient Egypt; and one of the florid discourses delivered by the Grand Master speaks of sages of the East, pontiffs of religion, etc. In this manner we approach that crisis in the confraternity which is perhaps the most interesting part of its history.

Dr. Fabr -Palaprat, for his better satisfaction—had married Masonry to Catholicism, and—transmission, revival, invention, whatever our choice may call it—we have seen that a similar marriage had been celebrated by him and his co-adjutors in respect of the Temple, or alternatively it was a daughter of the previous spiritual espousals. There passed, however, into his possession a codex in manuscript of the *Levitikon*, a contaminated version of the Fourth Gospel, with a species of commentary, attributed to the Greek monk Nicepheros of the thirteenth century, who is supposed to have had Sufic connections. On this basis the Grand Master decided to subject his Order to yet one other transformation, from which it issued as a kind of Johannite sectarian church. Here again the lead had been given him by more than one manufactured legend of the High Grades. With the aid of his document, which was subsequently published—as it is affirmed—with interpolations of his own, he produced a story which may be digested under the following heads: (1) That the Son of God—meaning Jesus of Nazareth—was brought up at the school of

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Alexandria ; (2) that he conferred initiation on his apostles and disciples, dividing them into several orders and placing them under the general authority of St. John, who became in this manner the Sovereign Pontiff of Christendom ; (3) that St. John never quitted the East ; (4) that his doctrine was preserved in its purity, and that his successors thus maintained the mystic and hierarchic initiation of Egypt, as transmitted by Christ, until the year 1118 ; (5) that at this time their knowledge was communicated to Hugo de Payens, the first Master of the Temple, who was invested with apostolic and patriarchal power, becoming a lawful successor of St. John ; (6) that in such manner the Temple was united *ab origine* with primitive and Johannite Christianity.

Such is the historical claim, and among the doctrines which it was sought to authorise after this fashion I will only mention the following: (1) a Divine Trinity of a certain kind was acknowledged, and it is unnecessary to enumerate the points of divergence from orthodox teaching, for they are illustrated by the next article, namely, (2) that God is the soul of Nature, and its elements are co-eternal with Him ; (3) in respect of the manifest world, He created only the modes of existence of bodies ; (4) the animating principle of all beings returns at death into the immensity of God ; (5) the soul, however, is immortal, which means, I suppose, the continuation of personal consciousness, and it is rewarded or punished in the other

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life according to its deserts in this one ; but in what sense a state of punishment can be postulated within the *abyssus Deitatis* I leave to those who are concerned with these and kindred follies and enormities of thought ; (6) the spirit of Jesus Christ is communicated in bread and wine, which—by the hypothesis—being so, a deeper state of thought in the dispensers of this illumination might have suggested a form of apostolical succession and a root in Secret Doctrine which would have placed the ORDER OF THE TEMPLE on a very different plane ; (7) Christ communicated three sacraments—Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist—the remaining four, which are recognised, being of apostolic institution ; (8) the resurrection is a matter of tradition.

Such in the thesis was primitive Christianity—another of those budgets of pure and undefiled doctrine from which we may pray to be delivered. This also was the old Templar religion, containing within itself a claim of priesthood which the Templars never put forward. On the strength of it the Grand Master of the nineteenth century not unnaturally discovered that a supreme pontificate was inherent in his chair of office, and when the Statutes of the *Fellow-Soldiers of the Order of the Temple* came to be published in 1825, they included some part of a *Ritual of the Enthronement of a Grand Master*, who, after consecration, was endowed with the apostolic power of binding and loosing in respect of sins.

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The promulgation of these claims was followed by a period of secession and internecine struggle, including the appointment of a Grand Master to replace Fabr -Palaprat, who, however, refused to resign, and he was subsequently restored to power. In 1825 the *Levitikon* was relegated to the archives as an historical monument belonging to the First Temple. In 1839 a decree of the Convent General describes the order as tolerant at that period in respect of its religious opinions, though it was imprescriptible that the Grand Master should be of the Catholic and Roman faith. It claimed independence of every other association, and therefore, by implication, of Freemasonry. Dr. Fabr -Palaprat had died in the year previous, and our English Admiral, Sir William Sydney Smith, was Regent of the Order and Grand Master Designate. He had held previously the titular office of Lieutenant - General of Asia. The Duke of Sussex was also a member, and altogether it is suggested by an English writer of the period that the chivalrous Roll of the Order contained about three hundred names scattered through various countries—a very small incorporation, having regard to the princely provisions of its statutes. In probability, moreover, it was a subscription membership, inoperative for the most part by reason of distance. The Johannite church, which was once opened in Paris, perished through the dearth of finances, and the institution itself was moribund, if not already extinct, before 1850.

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The *Tyler* so-called of its Knightly Grade was published by J. M. Ragon in 1860; the Order had therefore its signs, passwords and batteries, like all the Rites of Masonry; it came out of the bosom of Masonry, and it was recruited largely among members of the Brotherhood. Its distinction seems to have been that it did not exact the qualification of the Craft Grades from its Postulants.

I have depended so far on those sources of information which are available in the scattered fields of Masonic research; but certain rituals appertaining to the ORDER OF THE TEMPLE, though exceedingly difficult to obtain, have also passed through my hands. It follows from these that howsoever the debt of the Temple to Masonry was at an early stage concealed in virtue of a decree issued on 30th April, 1808, by the Grand Master Fabr -Palaprat, a natural development took place within the Order itself, and this at least owed nothing to the Craft or its extensions and dependencies. It constituted, further, a much more effectual veiling than would be possible under any circumstances by a mere change in the official titles of Grades. The information which now follows is new in Masonic literature, and it offers proof positive that our authorities in the past have spoken as usual with certitude on definite points of fact, and have erred, either because they followed a report only or the evidence of their personal persuasion. The

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foundation-matter of the question remains untouched, because the Degrees of which I am about to speak lie beyond or behind the purely chivalrous section of the Order, and the connection of this with Masonry is another question. To affirm that connection in respect, for argument's sake, of the years 1805 and 1808, omitting what took place by the evidence of official documents in 1831, which documents must have been within the reach of my precursors, since they have not been beyond mine, is not only an insufficient way of dealing with the whole subject, but one that is manifestly unjust to the ORDER OF THE TEMPLE itself

The adoption of the *Levitikon*, and the consequent attempted incorporation of a new and sectarian Christianity, led to the creation, about the period stated, of eight Grades of Levitical ordination, corresponding, speaking very broadly, since it is only a correspondence of numbers, to minor Orders, the sub-diaconate, diaconate, priestly ordination and Episcopal rank, according to the Latin Rite. It is, I suppose, to this Rite that the sequence is referable, and so far it may be said to derive from the *Pontificale Romanum*. The Grades were termed Orders, and the first group comprised *Levite of the Threshold*, *Levite of the Door within*, *Levite of the Sanctuary*, *Ceremonial Levite* or *Master of the Ceremonies*, and *Theological Levite*. The analogies in Latin Christianity are *Osteanus* or doorkeeper, *Lector*, *Exorcist*, *Acolyte*

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and *Subdeacon*. The Grades cited were conferred together, and were preceded by a catechetical instruction and profession of faith in the religion of Christ, as interpreted by the *Levitikon*.

The profession and instruction being finished, the presiding Pontiff proceeded, by the power in him vested, to constitute the lay *Chevalier* a *Levite of the Threshold*, placing a pick in his hand ; a *Levite of the Door within*, presenting him with a key ; a *Levite of the Sanctuary*, and as such he had two keys ; a *Levite of Ceremonies*, giving him the staff of his office ; and finally a *Levite Theological*, handing him the Book of the Law and investing him with a canonical gown, as also with the insignia of his Orders. The Recipient was allocated subsequently to one or other of these offices at the discretion of a Superior.

The Candidate for the next Grade, or that of *Levite-Deacon*, took no obligation, but was questioned and answered concerning the Church of Christ and its doctrine, the root of which was a confused pantheism. If not excessively involved in themselves, the definitions concerning Jesus Christ were also likely to end in confusion, so far as believers were concerned. The Christ of Nazareth was distinct from God, but this notwithstanding he was God and the Son of God—in the sense of the prophet David, who said of the Elect that they were gods and were all sons of the Most High. The Soul of Christ was a more perfect divine emanation than that of an

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ordinary man, but He was not the Son of God in the sense that He was engendered in the body of a virgin. He was, however, the Divine Word, the manifestation of the Eternal, and God in His revelation to man. The Spirit of Divinity was within Him and He was directed by this Spirit, but It did not take flesh in Him. When the Candidate had thus testified concerning the imputed teaching of St. John, the bishop placed him on his knees and he took vows of obedience to the laws of the Temple Church and to his superiors. The Episcopal hands were then imposed on his head and he was told to make himself worthy to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. He was presented with a thurible and was told to act as a servant-in-chief among the Levites of the religion of Christ. He was also vested, he kissed the pontifical ring and was proclaimed a deacon of the Church.

The eighth Grade or Order was that of *Levite and Priest*. The Candidate was brought to the Temple accompanied by two armed knights and two theological students. He demanded the grace of the priesthood and made another profession of faith, in which the doctrine concerning Jesus of Nazareth was developed somewhat further. It concerns, however, the recognition extended to the Christian Saviour by the guardians of the Secret Tradition, whose local centre appears to have been in Alexandria. By these guardians Jesus appears to have been consecrated and pro-

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claimed the Son of God, prophet-in-chief of the world and theocrat of the nations. The Rite of Ordination consisted in the imposition of hands, anointing with chrism and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, by Whose grace the Pontiff proclaimed that he who before had been Deacon was now created a Levite Priest of the Church of Christ and Doctor of the Law. He received also the power of consecrating bread and wine, which ceremony the Bishop and the new priest performed together.

In the last Grade, being that of the consecration of a Levite as Pontiff or Bishop, the priestly Candidate was brought to the chapel by two Knights, two Masters of the Ceremonies, two Deacons and two priests. He wore his sacerdotal vestments and carried the decree of his election. The profession which he made dealt more especially with the question of Apostolic succession and the recognition of the *Levitikon* as embodying the doctrine of the true and Catholic religion. The institution is exceedingly long and there is no need to describe it. The Candidate was sworn to obedience and fidelity as regards the fulfilment of his duties. When he was on his knees, with his face bent to the earth, the consecrating officer rose up and extended his arms over him. He was then raised from the ground and seated. The bishop girded himself with linen and washed the feet of the Candidate, who was afterwards caused to kneel down and the

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heretical gospel was placed on his head. He was blessed and told to carry into all places the sacred yoke of God's gospel. He was then anointed, and hands were imposed upon him, notwithstanding that the ceremony has certified in an earlier part that a bishop is not ordained. When his various insignia had been given him, a kind of mass was celebrated.

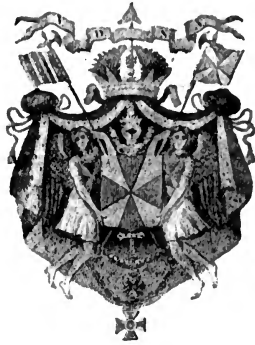
There is no point of view from which these ceremonies can be said to signify. Under the very best circumstances, they are hypothetically comparable to the Rites adopted by the Catholic Apostolic Church as the result of a very careful codification of ecclesiastical procedure in East and West. They may have the kind of interest which attaches to a sectarian form of Christianity, but this is no part of our concern. Moreover, in the particular case, they represent an obscure effort, without appeal, without a prospect from the beginning, and they have passed from the memory of man.

The Degrees, if they can be so termed, with which we have been dealing appear by the texts to have been superposed on a single Grade of Chivalry, which constituted reception into the Order; but other authoritative documents with which I am acquainted speak of two preliminary ceremonies, or alternatively of a single ceremonial which was divided into two parts, being those of Squire or Novice and Knight. There were yet other Rites, which, however, only call for

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mention. Like the Statutes General of the Order, the ritual procedure was developed on a generous scale and to meet all occasions. As in the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE, there was a separate method of reception for Servants-Hospitallers of the Order; there was a ceremony for the festival in commemoration of the most holy and glorious martyr, Jacques Molay; there was another connected with the marriage of a knight; the birth of his child was celebrated in like manner; and finally there was a service at his death. Besides these occasional observances there was a formal Eucharistic ceremony with a particular ritual after each meeting of the Chapter or *Séance Conventuelle*. The vestments and insignia of Levites were carefully elaborated, and the ecclesiastical body had nine divisions as follows: (1) Prince of the Apostles, (2) Apostolical Princes, (3) Apostolical Councillors, (4) Primate, (5) General Coadjutors, (6) Special Coadjutors, (7) Priests or Doctors of the Law, (8) Deacons and (9) Levites from the 6th to the 2nd Order. It was all very important in its accent, very reverent in the external guise, and took itself in the uttermost seriousness, but it was cloud piled upon cloud, and it dissolved speedily into its elements.





VII

THE KNIGHTS BENEFICENT OF THE HOLY CITY OF JERUSALEM

So far as the common sources of information and of reference are concerned, the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE must have appeared to the readers of Masonic literature as comparable to that Abraham Cowley who, in the words of Byron, "blazed the comet of a season." It is believed by some to have been emerging on the great horizon of Grades for something like ten years prior to its actual manifestation, but the evidence once again is only that which was proffered by Baron von Hund at a convention practically summoned to consider and decide on his titles. He had none in reality to offer beyond his bare word concerning his reception into the Temple in 1743 at a Lodge or a Preceptory the name of which he had forgotten. We have become acquainted with the difficulties which inhere in this statement, and I believe

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on my own part that the Rite was a sudden apparition with no antecedents to account for it except the Oration of Ramsay. It may be said that great schemes are not begotten in a moment, but I am speaking of the Rite in manifestation ; it would, of course, have been long maturing in the mind of its author, whether this was Hund or another.

The beginnings were in Germany, as we know, but in the space of a few years the star was at its zenith in France and also in Italy. The Unknown Superiors, a pledge of fidelity to whom in reality gave its title to the Rite, was the rock on which it broke ultimately. The course taken by von Hund is intelligible under the pressure that was exercised, but it was not the course of wisdom ; he would have done better to remember that it is of the essence of Unknown Superiors to remain unknown, and it was naturally fatal when he sought to locate them, when he went even so far as to speak of communications received from the hidden centre. The maintenance of a veil of mystery would probably at that period, and under all its circumstances, have left him with a certain benefit in respect of the doubt.

There is no question that the system was disintegrating long prior to the Convention of Wilhelmsbad, which was held in 1782, to deliberate, among other matters, on the claim of the Templar element as an element *ab origine symboli*

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in respect of Masonry. The term which it reached was designed to negative the hypothesis, or to confirm its tacit negation previously, and in this sense one would have thought that it put a period to the STRICT OBSERVANCE. As a fact, the Convention was resolved upon saving the Rite, and for this purpose it purged it, or consented to its purgation previously. I conceive that the Grades of St. Andrew carried with them an appeal which could not be overlooked by an assembly that was obviously favourable to the existence of High Grades. It might have retained these and rejected the Rituals of chivalry which arose out of them in the Rite. What it did, however, was to legitimise the whole sequence under the modifications at which I have hinted, and there emerged from the Convention the *Régime Écossais Rectifié* and the *Knights Beneficent of the Holy City of Jerusalem*—that is to say, the Grades of St. Andrew and the two chivalrous Grades of the STRICT OBSERVANCE, divested of the Templar claim but retaining a memorial concerning it as a link between that which was to survive and all that once had been.

The fact may not carry with it on the surface a testimony to the prudence of such a decision, because accommodations of the kind are confessedly dubious, and the next episode in the history has the complexion of an inevitable result. Practically from the very moment when the

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Convention terminated its labours, the Rite passes almost out of view. It will be understood that the tide of revolution swept over it, but when this subsided and Masonry began to reassume something of its pristine form, not only in respect of the Craft Grades but of the larger Rites, the emergence on the part of the RECTIFIED STRICT OBSERVANCE seems almost a negligible episode. The Directories of Burgundy and Auvergne are heard of indeed for a time; they elected Prince Cambacères, who was then Grand Master of the Grand Orient, as the Provincial Grand Master of their dual system, but I find little record of activity, while somewhere between 1823 and 1826 the system died out finally in France.

Now it will probably surprise those who are in any sense conversant with the subject if I add that the REFORMED RITE, all this notwithstanding, exists at the present day in a certain seclusion on the continent of Europe. There are covenants which prevent me from locating it, but a definite location it has, and it so happens that the two provinces I have mentioned are still those which remain out of the hypothetical nine that Von Hund had proposed to restore, following the original distribution of the Knights Templar. The centre of custody is not, however, at any point which would be suggested by either name.

Before proceeding to the subject of this section there are a few matters which arise out of the

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present preliminary remarks as a completion of the historical side.

(a) It is inferred by some Masonic writers that the Convention of Wilhelmsbad drafted the reformed Rituals, but there is some ground for preferring the alternative view that this work was really performed by or before the Convention of Lyons, which took place in 1778 under the auspices of the *Loge des Chevaliers Bienfaisants*, or *Loge de Bienfaisance*, resident in that city. I believe also that it was the appeal of the Rituals in their revised and highly spiritualised form which carried so much force with the convocation in Germany rather than the original Grades of the STRICT OBSERVANCE.

(b) As a point of some evidence that the rectification was adopted by the assembly at Wilhelmsbad and not drafted or compiled, it should be said that all the Rituals betray the hand of early Martinism, and to my mind represent a gradual development from the Martinistic centre at Lyons.

(c) This centre passed through a very curious and chequered Masonic experience, from the days when the RITE OF THE ELECT COHENS was established thereat to those later days when it confessed (a) to the influence of the mystic L. C. de Saint-Martin, and (b) to the intervention of the STRICT OBSERVANCE, itself brought about through the Masonic zeal of Willermoz.

(d) The Convention of Lyons divested the

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STRICT OBSERVANCE of the Templar element and added some other elements which were of a spiritual and moral kind: such, at least, is the statement, and I interpret it to mean that it ratified what had been effected by the Lodge already mentioned.

(e) The Convention of Wilhelmsbad had a wider programme than its precursor, and the question of the Templar element in Masonry and of that element in connection with the origin of the Craft, was by the intention only subsidiary to the general design; but it never passed beyond the specific point, and even in this respect it only reaffirmed the conclusion reached at Lyons.

(f) The Duke of Brunswick, who presided over the assembly, was a zealous defender and patron of the STRICT OBSERVANCE; I do not know that he personally approved of the changes, and his continued Masonic interest after the year 1782 does not of necessity suggest its adoption within the sphere of his influence; while the old unregenerated Directories would have naturally protested *in toto*.

(g) They perished, however, in the vortex of the Revolution, and their only resurrection in respect of the Écossais Grade is under the RÉGIME ÉCOSSAIS ANCIEN ET RECTIFIÉ and in respect of the Chivalrous Grades as *Novice* and *Knight Beneficent of the Holy City of Jerusalem*, to the consideration of which I proceed.

The two Grades, apart from their dramatic

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complexion, are characterised by a perfect union of principle, symbolic procedure and intention, so that for the purposes of this brief summary account I shall attempt no distinction between them—as if there were any separate design. They are utterly Christian in their character, and the professions of faith required of the Postulant are worded in the ordinary terminology of Christian Doctrine ; but through this embroidered veil there shines at every point the consciousness of a more exalted side, in which the formalism of doctrine dissolves and the spirit alone remains. The Order of Knights Beneficent may be therefore defined as the defenders of the Christ-religion, understood spiritually. The Candidate has come out of things external and is entering into those which are within. Again upon the surface, the inward spirit is one of Christian beneficence, and the work of the chivalry is to erect that ideal and mystic Temple which shall be the centre of holy love manifested towards God and man, but working up to the Divine more especially from its base in the practice of loving-kindness on this earth. Such a Temple is ever in the course of building, until that time shall come when the perfection of humanity in the faith which passes into knowledge, the hope which carries the seeds of its own realisation, and the love which acts on the individual through its union with the universal law, will have become realised in the plenary sense. Behind this there lies the

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old conception of all initiation concerning rebirth and resurrection into new life in the identity of the Living Spirit. I must not dwell on this point because it is of suggestion only, and the chief office of the Grades is rather to carry the moral aspects of Craft Freemasonry into a higher region by unfolding their integration in the Divine Plan.

It is in this sense also that the reintegration of man in God—by concurrence with this design—is put forward as the term of Masonry, the character of which is represented as threefold: (a) in respect of duty toward God, which is the duty of union in will; (b) in respect of self-knowledge, which is the realisation of the Divine in our nature; and (c) in respect of duty toward man, which is the realisation of the Divine in all. To such work and to such recognition the peoples of the earth are called by all the voices of the chivalry.

Hereof is one side of the instruction, and the other concerns the Secret Tradition out of which Masonry arose. There is in effect a short history of initiation in which it is easy to distinguish two elements, and useful to separate them so far that the one may not be held to stand or fall by the other. Egypt is taken as the source of Instituted Mysteries, or at least as that point beyond which there are no records to trace it. The connection of Israel with Egypt accounts for their derivation to Masonry through Solomon and the first mystic Temple. Behind this there lies, however, the

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world before the flood, and the traditions of that primal period are held to have been brought over by Noah, from whom it is doubtless intended to intimate that Egypt itself derived.

The epoch of Solomon represents a resurrection of initiation, and the Masonic story concerning the first Temple is a veil woven about it. The plan came to an end with the destruction of the Temple, and the secrets were henceforth preserved in the hearts of a few only. They descended in this manner to the Essenes and so to the time of Christ, Who restored initiation after a new manner. The Instituted Mysteries under the old Covenant are represented by the Craft Degrees, and their transfiguration under the law of Christ is represented by the High Grades. But the restoration personified in Christ did not involve new principles or derive from another root, and on this understanding Christianity has been always in the world, as St. Augustine said long ago, though it has been known under another name. The Essenes remained the depositories of the Christ-mystery in the Eastern world, and are actually that hidden sodality from which Masonry derives through the Knights Templar, not by the identification of the Chivalry with the operative builders, but through the descent of a vital principle from one to the other. The expression into which the thesis passes makes it even possible to infer that the Templars themselves were an accidental and automatic rather than an essential

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and conscious channel. At the same time there is a suggestion that they had a secret, which is substantially the mystery of chivalry, and this mystery was spiritual. I do not think that such an hypothesis carries us further than the memorable letter of St. Bernard to the *Nova Militia*, which I have already quoted. I do not, indeed, think that it is intended to carry us further ; it is rooted in the fraternal bond of the human race, and for those who were conscious of the bond, chivalry has been always in the world, like Christianity, though again not passing under the specific name.

It is obvious that in such a light the Knights Templar are reduced to a title or catchword, representing a Spirit rather than a fact in history, and it becomes possible elsewhere in the Grades for the literal Templar connection to be renounced formally. It is obvious, further, that the particulars of the mystery of perpetuation can be separated as a dream of the past from the essence of the matter at issue, when this matter emerges as a simple thesis (*a*) that there was a Secret Tradition ; (*b*) that the phase which was nearest to Masonry derives thereto from Jewry and is the tradition in Kabalism ; (*c*) that the Christian scholars of Kabalism were correct in affirming that the secret literature was a testimony to Christ ; and finally, (*d*) that the Christian Grades of Masonry, and, in particular, certain Grades passing under the guise of chivalry, complete the Craft, because they bear witness to Christ as the term of Masonic quest.



VIII

ADDITIONAL GRADES OF CHIVALRY IN THE ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE

THERE are three Grades of Chivalry which give testimony, as I have said, in the Holy House of Masonry concerning things which signify in the quest of the things that are eternal; and these three are one in respect of their motive and their term. They have been dealt with already in the sections of this book, and there is no need that I should name them. It does not follow that amidst the vast concourse of remaining testimonies no voices have been raised which deserve a hearing; if I confessed to my own feeling, there is music in many of them, and there are haunting intimations in a few of those that remain. But they would require a volume to themselves, and I must not suggest that they would repay the space which they might fill or the toil involved by their co-ordination. I could multiply sections

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easily to embody the results of a mere discriminating selection, but I am restrained by the limits of my proposal, which is to look for the traces of the Secret Tradition in directions where it may possibly lie, and to ignore those in which such a quest is idle. This and the next section are concerned with *additamenta* which, for one or another reason, must not be ignored entirely. The first, which is here and now opened, will treat briefly of the content embraced by the Grades added to the old RITE OF PERFECTION in its reconstitution as the ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE. Did the latter contain nothing which makes for our purpose, it would be difficult to overpass it because of its importance as a Rite, and on this account my synopsis will somewhat exceed the limits which, strictly speaking, are indicated by the title of the section. The second will deal with certain unclassified Grades which are of less moment on their own merits.

As regards the SCOTTISH RITE, we have seen that it superadded eight Grades to the old sequence of the COUNCIL OF EMPERORS, and it should be understood generally, in respect of the whole series, apart from the Craft Degrees, that their present form, as worked under the obedience of Supreme Councils in Great Britain and America, represents a certain reasonable and desired remodeling—the work in the one case, according to my information, being referable to an unknown hand, and in the other to that of the Sovereign Grand

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Commander, Albert Pike. I think that the latter, for the purpose of this revision, resumed the mantle of his early vocation, as the author of *Hymns to the Gods*; and I wish only that he had gone further, more especially respecting the better classification of the Grades, for these as they now stand are a permanent offence against logic.

The additions with which I am dealing came from various quarters, and a few of them must be referred to the first years of the nineteenth century, as there is no trace of them previously. The others were known in France under various obediences or as sporadic and detached Grades. In respect of all I am concerned rather with their original form, and I shall proceed to enumerate them in their accepted succession as follow.

I should recur in the first place to an indication which has been given already in brief. In constructing its particular sequence the SCOTTISH RITE has revised in a few respects the classification adopted by the old COUNCIL OF EMPERORS. The Grades of *Chief* and *Prince of the Tabernacle*, belonging, as we have seen, to the period of the First Temple and that of Israel in the wilderness, have been substituted for those of *Knight of the Sun* and *Kadosh*, which now appear as 28th and 30th respectively. The *Prince of the Royal Secret* has been moved from its place as the last and sovereign Degree of the EMPERORS and is numbered 32, its position being now occupied by the Knighthood of the *Brazen Serpent*. The

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connection of this with chivalry is another of the recurring examples of anachronism and fantasy which have already come under our notice. The Grand Master of the Lodge represents Moses, while his Ministers or Wardens personate Aaron and Joshua. I have said elsewhere in this volume that the Headship of the Sacred Lodge is not represented by any Masonic or super-Masonic Grade, and I do not conceive that the case is altered by the appearance of the Lawgiver in such a connection as is offered by the Ritual of this Degree. It is supposed to have been established by certain Crusaders after the recovery of Jerusalem; and it will be understood that some of the implicits are therefore of a Christian kind, but they are interspersed anomalously enough among the preoccupations belonging to a Grade of the Old Covenant. The Brazen Serpent, of course, signifies the healing of Israel, which is, however, commemorated with another motive, being the care of sick pilgrims in Palestine, to which office of charity the Postulant is pledged by the living bonds of brotherhood. A phase belonging to the Corporal Works of Mercy would therefore seem to represent the horizon at large of the Grade, but in a slender sense it has traces of suggestion concerning mystic death and resurrection, the healing and restoration of the soul as well as of the outward body. Because of its imputed place of foundation, the "Transparency"—or Tracing Board—of the Grade depicts the



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Burning Bush, with the Sacred *Tetragrammaton* in the centre—or the Divine Virtue encompassed by the Power and the Glory. Of such are the warrants in symbolism of that Higher Law which—once in mystic time and somewhere in the sacramental world—was drawn into expression, but was removed and not proclaimed. The universal world of humanity is awaiting it to this day.

The 26th Grade of the SCOTTISH RITE is that of *Trinitarian, or Prince of Mercy*. The experience of the Candidate is a little fantastic in character, and would, I think, be ridiculous in its original working even if the Temple had the resources of a theatre at its command. The details need not trouble us, but it so happens that behind the extrinsic questions to which I have adverted there is the anomaly of conception as a whole. A title such as Trinitarian suggests Christian doctrinal motives of an express kind, nor are such motives wanting: at the same time the Master of the Lodge—to make use of a Craft title—once more personifies Moses the Lawgiver, while the Wardens are Aaron and Eleazar, the Candidate representing Joshua, for a reason which is in no sense obvious. The intention of the Ritual, on the surface, at least, is to inculcate the importance of truth, and the symbolic statue of the Goddess occupies a prominent position in the Temple. The Candidate is sent on a triple journey through the sphere of the planets, that of the fixed stars and the Empyræan. These correspond to intel-

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ligence, conscience and reason. In the third there takes place a certain kind of unveiling, which seems to connect vaguely with a Hermetic purpose, as the instruction of the Grade is concerned with the Great Work. The result is anomalous enough, and it is only by supreme folly that it can be connected with the Mosaic period. The Christian elements tend further to confuse matters, but I may mention that three Divine covenants are recognised, constituting in their harmony a triple alliance between man and God. The first was made with Noah, the second with the Israelites in the desert, and the third with all mankind by the passion, death and redeeming blood of Jesus Christ. Perhaps in the spiritual understanding of the *Magnum Opus*, the covenant of circumcision, the covenant of the Law on Sinai, and that of the New and Eternal Testament, would be held as the three great symbolic periods of universal approximation towards the term.

The 27th Grade is that of *Commander of the Temple*, and it has passed apparently through several changes. The Temple is that of Jerusalem, and before it came into the hands of those who remodelled it there is evidence that this was the case. It is difficult, therefore, to tolerate its connection with any Order of Chivalry. This notwithstanding, the earliest records that I have met with describe it as dealing with the condemnation of the Knights Templar, and the Cross even now

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remains as one of its symbols. I have indeed seen a specimen of this cross inscribed with initial letters representing *Jesus Nazareus* and Jacques Burgundus Molay. Otherwise it has no symbols ; there are also no allegories and no elements corresponding to the idea of initiation : such, at least, is the statement of Mackey, but it has deeper intimations than he was perhaps in a position to recognise, for it is a Grade, after a certain manner, of death and restoration, though presented on the surface in the guise of bondage and liberation from the passions. I must not say that it is redeemed by this shadow of reality ; it is in truth negligible in conception and poor in performance.

The 29th Degree is that of *Grand Scottish Knight of St. Andrew of Scotland*. It has analogies with the old French Grade of *Maitre Écossais*, which has been described with its antecedents in an earlier section. The suggestion that in the root-matter it is peculiar to the SCOTTISH RITE, is therefore an error ; so also is the Hermetic complexion which was once ascribed to it in earlier days than these. It has further been certified as identical with the first Degree in the fabulous RITE OF RAMSAY. It pretends to have originated in Crusading times through the solicitude of certain Christians for the restoration of churches in Palestine which had been destroyed by the Saracens. Having no longer an office in this particular respect, it has taken into its heart the virtues of charity, philanthropy, universal

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tolerance, the protection of the innocent, the pursuit of truth, the defence of justice, reverence and obedience to the Divine, with the extirpation of fanaticism and intolerance. In the days before the French Revolution I suppose that the last duty would have involved hostility to the Catholic Church. It has been regarded, in fine, as a suitable preliminary to the *Grade of Kadosh*.

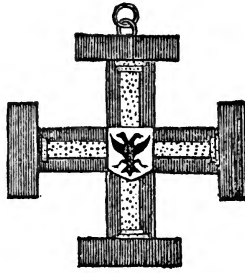
The 31st Grade is that of *Grand Inspector Inquisitor Commander*, which has been sometimes regarded as peculiar to the Rite : it was, however, the last, or seventh, in the series of the ÉCOSSAIS PHILOSOPHICAL RITE. It has been called purely administrative, but on the ethical side it inculcates justice to brethren. It is also a ceremony of installation apart from symbolism. At one time it was forbidden to clerics, and for a more obvious reason to Knights of Malta. It has, in any case, nothing to detain us. It has been suggested that the Templar element is carried over from the *Kadosh* Grade, and so is the office of execration, but this is a question of confusion, or otherwise of some early codex with which we are now unacquainted. As it stands, the Sovereign Tribunal which communicates the title *pro forma* possesses only the shadow of a Ritual, seeing that it pretends to no other purpose than the examination of aspirants to reception as *Princes of the Royal Secret*. Its devices are Justice, Equity, and the symbolic balance of the Law.

The 33rd Degree is *Sovereign Grand Inspector-*

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General, and this is particular to the Scottish Rite, if I except the fact that it has been stolen by later systems. It is Christian in respect of its elements, but it is more especially an administrative Grade, and may be left to its proper concerns. I ought, however, to add that the Templar element which enters into the Rite at the 30th Grade remains with it till the end, and is here also conspicuous. It is remarkable in view of this fact that the system does not possess an actual Grade of the Temple ; it is throughout commemorative only. The motive which actuated the commemoration has been reduced under certain obediences ; but I have seen Spanish Rituals belonging to the South American obedience which in 1873 retained curious vengeance elements. Those which at an earlier period were current in France perpetuated the traditional Templar hatred for the Knights of Malta, a similar sentiment pervading the *Prince of the Royal Secret*. Under the light presented by this element the 33rd Degree had the particular quality belonging to an office of idle and offensive observance. It is not worth while to dwell upon it, but so ended a Rite which in other respects had collected from various quarters some valuable testimonies at least to the Secret Tradition in Masonry.





IX

LESSER AND INDEPENDENT GRADES

I AM divided in my personal opinion, and it is quite possible that my readers will be divided similarly into two sections. Some of them will think that the proportion of Masonic High Grades which responds to the motive of chivalry is so exceedingly large that a more considerable part of this book should have been dedicated to the subject. It is precisely the temptation which I have felt compelled to resist. I have set aside eleven sections, and am treating of those Grades only which it seems impossible to ignore. Others, who do not confess to the enchantment of the chivalrous element, and perhaps regard it as a purely arbitrary and adventitious importation, will incline to decide that I have given too much space, seeing that out of a general division into seven books one of them has been occupied therewith. I can say only that I have followed my own discretion and have not too especially had

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either party in mind. I could have wished, indeed, to say more, and am relegating to an appendix certain briefer summaries of a few things left over out of many hundreds. Meanwhile, the present subsection will be concerned more especially with two Grades which are things of repute in England.

The acquaintance which we have made at the close of the third book with that Degree of *Rose-Croix* which is so full of grace and truth, will naturally occasion something more than distrust for a ceremonial scheme which might be called alternative, perhaps even supplementary thereto. These are, however, the aspects under which the Grade entitled *Knight of the Holy Sepulchre* is presented for appreciation at the present stage of our research. It will appear in due course that I regard it as of some importance symbolically, but it abides not only under the kind of cloud which I have specified but is open on the literary side to the charge of piracy. It is so like the *Rose-Croix* Grade that it seems to have borrowed all its vestures and much of its root-matter. I have intimated elsewhere the possibility that the two rituals, in place of reflecting from the one to the other, may have sprung from a common source. The point does not concern us in any especial way, because the *Grade of Rose-Croix* overshadows so completely the *Knight of the Holy Sepulchre* that the latter is relegated to the subsidiary position which it has always held. A far severer form

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of criticism than any which I am likely to use might still give expression to a certain sympathy with the Grade on account of its position in the pitiable triad of which it forms a part. On the one side is the knighthood of the *Red Cross of Rome and Constantine*, negligible to the last degree and presenting a familiar and worthless legend; on the other is the knighthood of *St. John the Evangelist*, in which the craft of manufacturing rituals has bewildered the brain of the maker; it is nightmare of all folly and unreason. Why the *pièce de résistance* is placed in the middle way in defiance of symbolical time must be left for settlement by the apologists of existing sequences in rites, if such apologists can be found; the name of Constantine in connection with the first Grade defines the chronological position, and the unreason is that what follows should belong—literally or spiritually—to the time of the resurrection. The 3rd Degree is, of course, in no category of consideration, as the invention of the lost Gospel of St. John is not an event which can be allocated either to this world or to the world to come.

Between these two nondescripts is the pearl of the triad, telling of the eclipse of that Divine Word which was manifested in Christ. Theoretically the Crucifixion has taken place, and the body of the great Master has been laid to its mystical rest by Joseph of Arimathea. The knightly company is in desolation, deprived of

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the Voice and the Word. The suggestion seems to be that the resurrection of the Word will take place if those who keep vigil over the tomb shall exercise sufficient zeal, by cultivating the cardinal virtues of which the Candidate may have learned the symbolic efficacy in the Grade of *Rose-Croix*. The attainment of those virtues is the reward of the vigil, or—in another form of expression—the watchers have to keep their lamps burning. The title by which the Candidate gains admission resides in the fact that he has discovered the secret communicated to those who worked at the Second Temple, which is equivalent to saying that the condition of reception is exaltation in the *Royal Arch*. There is also a further warrant in the desire manifested on his part for the attainment of the true mystery, understood as a verbal formula. The symbolism amidst which he is placed is that of another spiritual Temple; but the veil is rent, the corner-stone has been rejected and set aside, and the Knights are looking and praying for the restoration of all. The Candidate is constituted a guardian of the sepulchre, and goes out to battle with the enemies of the Word. He achieves victory, and the task which is imposed on him afterwards teaches him that, his previous efforts notwithstanding, the day-star is still obscured. As the result of another mission he is told that the day-star has reappeared. This signifies the resurrection, and there is joy among the chivalry of God.

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It is out of an apparent inconsequence attaching to the Candidate's technical and official warrant that the deeper intimation of the Grade arises. The possession of the ancient secret, familiar to those who have worked at the Second Temple in Masonic ceremonial, cannot in the reason of things constitute an efficient warrant, or any warrant at all, except for the Postulant entering from the porchway of the Craft, which in this instance would again be the *Holy Royal Arch*. The Candidate, however, is already a Christian Mason and a Knight Red Cross of Constantine. This consideration is, of course, very slight in itself, because I have pointed out already that the Knighthood of the Holy Sepulchre has an irrational position in a triad where two of the constituents are negligible; but it offers an opportunity to appreciate one further illustration of that which lies behind all Christian Grades answering to the motive of the Sepulchre. *Knight of the Holy Sepulchre*, *Rose-Croix*, or *Order of the Temple*, their message on the inward side is and can only be that the Christian House of Doctrine, like the Mystical House of Israel in the Craft Grades, is in the sorrow of a great loss. Each of these systems provides a scheme of restitution which symbolically atones for everything. But the Candidate in fine takes with him, from the experience of each pageant, only that which he brought in; and it is because the efficiency of the rituals has been restricted within the narrow

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spiritual consciousness of those who devised them that he does not take it out in a new form. It is therefore another story of a great substitution, the communication of that which is familiar in the sense wherein it is familiar, instead of in the transcendent sense which would lift up the cloud from the sanctuary. It should be observed, however, that the resurrection which is symbolised in the Grade is, in the sense of the symbolism, an immediate, present resurrection recurring at the advancement of every Candidate, which is exactly in analogy with its prototype, the *Grade of Rose-Croix*. It follows that the line of interpretation is the same in both cases, and that what I have presented in the one can be taken to stand for the other. It is in such manner that, through all this part of our research, we are haunted by the image of a great, holy and convincing ritual to come, which shall carry the whole subject into the desired transcendence. It seems to fly before us, and we almost see the edge of its glorious vestments at the turn of the road. But it is not a Grade of chivalry.

The ceremony of consecrating a Viceroy of the Order is important in a certain sense, because of its insistence on the spiritual priesthood according to the Order of Melchizedek, and it may seem by implication that this is reflected upon the Candidate. The ceremony of Enthroning a Sovereign affirms that the ineffable mysteries of the Order consist in the recognition of Christ

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as the True Word ; it claims in this manner to impart the great and unique secret which lies behind all Masonry, of whatever Rites and Degrees. It comes about as a consequence, and is peculiar to the system, that the initiation of the Candidate is not completed until he receives the highest office of the Order. As appears by the Rite of Dedication, the Conclave is built upon Christ. The impression of the sequence of Rituals is quite conclusive that the pseudo-historical part, including the connection with Constantine, is not only idle and regrettable on its own basis, but makes shipwreck of the symbolism. The dedications and investitures are common to the three Grades, but they arise more especially from *Knight of the Holy Sepulchre*. This is, of course, a Catholic Grade, and its particular blemish and inconsequences is found in the reliquary legend which is allocated thereto by an unnecessary traditional discourse ; it is also one of those Rites which was termed Jesuitical in the past. Possibly the invention of the Cross was at one time a separate Degree.

As a supplement to these considerations, and that my readers may judge for themselves, it will be appropriate to add a summary account of the *Red Cross of Constantine*. Till the year 1880, or subsequently, this Grade was identified with that of *Knights of Rome*, but the sub-dedication is now set aside. It is worked under the Council of the Order, but it is also worked in Ayrshire under the

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EARLY GRAND RITE OF 47 DEGREES, the *Red Cross of Rome and Constantine* forming the 23rd Degree. The first reference to its existence, made on authority that I have so far failed to verify, is said to occur in an early recension of Baron Hund's Templar Grade in the STRICT OBSERVANCE. I believe that the reference may have crept into a late copy, though I have not met with it anywhere ; in any case, 1750 is a date which seems impossible, and we shall do well to rest satisfied with the year 1788, when it began to be conferred in England ; it has an unbroken record from that period onward. The symbolic points are as follows : (1) The destroyed Temple is rebuilt in the heart by taking up the Cross and following the footsteps of the Lamb ; (2) the term is rest in the City of God ; (3) the title to reception is true legitimacy according to the royal line of David, meaning the Israel of God, or the pedigree of the spiritual succession which begins in the Supernal Paradise and ends in the Palace at the Centre ; (4) the obligation is at the risk of continued suppression of the True Word ; (5) in respect of the Word, it may be intimated, under the proper reserves, that it is not a coming forth from the Tomb but from a withdrawn state ; (6) the vesture of this world—being the Roman *toga*—was put aside at one time in favour of the apron of chivalry, but successive emendations by editors who had no eyes to see have refined away this symbolism. The Grade has really no connection with chivalry,

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and this is the excuse offered by the rational understanding for the omission just mentioned ; outside this it has no symbolism whatever ; but it is useful in its trivial way as evidence that what was held to be wanting in Masonry, in so far as Masonry depends from the theosophy of Israel, was supplied by the Christian Degrees. To illustrate this more fully the historical section represents Constantine, whose vision is the thesis of the Grade, as convinced otherwise by knowledge derived from the Roman *Collegium Architectonicum* that paganism was erroneous and absurd. A reference like this naturally involves a hypothesis concerning the origin of Masonry, but the Secret Tradition does not look to Rome of old for its titles or even its traces, though that which is found everywhere is not without its witness in the Republic and the Empire.

There are two different consecrations of the Red Cross, one of which is in Templarism, and the other in the Rosicrucian Mystery which lies behind Masonry. The hallows of the Masonic Order of the Temple are : (a) the Cup of Libations and of Memory ; (b) the Stone which is written within and without ; (c) the Dish of Bread ; (d) the Skull of Mortality. The Cup is successively that of water and of wine ; the Dish is the first refreshment offered to the Postulant ; the Skull is connected with the last test applied to him ; the Stone is the symbol whereon he sets his seal without that he may be

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enabled to look on that which is within, and hereto are many meanings attached. The intimations of Templar Masonry are in curious analogy with one side of the Graal traditions. Readers of my work on that literature will remember what is said regarding the removal of the Sacred Palladium, and that its loss was synonymous with the loss of vital realisation concerning the noumenal Eucharist. In this sense the Church has remained through the centuries at guard over a secret which has so far passed away that it is no longer in its official consciousness. The whole knightly duty of the Temple's striking ceremonial is to keep watch over an empty sepulchre. It is not voided, but is vacant in the simple and un-evasive sense ; that which had left went higher that it might draw all things after it ; but the Church, which is the keeper of the letter and the sign, does not see that this drawing is by way of the Spirit and of the meaning behind. The Divine act which exalted, beyond all reach of stars, the sacred Cup of the Graal, exalted also the risen body of the Master, so that in the highest or super-*efficacious* sense tabernacle and tomb are alike empty. In the symbolical and sacramental sense the signs remain and are valid ; the Christian veneration for relics carries with it the implicit that something has been always removed, but there is left always a sacred memorial. If it so happens that the holders of the Temple Grade reflect upon that mystery which has been

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communicated to them, technically speaking, they may realise that in respect of its first issues their Rite is a little unmeaning, yet it is really under this aspect highly symbolical. Let me add regarding one amazing point in the ceremony a single word by way of hint to those who can take it ; the last term of the Passion is the redemption of Judas Iscariot, but before this is reached what sterile paths, what mazes, what gardens of Gethsemane, what steep and clouded Calvaries.





X

THE ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND

I HAVE spoken of this ancient Rite in connection with the *Grade of Rose-Croix* but have reserved till the present section the consideration of two memorable points which could not be discussed at the moment. Let me say as a preface to both that the ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND bears a similar relation to other High Grades of Masonry that the alchemical tracts in Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* bear to other Hermetic remains in English of corresponding periods. The explanation is more simple than it seems. The Rituals of *Heredom of Kilwinning* and *Rosy Cross* are partly in archaic doggerel verse, while those of all other Orders and Degrees are in prose only. The Ashmolean collection is also in doggerel verse, but the rest of the English adepts were content to record their dreams and perhaps their experiments through the more

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universal medium of expression. There is an adventitious flavour of increased archaism in both cases by consequence: the metrical *Rosy Cross* is not older than the French *Grade of Rose-Croix* and certain texts in the *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, their ascriptions, notwithstanding, are not much earlier than Seton's *New Light of Alchemy* or the writings of Robert Fludd. The analogy can, however, be extended in a more favourable direction; for, as it so happens, the Ritual called *Heredom of Kilwinning* is anterior to any High Grade which is extant otherwise, and some of the alchemical texts in verse seem to represent the earliest English records in respect of Alchemy.

If, on certain considerations, I must apologise for the fantasy of this contrast, it still leads me up to my first point of importance. When Ramsay died in 1743 it is as nearly certain as anything can be called in the great book of Masonic false ascriptions that no Continental High Grade had as yet been put on the symbolical market. Whatsoever is alleged to have anteceded the year 1750 is rooted in chronological mythos. It seems indubitable, however, that at the very time of Ramsay's death the ROYAL ORDER was existing in London, and was then an established foundation, which could not have been later, and was probably somewhat earlier, than the date of the celebrated Oration. I believe that its first Degree



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is older than that of *Rosy Cross*, the evidences in respect of the latter being full of suspicion, and the disposition of informed criticism is to conclude that its root-matter, at least, represents an importation from France. But it follows: (a) that the *Grade of Heredom* is the first High Grade on record; (b) that—by a process of exhaustion—it is of British, and probably of English origin; (c) that the mere basis of the High Grades is therefore indigenous to these islands, like the Craft itself.

The next point is that the *Rosy Cross* has perhaps some shadowy analogies with the French Grade of *Rose-Croix*, but is in no sense the same ritual, with however grave variations. There would be, for this reason, more than temerity in the suggestion that the one was copied from the other, or that the one originated the other. It is probable to my own mind that they sprang from a common root, which is to be sought in the literary memorials concerning the Rosicrucian Brotherhood, and that in respect of the Royal Order it seems to draw from that branch of the memorials which dwells more especially on the cross ensanguined by the blood of the Redeemer than from that which is concerned with the Red Rose uplifted in the centre of the Cross. The matter of the symbolism is in one case rather the sacrifice of Messias, Who shed His blood for man, and in the other it is rather the mystical resurrection which followed the

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sacrifice. I consider that the *Rose-Croix* Grade is by far the more important of the two in the depth of its intimations ; but on the questions of date, origin and relations there is no first and second in the interest.

Unfortunately a comparison of the Rituals will not help us even to a tentative conclusion. Let us suppose for a moment that—contrary to critical opinion and my own view—the *Grade of Rosy Cross*, although later than that of *Heredom*, was at work in London between 1743 and 1748 ; there is then a possibility that it may have suggested the French *Rose-Croix*, without the latter being a development of the former. On this hypothesis we should get a certain insight into the genesis of what is now known as the 18th Degree, and this is not without moment, because it is one of the three Christian High Grades of Chivalry which really signify. But the only shred of evidence lending colour to the assumption rests in the fact that a little earlier than the year 1750 a few members of the ROYAL ORDER were domiciled at the Hague and applied for a constitution to London. It was duly granted, but no Chapter was incorporated. The rumour of the Rosy Cross had, however, passed to the Continent, and from the Hague it may have reached Paris. It is, however, simple surmise. Outside this point there are naturally the usual fictitious and worthless legends, as, for example, that the inevitable Chevalier Ramsay instituted the Order

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in France. That is an alternative version of the imaginary Templar Rite.

The assumption therefore fails, for neither substance nor shadow supports it. The contrary possibility is that which I have mentioned, that the *Rosy Cross* represents an importation from France. I think that this hypothesis merely follows the line of least resistance; it was held easier to assume that the *Grade of Rose-Croix*, which had so large an issue, begot the second part of the ROYAL ORDER than that this originated independently. It is not, however, translation, nor is it so much as imitation in any sense of that term. I adhere, therefore, to my original thesis, that they sprang from a common root, in the direction of which both issue in a mystery.

In conclusion on the historical side, readers should not be misled by a notion, sometimes put forward, that the existence of the *Écossais* system in France or elsewhere will account even for the genesis of the *Grade of Heredom*. I believe that it was earlier than any Degree of the system at any place on the Continent, and that the existence, if indubitable, of a Scots Lodge at Berlin in 1741, or of others at Hamburg and Leipsic a little later on, does not imply that they worked *Écossais* Grades in the sense that now attaches to that term.

I will, at this point, add a few words concerning the Ritual itself in its extant form. Part of it is in ordinary prose and part in that which

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I have described as doggerel verse. It is very bad verse indeed, but in this respect is comparable again to the literary claims of Ashmole's alchemical poets. They, however, have the saving—though not intrinsic—quality of what I have called an archaic manner, which in the present instance is due only to incredible crudity of style. There is, moreover, nothing to suggest that the verse was made in Scotland. The Ritual is almost entirely recitative in character, and is couched for the most part in the form of question and answer. Its deficiency of dramatic element is shared in common with most of the lesser and all the negligible High Grades. But we have seen that the same criticism applies to those of St. Andrew, which are so important in other respects.

The Candidate is pledged very briefly and, while he takes the obligation, has a sword in one hand and a trowel in the other. He is subsequently reminded that in this manner the Jews worked at the building of the Sacred Temple in the days of Nehemiah. The lesson is, however, patriotic, that in defending our country we should arm either hand for work or war. The Candidate is then constituted a Knight of the Rosy Cross and is invested formally, the Banner of the Order being displayed above his head. This completes the ceremonial or active part.

So far, there is utterly no reason for any distinctive name to be applied to the honour which

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he receives. The Christian elements of the Grade must be sought in the Lecture which follows, and to simplify this part I will classify the points thus: (1) A Lodge of Knighthood is formed by three persons, symbolising the Holy Trinity; (2) the chivalry of the Rosy Cross was established in memory of the tree which bore Him Who was at once the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley, namely, Jesus of Nazareth; in Whom (3) the Order places implicit belief and entire trust; (4) the articles of faith concerning Him are that He died upon a cross between two thieves, for the sins of humanity, that He descended into hell, and now sits enthroned on high till the Day of Judgment; (5) finally, the remission of sins is to be hoped for in virtue of faith alone.

The last statement should be noted, because it disposes once and for all of the suggestion that—in this form—the *Rosy Cross* came out of a Catholic mint. The doctrine is purely and simply that of Protestantism at the period. Personally, I regard it as fatal also to the hypothesis of a Jacobite interest, which was mainly Catholic, and those who have maintained that its presence affected Masonry have consistently and always referred it to the intervention of the Jesuits.

Readers who are acquainted with the French *Grade of Rose-Croix*—if only through the description which I have given—will inevitably conclude that the *Rosy-Cross*, in comparison, is not even

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“as moonlight unto sunlight” or “as water unto wine”; but, its reference to the Rose of Sharon notwithstanding, it has an implied importance for its period, because it dwells upon the Rose crucified, and there can be no question as to its real intimation, that when the Cross was ensanguined by the blood of Jesus it became truly the Rosy Cross. An intimation of this kind is wanting in the 18th Degree. But a further and more essential distinction rests in the fact that the second Grade of the ROYAL ORDER is not a Grade of Quest; it is rather one of doctrine communicated. The Word, which—*ex hypothesi*—is the Lost Word, is communicated almost *pro forma*, because it is the Word of the Grade, but there is no anxiety or research and no realisation that the Candidate is in a state of loss concerning it. The explanation is that the element of Quest and attainment belongs to the previous Degree, which is much more important, much more dramatic in character; the *Rosy Cross* is its appendix and not exactly essential as such, for as a Brother of *Heredom and Kilwinning* the Candidate has already received as much as the ROYAL ORDER is in a position to give him. That which it does convey to him is the marrow and life of Christian Masonry.

The Knights—for this is also a chivalry in the artificial and nominal sense—are here combined together in a quest, and the Candidate participates therein by the fact of his reception.

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There is a symbolical travelling in the four quarters to recover the Lost Word, which is in correspondence with the Perpend Ashlar, the Stone which the builders rejected. This Stone is Christ, Who is the perfect illustration of the three Masonic grand principles : (a) of Brotherly Love, because He laid down His life for the redemption of His brethren ; (b) of Relief, because it is He Who has liberated us from the bonds of sin and death ; (c) of Truth, because He is Truth itself and the Giver thereof.

The Grade is again largely of a recitative kind, but it is accompanied by a certain quality of action and has even a spectacular element, if I may so term it. I am afraid that this is its burden, but to those who confess to the sense of suggestion in Masonic Ritual and to the appeal of the Christian side, I know of few things more likely to take the spirit of the hearer into the symbolic transcendence than some of the questions and answers. There are two sections, respectively called the *Passing of the Bridge* and *Admission to the Cabinet*, and through both of them the wonderful discourse of the official interlocutors proceeds, like a chorus of hierophants, in the terse manner of conventional question and answer. It is not very easy to summarise the instruction in a satisfactory form, for it is scattered through an unusual array of sections, but I will attempt a consecutive presentation, setting the literal order aside.

The quest of the Word is followed through

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the wide world—that is to say, in the four quarters—and it is, in other terms, a quest for the Holy Rock or Mount of Adamant, which is a Rock of Salvation, with a fountain issuing therefrom. The Rock and the Word are Christ, and the voice of the Word says, in allusion to the fountain: Come and drink. On the rock is a great cruciform church in the middle of a great city, surrounded by angels carrying flaming swords. It is obviously the Church Catholic, or universal, visible and transcendent, its length from East to West, its breadth from North to South, its height immeasurable and its depth, in fine, unfathomable. It is the Church which is not of this world, although it is manifested here in similitude, and the work of the chivalry of Heredom is to share in the building thereof.

Now, the vision of this Church and the hope which it inspires concerning election to the Kingdom that is above, the City of the living God and the heavenly Jerusalem, is attained by the visitation of a certain Tower, which itself is a speaking symbol of Masonry. The implication is therefore that the Masonic art is the path of heaven, and this is how it is worked out.

(a) The three great lights of Masonry are natural, Masonic and Christian laws; (b) The sun directs us to the light of revelation, and the moon displays the sun of Nature, which is a reflected light; (c) The Master of the Lodge is not mentioned, but he is no doubt a vicegerent who

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leads under either light to the finding of Christ, as the end of all Masonic research ; (*d*) The five-pointed star, with the letter G in the centre, declares the *Shekinah*—whether on Sinai, in Salem,

or the place

Where eastern Magi saw the Blessed Face ;

(*e*) The mystic pillars signify that God alone is our support ; (*f*) The Masonic pavement represents the Law delivered on Sinai ; (*g*) The Blazing Star signifies the Divine Glory manifested thereon ; (*h*) The tessellated border indicates the adornment of a virtuous life in conformity with the Law ; (*i*) There is only one thing with which the Temple of Solomon suffers comparison, and that is the body of Christ, which is a mystical Temple ; (*k*) The place of Masons therein is the middle chamber—that is to say, the place of the heart, on which the head of St. John lay—otherwise the Secret Church, called specifically in the Grade the Church of the first-born, meaning the first-fruits of the redemption in spiritual resurrection after passing through emblematic death ; (*l*) The middle chamber is entered with the Masonic virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity ; (*m*) The Trestle-Board is the way of salvation, meaning the Holy Gospels ; (*n*) The Broached Thurnal is Divine Grace, which penetrates the heart ; (*o*) The Perpend Ashlar is the Grand Architect of the Church.

So does the symbolism of Masonry suffer a

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great transmutation and enter gloriously into a new life. I affirm—on the evidence here cited—that the *Grade of Heredom of Kilwinning* is a sum of Christian Craftsmanship, deserving a place in my septenary sequence of Degrees, were it not represented otherwise. This is the true knighthood of the Tower, about which we hear independently in the great nomenclatures of Grades. The sequels or comparisons of such a text in ritual are the texts in mystic literature of the *Cloud on the Sanctuary*, by Eckartshausen, and Loupoukine's *Characteristics of the Interior Church*.





XI

CONCLUSION ON MASONIC CHIVALRY

WE have now to sum up in respect of this section of the High Grade movement in Masonry, and the first thing that will, I think, be obvious to those who have followed me thus far is, that the motive of chivalry must be held as of an adventurous kind ; but, this notwithstanding, there lies behind it an implication which is exceedingly important, whatever may be its ground in fact. The motive depends from a prototypical hypothesis that the Crusaders met with something in the East which entered by their mediation for the first time into Europe, and more especially the western part. It was obviously not a mystery of material building ; if we say that it was emblematic architecture, the statement will be purely arbitrary, and hence in respect of intention the hypothesis could have been concerned only with some form of secret knowledge. The nature of this alleged knowledge is varied by the predisposi-

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tions of its several makers, between whom there was, however, a common ground. It is represented most especially by the Templar form, because it is in respect of this chivalrous Order that the suggestion becomes substantial on account of the charges preferred against the Knights at the time of their proscription.

In order to support the theory of transmission through this channel, it became necessary to show in legend that something had persisted in Palestine, comparatively from the far past, and was of a kind which would answer to the object in view. That which was selected may be called a kind of Kabalistic tradition, which at some indeterminate period had become Christian. It was obviously not Christianity of the Latin type, as this would have been an importation of something already possessing the kingdoms of the West in a plenary sense. It is spoken of frequently as Johannite, but this implication is perhaps rather late in the legend, and represents the set of influences brought into modern Templary by Fabré Palaprat on his adoption of the *Levitikon* as a kind of secret gospel. We shall see that for Baron Tschoudy some so-called Knights of the Morning were probably a veil of the Essenian sect, and that something very nearly identical was implied by the poet Werner in respect of his Sons of the Valley. In the one case we have students of the mysteries of Nature who had pursued their researches along the lines of Alchemy because this art happened to be a



THE POET WERNER

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particular interest of him who invented the story. In the case of Werner, who knew nothing of Alchemy, and was moreover a poet of his period, we have an imaginative creation with a suggestion behind it of strange occult powers and implied sanctity of design. The point is important as regards both indifferently, because both were seeking to celebrate a marriage between emblematic Freemasonry and those Instituted Mysteries which I speak of as part and parcel of the Secret Tradition.

The hypothesis of chivalry is of course a myth; it has been discussed rather seriously by Masonic writers of ability, who have been led to reject it, while there has been a disposition on the part of Masonic dreamers to sustain the claim; but to speak my mind frankly, it never stood in need of discussion, as demonstrably on the very surface its basis was (*a*) in pure reverie or (*b*) in a conventional device to insist on the identity between the root-matter of Masonry and that of the other Mysteries. It is this which constitutes its interest and imparts its strange charm. It is this also which gives a place to its serious consideration in these pages.

The question which arises is whether—on the assumption that it was a device—we are dealing with a simple intuition, almost a blind feeling, or with a veil of secret knowledge. Behind the comparatively untutored and primitive forms of expression which are on the surface of the *Grade*

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of Rose-Croix we have seen that there is a deep mystical sense, and it is the kind of sense which belongs to the Houses of Secret Knowledge. There is no legend attached to it ; there is no claim on the historical side ; it is not especially of the Temple, the Hospital, Palestine, Rhodes, or Malta : it is time immemorial of chivalry, and the chivalry is not of this world. We shall be on other and more explicit ground in the hypothesis formulated by Baron Tschoudy concerning the Knights of the Morning. It seems designed to intimate and conceal the relation of emblematical Masonry to the Mysteries by those who knew of the relation directly and indubitably. The available particulars concerning the external life of the inventor are very meagre, and of his inward life we know nothing. He wrote seriously within his own lines on his own subjects, and he claimed special knowledge without obtruding the claim. It is not exalting him to an undue grade of dignity if I suggest that he was the kind of person who at that period may have passed within some of the secret circles or have had cognizance concerning them. I do not believe that the Chevalier Ramsay was connected with any secret school, but his thesis was useful as a peg when the ulterior purpose intervened. In the case of Baron von Hund his story is so utterly entangled that it is difficult to reach any decision concerning it, as we have already seen ; but his *Ecossais Grades of St. Andrew* came out of a very curious mint ; it was

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dissolved in another mint and rose again gloriously therefrom. The Templar legend in the RITE OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE passes into something rich and strange when it issues in the hands of Werner into the suggestive mystery concerning the Sons of the Valley.

If the secret schools put some counters into the hand of von Hund and left him to sort them out as he could, we understand at once (*a*) his apparent personal sincerity, which has impressed those who repel his claims *in toto*; (*b*) the affirmation on his honour that he came across something of which he did not pretend to know anything certainly, but from which he expected direction; (*c*) his utter loss when the direction did not come; (*d*) the facility with which he was duped for a period by every impostor who sought to exploit his Rite; and finally, (*e*) the essential greatness of some of his materials, as well as their limitations when he worked them out—as he best could—by the help of his own lights. We can understand Werner also, possibly in touch with *attachés* of the Secret Tradition, but choosing the wiser part of the poet instead of the maker of Rituals.

The whole legend of Masonic birth in chivalry, approached in this manner, becomes for us an allegory and symbol, and to debate its value historically is as little to the purpose as to take a similar line of criticism regarding the mystic death of the Master Builder or the quest of Christian Rosy Cross after the wisdom of

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Arabia. I do not propose to consider whether the Charter of Larmenius and the four mythical Lodges founded by Jacques de Molay were part of the veiling; the genesis of these things is utterly in the dark clouds; the first would be especially regrettable on such a hypothesis, but up to a certain point at least the pseudo-historical fact was unquestionably part of the parable.

After the great Grades—those of *Rose-Croix*, the *Order of the Temple*, the *Knights Beneficent* and *Heredom of Kilwinning*, the purport of which we can understand in this light—there remains the great crowd of stultified and stultifying imitations devised apart from all knowledge, figments of foolish minds; we can understand exactly how they rose, how they took *signum* for *signatum*, and why they are therefore worthless.

Each of the great Grades has moving lessons of its own; some of them shine upon the surface, some of them are buried beneath; some of them have qualities of suggestion apart from their inner meaning; in some it is the inner meaning alone by which they are redeemed from fatuity. The guise of all is fantastic enough at first sight, but it really co-ordinates the typical examples that I have mentioned with the spiritual chivalry in transcendence of the romantic literature of chivalry. And beneath this appealing charm there are all the deeper intimations. They are stories of quest, stories of attainment, stories of aspiration after the Lost Word of all-redeeming

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sanctity, of the Living Gospel, the Mystic Cross of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley. The message brought away from them is far otherwise profound—as we shall see—than is anything communicated by alchemical Grades or Grades of Kabalism ; but for their proper understanding the first condition is that the historical side should be set definitely apart : it should be realised that we are moving only through a beautiful world of images. Those images represent the hunger and thirst of the heart for things undemonstrable, or at least hardly declared in the records of the past, Mysteries of the Christ-life, a quest after their own manner for the realities everywhere bodied forth in the many languages of the Secret Tradition—in a word, the *Mysterium Fidei*, which—as I have said—is a deep well of experience.



The End of the First Volume



Printed by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, Edinburgh

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DEC 21 1992

