Albert Pike's

**"ESOTERIKA"**

The

**SYMBOLISM**

Of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry

Sheet1
Text Only Figures Not Parsed

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|  Figure i. Original bound manuscript of The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees  |
|  of Freemasonry. From the Archives of the Supreme Council, 33°, S.J., USA. |
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Sheet2

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|  Albert Pike's |
|  "ESOTERIKA" |
|  The |
|  SYMBOLISM |
|  Of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry |
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|  Transcribed and Edited by |
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|  |
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|  Sovereign Grand Commander |
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|  THE SCOTTISH RITE RESEARCH SOCIETY |
|  WASHINGTON, D.C. + 2005 |

Sheet3

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Sheet4

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|  A secret muse cloth bring to light, |
|  wrapt mystery blind to mortal sight. |
|  Enchanted ever by her gaze |
|  the quill is swift, it never stays |
|  at rest, but quickens ever still |
|  as beating heart and privy thrill. |
|  |
|  Yon heights above she will descend |
|  the mind to free, the soul to mend.  |
|  0! Gentle muse! I call away, |
|  Come take me on the darker day! |
|  |
|  —Arthur Yates,"Call Away" (1859) |

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|  FOREWORD |
|  In the history of the Scottish Rite there is probably no name more revered  |
|  than that of Albert Pike, who served as Sovereign Grand Commander of the  |
|  Supreme Council, 33°, Southern Jurisdiction (Mother Council of the World),  |
|  from 1859 until his death in 1891. Indeed, the practices of almost every Supreme  |
|  Council throughout the world were so much influenced by him that it is said  |
|  he "found the Scottish Rite in a log cabin and left it in a temple:' In a real sense  |
|  Pike did lay the foundation upon which the modern Scottish Rite is built. He  |
|  revised our fundamental laws and statutes, ceremonies and rituals; he codified  |
|  our philosophy, assembled our archives, created our library, collated our his- |
|  torical records, and published volumes on every aspect of our practices. And  |
|  yet, much of his work remains unknown and unpublished! |
|  The present book, now published for the first time, is one of the little- |
|  known treasures written by Pike. It is, as far as I am aware, unique in the field  |
|  of Freemasonry. It presents his well-researched and completely unique inter- |
|  pretations of some of the symbols of the"Blue Degrees" of Entered Apprentice,  |
|  Fellow Craft, and Master Mason, the three fundamental Degrees common  |
|  to all branches of Freemasonry. This book is unique not only for its original  |
|  explanations and interpretations of Blue Lodge symbolism, but also because of  |
|  the impression it made on scholars who studied it. Two of England's greatest  |
|  Masonic scholars, Robert F. Gould and George W. Speth (founding members  |
|  of Quatuor Coronati Lodge 2076 in London, the premiere research lodge),  |
|  informed Pike that his Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry was the  |
|  most important work of the kind they had ever studied. |
|  Although the present book was initially written as a private work (only  |
|  two manuscript copies were made), Pike hoped that its contents would be  |
|  shared among interested Brethren. This wish remained impractical, since the  |
|  original has always been preserved in the Archives Vault in the House of the |

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|  + RONALD A. SEALE + |
|  Temple (the other copy remains in London). It is true that Pike labeled this  |
|  work "esoterika" and stated that he didn't want it broadly circulated. However,  |
|  it does not encroach upon the strict esoterica of Freemasonry, reveal the modes  |
|  of recognition, nor include anything by which someone could falsely palm  |
|  himself off as a member of the Fraternity. It is a study of symbolism, nothing  |
|  more and nothing less. But what a study it is! |
|  Pike has been criticized as being garrulous and prone to obfuscation. In  |
|  this book he speaks, perhaps, more clearly than in his other works. Granted,  |
|  this work does briefly discuss the symbolism of Hermeticism, Kabbalah and  |
|  Vedic philosophy, but readers unfamiliar with these topics will be gratified that  |
|  Pike speaks of them clearly. |
|  The editor, Ill:. Arturo de Hoyos, 33°, Grand Archivist and Grand Historian  |
|  of our Supreme Council, has added critical notes to help readers unfamiliar  |
|  with some of Pike's notions and topics. Ill:. de Hoyos, a well-known scholar  |
|  who has published extensively on Masonic history, ritual and symbolism, has  |
|  studied every version of Pike's several ritual revisions, as well as every Masonic  |
|  manuscript written by Pike kept in our Archives. With these and other  |
|  resources, he has added several appendices to help us follow Pike's growing  |
|  understanding of Masonic symbolism. The inclusion of the 18th-century cat- |
|  echisms cited by Pike also helps place his notions in their proper context. Any  |
|  remaining unfamiliar themes can be referenced and studied in publications  |
|  available from our Supreme Council. The reader may find it helpful to have  |
|  the works of Ill:. Rex R. Hutchens, 33°, Grand Cross, nearby. His books A  |
|  Glossary to Morals and Dogma (1993) and Pillars of Wisdom (1995) are excellent  |
|  resources which can clarify abstruse and perplexing themes. |
|  Now in its fourteenth year, the Scottish Rite Research Society ranks  |
|  among the finest Masonic research organizations in the world. It consistently  |
|  produces the most scholarly works on Freemasonry available in the English  |
|  language. This book is a welcome addition to its offerings. It is our hope that |
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|   FOREWORD   |
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|  it will both spread "more light in Masonry" and encourage others to continue  |
|  research. We do not assert that Albert Pike's interpretations are correct in  |
|  everything he wrote, but I believe you will profit by studying this book and  |
|  pondering its theories. |
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|  March 30, 2005 Ronald A. Seale, 33° |
|  The House of the Temple Sovereign Grand Commander |
|  Washington, D.C. The Supreme Council, 33°, S.J. |

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|  PREFACE s, |
|  ... the symbolism of Masonry is, in my opinion, the soul of Masonry.  |
|  When you shall have read what I have written, you may be led to take  |
|  up and complete, or at least carry further the work. It is a wide field,  |
|  and I am quite conscious how little I have done towards exploring it.  |
|  If, as is said in our Western Country, I have'blazed the way' for others,  |
|  I am quite content. |
|  —Albert Pike, December 2, 1888, to Robert F. Gould' |
|  |
|  ... the Symbolism of Masonry, or at all events a material part of it, is  |
|  of very great antiquity—and that in substance, the system of Masonry  |
|  we now possess—including the three degrees of the Craft—has come  |
|  down to us, in all its essentials from times not only remote from our  |
|  own, but also to those of the founder of the earliest of Grand Lodges.  |
|  —Robert F. Gould,"On the Antiquity of Masonic Symbolism" (1890)2 |
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|  MODERN MASONRY IN SEARCH OF A SOUL |
|  If we consider the virtual explosion of Masonic exposés published since 1723,3  |
|  it is remarkable that half a century passed before a Freemason took up his  |
|  quill and attempted to elucidate the meaning of the ceremonies. William  |
|  Hutchinson's The Spirit of Freemasonry (1775), generally regarded as the first  |
|  book devoted specifically to Masonic symbolism,4 was also remarkable in  |
|  receiving the approbation of the Grand Lodge. His book, which was pub- |
|  lished a hundred years prior to the advent of the "authentic school" of Masonic  |
|  research (which employs the methods of modern historiography), helped  |
|  establish a trend that accepted the legends of the Craft as history—its devotees  |
|  often ascribing Freemasonry's origins to Adam, Noah, Phaleg, Moses, King |
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|   ARTURO DE HOYOS   |
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|  Solomon, or other Biblical notables. Followers of this "romantic school" also  |
|  sought Masonry's origins among the ancient Egyptians, the Pythagoreans, the  |
|  Roman Collegia Fabrorum, the Knights Templar, or other traditions employing  |
|  ceremonial and symbolic instruction. In fairness to Hutchinson, it is under- |
|  standable that a man of his times, writing before the dawn of modern histori- |
|  cal criticism, meandered among ancient religions, attempting to draw parallels  |
|  between their august mysteries and rites and those of Freemasonry. But what  |
|  progress has been made in the subsequent 230 years? Since that time a host  |
|  of self-styled "experts" on Freemasonry have arisen, usually contradicting each  |
|  other, and each vying for the limelight. To be sure, the romantic school is alive  |
|  and well with otherwise intelligent and articulate advocates who have indeed  |
|  discovered one great secret of Freemasonry: there is financial profit to be made  |
|  in foisting pseudo-Egyptian history and distortions of Templarism on unin- |
|  formed Masons and a gullible public. Per contra, the writings of the authentic  |
|  school demonstrate that the romantic school represents the predilections of  |
|  wishful thinkers, couched in the language of pseudo-scholarship.5 Put off by  |
|  such pretense and nonsense Albert Pike observed, "much of what are styled  |
|  Masonic teachings, Masonic symbolism, and Masonic jurisprudence, is simply  |
|  nought, the re-threshing of old straw or the laborious discussion of trifles...."  |
|  Such being the case we may well ask, "Does Freemasonry really have a soul?  |
|  And, if so, of what does it consist, and whence is it derived?" |
|  |
|  THE FREEMASON |
|  Albert Pike lived during the most remarkable periods of American Masonic  |
|  history, which divided his experiences into the "three principle stages of  |
|  human life, namely, youth, manhood and age:' As a young man he was an  |
|  eyewitness to the Fraternity's near destruction during the so-called "Morgan  |
|  episode;' an anti-Masonic movement which swept America from 1826-42;  |
|  as an adult he was an active and energetic participant in Freemasonry's |
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|  xviii Ira, |

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|  + PREFACE + |
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|  reconstruction; and, in his old age he enjoyed the stability and strength of  |
|  the Fraternity, as it resumed a place of honor. During the latter phase of his  |
|  life he also witnessed the dawning of the authentic school of research, when  |
|  Masonic historiography was revolutionized. |
|  Pike was truly a renaissance man, always in pursuit of knowledge and  |
|  self-improvement. Within one lifetime he seems to have lived multiple lives  |
|  that sometimes overlapped each other. He was, for example, an advocate for  |
|  Native American rights, an accomplished attorney, an author, an educator,  |
|  an explorer, an historian, a military leader (Brigadier General), a philoso- |
|  pher, a poet, and a translator. This brief preface is not the place to recount  |
|  Pike's life and accomplishments. Of the several didactic biographies, I  |
|  invite the reader to peruse the two I enjoyed most: Jim Tresner's Albert  |
|  Pike: the Man Beyond the Monument (New York: M. Evans Co., 1995),  |
|  and Walter Lee Brown's A Life of Albert Pike (Fayetteville: University of  |
|  Arkansas Press, 1997). The former is anecdotal, delightfully interspersed  |
|  with Pike's wit and wisdom, while the latter is a more academic, but thor- |
|  oughly accessible approach. |
|  Initiated into Freemasonry in 1850, Pike was a member of Western  |
|  Star Lodge No. 1, at Little Rock, Arkansas. Two years later he, with others,  |
|  obtained a charter to start Magnolia Lodge No. 6o, over which he presided  |
|  as Master of the Lodge in 1854 and 1855. Pike also received the Capitular  |
|  Degrees in 1850, the Cryptic Degrees in 1852, and the Knight Templar Degree  |
|  in 1853. In March of the latter year Albert G. Mackey, then Secretary General  |
|  of the Supreme Council, 33°, Southern Jurisdiction (Mother Council of the  |
|  World), communicated the 4°-32° of the Scottish Rite to Pike. Over the  |
|  next two years Mackey loaned a substantial part of his manuscript ritual  |
|  collection to Pike, who transcribed and subsequently bound them into a  |
|  large volume now in the archives of the Supreme Council, 33°, Southern  |
|  Jurisdiction. Entitled Formulas and Rituals transcribed by Albert Pike in 1854 |

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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
|  and 1855, it preserved a significant portion of the Supreme Council's ritual  |
|  collection as it was at the time he received the Degrees. Mackey later loaned  |
|  the same manuscripts to officers of the Supreme Council, 33°, Northern  |
|  Masonic Jurisdiction, but—sadly—they were never returned. For the most  |
|  part, the early Scottish Rite rituals studied by Pike were slightly modified  |
|  versions of French rituals written in the late eighteenth century; others had  |
|  been revised by the Supreme Council between 1822-5. Many of the rituals  |
|  seemed primitive and even jejune to Pike, who believed that their true mean- |
|  ing had been lost to time. |
|  Pike's study of these rituals prepared him for appointment, in March 1855,  |
|  to a Supreme Council committee which was charged with the responsibility of  |
|  revising all the Scottish Rite's rituals. As a 32° Mason he was the lowest ranking  |
|  member of the committee, but, as was his habit, he threw himself into the task.  |
|  In fact, he was the only person on the committee to produce any results. As a  |
|  student of comparative religion, mythology, and philosophy, he sought to recover  |
|  and restore the ethical and philosophical truths he believed the original framers  |
|  of the Degrees intended to teach. Several of the Degrees, which were merely  |
|  skeletal, were fleshed out and became "workable:' The dramas Pike wrote taught  |
|  the lessons and conveyed the truths he supposed reflected their original intent. |
|  In 1857 Pike completed his revision of the 4°-32° which he then had pri- |
|  vately printed in an edition of ioo copies at his own expense at a cost of $1200  |
|  (about $25,150 in today's money)! This first revision—originally untitled but  |
|  dubbed "The Magnum Opus" by Mackey—was a monumental step forward  |
|  for the Scottish Rite. Although it failed to meet the needs of the Supreme  |
|  Council and was never adopted as the official ritual, it became the basis for  |
|  subsequent revisions, not only of the Southern Jurisdiction's ritual, but for  |
|  many Supreme Councils worldwide. |
|  In the same year Pike was appointed to the ritual revision committee,  |
|  the Supreme Council, 33°, Southern Jurisdiction, signed a Concordat with a |
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|  XX Ira, |

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|   PREFACE + |
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|  body known as the "Supreme Council of Louisiana." This organization, with  |
|  headquarters in New Orleans, had long contended with the two authentic  |
|  American Scottish Rite Supreme Councils. The New Orleans group, acknowl- |
|  edging its dubious origins, voluntarily dissolved itself and its members trans- |
|  ferred their fealty to the Supreme Council, 33°, Southern Jurisdiction. One of  |
|  the leading Louisiana members was Charles Laffon de Ladebat, who became a  |
|  friend, coworker, and confidant of Pike. In fact, de Ladebat not only conferred  |
|  the Thirty-third Degree on Pike, but also resigned his position as Deputy of  |
|  the Supreme Council in favor of Pike. The two corresponded on all matters of  |
|  the Rite, and de Ladebat did not hesitate to express dissatisfaction with some  |
|  of Pike's revisions. De Ladebat had himself printed revisions of the Eighteenth  |
|  and Thirtieth Degrees in 1856 and 1857, respectively, which included synopses  |
|  of the 4°-17° and 19°-29°, together with the modes of recognition (symbolic  |
|  signs, tokens, and words). Pike and de Ladebat later collaborated and revised  |
|  several of the Degrees, and in 1859 de Ladebat loaned Pike the only known  |
|  copy of an extremely valuable manuscript, Francois H. Stanislaus Delaunay's  |
|  Thuileur Universel, ou Manuel du Franc-mason (am), a 400+ page work with  |
|  the esoteric alphabets, signs, tokens, and words of numerous Masonic rites.  |
|  Pike also owned Delaunay's famous Thuileur des trente-trois degres de l'ecossisme  |
|  du rit Ancien, dit Accepte (1813, 1821), which was a similar work on the Scottish  |
|  Rite. These books explored the possible roots of the many obscure significant  |
|  words in the degrees, and would serve as an inspiration for Pike's own etymo- |
|  logical study, The Book of the Words (1878). |
|  Following his work with de Ladebat, as Pike undertook other Scottish  |
|  Rite projects, the Supreme Council recognized an effective leader and tire- |
|  less worker within their midst. As might have been expected, he was elected  |
|  Sovereign Grand Commander in 1859—a position he would hold until his  |
|  death in 1891. Between 1861 and 1884 he continued to revise the Southern  |
|  Jurisdiction's Scottish Rite rituals as he had time, producing them as a multi- |
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|   ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
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|  volume set. During the revision process he continued his study of Freemasonry  |
|  in all its aspects, and his successive ritual revisions reveal his growing under- |
|  standing of Masonic philosophy and symbolism. |
|  |
|  TWO LECTURES ON SYMBOLISM |
|  Prior to the emergence of the "authentic school" Pike had, like many others, read  |
|  the speculations and theories of earlier writers, sometimes accepting their fantastic  |
|  claims of the Fraternity's supposedly ancient origins. He tells us that, for a time,  |
|  he put faith in the "fancies about the Egyptian origin" of Freemasonry (a notion  |
|  spread today in the popular but uncritical book, The Hiram Key), but he ultimately  |
|  rejected this and similarly unfounded "fancies:' He lamented over the baseless  |
|  conclusions and contradictions he encountered, at times wondering if there was  |
|  actually anything of value to be found. In frustration he even considered abandon- |
|  ing the study of Masonic symbolism altogether, but consequently resolved to retain  |
|  the symbols and abandon the expositors. Even by today's standards Pike was a rare  |
|  type of Freemason, willing to sacrifice his opinions and prejudices upon the altar  |
|  of truth. He was a wide reader possessed of a critical faculty. A sensible person,  |
|  his notions—at times lofty and idealistic—were nonetheless founded in reality.  |
|  Profoundly interested in the nature of truth, he studied archeology, anthropology,  |
|  comparative religion, and philosophy, realizing a harmony of ideas (as opposed to  |
|  syncretism) which helped him appreciate the great quest of humanity and fostered  |
|  in him a tolerance of others' beliefs. His grasp and understanding of Masonic his- |
|  tory was excellent,' but not "complete" (alas! nobody can claim this) and, as we  |
|  shall see, he too would err in some of his interpretations of Masonic symbols. But  |
|  he did possess the greatest quality of a good investigator: he considered all avail- |
|  able evidence, and dismissed his own theories when verifiable data outweighed his  |
|  notions, however dear and venerable. |
|  Pike's study of Freemasonry taught him that, beyond fraternity, its ceremo- |
|  nies served a twofold purpose: (I) they inculcated social and moral virtues; and |
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|  (2) they were vehicles for transmitting symbols. Moral instruction, which can  |
|  be communicated overtly, cannot be considered either unique to Freemasonry,  |
|  or "secret" in any real sense. However, Pike suspected that the true "secrets" of  |
|  Freemasonry lay within its symbolism. By careful, prolonged, and analytical  |
|  study he began to discern and recognize a natural relationship between symbols  |
|  and things they symbolized. The results of this research, which was contempora- |
|  neous with his ritual revisions, would eventually be printed in two large volumes.  |
|  They were not written for the faint-of-heart, but are rather academic works.  |
|  Because they were not written for the average Mason, these first two studies were  |
|  printed in extremely limited editions of only loo copies each. |
|  The two volumes, A Lecture on Masonic Symbolism and A Second Lecture  |
|  on Masonic Symbolism, were both printed in 1875. The first volume began by  |
|  separating Pike's works from others of the genre by announcing a thesis which  |
|  dismissed the spiritualistic and occult notions some ascribed to Freemasonry. |
|  |
|  The superiority of Freemasonry to every other order and association,  |
|  consists in its symbols.... It has no secret knowledge of any kind. There  |
|  was, in the ancient initiations, something like the modern spiritualism;  |
|  but there is nothing of this or of magic in Freemasonry.' |
|  |
|  The statement that Freemasonry "has no secret knowledge of any kind"  |
|  requires qualification. Pike does not here refer to the claptrap "secrets" common  |
|  to fraternities, to the ceremonial or modes of recognition, or to the "mysteries"  |
|  concealed by symbolism. Rather, he here means secret information only avail- |
|  able by appeal to non-human entities. At the time Pike wrote this, "spiritual- |
|  ism" (communication with discarnate intelligences) was a rage in America and  |
|  England, and a general interest in mysticism and occultism was also on the rise.  |
|  In fact, Madame Blavatsky established the Theosophical Society just two and  |
|  a half months after Pike published his Second Lecture. (Blavatsky's influences |
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|   ARTURO DE HOYOS   |
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|  contributed to the nineteenth century's resurgence in western occultism and  |
|  promoting an interest in eastern mysticism.") Pike was sufficiently knowl- |
|  edgeable to justify his statement that Freemasonry teaches neither spiritualism  |
|  nor "magic" (the ability to alter the physical world by little-known powers of  |
|  the mind or by appeal to other-worldly beings and forces). |
|  His explorations into philosophy and religion included academic studies  |
|  of primitive and superstitious beliefs, as well as spiritualism and occultism (his  |
|  personal library included works on animal magnetism, the Kabbalah, magic,  |
|  somnambulism, etc.). As familiar as he was with metaphysics, he concluded that  |
|  it taught"that we can have no certainty of anything: that whatever one seemed to  |
|  have proved, another always disproved:' He added, "the demonstrations of those  |
|  who passed for the most profoundest of all the metaphysicians, always, at the  |
|  point on which their conclusions depended, became a mere juggling with words:'  |
|  For these and other reasons Pike wanted to clearly distinguish Freemasonry  |
|  from the common "occult" interests of his day. Thus, in an unambiguous state- |
|  ment in the 2,8°, Knight of the Sun, Pike clearly affirmed that Freemasonry does  |
|  not pretend to possess mysterious or occult knowledge. |
|  |
|  The Masonry of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish does not permit  |
|  any one to put forth in its behalf pretences to the possession of any  |
|  mysterious or occult knowledge not within the reach of the world at  |
|  large. Indeed such pretences are unauthorized anywhere in Masonry;  |
|  and when men have been induced by them to seek initiation or  |
|  advancement, the disappointment that has been the consequence has  |
|  been greatly mischievous to the Order." |
|  |
|  But if not "secret knowledge," what is the "mystery" in Freemasonry? For  |
|  Pike, the answer lay in its symbolism, which he deemed its true essence. This  |
|  matter-of-fact approach to Freemasonry is further evinced in Pike's revisions |
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|  of the Scottish Rite rituals. For him, the symbolism of Freemasonry was at  |
|  once moral, philosophical, and religious. It reminded the initiated of man's  |
|  duty to God and his neighbor, and assured him that God is not remote, but is  |
|  rather approachable, taking a personal interest in His creatures. Additionally,  |
|  Freemasonry's unique ability to espouse the causes of humanity, while declin- |
|  ing to assert the correctness of one faith over another, appealed to Pike's sense  |
|  of tolerance. His several revisions of the Scottish Rite's rituals progressively  |
|  espoused the rights of man by means of a government maintained by the con- |
|  sent of the governed. Freedom of conscience, and an awareness of the benefits  |
|  and responsibilities that come with free agency, lay at the heart of Pike's per- |
|  sonal philosophy. His rituals not only refined the Masonic ideals of Liberty,  |
|  Equality, and Fraternity, but gradually and successively unfolded a rational  |
|  explanation for the symbols and usages of Freemasonry. |
|  Beyond social virtues and fraternity; Pike believed that great truths, esoter- |
|  ic and Divine, lay concealed within the symbolism of Freemasonry. This view  |
|  was partially influenced by his study of early Masonic rituals. For example, in  |
|  an early ritual of the 32°, Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret, it was stated that  |
|  "the mysteries of the Craft are the mysteries of religion;' and that the different  |
|  Masonic degrees were invented to give only "symbolic secrets" to those who  |
|  could not be trusted with this fact." Accepting this, Pike shared at least one  |
|  view with the earlier expositors: the "ancient usages and customs" of the Craft  |
|  (Freemasonry), including the ceremonial acts of initiation, were not trifles to  |
|  bemuse onlookers or befuddle candidates; they were lessons for those capable  |
|  of seeing more than superficiality, i.e., for those who would not mistake the  |
|  symbol for the thing symbolized. |
|  Pike's Lecture on Masonic Symbolism was chiefly devoted to two subjects:  |
|  (I) the symbolism of numbers and (z) the Freemason's apron. Its number sym- |
|  bolism did not digress into numerology, which Pike considered arbitrary," but  |
|  sought rational explanations for the religious veneration of particular numbers |

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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
|  and sequences. Yet he remained aware that there were many symbols for which  |
|  he failed to find satisfactory solutions, and he even suggested that they might  |
|  lie beyond his capability. |
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|  The true meanings of a few of the symbols are still known in the  |
|  Lodges. Those of many others are disused; and those of some, I fear,  |
|  are lost beyond hope of recovery. Among those whose true meanings  |
|  are not given, are the Cable-tow and its length, the Square and  |
|  Compass on the altar, the Substitute words in different Rites, the  |
|  Apron, the 47th Problem, the tessellated or chequered floor, the rough  |
|  and perfect ashlars, the Plumb, Level and Square, and the orbs and  |
|  person represented by the three altar-lights. And the meanings of the  |
|  words "Shibboleth" and "Tubalcain;' and of the three implements with  |
|  which the Master was smitten will probably never be discovered.14 |
|  |
|  Most of the above-mentioned symbols were treated in his first two printed  |
|  lectures on Masonic symbolism, or are in the book you are now reading.  |
|  However, Pike's last sentence in the above quote, regarding the meanings of the  |
|  "three implements," is particularly notable considering that prior to writing the  |
|  present work he had already assigned symbolic meanings to the implements,  |
|  beginning with his ritual revisions of 1867 (see Appendix One). |
|  Pike believed that A Second Lecture on Masonic Symbolism, The Omkara  |
|  and Other Ineffable Words," would be his "last labor of the kind in Masonry."  |
|  The book was "intended to be the compliment of that on Masonic Symbolism";  |
|  however, without a running commentary it was, and remains, beyond the under- |
|  standing (and perhaps the interests) of most Masons. Rather than exploring  |
|  the imponderables of conventional Masonic symbolism, he investigated the  |
|  Hindu sacred monosyllable, and delved into Vedic philosophy—subjects most  |
|  Masons would find even more baffling than the works of the"romantic" school; |
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|   PREFACE |
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|  and yet Pike's work was scholarship!' The subject matter had direct relevance  |
|  to his revisions of the Fourteenth and Thirty-second Degrees—a fact not lost  |
|  on active Scottish Rite Masons; but most members lacked the requisite back- |
|  ground to appreciate Pike's insights. |
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|  SYMBOLISM OF THE BLUE DEGREES—PRECURSORS AND ORIGINS |
|  All systems of Freemasonry are founded upon the three primary "Blue" or  |
|  "Craft" Degrees of I° Entered Apprentice, 20 Fellowcraft, and 3° Master Mason,  |
|  and several Masonic Orders have their own versions of these Degrees (within  |
|  the United States they are only conferred by the State Grand Lodges). As a  |
|  part of his ritual revisions Pike also revised the Scottish Rite's version of the  |
|  Blue Degrees, for study, which he printed under the title The Porch and the  |
|  Middle Chamber ... The Book of the Lodge (1872). The more Pike researched,  |
|  the more he believed that the Blue Degrees contained the invaluable "myster- |
|  ies" of Freemasonry, although they were unperceived by the average member.  |
|  A voracious and omnivorous reader with a retentive memory, he recognized  |
|  a congruence between Hermetic and Masonic symbols. The square and  |
|  compasses, the sun and moon, the three pillars, and other symbols were  |
|  common to both. If not coincidental, what was the relationship? For Pike,  |
|  the relationship was significant rather than incidental, as he concluded that  |
|  the symbolism of Freemasonry lay in antiquity, and was either borrowed  |
|  directly from Hermeticism or the two shared a common ancestor. Through  |
|  his investigation of the earliest known Masonic catechisms, exposures, and  |
|  Old Charges (including the Regius Manuscript of c. 139o), Pike concluded  |
|  that the ancestors of Speculative Freemasonry possessed esoteric knowledge,  |
|  and that it was the possession of such that induced educated men like the anti- |
|  quary Elias Ashmole to join the Fraternity, which he did in October 1646. Pike  |
|  was not reticent to share these discoveries. In his "Address of the President;'  |
|  delivered to the Masonic Veteran Association of the District of Columbia in |
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|  1886, he discussed the importance of the Blue Degrees as the foundation of  |
|  Freemasonry, and the possessor of its secrets. This was followed a year later by  |
|  a similar study entitled, "What Freemasonry Was." |
|  As he made his discoveries, Pike expounded and elaborated upon  |
|  Masonic symbolism with increasing frequency and coherence. His most  |
|  extensive remarks were directed to members of the Royal Order of  |
|  Scotland, a Masonic system which has existed since at least 1741,1" and had  |
|  been active in the United States since 1878 (Pike served as its Provincial  |
|  Grand Master from then until his death in 1891). According to the Royal  |
|  Order of Scotland's "Heredom of Kilwinning" Degree, the Order was first  |
|  established "On the holy top of Mount Moriah in the Kingdom of Judea"  |
|  and afterwards reestablished "At I-Colm-Kill, and afterward at Kilwinning,  |
|  where the King of Scotland first sat as Grand Masten' Its raison d'être is  |
|  ostensibly the presentation of a type of Christianized Craft degree, reestab- |
|  lished and amended "To correct the errors and reform the abuses which had  |
|  crept in among the three degrees of Saint John's Masonry.' As a member  |
|  of the Royal Order of Scotland, Pike took these words to heart. He contrib- |
|  uted by assuming a personal responsibility "to correct the errors" he believed  |
|  affected the Craft's symbolism. |
|  Between 1886 and 1890 Pike delivered three discourses before the  |
|  Provincial Grand Lodge of America of the Royal Order of Scotland. In the  |
|  first of these he disclosed his intention to write "a treatise upon the Symbols  |
|  of the Blue Lodge," which would become The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of  |
|  Freemasonry. Although originally prepared for the benefit of members of the  |
|  Royal Order of Scotland, Pike stated that the manuscript would permanently  |
|  remain in the Archives of the Supreme Council. |
|  (As precursors of the present work, the reader is encouraged to read Pike's  |
|  "Address of the President,''''What Freemasonry Was," and his lectures before the  |
|  Royal Order of Scotland, which are extracted in extenso following this preface.) |
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|  COMPLETION OF THE MANUSCRIPT |
|  After completing the rough manuscript of The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of  |
|  Freemasonry Pike asked Edwin B. Mac Grotty, 33°, calligrapher of the Supreme  |
|  Council, to create the permanent copy. The completed work—its transcrip- |
|  tion, paper and binding—is a bibliophile's delight, employing some of the ele- |
|  ments of illuminated manuscripts. |
|  |
|  The title page is a work of art, done in blue, black and gold, with a  |
|  background of a large square and compass. Every word of the text is  |
|  in imitation of print, none of the letters being joined, while every page  |
|  is numbered in imitation of printed figures. All pages are of the finest  |
|  quality of paper and ruled with a border of red.' |
|  |
|  In addition to the transcription, Mac Grotty also added illustrations to  |
|  accompany the text. He redrew several engravings from old alchemical  |
|  texts which Pike analyzed in his various chapters. The completed 367-page  |
|  manuscript was beautifully bound in blue leather. Its tooled, gold-embossed  |
|  spine reads, "ESOTERIKA / THE / SYMBOLISM / OF THE / BLUE  |
|  DEGREES / OF / FREEMASONRY / PROPERTY / OF THE / SUP..  |
|  CO / WASHINGTON, 1888." |
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|  SYMBOLISM AND THE AUTHENTIC SCHOOL |
|  Throughout his Masonic career Pike enjoyed an ongoing correspondence with  |
|  contemporary scholars and officials the world over. One of his best known cor- |
|  respondents during the 188os was Robert Freke Gould, author of the recently- |
|  published and groundbreaking work, The History of Freemasonry (1882-7). The  |
|  publication secured Gould's position as England's greatest Masonic historian.  |
|  Pike was eager to both share what he learned and to have his work evaluated  |
|  and, in January 1888, he informed Gould about his study of Blue Lodge sym- |
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|  bolism. In the ensuing correspondence Pike touched on his views regarding the  |
|  origins of Masonic symbolism, and explained the origins of his work. |
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|  [ALBERT PIKE TO ROBERT F. GOULD: JANUARY 28, 1888] |
|  I have been for some time collecting the old Hermetic and  |
|  Alchemical works, in order to find out what Masonry came into  |
|  possession of from them. I have ascertained with certainty what the  |
|  square and compasses, the triangle, the oblong square, the three Grand  |
|  Masters, the idea embodied in the substitute word, the double-headed  |
|  Eagle of the Anc. . and Accep ... Rite, the Sun, Moon, and Master of  |
|  the Lodge and others [did.] |
|  I cannot conceive of anything that could have induced Ashmole,  |
|  Mainwaring, and other men of their class to unite themselves with  |
|  a Lodge of working Masons, except this—that, as Alchemists,  |
|  Hermeticists, and Rosicrucians had no association [of their] own in  |
|  England or Scotland, they joined the Masonic Lodges in order to meet  |
|  one another without being suspected; and I am convinced that it was  |
|  the men who inherited their doctrines who brought their symbols into  |
|  Masonry, but kept the Hermetic meanings of them to themselves. To  |
|  these men we owe, I believe, the Masters Degree. The substitute word  |
|  means "The Creative Energy from the Father,"—the Demiourgos,  |
|  and Hiram, I think, was made the hero, because his name resembled  |
|  Hermes, "The Master of the Lodge;' the Divine word (the Egyptian  |
|  Thoth), the Mercury of the Alchemists. |
|  I do not think there can be much doubt about this, and have  |
|  written out in full my notions in regard to our Symbolism, making a  |
|  MS. book of some zoo pages, and have deposited where it will remain  |
|  safe and secure; and believing that I have shown how Masonry became  |
|  speculative, having at least satisfied myself, I rest content." |
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|  [February 28, 1888] |
|  Although Masons will not read much, they listen excellently well and  |
|  patiently for any length of time—if the speaker will tell them anything  |
|  worth listening to. I think that I have talked to some sixty Lodges in  |
|  different places, from New York to New Orleans, and from the Atlantic to  |
|  the Pacific, to Lodges composed largely of men reasonably well educated:  |
|  lawyers, divines, and clergymen in New York, workmen in the saw-mills  |
|  of the territory of Washington, and of miners in Nevada, without in any  |
|  instance the audience becoming weary, often without even one going away,  |
|  although I rarely [spoke] for less than two hours, often two and a half,  |
|  and sometimes three. So I know that men of many kinds can be deeply  |
|  interested in the subject of the Symbolism of the Blue Lodge, and are glad  |
|  to have it proven to them that there is something more and higher in the  |
|  Blue Free-Masonry, than they had supposed." |
|  |
|  [June 27,1888] |
|  Yielding to persistent solicitation I have at last laid out my  |
|  thoughts upon the symbols of the Blue Lodge, and had the MS.  |
|  copied neatly and bound into quite a book. I wish I could submit it  |
|  to you and Bro. Hughan for your examination and comments. If I  |
|  thought that it would interest either you or him, I would send you the  |
|  original, in portions, by mail." |
|  |
|  [September 8, 1888] |
|  I suppose that no one can say what symbols the English Lodges  |
|  had before 3737, or with any approach to positiveness, whether they  |
|  had any. Is there any information in regard to that? |
|  I am satisfied that part of the symbols after that in use, and still in  |
|  use, came into Masonry from the hermetic books. Of the time of their |

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|  introduction I have no information, but I think we may reasonably  |
|  believe that until there were degrees in Masonry, there was not much  |
|  symbolism. How could they have been used without degrees? |
|  If any of the symbols, for example, the compasses and square,  |
|  were not the English school, this philosophy, I think, gave them its  |
|  own menacing, leaving the old, single, rudimentary significations to  |
|  continue for the mass of Masons. Is there, however, any proof, that any  |
|  of them were used by Masons, in Scotland or England before 1723? |
|  If the Hermetics introduced them, they knew what their symbolic  |
|  meaning then was among the Adepts: but for some of them, older than  |
|  Hermeticism, it had, no doubt, invented new meanings—e.g. for the  |
|  numbers 3 and 4, making 7. Plutarch did not know what Pythagoras  |
|  saw in the 47th Problem: and his explanation of it is but a conjecture.  |
|  But I think that in the main, the meanings that they symbols have to  |
|  me, they had to the English disciples of Fludd and Ashmole. |
|  You speak, in this connection, of English Masonry, saying that  |
|  'in Scotland, the early ceremonial must have been of the simplest  |
|  character: Is there any evidence that in England, before 1717, it was  |
|  any more elaborate? |
|  Hermeticism, as expounded by Ashmole and his contemporaries  |
|  in England and Germany, was intensely Christian and Trinitarian.  |
|  For the earlier Trinity, of the Creator, the Divine Wisdom or Intellect,  |
|  and the Word, it had substituted the Athanasian Trinity of the Father,  |
|  the Word and the Holy Spirit: and to this had accommodated its  |
|  symbolism. It was entirely ignorant of the theories of Zarathustra  |
|  and Pythagoras. I think I know what some of these were, and have, in  |
|  these, hit upon the primary meaning of some of our symbols.... |
|  The 'Ancient' Freemasonry certainly had no Masters' Degree...  |
|  We cannot say from what earlier source the degrees worked in 1724-5 |
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|  came: but neither can we cay, upon any proof yet produced, that  |
|  they came from any earlier source. We cannot say how far back their  |
|  ancestry extended. True: but we also cannot say that they had any  |
|  Masonic Ancestry. What secrets of the three present Degrees were  |
|  given in the two Degrees recognized by the grand Lodge of England  |
|  in 1723? Were all the words, signs and grips of three then given in the  |
|  two? Do we really know what were given? |
|  I cannot see how it can be said that the Master's degree was a part  |
|  of Ancient Free Masonry. I know of no proof that the Hiramic Legend  |
|  had had a period of infancy, before 1723. |
|  No one can claim that the Royal Arch, or any of the degrees  |
|  of the Anc... and Acct. Scott Rite formed a part of 'Ancient Craft  |
|  Freemasonry: But, if the Master's degree became Masonic, a part  |
|  of Freemasonry, when adopted, why could not the Rose Croix, the  |
|  Degree of Perfection, and others, though not Ancient; be entitled,  |
|  by their nature, purposes, forms and methods, to be also called  |
|  Masonic? Is not the Mark Degree essentially 'Masonic'? If you say  |
|  that nothing can be called 'Masonic' that was not part of Masonry  |
|  in 1725, you have a right to put that limited meaning on the word  |
|  `Masonic; as designating a system and organization, and not as in  |
|  any way indicating the essential character of a degree. In that sense I  |
|  do not dissert from your opinion. I called our Scottish Rite degrees  |
|  `Masonic; using the word in a wholly different sense, and as expressing  |
|  their essentiality. If they are the development of the Blue degrees, like  |
|  the commentaries on a text, they are Masonic...." |
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|  THE AUTHENTIC SCHOOL RESPONDS |
|  As interesting as the above comments are, they were necessarily incomplete,  |
|  and some of them (such as Pike's interpretation of the "substitute word") were |
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|  likely puzzling to Gould. But it is fair to say that a subject as novel and complex  |
|  as Pike's exploration into the origins and meaning of Masonic symbolism could  |
|  only be evaluated and understood within the context of his complete study.  |
|  Gould was an extremely meticulous scholar and, always the good barrister, he  |
|  reserved his opinions until the evidence was weighed. |
|  Sometime in the late summer or early autumn of 1888 Pike sent his origi- |
|  nal rough manuscript" of The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry to  |
|  Gould and his fellow members of Quatuor Coronati Lodge 2076 in London  |
|  (the premiere lodge of Masonic research). It was studied first by Gould and  |
|  subsequently by George William Speth, Secretary of the Lodge (who later  |
|  formed the well-known Quatuor Coronati Correspondence Circle, which con- |
|  tinues today). Although the manuscript was informative, it lacked the illustra- |
|  tions from old Hermetic texts which Mac Grotty prepared for the Supreme  |
|  Council's archival copy. When Mac Grotty learned that Quatuor Coronati  |
|  Lodge intended to make a second permanent copy of the manuscript for their  |
|  library he volunteered to prepare illustrations for their copy. Pike wrote to  |
|  Gould and informed him of this good news. |
|  |
|  [December 2,1888] |
|  As I have said, the symbolism of Masonry is, in my opinion, the  |
|  soul of Masonry. When you shall have read what I have written, you  |
|  may be led to take up and complete, or at least carry further the work.  |
|  It is a wide field, and I am quite conscious how little I have done  |
|  towards exploring it. If, as is said in our Western Country, I have  |
|  'blazed the way' for others, I am quite content. |
|  The brother who copied the old Hermetic cuts to which reference  |
|  is made, purposes to re-copy them for you, if you would like to have  |
|  them, and if you really mean to have the MS. copied for preservation,  |
|  it will be a labor of love with him.2' |
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Sheet32

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|  The second transcript was completed and stored in the archives of  |
|  Quatuor Coronati Lodge, with a note appended, describing it as follows: |
|  |
|  The foregoing copy is a true copy of a manuscript in the handwriting  |
|  of General Albert Pike of Washington in the United States of  |
|  America and was made by the undersigned Brother Reginald Thomas  |
|  Webster, Solicitor of the Kilburn Lodge 1608 at the dictation of the  |
|  undersigned George William Speth, P.M. Unity 183 and Sec. Quatuor  |
|  Coronati 2076 and subsequently examined by them with the original. |
|  [Signed] R.E.T. Webster |
|  G. Wm. Speth |
|  9th March 1889 |
|  Margate.' |
|  |
|  From continuing correspondence we learn that Pike's insights and reasoning  |
|  not only persuaded Gould to reconsider and revise his views on the antiquity of  |
|  Masonic symbolism, but in a letter of May 6, 1889, Speth declared the book to  |
|  be "the most philosophic & admirable work of the kind [he had] ever perused."  |
|  Gould's correspondence with Pike reveals the historian's abiding and deep  |
|  respect for his research. In a letter of May 23, 1889, Gould wrote that he "stated  |
|  to [his] friends in the [Quatuor Coronati] Lodge, 'outside the Lodge there is  |
|  only one person that we who are inside of it, should look up to with profound  |
|  veneration for his Masonic writings; and that is Bro Albert Pike:" Such state- |
|  ments were not mere flattery. As will be seen in the following extracts, Gould's  |
|  and Speth's letters evince a genuine admiration for a fellow scholar. |
|  |
|  [ROBERT F. GOULD TO ALBERT PIKE: DECEMBER 31, 1888] |
|  You are a great force in Masonry, and the fact has been more |
|  vividly brought home to me by another and more careful perusal |
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Sheet33

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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
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|  of your Lectures on Symbolism. There is no one among our British  |
|  Masonic writers who could have written up to the level of your  |
|  own performance. But this is to a certain extent explained by your  |
|  introductory remarks (with which my personal views coincide. See  |
|  Hist[ory]. of F [reemasony]. ii. 61), to the effect that many of learning  |
|  and intelligence, are disgusted by what they hear and read. |
|  |
|  [October 26, 1889] |
|  I was determined to get off a letter—so write very hurriedly,  |
|  which I hope you will excuse. Your Lectures on Symbolism impressed  |
|  me greatly and no part of them more so, than the effective way in  |
|  which you show how much of the meaning of what is now done in  |
|  Lodge, has been lost. |
|  Now I am clearly of opinion that a similar ignorance prevailed in  |
|  1717-3o, and for this reason reject as untenable, the theory that the  |
|  ceremonial of 173o was introduced into Masonry after 1717. Had such  |
|  been the case, the meaning of what was so introduced, would have  |
|  been known, & as I also venture to think, preserved. |
|  |
|  [November Ti, 1889] |
|  It had always struck me as singular, that the Freemasonry of  |
|  173o, was regarded by the writers of that period, as being some thing  |
|  unintelligible and nonsensical. And I noticed this in my History of  |
|  F [reemasonry]. (ii., 237). But your Lectures on Symbolism, caused  |
|  me to look into the subject more carefully. Now, it is my deliberately  |
|  formed opinion, that the essentials of the Masonic ceremonial, can be  |
|  traced behind 1717.... |
|  Your "Commentary" on mine, supplies a good many arguments  |
|  in favour of the antiquity of Masonic Symbolism. But the ilia" chief |
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Sheet34

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|  point I wish to establish in my forthcoming lecture is, the moral  |
|  certainty of the ceremonial of 173o, being of greater age than the  |
|  Grand Lodge of England. |
|  |
|  [ July 28, 189o] |
|  But though there are many Supreme Councils, there is only one  |
|  Albert Pike. Neither do the possessors of the 33°, at least in the Old  |
|  World, show in general, much interest in Masonic research.... But I am  |
|  surprised, that a rich S [upreme]. C [ouncil]. like that of England and  |
|  Wales, does not strive in some way to emulate the bright example of  |
|  the Mother Supreme Council. |
|  |
|  [GEORGE W. SPETH TO ALBERT PIKE: APRIL 2, 1889] |
|  ...the lectures are far & away beyond anything of the sort I have  |
|  every seen, and their study has afforded me not only much interest,  |
|  but much satisfaction. |
|  |
|  [May 6, 1889] |
|  Your lectures, spite any fault I could force myself to detect &  |
|  lay bare, if I wished to undertake so ungracious a task, still stands  |
|  pre-eminent as the most philosophic & admirable work of the kind  |
|  I have ever perused. |
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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
|  TO PUBLISH OR NOT TO PUBLISH |
|  Statements like those quoted above are themselves strong arguments for shar- |
|  ing Pike's Symbolism. However, Pike was disinclined to do so on anything but  |
|  a limited scale. Like many other people who are "bigger than life;' Pike had  |
|  strong opinions and passions. Aware of the tremendous intellectual gifts he  |
|  possessed, he was inclined to reserve the fruits of his research for those capable  |
|  of appreciating them, and he was a vigorous supporter of intellectual property  |
|  rights. On more than one occasion he asserted the right to withhold and even  |
|  destroy his own research. Although Pike denied the existence of anything  |
|  "occult" in Freemasonry (i.e., in the odious sense of the term), he firmly main- |
|  tained its esoteric character. Thus, whenever he delivered a lecture on what he  |
|  considered the "true" secrets of Freemasonry, it was usually not transcribed,  |
|  and even more rarely printed. |
|  It would have been impossible for Pike to share his research without com- |
|  mitting it to paper in some form. For this reason several of his works were  |
|  printed in limited editions, some of which had restrictions on ownership. This  |
|  may be understandable in the case of rituals, but he extended his restrictions  |
|  to his studies on the symbolism of Freemasonry. His first Lecture on Masonic  |
|  Symbolism (1875) included the following note which outlined the restrictions. |
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|  Washington, D.C. |
|  No. day of A...M... 5635 |
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|  Of the following work, one-hundred copies only have been printed,  |
|  belonging to those who have contributed to pay the cost. |
|  This copy is delivered and belongs to , and he receives |
|  it upon the express condition, agreed to by receiving it, that he will not  |
|  permit, at any time, any part of it to be published or to be copied; that he  |
|  will not part with it to any one save a Prince of the Royal Secret or 33° and  |
|  that he will provide that in case of death or accident happening to him, it  |
|  shall go into the hands of a Bro... of one of those degrees; and, in testimony  |
|  of this he will hereunto sign his name. |
|  |
|  |
|  Albert Pike |
|  Soy.. Gr.. Commander |
|  |
|  Within the text of the book, he further elaborated on the reasons for  |
|  these restrictions. |
|  |
|  We may smile also at those other Orders which ape our Ceremonies  |
|  and wear our symbolic clothing, while profoundly ignorant of the  |
|  meaning of all.... |
|  This leads me also to add, that this Lecture is not for publication,  |
|  nor will ever be published with my consent. I regard it as the Law of  |
|  Masonry that such instruction be given orally, and to the brethren  |
|  alone. Whatever may be the claims of what is called Masonic |
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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
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|  literature, to the gratitude of the Society, I think that the mischiefs  |
|  of which it is the fruitful mother have been very great. Too much  |
|  has been published, for the world at large to read, about Masonic  |
|  Symbolism, enabling the Profane to know all that is known by our  |
|  Initiates in general, or even more... 27 |
|  |
|  Pike's concern is somewhat puzzling, since he had stated several times  |
|  that most Masons had no interest in reading Masonic books. It is unlikely he  |
|  actually believed that the non-Masonic public somehow had a greater interest  |
|  in Masonic symbolism than Masons did themselves. The prohibition is also  |
|  somewhat enigmatic in light of a catalog he prepared in 1879, of books to be  |
|  sold by the Supreme Council." Although Pike stated that "no individual can  |
|  own a ritual' his catalog actually included the following"reprints of rituals of  |
|  old degrees" he prepared for publication. |
|  |
|  (I) The Degree of Mark Master Mason, Being the Work of the Grand  |
|  Council of Princes of Jerusalem, of South Carolina, and the Oldest  |
|  Work Extant Anywhere. |
|  (2)The Wigan Ritual of the Early Grand Encampment. |
|  (3)Rite Ancien Maconnerie D'York. sme Grade Mark Mason; & 7me Grade,  |
|  Royale Arche. (This work also includes a copy of the "Past Master:  |
|  Venerable of the Lodge:') |
|  (4)The English Ritual for Knights Templar: Transcribed verbatim et literatim,  |
|  for the Honourable M.P. Soy G. Corn., Bro. Albert Pike, XXXIIr,  |
|  Southern Jurisdiction, by Matthew Cooke, XXX°. |
|  (5)Grand Maitre Ecossais or Scottish Elder Master and Knight of St. Andrew,  |
|  being the Fourth Degree of Ramsay or of La Regime Reforme ou Rectifie  |
|  of Dresden. |
|  (6)Royal Arch Exaltation. |

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|  + PREFACE 4. |
|  I have studied these works in detail and note that some of them differed only  |
|  in minor details from the rituals used during Pike's time. The Royal Arch exal- |
|  tation, for example, was an almost verbatim copy of the contemporary ritual.  |
|  In its preface, Pike's friend Matthew Cooke, who was the source of the ritual,  |
|  stated that it was "evidently taken from some poor copy of the authorized pres- |
|  ent mode of working. As a whole it is pretty nearly correct—in all its essentials  |
|  it is quite so...." Cooke added that "want of time, alone" induced him to send  |
|  it, rather than a corrected copy. The books, which sold for $2.50 apiece (about  |
|  $so each in today's money), would have been extremely useful to Masons inter- |
|  ested in the development of the rituals. If we contrast these books with Pike's  |
|  studies on Masonic symbolism, it could be further argued that there was more  |
|  Masonry—in the traditional sense at least—and less speculation, in these  |
|  books than in those Pike restricted. |
|  Pike's A Second Lecture on Masonic Symbolism. The Omkara and Other  |
|  Ineffable Words (1875) was likewise a limited publication. Like the former work  |
|  it began by placing restrictions on its distribution. |
|  |
|  One hundred copies only, of this, as of the former will be printed.  |
|  At the price required, not many more than one hundred Masons in  |
|  the United States, I think, would care to have and read it. The mass  |
|  of Masons are little inclined to read works on Masonry. And I think  |
|  it wiser, also, to place these works in a few hands, forbidding further  |
|  multiplication of copies, and let what truths they may contain be  |
|  communicated orally to others by the few who read them." |
|  |
|  Pike felt so strongly about limiting distribution that he even had the print- |
|  ing plates "melted down:'" Each volume of the Lectures on Masonic Symbolism  |
|  sold for $25 (about $450 apiece today). If Pike truly believed that his discoveries  |
|  would be orally communicated in perpetuity he was idealistic if not naive. It is not |
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Sheet39

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|   ARTURO DE HOYOS   |
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|  known how many copies of these books survive today; however, in my experience  |
|  as a Mason I have known only a few people who have seen original copies of the  |
|  Lectures. Because of their scarcity original copies now command a premium; I  |
|  know one person who paid $9500 for an excellent copy the first Lecture. As any  |
|  bibliophile knows, the predictable result of limited publication is duplication and/  |
|  or piracy Ready proof of this is the fact that, contrary to Pike's wishes, copies were  |
|  made—some of which today sell for exorbitant sums. At the time of this writing a  |
|  rare book dealer is advertising a typescript copy of Pike's Lectures for woo." |
|  The Book of the Words (1878) is Pike's etymological dictionary of the  |
|  Scottish Rite's "significant words:' This book was also initially printed in  |
|  a limited edition, and the first edition of i5o copies was only available to  |
|  Thirty-second and Thirty-third Degree members; it sold for $7.50 (about  |
|  $140 in today's money). Original copies sell today for about $950. Realizing  |
|  the importance of the work, the Scottish Rite Research Society prepared an  |
|  authorized hardbound reprint of the enlarged second edition of:879, added an  |
|  introduction and an index, and sent it as a bonus book to our members in 1999.  |
|  It remains available for purchase today from the Supreme Council. |
|  As noted earlier, Pike's 1887 address, "What Freemasonry Was," had been  |
|  delivered to the Masonic Veteran Association of the District of Columbia.  |
|  As will be seen within its text (which follows this preface), it parallels The  |
|  Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry. He initially considered both  |
|  works private and stated, "Neither this nor they are intended for publica- |
|  tion."33 However, he later gave the text of his speech to the Masonic Veteran  |
|  Association, and they printed the talk in full. |
|  Like his other works on Masonic symbolism, the "Introductory" to the  |
|  present work explains that Pike did not want the manuscript made common: |
|  |
|  It has been urged upon me, again and again, that if I do not write  |
|  them out they will be lost when I die; and knowing this to be true, and |

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|  + PREFACE + |
|  that the day of my death must soon come, I address myself to the task  |
|  of providing for the preservation of that which, by study and reflection,  |
|  I have discovered in regard to the symbols of the Blue Lodge; especially  |
|  charging those to whom what I am writing shall be entrusted, now  |
|  and in all time to come, never to permit the multiplication of copies of  |
|  this book, or any part of it by printing, and forbidding the supplying  |
|  of any copy of it or any part of it in manuscript even, to anyone who is  |
|  not fit and qualified to teach and instruct his Brethren, and who does  |
|  not propose to use it as their teacher and instructor. |
|  |
|  Although Pike was averse to printing this book he was not opposed to  |
|  sharing it under the right circumstances; i.e., it could be given to someone "fit  |
|  and qualified to teach and instruct his Brethren;' as well as those who would  |
|  "use it as their teacher and instructor:' How often this was done I cannot  |
|  say. But if the book was never shared, it remains a fact that large parts of its  |
|  "secrets" can nonetheless be collated and reconstructed from both Pike's printed  |
|  discourses and from ritual extracts (several of which I have reproduced in the  |
|  appendices). Admittedly, the language differs slightly from the form presented  |
|  in the corpus, yet it is essentially the same. |
|  I am not naively suggesting that Pike would approve of the present work,  |
|  but I do believe that if he lived today this book would be made available in  |
|  some form. At a minimum, the advantage to the present publication is that it  |
|  brings together many of Pike's parallel thoughts on the symbols he treats. It  |
|  will thus ultimately educate members, as Pike had hoped. As a work specially  |
|  edited and annotated for publication, I am optimistic it may itself serve as a  |
|  "teacher and instructor:' |
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|   ARTURO DE HOYOS   |
|  How TO READ THIS BOOK |
|  While preparing this work for publication I occasionally discussed its  |
|  contents with friends. As an admirer of Pike's intellect and scholarship,  |
|  however, I was hesitant to influence their opinions by critiquing those  |
|  notions with which I disagreed. I also withheld my opinions because I  |
|  considered it a disservice to both him and my friends. In my view, this  |
|  would be analogous to watching a motion picture with a companion who's  |
|  an expert on the subject matter of the film. If she sat quietly at my side, I  |
|  could suspend disbelief and allow myself to be drawn into the experience.  |
|  However, if she constantly interrupted me by noting anachronisms and  |
|  plot flaws I would be unable to "lose myself" in the film and enjoy it to its  |
|  fullest potential. I might gain "intellectual knowledge" but only by sacrific- |
|  ing the participation mystique. |
|  For this reason, and in order to more fully appreciate the depth of  |
|  Pike's insights and the ingenuity of his conclusions, I strongly recom- |
|  mend at least two readings of this book. At the first reading you should  |
|  simply study and ponder the original corpus, as Pike intended, without  |
|  the distraction of reading my endnotes or the appendices. Let his voice  |
|  speak to you uninterrupted. On subsequent readings pause and examine  |
|  the endnotes; most of time they will simply contribute supplementary  |
|  information (e.g. biographic or bibliographic). On occasion, however,  |
|  they may correct Pike's citations and/or quotations or challenge his  |
|  deductions. Regardless of any disagreement, I believe that readers famil- |
|  iar with his other writings will understand how he arrived at his conclu- |
|  sions. I am further confidant that as one reads and rereads this work it  |
|  will engender a deeper respect and appreciation for Pike's genius in spite  |
|  of any errors he may have made. I believe that the present book is one of  |
|  Pike's most interesting and most accessible works. I invite you to read,  |
|  ponder and enjoy this work. |
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|  THE APPENDICES |
|  In order to make this book as "user friendly" as possible, I added five appendi- |
|  ces to this book: |
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|  Appendix i. Parallels to The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry.  |
|  This section includes Pike's earlier notions concerning some of the  |
|  symbols and themes treated in this book. Topics include (I) "The  |
|  Weapons and Blows of the Assassins;' (2) "The Three Grips;' (3)  |
|  "The Substitute for the Master's Word" and (4) "Is the Cable-tow  |
|  a Symbol?" |
|  |
|  Appendix 2. A Letter Touching Masonic Symbolism. This letter,  |
|  written to Robert F. Gould in November 1889, sets forth some of  |
|  the reasons why Pike believed Masonic symbolism is older than  |
|  Speculative Freemasonry. |
|  |
|  Appendix 3. Pike's Dependence on other Sources. Although Pike assert- |
|  ed that the ideas written in this book were original, some parts bear  |
|  an uncanny similarity to preexisting notions. This section examines  |
|  antecedents of one of the subjects discussed in this book, and demon- |
|  strates that Pike was, at least unconsciously, influenced by others. |
|  |
|  Appendix 4. The Faith of Albert Pike. Opponents of Freemasonry have  |
|  leveled a myriad of confused and contradictory charges against Albert  |
|  Pike's religious views. He has been accused of being an atheist and  |
|  even a devil-worshipper. The extracts in this appendix reveal that he  |
|  was a Christian who urged others to follow the teachings and example  |
|  of Jesus of Nazareth. Pike's words demonstrate his abiding belief in a  |
|  personal God, "to Whom it was not folly to pray." |
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|  Appendix 5. Four Valuable Exposes. The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees  |
|  refers to four early exposures of English Masonic ritual which are  |
|  reproduced in full, to facilitate study and research: (I) A Mason's  |
|  Examination (1723), (2) The Grand Mystery of Free Masons Discover'd  |
|  (1725 ed.), (3) Samuel Prichard's Masonry Dissected (173o), and (4)  |
|  Jachin and Boaz (1762). Although these exposures differ greatly from  |
|  Freemasonry as practiced today, they may help us understand how  |
|  Pike arrived at his ideas. |
|  |
|  A BRIEF NOTE ON PIKE'S STYLE |
|  In editing this book I tried to preserve Pike's "voice" as much as possible.  |
|  This means that I did not alter or rearrange the text, even though it would  |
|  have made some sections more coherent. However, I did modernize his  |
|  antiquated (and occasionally inconsistent) spelling and punctuation. Thus,  |
|  I dropped his frequent capitalization of nouns and updated his spelling of  |
|  words like "Mohamet" (Mohammed), "burthens" (burdens) and "immitted"  |
|  (emitted); I also added supplementary material within brackets to help  |
|  readers unfamiliar with some of Pike's unconventional transliterations (for  |
|  example, "Kurush the Median and his successor Daryus," are identified as  |
|  Cyrus the Great and Darius); and finally, I modernized his method of pre- |
|  senting scriptural citations (e.g., I Kings VII.zi becomes I Kings 7:21). But,  |
|  all in all, what you are about to read is the work as it was prepared by that  |
|  genius of Freemasonry, Albertus Magnus. |
|  |
|  March 13, 2005 Arturo de Hoyos, 33° |
|  The House of the Temple Grand Archivist and Grand Historian |
|  Washington, D.C. The Supreme Council, 33°, S.J. |
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|  Figure 4. A Free Mason Formed out of the Materials of his Lodge.  |
|  Designed by Alexander Slade (1754). |

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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
|  Extracts from Albert Pike's |
|  "Address of the President" and "What Freemasonry Was." |
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|  [The following texts introduced Pike's contemporaries to the rationale behind his  |
|  authorship of The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry. As such,  |
|  they are supplemental to the "Introductory" which precedes his text.] |
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|  [ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT] |
|  My Brethren, there are many fields of Masonic labor, and every one must work  |
|  in that wherein it seems to him that he can do the most good. But, whatever  |
|  else we may be, we are all Master Masons, and we all owe to the Masonry  |
|  of the Blue Degrees our first and paramount allegiance. No man is without  |
|  offence, who makes these Degrees mere stepping-stones by which to ascend to  |
|  what he deems a higher level. If he does so, he is not worthy to wear the deco- |
|  rations of the Degrees to which he supposes himself to have ascended. These  |
|  are higher than those of the Blue Lodge, in only the single sense, that they are  |
|  builded upon it, as the upper stories and attic of a house are builded above the  |
|  ground-floor, to which are in no sense superior to more honourable, unless  |
|  they are intrinsically so by virtue of a higher instruction, a profounder philoso- |
|  phy taught by them, a purer morality inculcated, a truer and better illustration  |
|  and explanation of the symbols. If really of a higher nature by virtue of these,  |
|  they would be equally so, if the numeration of the Degrees began at the top,  |
|  and that bearing the highest number were at the bottom.... |
|  If our labours and writings in other Degrees and Bodies tend to elevate  |
|  the Symbolic Masonry, to illustrate its symbols and invest them with a higher  |
|  significance and a more solemnly religious meaning, to apply and expound and  |
|  comment upon and make more forcible the moral law of the Blue Degrees,  |
|  'the principle tenets of Free-Masonry; 'included between the two points of the  |
|  compasses; to communicate to the zealous Masonic student more exalted ideas |
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|   PREFACE + |
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|  of the God in whom Masons put their trust, and strengthen him with more  |
|  convincing proofs of the existence of the soul after this life ends, then those  |
|  who work and write there are the efficient Apostles of the Free-Masonry of the  |
|  Blue Degrees, true fellow-workmen in the field of Masonic labour.... |
|  Let us, therefore, my dear Brethren, always remember, that first of all  |
|  and above all, we are Master Masons; and wherever we work and labour,  |
|  calling ourselves Masons, let us work and labor to elevate and dignify Blue  |
|  Masonry; for we owe to it all that we are in the Order; and whatever we may  |
|  be elsewhere, we are always amenable to its law and its tribunals, and always  |
|  concerned to maintain and magnify its honour and glory." |
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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
|  [WHAT FREEMASONRY WAS.] |
|  In the papers that I intend to leave for others who come after me to read will  |
|  be found the reasons why I conclude that Free-Masonry in England, from the  |
|  time when it no longer wholly consisted of gatherings of working men ... was,  |
|  for the workers or Commonality, a Christian and Trinitarian Society; Hiram  |
|  being to these, after the Master's Degree was introduced, the Representative of  |
|  Jesus Christ, the Divine Word; but that, to a limited number, its symbols had a  |
|  more general and more ancient meaning, concealing from the vulgar and teach- |
|  ing to a few adepts the doctrines of the Hermetic Philosophy and Alchemy. |
|  The preface to the Book of long Livers' alludes, I think, to these secret  |
|  doctrines, and to the esoteric meanings of the Symbols." |
|  These Symbols of the Blue Lodge came to Masonry, in part, from  |
|  Hermeticism; which also gave to Masonry its own explanation of those which  |
|  Masonry already possessed. |
|  Free-Masonry has always given the world to understand that it was in pos- |
|  session of a secret and mysterious knowledge, of inestimable value, which no  |
|  one could acquire elsewhere than in its Lodges. It still asserts that claim to be  |
|  the consideration of men, and offers the communication of that knowledge as  |
|  an inducement to men to seek initiation." |
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|  Dr. Mackey once disposed of the theory that Free-Masonry sprang out of  |
|  Rosicrucianism, in an off-hand way, by saying,"The symbolism of Rosicrucianism  |
|  is derived from the Hermetic Philosophy; that of Free-Masonry from an opera- |
|  tive art." No one has any definite idea what Rosicrucianism was, what doctrines it  |
|  taught, or what secrets it pretended to have. It seems to me to have been a vague  |
|  mysticism, with half-formed and shapeless notions expressed in incoherent jargon.  |
|  It was a modern production, and while it invented some symbols, (the meaning of  |
|  which is not certainly known by any one, especially that of the Cross with the Rose  |
|  upon it,) it borrowed others from the ancients and the Hermetic Philosophers. |

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|   PREFACE + |
|  But it is not true that all the symbolism of Masonry is derived from an oper- |
|  ative art: The Sun and Moon were not symbols from such an art, nor was the  |
|  Triangle, nor the Blazing Star, nor the 47th Problem of Euclid. The Compasses  |
|  and the Square were used as Hermetic symbols long before Masonry had them:  |
|  the 47th Problem was a great symbol of Pythagoras. The numbers 3, 5, 7, 9, had  |
|  no connection with operative art, nor did any of the triads of the Lodge, nor the  |
|  True Word, nor the Substitute for it, nor any of the symbolism of the legend. |
|  Elias Ashmole, made a Free-Mason in 1646, and who died in 1692, trans- |
|  lated and published a work of Dr. Dee on the Secrets of Hermetic Science, and  |
|  one of Jean Espagnet on the Grand Secret of Hermetic Philosophy; and also  |
|  published Annotations on the writings of Englishmen upon the Hermetic  |
|  Mysteries; and Desaguliers and Anderson may have known him; but it does  |
|  not appear that either of them affected to be Hermetics. That some one to  |
|  whom that philosophy was familiar gave shape to the Degrees after 1723  |
|  appears certain to me from the presence in them of symbols borrowed from  |
|  Hermeticism, together with their ancient meanings; from what I believe to be  |
|  the true meanings of those that seem to have come from 'an operative art'; and  |
|  from the scope and purpose of all, except those of the Legend, taken together. |
|  There are symbolic meanings in the Legend also, Hiram himself being a  |
|  Symbol; but these were new, and we owe them to the inventor of the Legend  |
|  itself. Who that inventor was we cannot even conjecture. We can only say that  |
|  was probably a member of Lodge No. 4. |
|  To whomsoever the arrangement of the Degrees and the extension of their  |
|  symbolism may have been due, it is certain that, by means of these, Free-Masonry  |
|  became quite another thing than what it was in 1717, when, so far as can be ascer- |
|  tained, it had no symbolism at all, or, if any, none that was worthy studying?' |
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|  The Lodges of Free-Masons were wholly unconnected with the Masons' or  |
|  Free-Masons' Guild or Livery Company of London or elsewhere. And if there |

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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
|  were no Lodges or local Clubs of other handicraftsmen, a Lodge of Masons  |
|  offered to the students of Rosicrucianism and Hermeticism and Alchemy the  |
|  only organization ready to their hand and apt for their purposes, by joining  |
|  which they could assemble together, maintaining a Society within a Society— |
|  the latter public, the former unknown and its existence unsuspected. |
|  They had only to give to the Symbols derived from 'operative art; i.e., to  |
|  the tools and implements of the stone-masons, perhaps already invested with  |
|  a rude and simple symbolism, meanings that suited their own doctrines, leav- |
|  ing undisturbed those which these Symbols had for the working-men; and  |
|  by Degrees to introduce others belonging to Hermeticism; and they could,  |
|  of course, find opportunity enough to talking with each other, and also make  |
|  disciples among the working-men. |
|  Ashmole did not desire social intercourse with common stone-hammerers  |
|  or building masons. He could not have cared for their pipes and ale, or have felt  |
|  any interest in what concerned their trade. |
|  There was some sufficient motive. The Society already had members who  |
|  claimed for it an origin in the earliest ages. In the Lodge at Warrington, in  |
|  Lancashire, of which we get but this single glimpse, there was, it is probable,  |
|  men known to Ashmole and Colonel Mainwaring to be of tastes and studies  |
|  like their own, constituting an inner group, with whom they wished to com- |
|  mune in secret: and such groups may first have been formed within the Lodges  |
|  at a time when it would have been dangerous for them to meet together openly  |
|  as avowedly Rosicrucian or Hermetic organizations. For not long before the  |
|  beginning of the i8th Century men still believed in sorcery and magic, and  |
|  Paracelsus and Agrippa were regarded as accursed: and the Church of Rome  |
|  held the doctrines of the Hermetic philosophy to be more heretical than those  |
|  of Arius or Huss or Wiclif. |
|  It was to conceal these doctrines from all except the adepts, that these 'her- |
|  etics' resorted to an unintelligible jargon, in which no coherent ideas seemed |
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|  + PREFACE + |
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|  to be embodied; and that when they pretended to explain any of their dark  |
|  sayings, the explanations were so trivial and common, so orthodox, and so free  |
|  of offence to the most exacting church or owlish bigot, that there evidently  |
|  appeared to have been no necessity or reason for concealing them. The true  |
|  meanings none but the adepts ever knew: and these may have used Masonry  |
|  as a cloak for their association." |
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|  It seems to me that those who declaim against the higher Degrees, and  |
|  insist that there is no Masonry except the Ancient Craft Masonry, ought in  |
|  honesty and good conscience to class the third Degree among these 'higher' one  |
|  which are no part of Masonry, because they did not belong to 'Ancient Craft  |
|  Masonry: It was unquestionably, to use the phrase of Lyon, concocted; and the  |
|  legend of Hiram invented, in 1723 or later: and the Degree is no more a part  |
|  of Ancient Craft Masonry than the Degrees of the Lodge of Perfection in the  |
|  Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite are; for these contain and illustrate other  |
|  legends in regard to Hiram and his murderers that are quite as Masonic as the  |
|  legend of the third Degree is. |
|  The object of the addition of the third Degree was to add to the Symbolism  |
|  of the Institution and make Masonry more worthy of the consideration of  |
|  intelligent and studious men. The same laudable purpose inspired those  |
|  who at different times added the other Degrees which have been accepted as  |
|  Masonic, most of them for more than a century, and none of them for much  |
|  less than that length of time. |
|  It is known to you all that during a large part of my life, fully thirty  |
|  years, I have devoted myself to the development of thirty of these additional  |
|  Degrees, constituting a Rite more widely diffused in the world than any  |
|  other, and to studying the Symbols of the Blue Degrees and endeavoring to  |
|  exalt the first three Degrees in the estimation of men. If I had not considered  |
|  myself engaged in Masonic work, I should have wearied of the labor long ago. |
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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
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|  It is the fashion to speak of the high Degrees as injurious to the Symbolic  |
|  or Ancient Craft Masonry; but it is by far more easy, sometimes, to say a  |
|  thing than to prove it. It is exceedingly doubtful whether the Blue Masonry  |
|  would have become strong, and its membership numerous, and its life long,  |
|  on the Continent of Europe and in the Republics that were once Colonies of  |
|  Spain, if it had not been accompanied by the higher Degrees. These not only  |
|  developed the principles of Blue Masonry and taught with stronger empha- |
|  sis the great doctrines of free government and freedom of conscience, which  |
|  alone commended Masonry to the consideration of the intelligent devotees  |
|  of freedom in those countries, but by the distinction which they offered to  |
|  those who were worthy to attain them they added to the attractions which  |
|  Masonry possessed for men distinguished among their fellows by high posi- |
|  tion, force of character and rare intelligence.'s9 |

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|   PREFACE + |
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|  Extracts from Albert Pike's |
|  Lectures to the Royal Order of Scotland |
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|  [EXTRACT I. MEETING OF 1886] |
|  To expound the Symbolism of the Blue Degrees in a profounder and truer  |
|  sense; to teach "the principal tenets of Masonry, included between the two  |
|  points of the compasses," the higher moral principals, without which "broth- |
|  erhood" is but an idle word, the duties of generosity, sympathy, forbearance,  |
|  kindness, forgetfulness of injuries, charitable judgment, active beneficence,  |
|  compassion—this would be to exalt and magnify the Symbolic Masonry. |
|  If the great symbol of Pythagoras, known as the 47th Problem of Euclid,  |
|  means only, as we read in the "Book of the Lodge" of Bro.. Mackey, "that  |
|  Masons are great lovers of the Arts and Sciences in general;' it should at once  |
|  disappear from the charts or tracing-boards of our Lodges; for the "explana- |
|  tion" explains nothing, and makes the symbol no symbol at all of any thing. If  |
|  the different relative positions of the Square and Compasses upon the Altar, in  |
|  the different Degrees, teach only what the Candidate is told, they teach noth- |
|  ing at all, and are unmeaning simulacra of symbols. If the Substitute for the  |
|  Master's Word means no more than "marrow in the bone;' or "What! Is this  |
|  the builder?" it is not a "substitute" for any thing worth being represented by  |
|  a substitute; and least of all is it a substitute for the Unknown Name of God,  |
|  the Father of all that is. |
|  Every legitimate symbol of the Blue Lodge, every one that really belongs  |
|  to it, is a religious symbol, of great antiquity, which came to Free-Masonry  |
|  from the Hermetic Philosophy by inheritance, through Pythagoras perhaps,  |
|  from the Median Magi. Every one of them is the embodiment of a doctrine  |
|  in regard to the Deity, and the revelation of divine truth to man—doctrines  |
|  which have reappeared in every subsequent religion. If I should live another  |
|  year, I will entrust to the keeping of the Provincial Grand Lodge a treatise |
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|   ARTURO DE HOYOS   |
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|  upon the Symbols of the Blue Lodge containing the results of my studies and  |
|  reflections thereon, and so discharge in part the debt which, as a Knight of the  |
|  Rosy Cross, I owe to the Symbolic Masonry.° |
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|  [EXTRACT 2. MEETING OF 1887] |
|  I have kept the promise made to you at our last session, that I would write out  |
|  my interpretations of the Symbolism of the Blue Lodge; and as soon as I can  |
|  have a fair copy made, I will place it in the keeping of the Provincial Grand  |
|  Secretary, so that it may be accessible to those who may desire to read it. |
|  It will be received upon the condition that it is not to be at any time, in  |
|  whole or in part, published, or any copy of it made. Those things, the knowl- |
|  edge whereof was anciently confined to the Adepts, are to be confined to  |
|  Adepts still, and not loosely divulged to all the world; and no man or number  |
|  of men will ever have a right to make common what I leave in special trust for  |
|  a few, it being wholly mine to preserve or destroy as may seem to me good. |
|  Masonry has been so liberal in the divulgation of its symbols, as not to  |
|  know that it has any left to be divulged. |
|  A man is no longer satisfied with the acquisition of knowledge or the dis- |
|  covery of any key of mystery, for himself as a private possession, or to be shared  |
|  with a few; but must forthwith rush into print and proclaim his discovery to all  |
|  the world. I do not see why Masonry should desire to expound her symbolism  |
|  urbi et orbi,41 since its secrets are the only ones which every one who reads has  |
|  not the ample opportunity to learn. |
|  The very essence of her being consists in her symbolism. This makes her  |
|  what she is. I have expressed this truth elsewhere in the aphorism, "Her sym- |
|  bolism is the soul of Free-Masonry:' Wearing the mask and garb of a common  |
|  and laborious trade and occupation, she is the oldest and most venerable of  |
|  all human institutions and refuses to disclose herself even to the great mass  |
|  of her own novices." |
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|   PREFACE   |
|  [EXTRACT 3. MEETING OF 1890] |
|  Four years ago I said to you, `If I should live another year, I will entrust to the  |
|  keeping of the Provincial Grand Lodge a treatise upon the Symbols of the  |
|  Blue Lodge containing the results of my studies and reflections thereon, and  |
|  so discharge in part the debt which, as a Knight of the Rosy Cross, I owe to  |
|  the Symbolic Masonry.' |
|  This promise was not punctually kept: but after two years had passed I did  |
|  do the promised work. I have given to the manuscript-book containing it the  |
|  tide, 'The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of Free-Masonry: It consists of an  |
|  Introductory chapter, five principal lessons; and some Fragments. One copy of  |
|  the work is here; and one, made there from the original manuscript, is in England,  |
|  in the keeping of Bro. . Gould, the Masonic Historian. No other copy of it or of  |
|  any part of it can be made, and the original rough manuscript has been destroyed. |
|  The work cannot be printed. It is esoteric: and I have committed it to writ- |
|  ing only because it would otherwise at my death have been lost. It will always  |
|  remain in safe-keeping, in the House of the Temple of the Supreme Council  |
|  of the 33d Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States, because  |
|  the Royal Order has no Home: and it will never be permitted to be taken out  |
|  of that building, even for an hour, by any one. It may be read here by Masonic  |
|  students and to classes of students or in a school of instruction. If lent to one  |
|  and another, it would soon be ruined or disappear: for there is no trust to be  |
|  put in borrowers of books, as I have found to my cost. |
|  Permit me to say briefly in this address somewhat what may without impropri- |
|  ety be published on this subject by which others may be invited to investigate. |
|  The Brotherhood of Free-Masonry at first consisted wholly, and for a long  |
|  time afterward chiefly, of hand-workers; of two classes only—Apprentices  |
|  and Fellows—their occupation stone-masonry; the Ancient Charges and  |
|  Regulations prescribing their duties and defining their relations to each other  |
|  as such. The 'Masters' then were simply those to whom the former had appren- |
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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
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|  ticed, and by whom the latter were employed. At how early a day, in England,  |
|  Scotland, or Ireland, these Apprentices and Fellows formed clubs, for convivial  |
|  purposes, calling them 'Lodges; instead of continuing to have mere occasional  |
|  gatherings, of such as saw fit or chanced to come together, is not know; not is  |
|  it known that, before the year 1717 there was any sort of connection or com- |
|  munity among the Lodges. There is no proof that there ever was a General  |
|  Assembly in London before that year. It is said in the Regius Manuscript that at  |
|  an earlier day `Gemetry; brought by Euclid into England, called itself`Masonry,  |
|  and architects and the sons of noblemen were associated with the Masons.  |
|  As to the sons of noblemen we may be allowed to doubt. It is very likely that  |
|  architects were among the 'Masters'; but I think there is no evidence that the  |
|  architects were members of the Lodges. |
|  As early, at least, as the middle of the i7th century, persons not stone- |
|  masons, nor geometricians, nor mathematicians, nor architects, began to be  |
|  admitted into the Lodges—some, no doubt, merely for their countenance and  |
|  patronage; but we can not account in that way for most of them. Elias Ashmole,  |
|  who was admitted in 1646, in Lancashire, was an antiquarian, a solicitor in  |
|  chancery, a physician, and astrologer and a Hermetic philosopher, and writer;  |
|  and Colonel Mainwaring, who was admitted with him, had been a soldier and  |
|  may have be a squire and magistrate. One of the four 'Old Lodges; said to have  |
|  existed in London before 1717, but of the pre-existence of either of which not  |
|  proof has ever been found, had a larger membership than all the other three  |
|  together, and was the only one of the four that had even one member of the rank  |
|  of Esquire. Among its members were Clergymen, Scholars, Esquires, Knights  |
|  and Noblemen, whose connection with the brotherhood is unexplained. |
|  There was no connection whatever between the Masonic Lodges and  |
|  the Mason's Company or Guild of London, and when the Grand Lodge was  |
|  formed after 1717 working men of other occupations than stone-masonry  |
|  were members of Lodges—two such workingmen of other occupations were |
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|  + PREFACE + |
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|  freely admitted. Certainly this was the case at York. I doubt whether the  |
|  majority of the members of any of the old Lodges, either of the moderns or  |
|  ancients, were working Masons. |
|  I am convinced that before 1723, persons professing the Hermetic philoso- |
|  phy had obtained admission into the Lodges, and under the cloak of Masonry  |
|  held their secret consultations and made disciples. |
|  It is significant that while Euclid is said to have brought `Gemetry' into  |
|  England, Pythagoras, of Crotona in magna Grecia, is also credited with its  |
|  introduction there. Pythagoras was neither stone-mason, nor architect, nor  |
|  mathematician, but a philosopher and teacher, dealing with numbers as sym- |
|  bols, and holding doctrines concerning them which have never since been  |
|  understood, but now may be by means of the old Gathas of the Zend-Avesta.  |
|  We now have only a very imperfect knowledge of his language in regard to  |
|  them. Iamblichus was in reality profoundly ignorant of his teachings, and  |
|  Plutarch was entirely mistaken as to the symbolic meaning of his great symbol,  |
|  the right-angled triangle, representing the numbers 3, 4 and 5. |
|  Pythagoras did not style it his 'Great Symbol, because of the mathematical  |
|  theorem which it expressed, or because by means of it, it could be ascertained  |
|  by a simple measurement whether the walls of a building formed a square. The  |
|  Zend-Avesta makes it absolutely certain that to him it was a religious symbol;  |
|  that his Lesser and greater Tetractys were so likewise: and that numbers, for  |
|  him, symbolized great religious truths. |
|  Euclid was neither Mason nor Architect, but a Mathematician; and  |
|  'Gemetry' in the Regius Manuscript meant, I think, 'the science of numbers;  |
|  according to the doctrine of Pythagoras. |
|  The Hermetic Philosophy was of Greek origin, professing an Egyptian  |
|  parentage. Whether it was the Pythagorean doctrine or not, it certainly par- |
|  took of it, and of the notions of Plato and Philo the Alexandrian Jew, and  |
|  those current in Asia Minor in regard to the Divine Wisdom and the Creative |

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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS |
|  Word. In the 17th century it had developed into Alchemy and Rosicrucianism,  |
|  had lost the original meaning of some of the symbols, using the number 4 and  |
|  the square and cube as symbols of the four elements, and the number 3 and  |
|  the triangle, the double and triple interlaced triangles and the pentalpha as  |
|  symbols of the Triune Deity, representing the three Divine Persons by its salt,  |
|  sulphur and mercury. Its Divine Word, the creative potency of the Deity, the  |
|  Demiourgos, the Vohumano of Zarathustra, the Egyptian Thoth, the Greek  |
|  Hermes is expressed in the Master's Degree by the word spoken at the grave,  |
|  and represented by Hiram the Artificer. The symbols of the Blue Lodge con- |
|  ceal the truths of the old Aryan doctrine. |
|  But although, by the making and adoption of the third Degree, and the  |
|  introduction of the Hermetic Symbols, Free-Masonry became hermetic for one  |
|  small class of its members, it became for all the rest only 'a system of morality,  |
|  veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols: It had always been Trinitarian; and  |
|  the Cross with the Rose upon it was a Christian symbol; and there are esoteric  |
|  proofs in the ritual that its symbols had higher meanings, philosophical and  |
|  religious; but yet it retained, and retains to this day, as its organic law, the old  |
|  Charges and Regulations of Stone-Masonry. It clung to its old fictions, too, now  |
|  known to have been no more veritable than the old Romances of Chivalry. |
|  In theory it is still an association of Stone-Masons, in which, however,  |
|  the Apprentices and Fellow-Crafts have utterly lost their rights and privileges,  |
|  which the Masters have usurped. The Irish Masons who set up the Dermott  |
|  Grand Lodge by their own authority, no one knows when or how, styled them- |
|  selves 'Ancients; and the London and Westminster Masons, who had adopted  |
|  the Master's Degree somewhere about 172,3 to 1725, quietly accepted for them- |
|  selves the name of 'Moderns: not, I think, because they had reverse the order  |
|  of two words, but because they had really made a new Masonry. |
|  It has been much more modernized since then; but it still apotheosizes  |
|  WORK. The Apprentices work with the 24-inch gauge and common gavel: the |

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|  + PREFACE + |
|  Fellow-Craft with the mallet and chisel of the stone-cutter and carver. On the  |
|  Tracing- or Trestle-board the Master draws his designs for the workmen to  |
|  follow. The Compasses, and Square with arms of unequal length, (one 3 mea- |
|  sures, the other 4,) lie upon the altars of Masonry with the Holy Scriptures,  |
|  implements of the artificer, but symbols to him who understands them, of the  |
|  profoundest truths. The Plumb-rule, the Level and the Square are immovable  |
|  jewels of the Lodge. The Apprentice, in the northeast corner of the Lodge,  |
|  works upon the rough ashlar; and the Fellow-Craft, who has 'passed from the  |
|  Plumb-rule to the Square, works in the southeast corner on the perfect ashlar,  |
|  the cube of perfection and foundation. Becoming Master, he 'passes from the  |
|  Square to the Compasses; and the Trestle-board becomes his working-tool. |
|  Hiram the Artificer is the hero it its legend; and the workmen on the  |
|  Temple were the first Apprentices and Fellows. He represents the Divine  |
|  Word, the Demiourgos, `by whom everything was made that was made; whom,  |
|  and not the father, Masonry styles 'the Grand Architect of the Universe. |
|  Anciently a word was a name of the Deity, because it in some way expressed  |
|  His supposed nature or essence, or some of His attributes or potencies. No  |
|  such name was a mere arbitrary and in itself meaningless group of letters like  |
|  that commonly used by us. The VERY DEITY was held to be unmanifested and  |
|  utterly uncognizable by the human intellect; and therefore He was said to have  |
|  no name. He could be known only by His creative word; and this creative word  |
|  is the substitute or Vicarial WORD, the DEBAR YEHUAI-1' of the Hebrews. |
|  The temple of Solomon is a symbol of the universe, ordered by the will  |
|  or POWER of the Deity, planned by his WISDOM and created by his WORD;  |
|  and these three are represented in Masonry by the King of TYRE, the king of  |
|  ISRAEL and HIRAM the Artificer. It was a favorite notion of Bro... Albert G.  |
|  MACKEY, that the second temple was also a great symbol; but that was a mere  |
|  assumption, without real foundation; and his explanations of it were but the  |
|  fancies of his own intellect. There is no symbolism in the Royal Arch Degree, |

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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
|  I think, expect the four living creatures of Ezekiel and the Apocalypse; and the  |
|  symbolic meaning of these was not known to the makers of the Degree. |
|  The symbols of the Blue Degrees—by which I mean those only which are  |
|  not modern inventions—embody the whole doctrine and morals of the Irano- |
|  Aryan religion, already ancient in the days of Zarathustra; and the theosophy  |
|  current in Asia Minor when Christianity first appeared there. |
|  Symbols were used to conceal from the commonalty and express to  |
|  the adepts religious and philosophical truths. The principles of morality  |
|  needed none, and none were used to express them except such as were of  |
|  plain meaning to every one. No concealment was resorted to in regard to  |
|  them. Of course the virtues and vices have been symbolized; but the whole  |
|  use and value of these symbols consisted on their entire freedom from mys- |
|  tery, in the utter absence of any esoteric meaning. We have old books full of  |
|  emblems of that kind; but the circle with a point in the center, the triangles,  |
|  the cross, the three grips, two unsuccessful and one successful, the imple- |
|  ments with which certain blows were given and the part of the body aimed  |
|  at by each, have mystic meanings. |
|  We may be permitted to suppose that those to whom these and other  |
|  symbols of the Lodge had such meanings soon found that these significations  |
|  had no interest for the commonalty of Masons of that day, were above their  |
|  comprehension, and expositions of them worried and wearied the unwilling  |
|  listeners; and so these meanings died with their possessors. |
|  Nor is it to be wondered at that the secret meanings of the symbols of  |
|  Free-Masonry should have been lost, not that trite and trivial explanations  |
|  should have taken their places. The symbols of the Sages have always at last  |
|  become the idols of the common people: and when the meanings of old words  |
|  and phrases have been lost, legends have always been invented, accommodated  |
|  to supposititious meanings, which then have become oracles and the legends  |
|  articles of religious faith. |
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Sheet60

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|  + PREFACE + |
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|  How many thousand years ago was it, when the last Egyptian Priest died,  |
|  who know the real meaning of that common symbol, the Crux Ansata? and  |
|  who is there that knows it now? |
|  Who, for three thousand years, has known the real meaning of the  |
|  Tetragrammaton, itself a compound symbol? |
|  Millions of Hindus, for four thousand years, have pronounced with rev- |
|  erential awe the sacred monosyllable OM. It was a symbol of the profoundest  |
|  meaning, as the book ascribed to Manu shows: but in all that time no Brahmin  |
|  has known its meaning or origin. |
|  How many thousand years is it since any rabbi knew of what the act of cir- |
|  cumcision was really a symbol? and why and how it had a religious significance?  |
|  That it was a symbol is plain. `I, Aliun Anial Sadi; Yehuah said to Abram, 'will  |
|  establish my covenant between me and thee, for an everlasting covenant. Ye shall  |
|  circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token of the covenant  |
|  between me and you. My covenant shall be in your flesh, for an everlasting  |
|  covenant; and the uncircumcised man-child shall be cut off from his people. He  |
|  hath broken my covenant:" If this were found in the Rigveda, who would doubt  |
|  that it was an after-explanation by legend, of a symbolic observance, whose origin  |
|  and meaning had been lost in the midst of antiquity? |
|  When has any one known the symbolic meaning of the four living crea- |
|  tures whom the Prophet Ezekiel saw in his vision? |
|  How long is it since any one has known the meaning which the cross,  |
|  with the red rose upon it at the intersection of its arms, had for the early  |
|  Rosicrucians? How long, indeed, is it since any one knew the original mean- |
|  ing of the cross itself? |
|  By using the tools of labour as symbols of profound religious truths,  |
|  Masonry glorifies and consecrates work, dignifies it, and seeks to ennoble it.  |
|  Necessarily, therefore, it must honour and reward its own workers, and its  |
|  workers only, in life and after death—those who have brought up 'good square |
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Sheet61

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|  + ARTURO DE HOYOS + |
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|  work,'—in faithful attendance in punctilious performance of duty in the  |
|  Lodge and wherever else Masonic work is done—in charitable ministrations,  |
|  in brotherly encouragement, in forgiveness and loving kindness, in furthering  |
|  its great purposes by strenuous labour of hands or brain with voice or pen, by  |
|  precept and example, according to the full measure of the power and ability,  |
|  and means and opportunity given freely unto each wherewith to work.... |
|  It may seem that all this that I have written of Symbolism and Labour lacks  |
|  the merit of appropriateness, like a sermon at a feast; and so it may be. But I was  |
|  glad to have the opportunity to say it here, and if I may have your kind indulgence  |
|  a little longer, I will tell you why, hoping you may find the reason sufficient. |
|  I have earnestly desired, for thirty years and more, to see Free-Masonry  |
|  re-claim its ancient prestige and pre-eminence, and the Children of the  |
|  Widow feels more highly honoured by being Free-Masons. And I have had,  |
|  during all those years, no other ambition than to prove its title to greater  |
|  homage and veneration. To do somewhat to exalt and magnify it in their  |
|  estimation has seemed to me to be a better object and worthier reward of  |
|  generous ambition, than any other. |
|  I had first to convince myself. I had not long been a Mason when the  |
|  symbolism of the Blue Degrees began to attract my attention. In the shadows  |
|  behind the monitorial explanations of the symbols I thought that I got occa- |
|  sional glimpses of indefinite shapes of other and higher meanings. I shall not  |
|  weary you with a recital of my efforts, often mis-directed and futile, to discover  |
|  these, or of the extent and duration of my studies. One by one, sometimes with  |
|  long intervals between, meaning after meaning disclosed itself to me: and I  |
|  had not gone far when I became convinced that in Free-Masonry the Ancient  |
|  Greater Mysteries were revived; and that, as theirs did, its super-excellence  |
|  consisted in the philosophical and religious doctrines concealed in its symbols;  |
|  and that these entitled it to be spoken of with that admiration and reverence  |
|  with which Cicero spoke of those mysteries. |
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Sheet62

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|  PREFACE + |
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|  That conviction long ago ripened into proven certainty. But even while it  |
|  had as yet hardly taken shape, I began dimly to discern that Masonry was a  |
|  far greater thing than it had seemed to me as I received its Degrees and heard  |
|  repeated afterwards the trivialities that belittled it. Notwithstanding these, it  |
|  began to shape itself to my intellectual vision, into something more imposing  |
|  and majestic, solemnly mysterious and grand, like those great rock-temples of  |
|  India, in the gloom of whose recesses the mighty shapes of the grave, silent,  |
|  serene, impassive illapidations of quiescent power and intellect seem to say,  |
|  that, if they chose to speak they could reveal all the awful secrets of the mate- |
|  rial and spiritual universe. It seems to me like the Pyramids in the grandeur of  |
|  their loneliness, in whose as yet undiscovered chambers may be hidden, for the  |
|  enlightenment of the coming generations, the sacred books of the Egyptians, so  |
|  long lost to the world; like the Sphynx, half-buried in the sands of the desert. |
|  Then the conviction dawned upon me that in its symbolism, which and  |
|  its spirit of brotherhood are its essence, Free-Masonry is more ancient and  |
|  venerable than any of the world's living Religions. It has the symbols and the  |
|  doctrines of the old Aryan faith, which, far older than himself, Zarathustra  |
|  inculcated. The Brahmins neither know the meaning of the Vedic Hymns, nor  |
|  what the Deities were whom these extolled; and the old Gathas of the Zend- |
|  Avesta speak to the Parsees of today in an unknown tongue; and it seemed to  |
|  me a spectacle sublime, yet pitiful, that of the ancient faith of the kindred of  |
|  our ancestors, a faith already crowned with the hoar-frost of antiquity when  |
|  the first stone of the first Pyramid was laid, holding out to the world its sym- |
|  bols once so elegant and mutely and in vain asking for an interpreter. |
|  And so I came at last to see clearly that the true greatness and majesty of  |
|  Free-Masonry consist in its proprietorship of these and its other symbols; and  |
|  that its symbolism is its soul. |
|  What I have said here has been said for the purpose of inducing some  |
|  of you and others who may read it to take up and carry on the work which I |
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Sheet63

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|  + ARTURO DS HOYOS + |
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|  now lay down. There is no other way, I am sure, to win for Free-Masonry the  |
|  pre-eminence to which it is entitled. Entreating you to ponder upon it and top  |
|  address yourselves to the work, I give you hearty greeting and wish each of you  |
|  long years of comfort and fulfilled desires.'" |
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Sheet64

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Sheet65

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|  any Prophets and Righteous  |
|  Men have desired to see, but  |
|  have not seen, what ye see; and to  |
|  hear, but have not heard,  |
|  what ye hear. |

Sheet66

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|  herefore speak I to them in parables; |
|  because seeing, they see not; and |
|  hearing, they hear not; neither |
|  do they understand. |
|  And in them is fulfilled the prophecy |
|  of Isaiah, which sayeth, by hearing ye |
|  shall hear, and shall not understand; |
|  and seeing ye shall see, and |
|  shall not perceive. |
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Sheet67

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