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| APPENDIX TWO + |
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|  different from another, put both together, in order to give all. There was no |
|  great uniformity of catechism, I fancy, where there was little communica- |
|  tion between Lodges; and, indeed, I can go now from one of our States into |
|  another and find differences as great as those of the two answers, which, as |
|  he could not prefer one to the other, Prichard combined into one, and so |
|  solved the difficulty. It is to be noted that he was divulging and disclosing, |
|  and his accuracy would be denied by some Mason, if they used one formula |
|  and he gave the other, used elsewhere. He was not laying down a formula |
|  to be followed. |
|  Much of what was published in the Flying Post, in 1723,5 bears little mark |
|  of being genuine, and it is not certain that much of the other catechism was not |
|  of the authorship of the divulger of the Grand Mystery,' but it seems to me to |
|  have more that is correct in it than the other. |
|  There are some things in it which may be worth considering, as they seem |
|  to point to something above hewing and laying stone. For example, "God and |
|  the Square," in answer to the question, "How many make a Lodge? |
|  The Triangle and Square Cross," in this: |
|  Q. What Lodge are you of? A |
|  A. The Lodge of St. John. |
|  Q. How does it stand? |
|  A. Perfect East and West as all Temples do. |
|  And in this: |
|  Q. How many angles in St. John's Lodge? |
|  A. Four, bordering on Squares. |
|  Also, the Cross in this: |
|  Q. Who rules and governs the Lodge and is Master of it? |
|  A. Irah, |
|  or the Right Pillar. |
|  Iachin, |
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|  284 Ira, |

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|  + A LETTER TOUCHING MASONIC SYMBOLISM + |
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|  That the three Lights represent "the three persons, Father, Son and Holy  |
|  Ghost;" and the two Pillars the "strength and stability of the Church in all ages:'  |
|  That "odds make a Lodge,""because all odds are men's advantage:' |
|  That with God and the Square five or seven right and perfect Masons make  |
|  a Lodge. |
|  That the right word or right point of a Mason is Adieu [a Dieu]. |
|  The letter to a Friend shows that in 1725, secret doctrines were taught in  |
|  Masonry, the word Mason was used in a figurative sense, and Masonry was  |
|  suspected of being Gnostic or heretical. |
|  The disposition of "the laws and statutes ordained by the honourable  |
|  Lodge of Aberdeen, 27th December, 16707 "that no Lodge be holden within a  |
|  dwelling-house where there is people living it in, but in the open fields, except  |
|  it be ill weather, and then let a house be chosen that no person shall heir or  |
|  sie us" cannot be accurately said "to contains some parts of the Ritual of 1730;"  |
|  or, to express the thought more nearly in your own words, does not show that  |
|  "some parts of the Rituals of 173o can be traced to 1670." It had only this in  |
|  common with the later formulas,—that secrecy was to be secured for meetings  |
|  of a Lodge. None of the later phrases are found in it; and therefore we cannot  |
|  infer that because some parts of the Ritual of 173o can be traced to 167o, there- |
|  fore other parts may; for none of the phrases are traceable thither. |
|  I do not see, in these several sayings about the places for holding the  |
|  Lodge, anything connected with the symbolism of Free-Masonry, whether "the  |
|  essentials of the Degrees along with other things" is an accurate definition of  |
|  "symbolism" or not; nor any basis for a supposition "that the symbolism could  |
|  not have been introduced by the newcomers into Masonry;' and that "it can  |
|  presumably be carried back to an earlier date than 1717." |
|  I am quite ready to believe, and think it can be shown, that there had been a  |
|  symbolism in Masonry long before 1717, but that the working-class of Masons in  |
|  the Lodges had no knowledge of it, it being confined to the men who, of another |
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|  class, united themselves with the Lodges. If that was even so, those Lodges which  |
|  had no members of that class had no symbolism in their Masonry. |
|  So that I do not generally think we can be warranted in assuming that,  |
|  among Masons generally,—in the body of Masonry,—the symbolism of Free- |
|  Masonry is of earlier date than 1717; while I think you can prove, that among  |
|  Free-Masons of a certain class and limited number, the same symbolism, or  |
|  a larger part of the same, afterwards placed in the Degrees, did not exist long  |
|  before, perhaps some centuries before, 1717. |
|  It is not easy to conceive of anything in the purposes or practices of  |
|  Lodges of working Masons in the 17th century, that could have induced  |
|  the Rosicrucians or the Hermetic and Alchemical philosophers to  |
|  use the mask of the common Masonry to cover and conceal their own  |
|  secret philosophical organization. "During the splendour of medixval  |
|  operative Masonry," association with it was more on a footing of equal- |
|  ity, and `Gemetry' styled itself 'Masonry: It is quite true that "the Regius  |
|  Manuscript addresses a much higher stamp of persons than the manu- |
|  script Constitutions of a later date:' |
|  The art of building then stood above all other arts, and made all others  |
|  subservient to it. It commanded the services of the most brilliant intellects,  |
|  and of the greatest artists. The old symbolism was embodied in the churches  |
|  and cathedrals; and some of these were adorned by figures and devices which  |
|  would never have been tolerated there, if the Priesthood had known what they  |
|  meant to the Adepts. |
|  I think that the Philosophers, becoming Free-Masons, introduced into  |
|  Masonry its symbolism,—secret, except among themselves,—in the Middle  |
|  Age, and not after the decline of operative Masonry began. |
|  You truly say that the 'newcomers into Masonry' 'would not have intro- |
|  duced anything, of which they did not understand the meaning: Nor would  |
|  the philosophic, Hermetic or Rosicrucian Masons have displayed their sacred |
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|   A LETTER TOUCHING MASONIC SYMBOLISM + |
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|  symbols to rude working-Masons, who could not have been made to under- |
|  stand their explanations. |
|  For the same reason, when they did, to secure growth for the association,  |
|  frame and formulate the Degrees, and deliver into the keeping of the Lodges  |
|  their ancient symbols, they kept to themselves their philosophic, and religious  |
|  meanings, and gave to the pipe-smoking and ale-drinking toilers such trite  |
|  moral explanations as they could understand. |
|  The Grand Khaibar expresses unbounded contempt for Masonry, calls its  |
|  fictions 'solemn fooleries, and declares that 'the Mystic Lodge' |
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|  "May soothe the fancy, |
|  words without meaning it affords, |
|  And signs without significancy... |
|  A mole-hill to a mount to swell |
|  Is the true sign of a Free-Mason:' |
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|  I do not find in it any admission that Masonry, in 1726, had any symbol- |
|  ism, or any insinuation that its symbolism was not understood. |
|  I agree with you, that an ignorance of the meaning of what is done in the  |
|  Lodge, similar to that which now prevails, prevailed in 1717. |
|  Consider, for example, how the 47th Problem stands among the Lodge- |
|  symbols, without any explanation at all, i.e., without being a symbol. So it was  |
|  in 1724. To Pythagoras it had a profound significance; and we learn from the  |
|  Gathas of the Zend-Avesta what that significance was. But Plutarch did not  |
|  know it. The meaning was lost in his day; and the explanation that he gives is  |
|  inane and insignificant. |
|  Again, take the numbers 3 and 4 as constituting 7. The Hermetic phi- |
|  losophers take 4, represented by the square, to symbolize the earth, or nature,  |
|  or the four elements, fire, air, earth and water. But to Zarathustra, 4 repre- |
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|  + APPENDIX Two + |
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|  sented, as the four arms of the cross do, the four male energies of the Diety,  |
|  i.e., the Divine Wisdom, the Divine Word, the Divine Might and the Divine  |
|  Sovereignty; and 3, the female Potencies of the Deity (female, as acting through  |
|  nature), Desire to propagate, Soundness or Virility, and Vitality.\* |
|  But the fact that the meanings of the symbols were unknown to the mass  |
|  of Masons does not prove that they had had and lost them; but may quite as  |
|  reasonably be held to prove that they never had them, because they were with- |
|  held from them, and when the symbols came into their keeping, as parts of the  |
|  Degrees, the meanings given them were only those that we have to-day. I cannot  |
|  see in this anything to make untenable the theory that the ceremonial of 173o  |
|  was introduced into Masonry after 1717. You say, "Had such been the case, the  |
|  meaning of what was so introduced would have been known, and, as I also  |
|  venture to think, preserved." Why not think it would have been known and pre- |
|  served until now, no manner when introduced? In other words, why not say,"No  |
|  meanings have been lost. There never were other meanings than those given now.  |
|  If there had ever been, they would have been known and preserved:' |
|  They would have been known, if the few possessors had seen fit to make  |
|  them known to the many. No one can assume that they did make them known.  |
|  How is it certain that they would have been preserved? How long were the  |
|  meanings which the symbols used by Pythagoras had,—to himself,—pre- |
|  served among his disciples? Did the blows given by the murderers, and the  |
|  parts of the body struck, never symbolize anything? or the grips, by two of  |
|  which nought is effected, and by the third the purpose is achieved? Did the |
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|  \*NOTE: The equilateral Triangle is, Hermetically, God, the Indivisible Trinity. The  |
|  Cross with equal arms, the Universe. God and the Square are God and the Universe, of which  |
|  latter every Masonic Lodge, as every one knows, is a Symbol. |
|  IRAH, Hebrew, is 'reverence, veneration, piety, religion: |
|  [Pike] |
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|  4 A LETTER TOUCHING MASONIC SYMBOLISM + |
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|  Substitute-Word never have a meaning? Why, then, have these meaning, if  |
|  once known, not been preserved? If one but reflects that all false religions have  |
|  come from loss of the true significance of symbols, and that no religious or  |
|  philosophical symbol has ever escaped final misunderstanding and loss of its  |
|  meaning, he will see that the most perishable of all things are the true mean- |
|  ings of the symbols. Do you not suppose that it was at one time known what  |
|  the Tau Cross meant? I have known more than one symbol in Masonry utterly  |
|  destroyed since I have been a Mason. |
|  I hold the symbolism of Masonry to be of very ancient origin, and that its  |
|  meanings have been lost, as those of the figurative expressions of the Rig-Veda  |
|  have been, and those of the Githas of Zarathustra. |
|  I can find no ground, beyond that of which I have spoken, upon  |
|  which to plant my foot, and I hesitate to step off of it into the void of  |
|  conjecture and speculation. I cannot suggest what influences could have  |
|  had any effect on this early development of the science:' I so not think  |
|  that the science of symbolism ever had any development among the  |
|  common class of working-Masons. |
|  But it played a great part in architecture, and the medizval architects must  |
|  have been familiar with it. All the genius of the age was enlisted in architec- |
|  ture's service, in the fashioning of churches, cathedrals, and other great public  |
|  and princely edifices, as well as in their carved ornamentation and their inter- |
|  nal arrangements and furniture. If one were competent, it would be interesting  |
|  to inquire how far the deterioration of architecture and its violations of good  |
|  taste were owing to the dying out of the science of symbolism. |
|  Fraternally and truly yours, |
|  ALBERT PIKE. |
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