

VI

MARK AND ARK

The man presumed the stone to be ancient, much as he represented it to have been rudely carved by himself in an idle mood, and to display letters intended to bear neither more nor less than the simple construction of BILL STUMPS HIS MARK. . . . The Pickwick Club (as might have been expected from so enlightened an institution) received this statement with the contempt it deserved, expelled the presumptuous and ill-conditioned Blotton, and voted Mr. Pickwick a pair of gold spectacles. . . .

Charles Dickens, The Pickwick Papers.

TRADITIONALLY the Mark degree in Masonry was regarded as an off-shoot from the second, or Fellow Craft degree. As usual, there is much confusion and doubt over its early history and nature¹ and only the briefest survey is appropriate here.

The practice among medieval Masons of marking their work for purposes of identification with a distinctive character or device, analogous to the hall-marks of the goldsmith and silversmith, is well known, and these masons' marks are a distinctive feature of many an ancient cathedral and church all over Europe. In Scotland the practice seems to have been especially widespread and organized; the celebrated Rosslyn chapel in particular abounds with these marks. William Schaw, Master of Works to James VI of Scotland ordered, in the famous Schaw Statutes of 1598, that the marks of all masons should be duly registered and inserted in their work. The practice is not quite extinct in stone quarries and masonry yards even today. This system of masons' marks, however, was purely 'operative' and

1. Books dealing specifically with this degree are fewer than books about the Craft or Royal Arch. There are, however, the following: J. A. Grantham, *An Introduction to Mark Masonry* (privately published, 1934). Bernard H. Sprungett, *The Mark Degree* (A. Lewis, 1946). Bernard E. Jones, *Freemasons' Guide and Compendium* (Harrap, 1950), Chapter XXXV on Mark Masonry. Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie, *The Mark Work* (originally published 1884, reprinted, revised by the Rev. J. T. Lawrence, by A. Lewis, 1944). This little book is mainly concerned with the conduct of the ritual, but it also deals briefly with the symbolism and history of the degree. There are also articles in the various Masonic Encyclopædias,

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practical. Not until the eighteenth century, as far as is known, did its symbolism enter the sphere of speculative Freemasonry.

The degree system in the eighteenth century was, compared with today, extremely fluid. There were no separate Mark Lodges as now, and private Lodges, particularly among the "Ancients," conferred such degrees as were traditional with them. Grand Lodge in its earlier days was more a federation of Lodges than a controlling body over them, and it was not until the Union in 1813 that Masonry was regimented and codified, and extraneous degrees, other than the Royal Arch, were literally dislodged. Some of the material now in the Mark degree may at one time have been included in the Fellow Craft, hence isolated references to distinctively Mark symbolism do not necessarily imply that a separate degree was worked. To make things even more complicated, the Mark was at one time two successive degrees, Mark Man for the Fellow Crafts, and Mark Master exclusively for Master Masons; the present single degree now incorporates the substance of both. And in addition a number of extraneous Mark titles hovered around to embroider the motif, the Link and Wrestle, Link and Chain, Mark and Link, Passing the Bridge, the Fugitive Mark, Christian Mark, Cain's Mark, Travelling Mark, Black Mark, and so on. As separate degrees, if indeed they ever really were so, they are now extinct, yet some of their symbolism is said to survive in local workings of North Country Mark Lodges. Passing the Bridge is a theme that still appears in some American Chapters as a preliminary to the Royal Arch (for which the Mark degree is there a prerequisite) and in Britain it emerges in two of the higher degrees, the first or Harodim degree of the Royal Order of Scotland, and the rather similar Red Cross of Babylon in the Allied group. There are hints of it, too, in the fifteenth degree of the Ancient and Accepted Rite known as the Knight of the Sword. This is not worked in Great Britain, except occasionally as a museum piece.

The main sources of information on the confused early history of the Mark are the minute-books and records of early Lodges. The first reference seems to be in the by-laws of Lodge Doric Kiltwinning, of Port Glasgow, which stipulated in 1758 that the fee for being made Mark Master was to be 1s. 1½d. The greatest name associated with the introduction of Mark Masonry

into the south of England was Thomas Duncerley (an illegitimate son of George II as Prince of Wales), who, as Provincial Grand Master of Hampshire visited the Chapter of Friendship in Portsmouth, "and having lately rec'd the 'Mark' he made the Bre'n 'Mark Masons' and 'Mark Masters,' and each chose their Mark." The Marquis of Granby Lodge in Durham was conferring the degrees by 1773, St. Thomas's Lodge, London, in 1777. From then on to the Union of 1813 Mark Masonry seems to have spread fairly rapidly.

The Union, however, dealt the Mark a crippling blow by refusing to recognize it as part of "pure and ancient masonry." Yet their ceremonies went on, and some Lodges where the tradition was well established continued to work the degree without any authority. In 1851 Mark Masonry started its independent existence in London with the foundation of the Bon Accord Lodge, which received its charter from the Chapter of that name in Aberdeen. In Scotland the Mark was fully recognized, but there was much long-drawn-out wrangling in both countries over the legality of this charter and the right of Bon Accord Aberdeen to confer it; in spite of this, however, the new Mark Lodge flourished in London, and by 1856 it had achieved a membership of some hundred and twenty.

An effort was made in this year to secure Grand Lodge recognition for the degree, and a resolution was actually passed by that body authorizing its sanction. But at the next meeting Grand Lodge refused to confirm the minute on the ground that it was not empowered to make such an innovation. This was a final and decisive blow; all hopes of recognition disappeared, and the two bodies have ever since led their own independent lives.

The Bon Accord Lodge accepted the inevitable and leagued with three others to bring into being the first Mark Grand Lodge. Again there was opposition and strife, for some Mark Lodges regarded this new body as self-constituted and spurious, and preferred to receive their charters from the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland, which made for strained relationships. It was not until 1878 that peace and harmony were finally restored, and the old Mark Grand Lodge became the present Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales and Dominions and Dependencies of the British Crown.

The present position is in some respects anomalous, but it

works, because the English love anomalies and take pride in making them work. Although official recognition is still lacking, relations are extremely cordial and co-operative at every turn between the two bodies, and there are many who attain high rank in both. The Mark Grand Lodge, operating from cramped and temporary quarters in Kingsway, use Freemasons' Hall in Gt. Queen Street for their Quarterly Communications and other large assemblies. They have their own Fund of Benevolence for the relief of Mark Masons and their families in need, and for educational grants, but they liberally support the hospital and the schools of the main Masonic body. For after all, every Mark Mason must first also be a Master Mason in the Craft—there is of course no such thing as initiation *ab initio* into the Mark, or into any other of the higher or side degrees. The lack of official recognition has in practice become the merest technicality.

The Mark ritual is of interest from the religious point of view because it contains certain elements claimed to be Messianic, and in England at least (unlike the Craft rituals) it contains a significant quotation from the New Testament.¹ Its general character and drama are more "operative," and this has been adduced as an argument for its greater antiquity, but the historical evidence for this is extremely obscure.

Let us examine this degree in greater detail

The Candidate for advancement, as it is called, wears his Master Masons' apron; customs vary, but the usual form of preparation is to remove the coat and roll up the shirt sleeves. He is announced as one "who has served his time as an Entered Apprentice, worked in the quarries as a Fellow Craft, and is now desirous of becoming a Mark Master Mason to qualify him to preside over a Lodge of Operative Masons." The password

1. The earliest printed Mark workings are in the irregular disclosure, Carille's *Manual of Freemasonry*, pp. 190-9. The two degrees of Mark Man and Mark Master are preserved, but the material is very dissimilar to the ritual today. It has been suggested that Carille's sources were spurious, but Bernard E. Jones (*Freemasons' Guide and Compendium*, pp. 537-8) assumes that they give a substantially accurate picture of the workings of that time.

Modern authentic rituals are published from the Mark Masons' Hall "published under the Authority of the General Board" and the copy I follow in this chapter is dated 1946. A. Lewis & Co. (Masonic Publishers) also publish Mark rituals. Scottish versions will be found in Wm. Harvey's *Complete Manual of Freemasonry* (Dundee, 1950), *Scottish Craft Rituals* (Kenning & Son), *The Scottish Ritual of Craft Freemasonry* (John Bethune, Edinburgh) and others.

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(Joppa) and the pass grip (given by locking the fingers as one would do in pulling another up a steep place, and bringing the tips of the thumbs together), are given for him by the Inner Guard. He is admitted on the chisel, which is applied to his left breast and tapped with the mallet.

The Candidate proves himself a Mason by perambulating the Lodge, and giving the Craft signs to the officers, and then kneels while this prayer is offered :—" May the Great Overseer of the Universe pour down on this convocation the continual dew of His blessing, and whether we be stationed on the plains of Zarahatha or in the forests of Lebanon ; whether employed on the rough Ashlar or in putting in the keystone of a Mystic Arch, may He be with His faithful workmen ; and when called off from our labours here, may we be found worthy to receive the wages promised to those who work diligently in His Holy Temple. So mote it be."

He is then told that in accordance with ancient custom he must choose his own distinctive mark, any device not already in use by a member of the Lodge, and this is duly recorded. He is designated a Mark Man, his device on a card is surrounded by the equilateral triangle (the mark of the Worshipful Master) as a sign of approval, and holding this with his thumb in the palm of his hand he presents it at the wicket in front of the Senior Warden, and receives his "wages."

Having been thus admitted a Mark Man, he is now advanced to the degree of Mark Master. He proceeds to the pedestal in the east by nine steps, the first five as if ascending a winding staircase as in the Fellow Craft degree, followed by two steps long and slow, and another two short and quick. Kneeling on both knees, with both hands on the Volume of the Sacred Law, he takes his Obligation. In addition to vowing secrecy, he swears that "I will not unjustly use any Brother's mark, but will receive it when presented to me, and grant his request, if just, and within my power, the same not being detrimental to myself or my connections, but I shall not feel myself bound again to relieve him until he shall have redeemed his mark from his former obligation."

The penalty which he swears to accept if unfaithful is a relatively mild one ; the removal of his right ear and right hand.

1. The wage is usually a token about the size of a penny, bearing various symbols of this degree.

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It shares with the somewhat similar penalty of the Installed Master in the Craft the distinction of being not completely lethal, however vexatious its infliction. As a pledge of his fidelity the Candidate seals the oath by kissing the Sacred Volume four times.

After the obligation the Candidate is sent symbolically back to work in the quarries, actually out of the Lodge to the ante-room. He is divested of his Masonic apron, and with the two Deacons who have withdrawn with him, puts on a larger working apron. They re-enter the Lodge, announced as "workmen from the quarries with materials for the building of the Holy Temple which they are anxious to submit for approval." The Junior Deacon carries a model of an oblong ashlar stone, the Senior Deacon a square one, and the Candidate a model of a keystone. These are in turn submitted to the Junior Overseer to be approved ; the first two are tested with the square, rapped with the mallet, and declared to be "fair work and square, such as is required for the building," and the Junior Overseer whispers the password. But when the Candidate follows the Deacons and produces his keystone, it is summarily rejected. "This is a curiously wrought stone," says the Junior Overseer, "neither square nor oblong. I cannot receive it." He refuses, therefore, to give the Candidate the password, as the work is not in accordance with his plans.

The three then proceed to the Senior Overseer where the process is repeated ; the Deacons present their work and give the password, the Candidate's keystone is again rejected, and he has not the password to give. Yet the Senior Deacon is impressed. "Although it is not in accordance with my plans, yet from the masterly skill displayed in its execution I am unwilling to reject it on my own responsibility," he explains. He gives the Candidate the option of returning to the quarries to try again, or of submitting the keystone at his own risk and without the password to the Master Overseer. The Candidate adopts the latter course, and not only is his work again decisively rejected, but he is sternly rebuked for his presumption. The Senior and Junior Overseers, too, are rebuked for allowing the Candidate to proceed thus far, and the Master Overseer orders the keystone to be "heaved over among the rubbish." The drama of the rejected keystone is temporarily interrupted

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at this point by the announcement of the Senior Warden that it is time for the Craftsmen to receive their wages. Accordingly the Deacons marshal up the Brethren in line to march to the Senior Warden's wicket. The Mark Anthem, or part of it, which goes to the tune of "God Save the Queen," may optionally be sung while this is going on :—

Mark Masters, all appear
Before the Chief Overseer—
In concert move ;
Let him your work inspect,
For the Chief Architect,
If there be no defect,
He will approve.

You who have passed the square,
For your reward prepare—
Join heart and hand ;
Each with his mark in view,
March with the just and true ;
Wages to you are due,
At your command.

Hiram, the widow's son,
Sent unto Solomon
Our great keystone ;
On it appears the name
Which raises high the fame
Of all to whom the same
Is truly known.

Now to the westward move,
Where, full of strength and love,
Hiram doth stand ;
But if imposters are
Mix'd with the worthy there,
Caution them to beware
Of their right hand.

Now to the praise of those
Who triumph'd o'er their foes ;
Well played their parts :
To the praiseworthy three

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Who founded this degree,
May all their virtues be
Deep in our hearts.¹

The Brethren in turn approach the wicket, and each thrusts his hand through the hole in it to receive his wages. The Candidate who is last in line, has no way of seeing that the hand must be presented in a certain position, which is with the thumb, first and second fingers extended, the fourth and fifth fingers clasped to the palm, which is the recognized sign. In all innocence he simply pushes through his hand. The Senior Warden illustrates the meaning of the second half of the fourth verse of the Mark Anthem by seizing his hand and exclaiming "An imposter ! an imposter ! Off with his hand !"

"Spare him ! Spare him !" says the Senior Deacon. "He is not an imposter. I vouch for him as a Mark Man, having worked with him in the quarries."

"I denounce him," insists the Senior Warden, "as an imposter, having attempted to obtain the wages of a Mark Master without giving the token. The usual penalty must be inflicted." Saner counsels prevail, however, after some argument, and the matter is taken to the Worshipful Master for judgment. The little crisis is all smoothed out. The Candidate proves himself as a Mark Man, and although the Worshipful Master cannot too strongly express his indignation that he should have attempted to obtain the wages of a Mark Master without being justly entitled to them, he recognizes that the fault was of ignorance and not of wilful intention to defraud. Accordingly he is again sent back to the quarries to knock out rectangular stones ; in other words, he sits down quietly in a corner of the Lodge.

After a brief spell of complete silence, the Senior Warden announces that the work is at a standstill.

"On what account ?" asked the Worshipful Master.

"For want of a Keystone for the Sacred Arch of King Solomon's Temple," replies the Senior Warden.

"I well remember issuing the designs for such a stone," ex-
postulates the Master as he searches through his papers on the
pedestal. "Here is a copy. Brother Junior Overseer, have you

1. This almost parody of a Christian doxology in these last lines is an
ascription, not of course to the Holy Trinity but to Hiram King of
Tyre, Solomon, and Hiram Abiff.

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seen such a stone ?”

“Such a stone was brought to me for examination, but not being in accordance with my plans, I passed it to the Senior Overseer.”

“Brother Senior Overseer,” asks the Master, “What did you do with it ?”

“It not being in accordance with my plans,” explains that officer, “nor with the instructions I had received, but possessing considerable beauty of workmanship, I passed it on to the Master Overseer for final approval or rejection.”

“Brother Master Overseer, do you remember such a stone being submitted to you ?”

As there can be no further shelving the responsibility, the Master Overseer faces the music.

“I do, Worshipful Master, but seeing it was neither square nor oblong, nor in any way answering to my plans, nor to the instructions I had received, I ordered it to be heaved over among the rubbish, which was accordingly done.”

“Let diligent search be made for it,” says the Worshipful Master. “It is the most important stone in the building. Richly rewarded shall be he who succeeds in finding it.”

The Brethren start searching, and it is, of course, the Candidate who finds it, guided by the Deacons.

“Worshipful Master,” exclaims the Senior Deacon, “The stone is found !”

“By whom ?”

“By the skilful Craftsman who prepared it.”

“Let me see it.” The Deacons bring up the Candidate, who presents the keystone to the Worshipful Master. He compares it with his plan. “It is indeed the very stone ! Brother Craftsman, I congratulate you not only on the skill displayed in having prepared this stone, but also upon your good fortune in being the bearer of it uninjured after it had been rejected by the Overseers, and to mark my deep sense of your merit and ability shall now proceed to entrust you with the secrets of the Mark Master Masons’ degree.”

It may be mentioned at this point (although in the ritual it is only explained later in the lecture) that the Overseers had lost the plans for the keystone, but the “ingenious and intelligent Fellow Craftsman, either having seen the perfect plan or forming

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a good idea of it from the nature of the work” carved it out on his own.

The conferring of the secrets follows. The Chaplain reads 2 Chron. II, 11-16, in which Hiram (or Huram) King of Tyre sends the other Hiram (Abiff) to King Solomon, and promises materials for the Temple. The last verse is the significant one for the pass grip and password Joppa, which so far the Deacon has given on the Candidate’s behalf :—

“*And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need : and we will bring it to thee in flotes by sea to Joppa : and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem.*”

The signs are given. The first one basically is the position of the fingers of the right hand when receiving the wages ; it is raised in the hailing sign, the normal salute used in entering or leaving the Lodge or addressing the Worshipful Master, and the penal sign chops the right hand off with the left. Then there is the Heave Over sign, a swinging movement inspired by the rejection of the keystone. At this point the 22nd verse of Psalm CXVIII is either read or chanted :—

“*The stone which the Builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.*” (Authorized Version)

Then there is the sign of Distress, accompanied by the words “Alas ! Alas ! My labour is lost !” and lastly the sign of Thanksgiving, with clasped hands and uplifted countenance, with the exclamation “Thanks be to God, I have marked well.”

The grip is imparted ; like the pass grip it is an elaborate handclasp which is far too conspicuous for recognition purposes outside the Lodge. It is given by linking the little fingers, closing the other fingers with their backs to each other each to each, and the thumbs touching as in the pass grip.

Next the Chaplain reads from Ezekiel, Chapter XLIV, verses 1, 2, 3 and 5. Again the last is the significant one :—

“*And the Lord said unto me, Son of Man, mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, and all the laws thereof ; and mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary.*”

This verse gives the word. The ancient word is *Keb Raiioth* or

sometimes *Kyrock*, "alluding to the people and signifying Companion of the Mark, but in most Lodges where the English language is spoken the words *Mark Well* are substituted."

Investiture with the apron follows, and Revelation II, 17, is read or sung:—

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna and I will give him a white stone and in the stone a new name written which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

The jewel of the order is presented. This is a small model of the keystone; on one side are certain Hebrew characters, and on the other, around a circle, are the letters H.T.W.S. S.T.K.S., standing for Hiram Tyrian Widow's Son, Sent to King Solomon. This is alleged to be the translation of the Hebrew characters. Later the Candidate has his mark engraved within the circle.

The ceremony concludes with the presentation of the working tools, the mallet and the chisel by which "we are reminded of the moral advantages of discipline and education, and are led to entertain a firm but humble hope that by the correction of irregularities and the subjugation of our passions, we may hereafter be found worthy to receive the approving mark of the Great Overseer of the Universe, as fitted to form part of that spiritual edifice, 'that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'"

In the Mark degree, as in the Craft and Royal Arch, the triad-enthusiasts who assume that three of anything must symbolize the Holy Trinity have a happy hunting-ground. "One great one," says Bernard H. Springett in his popular little booklet¹ "is ever being impressed upon our minds, that of Body, Soul, and Spirit typified in turn by the W(orshipful) M(aster), S(enior) W(arden) and J(unior) W(arden); the Deacons and the Candidate; the three Stones; and at a later stage by the Candidate, the S(enior) W(arden) and the W(orshipful) M(aster)." Those interested can doubtless find many more.

A. E. Waite² says of this degree that "it takes us back to that earlier state of Masonry, the ante-Grand Lodge period, when rituals—such as they were—were not memorials of Judaistic Deism. There is none which bears comparison with it for the

1. *The Mark Degree* (A. Lewis, 1946) p. 62.

2. *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, Vol. II, p. 35.

wealth and significance of its Christian allusions and implicits." Although Waite exaggerates, I think, both the pre-Grand Lodge antiquity of the Mark degree and the extent of its Christian implicits, it is perfectly true that the Mark was more popular among the Ancients, with their rather stronger Christian tradition, than with the Moderns; also that, as it was rejected at the Union of 1813 its ritual was not subjected to the final de-Christianizing policy of the United Grand Lodge.

In the sense that Our Lord is nowhere mentioned specifically by name in the ritual, lectures, or prayers, the Mark degree is no more Christian than the Craft. And incidentally the keystone legend is no more scriptural than the rest of the Hiramic legend. The morality of it seems a little confused.¹ Clearly the loss of the designs for the keystone reflects no credit on the Overseers, and in some versions of the ritual they are sternly rebuked, stripped of all their privileges, and sent back to the quarries. The Craftsman represented by the Candidate is guilty of presumption and of disobedience in turning out a stone which his private judgment tells him will one day be needed instead of turning out the squared ashlar according to instructions. He is rebuked for this, just as he is rebuked for claiming wages to which he is not entitled, but is later honoured and rewarded when the stone is urgently required to finish the Temple. In the altogether laudable context of commending private enterprise and initiative against assembly-line monotony and bureaucracy in the quarries the Craftsman's action is praiseworthy, and not un-Christian. Yet the fact that the Craftsman has himself wrought the key-stone, and has himself marked it with his own mark militates against the validity of the symbolism so often urged, that this

1. An interesting and even less moral tradition which links the keystone with Jacob's Pillar, the Stone of Scone or Stone of Destiny in Westminster Abbey was to be found in the Early Grand Rite which once controlled some forty-seven miscellaneous and mainly extinct degrees in the south-west of Scotland. According to this legend, King Solomon, before the arrival of Hiram, had appointed a kinsman named Cavelum to be in charge of building the Temple, Hiram was jealous of him, and placed this Stone of Destiny so precariously over the north gate of the Temple that it fell on Cavelum, and killed him. Solomon in his distress ordered the north gate to be for ever walled up; hence Hiram paid the price of the murder in his own death, for he was denied the escape from his assassins that this fourth exit would have given him. Perhaps some future degree-monger will ascribe to this incident the crack in the stone which led to its being broken when it was removed from the Abbey by Scots Nationalists in 1951!

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"stone which the builders rejected" represents Christ, unless again the alleged "Christianity" of this degree is Gnostic rather than orthodox, with the Candidate himself, or in his works, representing Christ, and becoming *himself* the "head stone of the corner."¹

For when A. E. Waite talks about "Christian implicits," and when others go even further and refer to the Mark as an essentially Christian degree, it is this rejection motif of the *lapis reprobatus* becoming the *caput anguli* which is mainly referred to. Officially of course the Mark degree falls into the same category as the Craft and Royal Arch in that all believers in a Higher Being are welcomed. "All masons know that no special religious tenet should be upheld in the Lodges—Mark or Craft—or referred to in any way."² But just as Craft Masons are free privately to interpret the Hiramic legend as a Christian allegory, so are Mark Masons to regard their workings as Christian prophecy, and in this latter case the purely superficial resemblances seem more obvious.

Although Masons profess to be devoted to the Bible, an extremely elementary scripture lesson seems to be necessary. There are two references to a foundation stone in the Old Testament. One is that which is quoted in the ritual, the 22nd verse of Psalm CXVIII: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." We may pass over the not very important fact that the head of the corner does not mean the top but the extremity, not a keystone but a corner-stone. The stone, however, refers to Zion, in which is summed up the Kingdom of God. The other passage, Isaiah XXVIII, verse 16, makes this clear:—"Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation."³ This refers to the Kingdom of God, the divine protection of Jehovah, if not

1. Bernard Springett (*op. cit.*, p. 50) describes an old ritual from Blackburn which avoids this difficulty by having the Candidate find the keystone in the quarry, but he has not wrought it himself. This, however, is exceptional and not in accordance with the authorized ritual put out by Mark Grand Lodge, nor with any of the twenty or so printed and manuscript rituals of this degree from England and Scotland in my possession.

2. *The Mark Work* (A. Lewis, 1944) p. 51.

3. Cf. also Genesis XLIX, verse 24: "...the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel)."

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to Jehovah Himself.

The Messianic application in the Bible is due to the fact that the person of the Messiah bears the same relation to a kingdom of living persons that Zion, the capital of the kingdom, does to the Kingdom. There is the further fulfilment of the verse from Psalm CXVIII in the rejection of Christ. Hence our Lord applies this prophecy to Himself.¹ St. Peter preaches of Jesus Christ of Nazareth that "this is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name given among men, whereby we must be saved."² He again teaches the same in his first Epistle General.³

For the Mark Mason to appropriate to a stone which he has himself fashioned for King Solomon's Temple a verse of scripture referring to a stone which God has fashioned and laid in Zion seems presumptuous, to say the least of it. But to claim his own handiwork as a prototype of Christ is blasphemous. The symbolism of a spiritual temple made up of living stones is clear enough, and the Mark Mason would be wise to leave it at that. For when they interpret their own Masonic version of this symbolism in a Christian sense, they are merely being led astray by similarities of phrassology, illogically forgetting or ignoring the fact that no work of human hands can be the True Christian Cornerstone, nor can salvation be found in it.

This same inherent vagueness of thinking is exemplified in the second "messianic" passage found in the Mark workings. When the Candidate is given his jewel, a small white replica of the keystone bearing his own mark, and the name of Hiram in mystic letters, the 17th verse of the second chapter of the Book of Revelation is sung or recited, as we have seen. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

Although this passage occurs in the authorized English Mark ritual and in many of the local variants, it is not found in some of the older rituals, nor in any of the Scottish workings, ancient or modern, as far as I am aware. On the other hand, it does

1. Matthew XXI, 42. Mark XII, 10 and Luke XX, 17.

2. Acts IV, 11-12.

3. I Peter II, 7.

appear in many American Mark rituals, which often follow more primitive originals. But on the whole it seems probable that the verse was inserted because it appeared apt, rather than that the jewel was originally devised to conform with this apocalyptic imagery. In any case, it is a little unfortunate.

The keystone contains the name of Hiram as well as the Candidate's own mark, and (for what it is worth) the Mark Anthem in the ritual stresses in its third verse that Hiram, not Christ, is "our great keystone" and that it is his "name which raises high the fame of all to whom the same is truly known." The "new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it," however, appears to be applied to the Candidate's own mark, despite the superficial inaptness that this mark is not given him, but is chosen by the Candidate himself, and approved on the keystone by the addition of the Worshipful Master's Mark. In the address on the working tools, the Candidate is "led to entertain the hope that by the correction of irregularities and the subjugation of our passions, we may hereafter be found worthy to receive the approving mark of the Great Overseer of the Universe, as fitted to form part of that spiritual edifice, 'that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'" The quotation from Revelation appears to give the impression that it is Christ Himself who will thus stamp our work with His approval, even though His Name and mediation are nowhere invoked in that work.

Commentators have differed over the exact meaning and origin of the white stone referred to by St. John. The most generally received explanation, however, is that it referred to the common superstition of the belief in talismanic stones bearing a magical name. Magic in all its forms entered largely into the life of the great cities of Asia, and particularly at Ephesus.¹ Adopting this imagery, St. John implies that the true, the divine "magic" inscribes on the human character and life the Name of Christ, the new Name with all its freshness and eternal youth, which can only be understood by those who have been redeemed in that Name, in contrast with the poor imitations that enthralled (and continue to enthrall, it seems) pagan society. As a "Christian implicit" then, the introduction of this text proves nothing. It sounds well, and it has doubtless comforted the heart of many

1. see King, *Engraved Gems*, the chapter *Gnostics and their Remains*, p. 97 *et seq.*

a Christian Mark Mason to feel that his little talisman is an apocalyptic symbol of his approbation in Christ. Yet as usual the symbolism is muddled and illogical.

The Mark degree is no more Christian than the Craft. It can be allegorized in a Christian direction only by misunderstanding the exclusive character of Christianity, the uniqueness of our redemption in Christ, and the true meaning of faith.

A little light relief may be afforded to the reader at this point by a brief consideration of the Ark Mariner degree.¹

The history of this triviality need not detain us in detail. Earliest references to it come from Bath, in the year 1790, and the famous Baldwin Chapter at Bristol appears to have worked it a few years later. In 1794 the "Diluvian Order, or Royal Ark and Mark Mariners" appears to have combined with the Knights Templars with Thomas Dunckerley as Grand Commander. The degree had a greater vogue among the Ancients, however, and shared the fate of so many others of being excluded at the Union of 1813. It continued a precarious existence until it was taken over in 1871 by the Mark Masons, and the "Grand Master's Royal Ark Council" was set up.

Ark Mariner Lodges today are attached or "moored" to the Mark Lodges in the same way that Royal Arch Chapters are attached to Craft Lodges, and the Mark degree is, therefore, an essential prerequisite for "elevation". There is no continuity of legend, however. For the Ark Mariner, as its name suggests, removes us from the purities of King Solomon's Temple and plunges us backwards into the waters of the Flood.

Worshipful Commander Noah rules the Lodge, assisted by Shem and Japhet as Wardens. The other ceremonial officers are the Senior and Junior Deacons, the Director of Ceremonies, the Guardian, or inner guard, and the Warden or outer guard. God is saluted in this nautical degree as the Supreme Commander of the Universe. Ham is not respectable enough to be repre-

1. An authorized ritual is published from Mark Masons' Hall, latest edition, 1950, which is the one I follow in this description. A. Lewis also published an edition together with the Mark ritual in 1936. There is not a great deal of separate literature on this degree apart from articles in Masonic encyclopædias etc., and papers published on the *History of the Ark Mariners' Degree* which appeared in the Transactions of the Manchester Association for Masonic Research (Vol. 10, 1919-20), read by the Rev. W. W. Covey-Crumpp. This same clergyman also privately published a pamphlet (undated) *The Symbolism in the Ark Mariners' Degree*.

sented at all ; he is omitted with execrations, presumably for his unfilial conduct in stripping off his father's Masonic apron and revealing his nakedness. The fact that his descendants became slaves of dark complexion, and therefore, generally speaking, ineligible for regular Masonry, contributes to his disfavour ; as the lecture explains Ham has " no place amongst us on account of the curse pronounced on his posterity."

The Candidate presents himself under the name of Noachida, and enters the Lodge on the point of a triangle presented to his breast. Prayer is offered to the Great Commander : " In Thy name we meet this evening to elevate a Brother, who with us may continue to commemorate so wonderful a deliverance as that of Noah and his family from the Deluge. Grant that he may prove a true Brother, able to unfold the mysteries of Ark Masonry.... May we so conduct ourselves in the Ark here, that when we are called hence by the Supreme Commander of the Universe, we may find a blessed Sanctuary in the mansions of everlasting rest."

He is led around an equilateral triangle the three points of which are marked by the three officers, and represent Beauty, Strength, and Wisdom. The obligation is taken, not on any sacred writings (which were not then in existence, it is explained) but on the Porphyry Stone, an emblem not found in Genesis but which according to Masonic tradition served as a pillow on which " the good old Patriarch Noah reposed, when he daily returned from his pious labour in building the Ark." It was placed in the centre of the Ark when finished, was used as an anchor to moor it to Ararat when the floods subsided, and later as an altar stone for Noah's first sacrifice of thanksgiving on dry land. The penalty of the obligation is to have the ribs broken, and to be overwhelmed by the waters and swept off the face of the earth.

The Candidate then advances to the east by nine steps. The first three are round the triangle, representing Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, the fourth is to the middle of the triangle. The last five are forward to the east, and represent " those five cardinal virtues peculiarly characteristic of Masonry—Watchfulness, Discretion, Brotherly Love, Truth, and Charity."

There are seven signs, representing such matters as swimming, the equilateral triangle, the rainbow, the stretching out the hand

to welcome home the dove, accompanied by the words " Lo, she cometh." The grip represents climbing trees and mountains, symbolizing the unregenerate antediluvians trying to escape the rising waters. Words are given, such as Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech. The apron, adorned with triangles and rainbow ribbon, is " an emblem of love and virtue, and, as such more valuable than any gift an Emperor or King can bestow." The working tools are the axe, the saw, and the auger or borer. " The axe felled the trees, and they, being cut down, were emblematic of the fall of the old world. The saw dividing the timber into planks is emblematic of the separation of Noah and his family from the rest of mankind by the Lord. The auger making holes in the planks teaches the use of affliction in producing self-abasement and searchings of heart. As the Ark was built by these tools, we are shown that by perseverance in Faith, Hope, and Love, we may be shut into an Ark of safety, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the whole Earth shall be dissolved."

Canon Covey-Crump, in a privately printed pamphlet, declares that the Porphyry Stone is the same as the keystone, the " stone which the builders rejected " in the Mark degree, and therefore the Porphyry Stone, too, represents Christ, and is the " cherished palladium of those who fully appreciate its value... encarnadined with the Blood of Atonement and Mercy." This, however, is far-fetched and not generally accepted. There is no hint of it in the ritual.

Certainly both in the Bible and in the writings of the Fathers the Ark is mystically interpreted as a prototype of Christ, the Ark of our salvation. Hence there are Masons who claim that this degree, too, although open to all religions, is implicitly Christian. Perhaps so. Children playing at Noah's Ark in the nursery, or youths singing the well-known ditty " The animals went in two by two, Hurrah ! Hurrah ! " are doubtless also prophesying their redemption in Christ, as well as satisfying their adolescent need for a bit of fun. Even Canon Covey-Crump wrote a little apologetically of the Ark Mariner that he hoped his remarks would " exonerate this degree from any stigma of inanity." J. S. M. Ward, whose enthusiasm for higher grades of all sorts was usually ardent, described it as " quite a

1. *The Symbolism in the Ark Mariners' Degree* (undated) p. 5-6.

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pretty little degree," but with "not too much really deep teaching."¹ Bro. Woodford wrote that "it is of late formation, and without offence may be termed a fancy grade."² A. E. Waite is more scathing, and terms it a "peculiar Mystery of Folly," refers to its "frivolity," and says that its teaching "might be spiritualized with equal efficiency in a schoolboy's exercise."³

Happily, however, in the Installation ceremonies of Commander Noah the Installing Officer produces a vessel of salt, explaining that "when the wild Arab of the desert has tasted salt with his guest, that guest is sacred to him.... Let us in like manner seal our vow of fidelity to Ark Masonry". Then follows the hilarious rubric :—" All present take a pinch of salt...."

1. *The Higher Degrees Handbook*, p. 16.
2. *Kenning's Encyclopædia of Freemasonry*, p. 41.
3. *A New Encyclopædia of Freemasonry*, vol. II, pp. 380-381.

PART II

VII

THE NEW COVENANT

Yet they still served up to me in those dishes glowing phantasies, than which better were it to love this very sun (which at least is true to our sight) than those illusions which deceive the mind through the eye. And yet, because I supposed them to be Thee, I fed upon them; not with avidity, for Thou didst not taste to my mouth as Thou art, for Thou wast not these empty fictions: neither was I nourished by them, but the rather exhausted. . . . With such empty husks was I then fed, and not fed.

St. Augustine, The Confessions.

“**M**ASONRY is a progressive science,” the Craft ritual assures the initiate. Therefore, continues the argument of one who claims to have taken almost every degree in England and Scotland including the 30th, and is a regular communicant member of the Church of England, “we must look at the scheme of things as a whole, and not select passages from particular rituals or degrees which happen to suit our purpose.”¹ The writer of this article, written in answer to one of my own, represents a widespread point of view put forward in shoals of letters with which I have been inundated, including many from the clergy. He goes on himself to pick out those very isolated aspects of the ritual discussed in earlier chapters which he claims are prophetic of Christianity. “What lies ahead?” he asks. “What is here foreshadowed? But at last we appreciate what the earlier ritual calls the relative dependency of the several parts when we proceed to the Eighteenth Degree or Rose Croix. Here, as the Church teaches, the Old Testament finds its completion in ‘The New and Better Covenant,’ and Hiram is indeed a forerunner of Christ.”

This kind of argument is extremely popular with those Masons who have taken the Eighteenth Degree or who are Knights 1. *Theolog* (The Journal of the Faculty of Theology, King's College, London) Easter term, 1953. Article *Christian and Mason*, p. 10, anonymous. The author, however, is well known to me: he wrote me that he remained anonymous because he feared “disciplinary action either by Grand Lodge, Great Priory, or the Supreme Council.” It appears to be a Masonic offence to attempt to defend it from religious criticism.

For thei conspiren many false errors aghenst the comyn fraternyte of Crist, that alle Cristene men token in here cristendom, and aghenst comyn charite and comyn profit of Cristene men . . . men of sutel craft, as fre masons and othere, semen openly cursed bi this sentence.

John Wyclif, The Grete Sentens of Curs.

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Templar. Even those who have not gone beyond the Royal Arch will urge that as the Church uses the Old Testament in her lessons and liturgy there is no reason why Masonry should not do the same, and thus at least provide a *preparatio Evangelii*.

Woolly thinking again ! Even if this symbolism and allegory could be accepted as patient of a far-fetched Christian prophetic interpretation (in the teeth of the historical evidence that Craft Masonry was deliberately de-Christianized in 1813), what would it prove ? The Church reveres and uses the Old Testament only in the context of the New. The Old Testament itself makes no claim to be a complete revelation, but ever looks forward to the redemption of the True Israel, and awaits the coming of the Messiah. Clearly a Church service which was entirely derived from the Old Testament, with nothing from the New, would not be a Christian service even if Messianic prophecies from the Book of Isaiah were included as lessons. Otherwise all Jews would *ipso facto* be Christians, which is absurd. No more absurd, however, than for the Craft Mason to claim that his ritual is Christian because he can here and there twist into it a Messianic prophecy, and that there are other degrees further on which claim to be fully Christian.

The Rose Croix Mason or the Knight Templar must first be a Craft Mason ; he cannot by-pass the first three degrees. He need not remain an active member of the Craft after his "perfection" but a very great number do. Here again is an anomaly. If Masonry is a progressive search for light, as is claimed, it is most curious that those who have gone on beyond the Craft to find the light of Christ in the higher degrees are unable to proclaim that light to their still-questing brethren in Craft Lodges where the name of Christ may not be mentioned or adored. How angry St. Paul would have been at this limitation ! He descended, so to speak, from the high degree of his Christian conversion to preach in the Craft synagogues of the Jews, but he preached Christ crucified, and Him only. He refused to bear witness anywhere where he could not bear witness to his divine Master.

Again, when the higher-degree Mason quotes that "Masonry is a progressive science" and implies that the progression leads inevitably and logically to the Rose Croix or Orders of the Temple, he ignores the fact that he is quoting out of context.

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The "progressive science" of the Craft ritual leads to the Royal Arch and no farther, according to the ritual and Constitutions of Grand Lodge. The former declares that the Royal Arch is the "Supreme Degree, at once the foundation and keystone of the whole Masonic structure." The latter lays down authoritatively that "pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more... including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch." Not a hint is there of any further progress, for Craft and Chapter together claim to be a complete and entirely self-sufficient system from which all other degrees and orders were deliberately excluded in 1813. There is no recognition of any higher degrees, Christian or pagan. Officially they are all just fancy extras, extraneous systems later grafted on to the Craft foundation, optional extras for those interested. Few can claim any great antiquity.

There is a popular misconception about these degrees among non-Masons. Because the Ancient and Accepted Rite (incorrectly called the Scottish Rite in Britain, correctly so in America) has higher numerical titles to its degrees which stretch to thirty-three, it is often thought that this rite has also a higher authority. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Supreme Council 33rd Degree would not dream of attempting the presumption of claiming any control over Grand Lodge, which is immeasurably the more influential and powerful body. An individual Mason who has the 33rd degree has no more precedence or authority in a Craft Lodge than any Master Mason.¹ He is not even allowed to wear the jewels and insignia of any higher order there, because they are not recognized as pure ancient Masonry at all. "Side degrees", then, is really a more apt title for them, along with the Mark, the Allied and Cryptic degrees, the Secret Monitor, the Knights Templar, and the Royal Order of Scotland.

And this brings us to another snag in the facile argument that Christian degrees are the logical fulfilment of the Craft. They are in fact only one of many varying fulfilments. One can proceed through the Mark into the Cryptic degrees, which also cast further light on the Hiram legend, but they are not Christian at all. Nor are the miscellaneous Allied degrees ; though some of them have a Templar content they are open to all religions. 1. That is, as a 33rd degree Mason. It so happens, however, that the Supreme Council do not normally confer this degree on any who have not already achieved Grand Lodge rank in the Craft.

The *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia* claims to interpret and fulfil Craft Masonry in terms of Theosophy, and the amazing farrago of nonsense in its rituals derives more from Mme. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* than from the New Testament. Its claim to be Christian in teaching is the sheerest impertinence or ignorance.¹ But Theosophists, too, can trace their symbolism and prophecies in the Craft degrees of Grand Lodge.

Even the thirty-three degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Rite do not present an orderly and logical sequence from the non-Christian to the Christian. The 18th or Rose Croix degree deals with the crucifixion and resurrection, but the Knights Kadosh or 30th degree (although of course composed only of those who have taken the eighteenth) reverts to innocuous philosophy of a very general kind and is mainly concerned with the ascent of a ladder whose rungs symbolize the seven sciences. The degrees over thirty become progressively more vague and pan-religiously platitudinous. In America there is a further order with a membership of over half a million called the Ancient Arabic Order of the Mystic Shrine, open only to Knights Templar and Masons of the 32nd degree.² Progression into this lands the aspirant into an idiotic absurdity of quasi-Moslem ritual and symbolism, though it is safe to pay it the compliment of assuming that its Nobles are incapable of taking the ritual seriously.

Hence the argument that Masonry is a progressive science which leads from the non-Christian to the Christian is not really convincing. One can progress through a bewildering labyrinth of degrees and orders of any or no religion before, or instead of, coming across the two or three Christian ones, and it is difficult to see by what right these two or three claim to be *the* fulfilment of the Craft. Christians may feel that they *ought* to be, and

1. The externals of this Rosicrucian order, like many other strange religious sects, such as the "Sanctuary" in Basil Street, Knightsbridge, before the war, the "Liberal Catholics", or the "Cathedral of the Good Shepherd" in Lower Sloane Street, London today, ape a good deal of Catholic ceremonial deprived of its Catholic content. The *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia* has its altars, its thurifers, its torch-bearers, even its "celebrants." The Chaplain-General, according to the Ordinances as revised in 1918 must wear "Cassock, mantelletta and biretta of rose-red moiré silk. Indian cambric rochet edged with lace. Rose-red silk gloves. For full dress, in addition, red stockings or socks, gilt kid shoes and mozzetta." The wearer of this ultramontane Masonic magnificence need not necessarily be a clergyman at all, still less a Cardinal!

2. See Appendix A.

possibly for them they are therefore, but Masonry as a whole does not confirm it, and Grand Lodge denies it by failing officially to recognize their very existence.

But finally, are these allegedly Christian degrees really Christian at all in any orthodox sense? That is the next point to consider.

VIII

THE ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED RITE

O Sir, we quarrel in print; by the book, as you have books for good manners, I will name you the degrees.

Shakespeare, As You Like It.

Trail'st thou the puissant pike?

II King Henry V.

THE heyday of the multiplication of Masonic degrees and orders was the second half of the eighteenth century. Their most fruitful breeding ground was France. Here, then, is the time and the place to search for the origins of what is now known as the Ancient and Accepted Rite which was to superimpose an extra thirty degrees on top of the basic three of "pure ancient Masonry."

Some of these additional degrees represent a later development and elaboration of the original Masonic legend. Further incidents in the building of King Solomon's Temple are dramatized, and a good deal more is heard of the vengeance which overtook the assassins of Hiram the architect. Many of them, however, introduced entirely fresh matter quite alien to Masonic tradition. They are really different orders altogether, whose chief claim to the title of Freemasonry lies in their having made Lodge membership an essential prerequisite for entry into Chapter, Conclave, or Consistory.

It was a period of confusion and dissension. New rites and orders sprang up everywhere. Many of this bewildering chaos of degrees and orders were known as *grades écossais*, or Scottish degrees. The reason for this is not altogether clear. A popular explanation is that exiled Scottish Jacobites, in particular the Chevalier Ramsay, were largely responsible for their origin, but evidence for this is extremely scanty, and Ramsay, like Frederick the Great, has been credited with a larger Masonic role in popular imagination than he ever played in history. One myth in the Templar transmission theory is that exiled and persecuted knights fled to Scotland after the dissolution of the order

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encouraged by Robert the Bruce, and founded the Mother Lodge of Kilwinning; this may account for certain degrees with a Templar content styling themselves Scottish. In any case, Scotland was supposed to be the cradle of Freemasonry (as indeed to a certain extent it was) and the most likely explanation therefore seems to be that the title was claimed as an alleged proof of antiquity and genuineness. If an irreverent simile may be pardoned, whisky is popularly claimed as "Scotch" the world over, wherever distilled—unless it is known to be Irish!

Many of these degrees and orders, "Scottish" and others, were short-lived and died a natural death. But the title of Scottish remained with some, to the irritation of the Grand Lodge of Scotland who would have nothing to do with them, and in America the Ancient and Accepted Rite is known as "Scottish Rite Masonry" to this day. The English Supreme Council dropped the title only in 1909.

In the course of the year 1758 a body arose styling itself *Conseils des Empereurs d'Orient et d'Occident* and its members as Sovereign Masonic Princes. It bestowed warrants for Lodges to work the higher degrees of "Perfect and Sublime Masonry" throughout Europe. This "Rite of Perfection," as it was called, consisted of twenty-five degrees, including the Royal Arch and the Rose Croix; the twenty-fifth was the Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret. Not unnaturally its pretensions to superior Masonic status caused dissensions with the Grand Lodge (later known as the Grand Orient) of France, and there were schisms in both bodies which there is no point in tracing in detail here.

In 1761 the Council of Emperors granted an authority to a certain Stephen Morin to propagate the rite in the New World. It is generally believed that Morin was a Jew, but there is some evidence that he may have been of Huguenot extraction; in any case no religious tests were demanded of initiates into the Rite of Perfection. Morin sailed immediately for the West Indies, and at Santa Domingo he started the dissemination of the rite, appointing Inspectors not only for the West Indies but also for the United States. Among others he conferred the twenty-five degrees on Moses M. Hayes, who appointed Isaac Da Costa as Deputy Inspector-General for South Carolina. In 1783 the

Grand Lodge of Perfection was established at Charleston,¹ which in 1801 became the Supreme Council, opened by John Mitchell, the Sovereign Grand Commander, and Frederick Dalcho, an Episcopalian clergyman. The other members of the first Supreme Council were Emanuel de la Motta, Abraham Alexander, Israel de Lieben, and Moses Clava Levy, who were Jews, and Thomas Bartholomew Bowen, Dr. Isaac Auld, and Dr. James Moultrie. At no time from the very beginning, then, was the Mother Supreme Council of Charleston a Christian body, even if her grand-daughter in England claims to be a Christian convert.

Up to this time nothing is known of any degrees in this rite higher than the twenty-fifth. But in 1802, sixteen years after the death of Frederick the Great of Prussia, eight further degrees were compiled from various European sources, and interpolated into this number. The legend went forth in a circular to all the Grand Lodges of the world that that Monarch had ratified a set of secret Grand Masonic Constitutions (alleged to have existed from time immemorial) and had established a Supreme Council of Sovereign Grand Inspectors General controlling thirty-three degrees. In these Constitutions "the higher power was conferred on a Supreme Council of nine brethren in each nation who possess all the Masonic prerogatives in their own districts, that His Majesty individually possessed, and are Sovereigns of Masonry."

This was patently a myth, if not a deliberate fraud. Nothing is known of it in the archives of the Berlin Lodge of the Three Globes, which might have been expected to know about it before it was proclaimed in Charleston, South Carolina. Frederick died in 1786, the year of these Constitutions, and had been in poor health for some time previously. His early interest in Masonry, such as it was, had in any case largely evaporated in later life. No serious Masonic historian today dreams of taking the story seriously, though unfortunately the *Official History of the Supreme Council* published in 1831 commits itself to the authenticity of the legend, and Albert Pike later defended it, disastrously for his reputation. The best that can be said of this fraudulent foundation for the rite is that it was a pious fraud born of hero-worship and a desire to attach a celebrity as an historical patron. Still,

1. The headquarters of the Southern Jurisdiction are now at Washington.

it was clearly a fraud clearly intended to deceive. The name of Frederick of Prussia continues to be used in the abbreviated ritual as the Word of the thirty-third degree, despite the embarrassment caused by its utterance in the 1914-18 war.

In 1813 a Supreme Council was constituted in New York, known as the Supreme Council for the Northern Jurisdiction. What in America is known as the Mason-Dixon line was roughly the frontier between these two bodies. The headquarters moved from New York to Boston in 1851.

Among Masons the most revered figure in the Ancient and Accepted Rite is undoubtedly Albert Pike, who more than any other man is responsible for the rapid spread and popularity of these higher degrees. Dr. Fort Newton, of the City Temple, London, said of him that he found Masonry a log-cabin and left it a temple. His most important work was his drastic revision of the rituals. Charles Joseph Jean Laffron-Ladebat had made some improvements in 1855, but Pike went much further. His rituals, with all their crude paganism and half-digested occultism (much of it lifted bodily without acknowledgement from the occultist Eliphas Levi) are still in use by the Southern Jurisdiction, of which he was Grand Commander from 1845. His other work, *Morals and Dogma*, a turgid, immensely lengthy, and monumentally boring commentary on the degrees, with many passages taken from other authors, is still accepted as the official monitor. Under his generalship the rite grew and prospered, and it is not without justification that he has been styled the master-genius of Masonry. That he was ever pope or absolute dictator of world-wide Masonry, however, is a figment of the anti-Masonic imagination, based on the forgeries of Gabriel Antoine Jogand-Pagès, better known as Leo Taxil, who formulated this legend in Paris only a few months after Pike's death in 1891, and backed it up with accusations of crude deliberate Luciferianism. Yet the fact remains that Pike's moral influence as Grand Commander of the Mother Supreme Jurisdiction was undoubtedly great wherever the rite was worked.

In England there is some evidence, but not a great deal, for the existence of a Supreme Council warranted directly from France as early as 1819. The evidence comes from France, and despite the known antipathy of the Grand Master the Duke of Sussex to the higher degrees, it seems that overtures were made to him

regarding the formation of a Supreme Council, and that negotiations were entered into. If such a Supreme Council was actually formed, it seems to have existed only on paper, for there are no traces of its having functioned or issued any charters.

Yet there is evidence that Rose Croix Masonry was worked in England before the present Supreme Council was warranted. Encampments of Knights Templar used to work it. Those two museum cities of antique Masonry, Bristol and Bath, and also Newcastle and Portsmouth conferred the degree very early in the nineteenth century, the Antiquity Encampment at Bath apparently first worked it in 1793. But it was not until two years after the death of the Duke of Sussex that the Supreme Council of England and Wales, the Dominions and Dependencies of the British Crown was constituted, on October 26, 1845. The leading personalities were Dr. R. T. Crucefix, Dr. Henry Beaumont Leeson, and the Rev. George Oliver, the prolific writer referred to in an earlier chapter. Dr. Crucefix petitioned the Northern Jurisdiction of America for a warrant, which was issued on July 23, 1846. There was an inaugural festival, and the new Council was launched. By the end of the century there were one hundred and forty-four chapters. Today (1954) there are four hundred and seventy.

Owing to the loss of early minute-books there is not a great deal of information available about ritual revision. Existing minutes date from 1853, so it seems that the rituals must have taken shape before then. The most likely guess is that they are largely the work of Oliver, based on the ritual which would doubtless be sent from America with the warrant. The Council ordered the revised rituals of Laffron-Ladebat in 1857. Albert Pike sent copies of his revisions in 1872.

In England today the Ancient and Accepted Rite works only the eighteenth degree, and the thirtieth to thirty-third inclusive, the intermediate ones being conferred titularly, as explained in the rituals which follow. In London, however, there is an annual festival at which one of these intermediate degrees from the fourth to the seventeenth may be demonstrated in rehearsal as a museum piece for the interest of the Brethren, by the King Edward VII Chapter of Improvement. As they are not in regular use, however, I am informed, I know not with what accuracy, that the American rituals of the Northern Jurisdiction are used

for these demonstrations. It is certainly true that Canon Covey-Crump's useful little book *The Intermediate Degrees of the A. & A. Rite* (1949) which summarizes the legends of these degrees, follows these American workings.

Any Master Mason of twelve months' standing may apply for "perfection" in the Rose Croix of Heredom,¹ the Royal Arch is not a necessary requirement. No one is eligible for the thirtieth degree until he is a Past Most Wise Sovereign in the eighteenth, and has been a member for at least three years. He must be recommended for the honour by his local Chapter.

The thirtieth degree is usually conferred in London, at the headquarters of the Supreme Council at 10 Duke Street, St. James's, S.W.1, and at least three Grand Inspectors General (thirty-third degree) must be present. Sometimes, however, special Chapters for this purpose are arranged in the provinces. Promotion beyond the thirtieth degree is sparing, and depends on seniority and service. The thirty-first degree is limited to six hundred members, the thirty-second to two hundred and fifty.

The 1954 Year Book lists seventy members of the thirty-third degree (one of whom has since died) and a further eight *honoris causa* from other jurisdictions. As there may be some interest in the identities of these so-called "top Masons" their names will be found in an appendix.

One also finds curiosity, and sometimes misgivings, over the foreign contacts and alleged alliances of the Supreme Council. It is therefore perhaps worth recording that there are ten other Masonic bodies with whom the Supreme Council of England and Wales is in full fraternal relations, and exchanges representatives. These are the Supreme Councils of Scotland, Ireland, Canada, the Northern and Southern Jurisdictions of the United States, the National Grand Lodge of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, and the Supreme Council of the Netherlands.

1. Possible derivations of the word Heredom are:—
 - a. From *Herodium*, a castle built by King Herod.
 - b. From *Hightroadian* (Hightroadmen or wayfarers) an obscure Masonic degree worked at Gateshead in 1746.
 - c. From *heredium*, genitive plural of *heres*, heir, implying that the degree was invented by the heirs of ancient Masons.
 - d. From the *Harodim* or overseers (1 Kings, 16, and IX, 23).
 - e. From the legend that Heredom was the name of a mountain in Scotland in which Masonic secrets were preserved.
 - f. From the Greek *hieros domos*, holy house.
- The last is the most commonly accepted. The word also occurs in the first degree of the Royal Order of Scotland, Heredom of Kilwinning.