

IX

THE ROSE CROIX OF HEREDOM

*What knoweth then
The Brother of the Rosy Cross?—But nothing
Save that he boasteth that all things created
Derive from three alone—salt, mercury,
And foetid sulphur.*

Mundus Christopheri Filius (1619).

There is no question that the Eighteenth Degree, in its valid and orthodox form as the Word discovered and communicated, carries on the Rosicrucian claim to possess the Key of Masonry, to be its fons et origo and to deliver its final message. Its great success must be accounted for . . . in view of the talismanic magic which has always and everywhere encompassed the title of Rosy Cross.

A. E. Waite, The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross.

IDEALLY there should be three rooms *en suite* for the conferment of this degree, the Black Room, the Chamber of Death, and the Red Room. There should be in addition an ante-room for the preparation of Candidates and for the conferment of the intermediate degrees; sometimes, however, a separate room altogether can be devoted to this.

At the east end of the Black Room is an altar and a plinth of three steps. Above the altar is a transparency, lit from behind, on which are depicted three crosses, each upon three steps; the central cross, higher than the other two, has on it the Mystic Rose surrounded by the Crown of Thorns. On the steps of the other two are depicted a skull and cross-bones. On the altar are a Bible, a pair of compasses, and an unsheathed sword. The altar has a frontal of black, fringed with silver. On it are worked five swords; four in a St. Andrew's cross with the points towards the centre, and the fifth upright in the middle. The Most Wise Sovereign is seated on the north side of the altar, and the Prelate on the south. A pair of black curtains is hung in front of the altar, which completely conceal it when drawn.

In the centre of the space west of the curtains is spread a black floorcloth on which is painted a pelican surrounded by seven concentric white circles. The head of the pelican is towards the east.

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In the south, west, and north are three black pillars surmounted by black pyramids with lights inside; the sides of the pyramids facing inwards are pierced with eleven holes in a triangle surrounding translucent letters, H, C, and F respectively. A removable plate bearing the same letter is on each pillar.

The First General is seated in the north-west, the Second General in the south-west, and the Captain of the Guard at the entrance to the Red Room. The Outer Guard (corresponding to the Tyler in the Craft) is stationed in the ante-room.

All the furnishings are black, and there should be no lights at all other than those behind the transparency over the altar, and in the tops of the pillars shining through the holes and the translucent letters.

The Chamber of Death should have an entrance direct from the Black Room, and an exit direct into the Red Room. It is furnished entirely in black. On the floor are skulls and cross-bones, and if possible a figure in a winding sheet laid out as a corpse. The room is lit only by lamps burning spirits of wine, and flambeaux fixed in skulls.

The Red Room provides a startling contrast. It is brilliantly illuminated, and furnished in bright red. In the east is a white altar, upon which are two super-altars each of four steps. On these are a profusion of red roses, and thirty-three lights arranged in three inverted triangles, with the white Cubic Stone in the centre. Also upon the altar, on the south side, are placed the Word (I.N.R.I.), a Bible, the alms-dish, and a taper. The altar has a white frontal, adorned with red and gold, bearing an equal-armed cross on which are five Hebrew characters in gold. The Most Wise Sovereign has his throne to the north of the altar, and in front of him is a pedestal on which are the Chapter Warrant, the seal, and copies of the regulations and by-laws.

In the west sit the First and Second Generals (with pedestals in front of them), the Marshal, and Raphael.

In the centre is the floor-cloth, strewn with roses, upon which is a ladder of seven steps. Upon each step is placed a movable letter, each covered by a rose. These letters, reading successively from west to east, are F.H.C.I.N.R.I. Between the ladder and the altar is a kneeling-stool.

The Officers of a Rose Croix Chapter are the Most Wise Sovereign, the Prelate, First and Second Generals, Director of

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Ceremonies, Marshal, Raphael, Herald, Captain of the Guard, Organist, and Outer Guard. Others whose part is administrative and not ceremonial are the Treasurer, Recorder (Secretary), Almoner, Stewards, and assistants as required. A quorum of at least five Brethren, including the Most Wise Sovereign or Past Sovereign, is needed for the perfection of a Candidate.

All Brethren wear dark morning or evening dress, and (excepting members of the Thirty-Third Degree) white gloves. The regalia consists of apron and collar with jewel suspended from it, all reversible. The apron is of white satin, bordered with red. On it is embroidered in gold thread a pelican feeding its young, and a Latin cross, surrounded by a wreath. The reverse is of black watered silk, with a plain red Latin cross.

The collar is of red silk, embroidered in gold thread with the pelican and cross in the centre, a serpent having its tail in its mouth on the right, and the crown of thorns on the left. The reverse is of black silk, with three red Latin crosses.

The jewel is in the form of a pair of compasses enclosing a cross, and surmounted by a celestial crown. On one side of the jewel is the pelican feeding its young, on the other, a white eagle with extended wings. On both sides there is a rose on the joint of the compasses.

The black reverse of the regalia is displayed when the Chapter is assembled in the Black Room.

OPENING THE CHAPTER¹

(The Most Wise Sovereign gives one knock, which is repeated by the First and Second Generals).

M.W.S. Brethren, assist me to open the Chapter of Princes Rose Croix of Heredom. *(All rise).*

M.W.S. Excellent and Perfect Marshal, see that the Castle Gates are duly guarded.

(The Captain of the Guard opens the door, and the Marshal satisfies himself that the Outer Guard is in his place, and reports).

1. Rose Croix rituals are not sold to the public, though secondhand copies of earlier editions are reasonably available. A spurious version occurs in the *Text Book of Advanced Freemasonry* (Reeves and Turner) but authentic rituals are privately printed for the Supreme Council. An edition was printed in 1951, and later a list of errata and corrections appeared which were embodied in the latest 1952 edition. My own collection includes this, and almost every edition since 1876, and a manuscript ritual even earlier than this.

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Mar. Most Wise Sovereign, all is secure without.
M.W.S. To order, Brethren, as Princes Rose Croix.

(All stand to order with the 3rd sign. The signs are described later in the ceremony when they are given to the Candidate).

M.W.S. Excellent and Perfect First General, what is the hour?
1st Gen. The ninth hour of the day.

M.W.S. Then it is the hour when the Veil of the Temple was rent in twain and darkness overspread the earth, when the true Light departed from us, the Altar was thrown down, the Blazing Star was eclipsed, the Cubic Stone poured forth Blood and Water, the Word was lost, and despair and tribulation sat heavily upon us.

(Solemn pause)

M.W.S. Since Masonry has experienced such dire calamities, it is our duty, Princes, to endeavour by renewed labours to retrieve our loss. May the benign influence of Faith, Hope, and Charity prosper our endeavours to recover the lost Word, for which purpose I declare this Chapter of Princes Rose Croix of Heredom duly open *(all drop sign)* in the Name of the Great Emmanuel.

(M.W.S. knocks 6.1., repeated by the First and Second Generals, the Captain of the Guard, and the Outer Guard. The Prelate opens the New Testament).

M.W.S. Excellent and Perfect Prelate, the Chapter being open, what remains to be done?

Prel. To respect the decrees of Providence; to render worship to God alone; and with all humility and patience to endeavour to recover the Word.

M.W.S. Yes, Princes, that shall be our aim. Do you, Excellent and Perfect Prelate, invoke a blessing on our labours.

Prel. Almighty and Everlasting God, give unto us the increase of Faith, Hope, and Charity; and, that we may obtain that which Thou dost promise, make us to love that which Thou dost command, through Jesus Christ, our Great Emmanuel. Amen.¹

M.W.S. *(Gives the first part of the second sign)* Save, we beseech Thee, O God in Heaven, Creator and Sovereign of all things, us Thine unworthy children.
Be seated, Brethren.

(The Minutes are read, and the business of the Chapter proceeds).

1. Except for the ending, this is the Collect for the fourteenth Sunday after Trinity in the Book of Common Prayer.

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THE CEREMONY OF PERFECTION

1. RECEPTION

(When a Candidate presents himself for Perfection his qualifications are first examined, as follows):—

M.W.S.

Excellent and Perfect Marshal, you will retire and ascertain if Brother professes the Trinitarian Christian Faith, and, if he is willing to take an Obligation in the Name of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, you will ask him to sign the necessary Petition.

(The Marshal retires, and presents the Petition to the Candidate in the ante-room for his signature. The Petition is as follows):—

I, the undersigned, most humbly supplicate the Most Wise Sovereign and Excellent and Perfect Princes now assembled, that you will be pleased to admit me to your Princely Order, presenting myself with humble desire to obtain perfection.

I do most solemnly promise true allegiance to the Supreme Council Thirty-Third Degree, duly, lawfully and constitutionally established on the 26th day of October, A.D. 1845, sitting at their Grand East in London for England and Wales, the Dominions and Dependencies of the British Crown.

I furthermore promise to hold no Masonic fellowship or communication with any Masons or Bodies of Masons which at any time have been or may hereafter be established anywhere by any authority whatsoever, except with such as are, or may be, duly acknowledged as being lawful and regular by the aforesaid Supreme Council.

In testimony whereof, I sign this my solemn promise and obligation.

(The Marshal returns and presents the completed Petition to the Most Wise Sovereign).

Mar.

Most Wise Sovereign, Brother expresses himself willing to take an Obligation in the Name of the Holy and Undivided Trinity.

(The Sovereign satisfies himself that the Petition is in order. The Candidate is then balloted for, and if the ballot is favourable all go into the room where the Intermediate Degrees are to be conferred).

2. THE INTERMEDIATE DEGREES. (a) The lodge of Perfection

(The Candidate, who wears no Masonic clothing or regalia whatsoever, is admitted by the Marshal and placed before the Most Wise Sovereign).

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M.W.S. By virtue of the power vested in me by the Supreme Council Thirty-Third Degree, I declare this Lodge of Perfection open.

(Nine knocks. The Marshal opens the Bible).

M.W.S.

Brother, the position of a Prince Rose Croix to which you aspire requires that you have had conferred upon you seventeen Degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Rite of Freemasonry.

The Degrees of Craft Masonry, which you have already received, are accepted as equivalents of the first three Degrees of this Rite. In the ordinary course it would take many months, or even years, before you could acquire the whole, but it has pleased the Supreme Council Thirty-Third Degree to direct that the intervening fourteen Degrees may now be communicated to you by name. Are you willing to pledge yourself to preserve the secrets and mysteries of these Degrees? *(The Candidate signifies his assent).*

M.W.S.

Then you will kneel on both knees; place your right hand upon the Volume of the Sacred Law; and with your left hand hold this sword by the blade, hilt upward. State your names at length, and repeat after me:—

M.W.S. & Can.

I,, in the presence of God, Creator of the Universe, and calling upon these Brethren as witnesses, do upon this Sacred Book, most solemnly and sincerely promise that I will never illegally reveal any or either of the secrets or mysteries of or belonging to the several degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Rite from the First Degree to the Seventeenth Degree both inclusive, which heretofore have been known to me, or may at any future time, be communicated to me. *(The Marshal replaces the sword on the table).*

M.W.S.

You will seal this once on the Volume of the Sacred Law.

(Candidate kisses the Bible).

M.W.S.

You will now rise.

I confer upon you the following Degrees by name:—

4. Secret Master,
5. Perfect Master.
6. Intimate Secretary,
7. Provost and Judge,
8. Intendant of the Buildings,
9. Elect of Nine,
10. Elect of Fifteen,
11. Sublime Elect,
12. Grand Master Architect,

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- M.W.S. 13. Royal Arch of Enoch,
14. Scotch Knight of Perfection.

In the first eight of these Degrees (4th to 11th) the Legend of Hiram Abiff is continued in a series of allegories. Collectively they portray the confusion caused by the death of Hiram and the steps taken by Solomon to restore order and progress in the kingdom. The building of the Temple proceeds, and the successors of the three Grand Masters of Craft Masonry are shown in the 12th and 13th Degrees continuing the work with which they have been entrusted. The 14th refers to the legend of the Secret Vault and its contents.

The whole group is known as that of the "Ineffable Degrees."

I now declare this Lodge of Perfection closed. (*Nine knocks*).

- (b) The Council of the Princes of Jerusalem

M.W.S. By virtue of the power vested in me by the Supreme Council Thirty-Third Degree, I declare this Council of Princes of Jerusalem open. (*Knocks* 1, 2).

M.W.S. I confer upon you the Degrees of :—
15. Knight of the Sword, or of the East,
16. Prince of Jerusalem.

These two Degrees are variously known as the "Historical Degrees" and as "Orders of Chivalry." They give an account of the assistance received from Cyrus and Darius in the task of rebuilding the Temple after the Babylonian Captivity.

I declare this Council of Princes of Jerusalem closed. (*Knocks* 1, 2).

- (c) The lodge of the Knights of the East and West

M.W.S. By virtue of the power vested in me by the Supreme Council Thirty-Third Degree, I declare this Lodge of Knights of the East and West open. (*Knocks* 2, 2, 2, 1).
I confer upon you the 17th Degree, Knight of the East and West.

The signs, tokens, and words are exchanged thus :—
Place your left hand, with the fingers straight, on my right hand, I cover it with my left hand, and you look over your right shoulder and say ABADDON, which refers to the Evil One.

I reply by touching your left shoulder with my left hand, and you touch my right shoulder with your right hand, thus forming a St. Andrew's Cross. Then

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M.W.S. I look over my left shoulder and answer JAHABULON, which means "The Lord is our help."

This Degree is the first of the "Philosophical Degrees," and forms a fitting preface to the principles of Christianity represented in the 18th Degree. Studied as allegories, these Intermediate Degrees continue the teachings of Symbolic Masonry.

I close this Lodge of Knights of the East and West with the knocks 2. 2. 2. 1.

(*The Marshal closes the Bible. The Sovereign and other Princes pass to the Black Room, where members of the 18th degree reverse their aprons and collars.*)

3. THE FIRST POINT

(*In the Black Room the Prelate opens the New Testament. The black curtains are drawn across, concealing the altar, and all lights are extinguished except those behind the transparencies and on the three pillars. The Marshal conducts the Candidate to the door, and knocks 2. 2. 2. 1.*)

2nd Gen. Most Wise Sovereign, an alarm.

M.W.S. Excellent and Perfect Second General, see who disturbs this Chapter.

(*The Second General opens the door.*)

2nd Gen. Wherefore this alarm?

Mar. This worthy Knight of the East and West, having confided to me a Petition which has been presented to the Most Wise Sovereign, now begs to be admitted to receive an answer.

2nd Gen. Wait while I report to the Most Wise Sovereign. (*Closes the door.*) Most Wise Sovereign, a worthy Knight of the East and West, having presented a Petition to you by the hand of the Marshal, now requests to be admitted to receive your answer.

M.W.S. Summon our Excellent and Perfect Marshal to conduct him hither.

(*The Second General admits them, and the Marshal conducts the Candidate up to the drawn curtains.*)

Mar. Most Wise Sovereign, I present to you Brother
M.W.S. Who and what are you?

Mar. Nobly born and of the tribe of Judah.

M.W.S. What is your rank?

Mar. Knight of the East and West.

M.W.S. Give me the Word.

Mar. ABADDON.

M.W.S. JAHABULON. What is your age?

Mar. Thirty-three.

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M.W.S.

Your petition has been favourably received by this Chapter ; but whilst we admire your zeal and courage, and your conduct inspires us with confidence and esteem, alas, you have come among us at the ninth hour of the day, when we are overwhelmed with grief and the deepest sorrow, and consternation spreads horror over our brows.

The earth quakes, the rocks are rent, the Veil of the Temple is rent in twain, darkness overspreads the earth, and the True Light has departed from us. Our Altars are thrown down, the Cubic Stone pours forth Blood and Water, the Blazing Star is eclipsed, our Shepherd is smitten, the Word is lost, and despair and tribulation sit heavily upon us.

(Solemn pause)

Nevertheless, it is well that you have arrived at this hour of peril ; since, as a courageous and valiant Knight, we trust that you will assist us in our endeavours to retrieve our loss and recover the Word ; in which case only shall we be able to confer upon you that distinction you so earnestly desire.

Mar.

We promise faithfully to aid you in your labours and to obey whatever commands you may be pleased to impose upon us.

M.W.S.

Then, worthy Knights, I direct you to travel thirty-three days ; eleven to the Pillar of Wisdom in the North ; eleven to the Pillar of Beauty in the South ; and eleven to the Pillar of Strength in the West ; returning to me in the East with whatever information you may obtain during your travels. I particularly commend to your meditation the beauties of the New and Better Covenant ; and that you may more completely appreciate its excellence, let us invoke guidance and direction from above.

(All stand).

Prel.

Almighty and Sovereign Architect of the Universe, who dost penetrate into the secret recesses of the hearts of men, purify ours with the Sacred Fire of Thy Divine Love. Banish from this Holy Sanctuary the impious and profane ; and grant that we, aided by the Power of Thy Spirit, may be enabled to distinguish the precious metal from the dross, and may not be deceived in the choice of him we are about to perfect. May our Order ever be adorned by service, good will, and peace. Now unto the King, Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, be the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

(The Brethren resume their seats).

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M.W.S.

Depart in peace.
(The Marshal followed by the Candidate passes seven times round the Chapter. During the third circuit the Candidate is shown the Pillar of Wisdom in the north, and is given the letter F. During the fifth circuit he is shown and given the letter H from the Pillar of Beauty in the south. During the seventh circuit he is shown and given the letter C from the Pillar of Strength in the west. During the perambulations the Prelate reads Isaiah LIII. Solemn Music may be played during the reading).
" Who hath believed our report ? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed ? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground : he hath no form nor comeliness ; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

Prel.

" He is despised and rejected of men ; a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief : and we hid as it were our faces from him ; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows : yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.

" But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way ; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

" He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth ; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation ?

" For he was cut off out of the land of the living : for the transgressions of my people was he stricken ; and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief.

" When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand : he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied ; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

" Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because

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Prel. he hath poured out his soul unto death ; and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors," (*The Marshal, having timed the circuits with the reading, returns with the Candidate to the curtain. He passes through the curtain, leaving the Candidate outside, and gives the three letters F, H, C, to the Most Wise Sovereign.*)

M.W.S. I congratulate you on the success which has already rewarded your exertions. These letters are the initials of those Virtues by whose assistance you may be led to the discovery of the lost Word.

(*The curtains are slowly drawn back, revealing the altar to the Candidate, and the Marshal returns to his side.*)

M.W.S. Before I can explain further, I must call upon you to take a solemn Obligation to keep inviolate the secrets and mysteries of our Order. Are you ready to take it ? (*The Candidate signifies his assent*)

M.W.S. Then you will advance and kneel before the Holy Cross. (*Candidate kneels on both knees*). Place your right hand upon the New Testament, whilst across your hand will be laid a sword and the compasses. (*The Prelate adjusts these. All rise*). State your names at length, and repeat after me :—

M.W.S. I,, in the Name of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, before the Holy Cross, and in the presence of this Perfect Chapter, do hereby and hereon promise that I will never reveal the secrets or mysteries of this Order of the Rose Croix of Heredom to anyone in the world not lawfully entitled thereto, or whom I may believe not to have been duly qualified in a true and regularly constituted Chapter. I furthermore pledge my sacred word of honour that I will, at all times, pay due allegiance to this Chapter and to the Supreme Council under whose authority it is held.

All this I solemnly pledge myself to observe : so help me God and keep me steadfast in this my obligation. (*The Prelate removes the sword and compasses.*)

M.W.S. You will seal that seven times on the New Testament. (*Candidate does so*). Rise, newly obligated Brother. (*The Brethren sit. The Marshal takes the Candidate to the west of the floorcloth, where they face east.*)

M.W.S. I now inform you that the seven circles round which you have travelled represent the seven periods of the world's existence, which will close with the Second Advent of our great Emmanuel, when time shall be swallowed up in eternity.

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M.W.S. I have already congratulated you on having found the Initials of the three fundamental principles of our Order—Faith, Hope, and Charity. Assisted by these Virtues, we have no doubt that you will ultimately succeed in attaining the end and object of all our researches—that Word on which our eternal salvation must depend.

M.W.S. For Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hope maketh not ashamed—Charity suffereth long and is kind ; Charity envieth not ; Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth ; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth : but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail ; whether there be tongues, they shall cease ; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away ; for we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Let us pray. (*All rise*).

Prel. Almighty and Everlasting God, give unto us the increase of Faith, Hope, and Charity ; and, that we may obtain that which Thou dost promise, make us to love that which Thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

M.W.S. Having found the three fundamental principles of our Order let us go forth in search of the lost Word. A Procession is formed. First the Most Wise Sovereign and the Prelate, and members of the 33rd degree, if any are present. Then members of the 32nd, 31st, and 30th degrees. Then those of the 18th. Finally the Marshal and the Candidate. After passing the east once, all bowing to the altar, the Sovereign, the Prelate, and those of the 33rd degree leave the Black Room and pass into the Red Room. After passing the east twice, those of the 32nd, 31st, and 30th degrees similarly retire. After passing the east thrice, members of the 18th degree similarly retire, except for the Marshal. After passing the east four times, the Marshal leads the Candidate to the Captain of the Guard, who challenges him).

C. of G. You cannot enter here unless you give me the Word. Mar. He cannot. He is travelling in search thereof, hoping to obtain it by the practice of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and by the help of the New and Better Covenant.

C. of G. This attire is not compatible with that humility

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C. of G. necessary for those who wish to recover the lost Word. Clothe yourself in the garment of humility, and I will then summon Raphael to your assistance.

(A black crêpe veil is placed on the Candidate's head, and the Marshal leads him into the Chamber of Death. The Marshal then retires, and with the Captain of the Guard passes into the Red Room, leaving the Candidate alone. Solemn and funereal music may be played. After a pause, Raphael enters the Chamber of Death with his sword at the carry.)

Raph. I am come to conduct you from the depths of darkness and the Valley of the Shadow of Death to the Mansions of Light.

You have undergone dangers, difficulties, and afflictions ; yet be of good cheer. Armed with the Virtues you have already obtained, Faith will support you when tempted to despair, Hope will cheer you on your road, and Charity will sustain you in every trial, until having travelled through the abyss of darkness, you finally arrive at the Mansions of Light, whither our Heavenly Sovereign has gone before. Approach and follow me.

(Raphael leads the Candidate through the skulls, bones, corpses, etc., in the semi-darkness, and finally into the Red Room.)

4. THE SECOND POINT

(In the Red Room, brilliantly lit, the Brethren have reversed their regalia again, coloured side out. The music, if any, swells to a triumphant character as Raphael leads the Candidate into the room, and to the foot of the Mystic Ladder in the centre.)

Raph. Most Wise Sovereign, I bring with me this worthy Knight who has travelled through dangers and difficulties in search of the lost Word, and now supplicates to be rewarded for his labours.

M.W.S. Excellent and Perfect Raphael, we doubt not that this worthy Knight, assisted by your powerful aid, is deserving of every distinction ; and I now call upon him to ascend the ladder which leads from Darkness to Glory and Perfection. But first, how came he hither ?

Raph. Through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

M.W.S. What supported him ?

1. The music recommended is Handel's Dead March from *Saul*, changing to the joyful air of " Sound the Loud Timbrel o'er Egypt's Dark Sea " when Raphael and the Candidate enter the Red Room.

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Raph. Faith, Hope, and Charity.
M.W.S. What does he seek to obtain ?

Raph. The Lost Word.
M.W.S.

Then, as he appears to have proceeded thus far aright and to be well prepared to ascend the mysterious ladder, he may advance, pausing at each step and replying to my questions with your assistance.

What is that virtue which leads from earth to Heaven ?
(The Candidate puts his left foot on the ladder. Raphael removes the rose over the letter with the point of his sword, and directs the Candidate to pick up the letter, and then to stand with both feet on the first step. This procedure is repeated for the subsequent steps. Raphael prompts the Candidate's replies.)

Can. Faith.

(Before the second step) :—

M.W.S. What Virtue supports you when oppressed by shame and sorrow ?

Can. Hope.

(Before the third step) :—

M.W.S. What is the perfection of every Christian Virtue ?

Can. Charity.

(Raphael takes the three letters F. H. and C. from the Candidate. Before the fourth step) :—

M.W.S. Whence come you ?

Can. From Judaea.

" Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came Wise Men from the East to Jerusalem, saying :— ' Where is He that is born King of the Jews ? For we have seen His Star in the East, and are come to worship Him.' "

(Before the fifth step) :—

M.W.S. By what village did you pass ?

Can. Nazareth.

Prel.

" Philip findeth Nathaniel and saith unto him, ' We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph.' And Nathaniel said unto him, ' Can any good thing come out of Nazareth ? ' Philip saith unto him, ' Come and see.' "

(Before the sixth step) :—

M.W.S. Who conducted you ?

Can. Raphael.

Prel.

" He found Raphael that was an angel, and he said unto him, ' Canst thou go with me ? ' To whom the angel said, ' I will go with thee, and I know the way well.' "

(Before the seventh step) :—

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M.W.S.
Can.
Prel.

Of what tribe are you ?
Judah.

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet until Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."
Give me the Initials of the last four steps.

M.W.S.

(Raphael takes the four letters I. N. R. I. from the Candidate, and gives them to the Sovereign).

M.W.S.

Worthy Knight, by the aid of Faith, Hope, and Charity you have indeed succeeded in finding the lost Word. *(Raphael removes the black crêpe veil from the Candidate, and instructs him to step off the ladder).*

M.W.S.

By Faith you have found the Rose of Sharon, and you have been able to apprehend Him Who will neither leave nor forsake you.

By Hope you have obtained a Heaven-born blessing, which will console you under all difficulties and distresses and teach you under the afflictions of your earthly pilgrimage to look for a better and more enduring inheritance.

In Charity you behold the perfection of every Christian virtue.

Taking the Initials of the last four steps of your journey and putting them together, you have found the Name of Him Who is The Word, for St. John says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."
Now, worthy Knight, having found the Word of the New Law, I request our Excellent and Perfect Prelate to affix it to its proper place.

(All rise. The Prelate receives the Word from the Sovereign and places it on the Cubic Stone on the altar. All present, except Raphael and the Candidate, kneel on the right knee and point towards the Word with the right index finger. They then rise and give the first sign, with the word HOSANNA seven times. The Sovereign stands in front of the altar, facing west).

M.W.S.

Let the Candidate approach.
Worthy Knight, I rejoice to confer upon you the reward you have so well earned, and I trust that, by the practice of those Virtues that have this day been commended to your notice, you will indeed be led to Him Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Kneel, therefore, and receive those honours to which you are now entitled.

(The Candidate kneels on both knees. Raphael presents

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M.W.S.

his sword to the Sovereign).
By virtue of the power and authority in me vested by the Supreme Council Thirty-Third Degree of England and Wales, the Dominions and Dependencies of the British Crown, I hereby make *(touches Candidate's right shoulder with the sword) create, (left shoulder), and constitute (head) you, now and for ever, a Knight of the Pelican and Eagle.*

M.W.S.

(The Sovereign returns the sword to Raphael).
I seal you a Prince of the Order of the Rose Croix of Heredom with the Seal of Perfection.
(The Sovereign raises the new Prince).

M.W.S.

Rise, Excellent and Perfect Prince Rose Croix, and receive the emblems of our Order. Princes, be seated. *(The Director of Ceremonies takes away the kneeling-stool and presents the regalia).*

M.W.S.

I invest you with the badge of the Order. *(Presents the apron, and then takes the Collar and Jewel in his hands).*

The Jewel worn in this Degree is a pair of Compasses with a rose on either side, and surmounted by a Celestial Crown.

The points of the Compasses are extended on the segment of a circle with a Cross between them. Beneath the Cross is the heraldic emblem known as a "Pelican in its piety" ; and on the reverse a White Eagle with wings extended as if rising in the air.

The Pelican is a symbol of Christ our Redeemer ; for, as it was reputed to feed its young with its own blood to save them from death, so our Saviour shed His Blood to save us from death eternal.

The Eagle reminds us that the Saviour is God Himself, as He said to the Israelites of old, "I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself."

The Rose is an emblem of secrecy and silence. In the Song of Solomon we find reference to the Saviour under the mystical title of the Rose of Sharon.

The Cross represents the Cross of Calvary, red with the Precious Blood.

The Red Collar is embroidered on the right side with the representation of a Serpent, the symbol of wisdom, having its tail in its mouth, thus forming a Circle, the emblem of eternity.

On the left side is embroidered a representation of the Crown of Thorns, worn by Him Who says unto us, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life."

Thus the Rose and the Cross and the other symbols

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M.W.S.

peculiar to this Degree should remind us, through the Eternal Wisdom, of Him who is The Word, and teach us to take up our Cross and follow Him here, that we may win the Crown hereafter.

I now invest you with the Collar and Jewel of the Order.

I present to you this Rose, an emblem of Him Who is the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley.

Be careful, by the exercise of Faith, Hope, and Charity, to continue to deserve these emblems, which are symbols of hidden truths known only to the Perfect Mason.

I will now communicate to you the signs and words of this Degree.

The first sign is called the sign of Adoration. It consists in interlacing the fingers, then lifting the hands to the forehead, palms outwards, and at the same time raising the eyes to Heaven and exclaiming HOSANNA, then dropping the hands on to the body. The second sign is exchanged thus :—I raise my right hand to my forehead with the fingers closed except the index finger, saying HE ASCENDED. You reply by pointing downwards with the right hand, saying HE DESCENDED. The complete sign signifies that there is but One God in Heaven and Earth, Creator and Sovereign of all things.

The third is called the sign of the Good Shepherd or Pastor. It is given by crossing the arms on the breast, the left uppermost. It is answered in the same manner. We then approach each other with the third sign and mutually place our hands on the other's breast, thus forming two crosses. Then we exchange the letters I. N. R. I. alternately. These are the Initials of the superscription on the Cross, and stand for Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum.

The password EMMANUEL is given with the sign of the Good Shepherd, and is answered by PAX VOBISCUM given with the same sign. The sign is also given when addressing the Most Wise Sovereign and when entering or leaving a Chapter.

Excellent and Perfect Marshal, you will conduct the new Prince to the West and let him be duly proclaimed.

(The Marshal and Raphael conduct the newly perfected Prince to the West and place him between and slightly in front of the Generals, and stand on either side of him facing East. All rise).

Herald

(Standing in the south west) By command of the Most Wise Sovereign, I proclaim that our Brother

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Herald

has this day been created a Knight of the Pelican and Eagle, and sealed and invested a Prince of the Order of the Rose Croix of Heredom. I summon him accordingly to take his seat in the Chapter.

(Farfare. All resume their seats. The Director of Ceremonies leads the new Prince to the Sovereign who shows him the Warrant and presents him with a copy of the Rules and Regulations, and the by-laws of the Chapter. He is then conducted to his seat in the south east. The remaining business of the Chapter is then transacted. Alms are taken and presented at the altar. The Most Wise Sovereign rises thrice to enquire if anyone has ought to propose for the good of the Order in general, or of this Chapter in particular. Then all except members of the Thirty-Third Degree retire, and the room is prepared for the Third Point).

5. THE THIRD POINT.

(The ladder, floorcloth, and roses are removed, and a table with a red cloth is placed in the centre of the room. On the table are placed wafers, a chalice of wine, salt, and a second cup containing spirits. Gloves are removed, and the Princes enter the room in procession in inverse order of precedence, the Marshal and the new Prince first, others according to their degree, the Prelate and the Sovereign last. They circle the room, and when the Sovereign and the Prelate reach the East a complete circle is formed around the table. The members of the 33rd Degree take their places to the left of the Prelate. The Candidate is left outside the circle).

M.W.S. Princes, we have now arrived at the perfection of Masonry ; let us then unite in forming the Living Circle as an emblem of Eternity.

M.W.S. *(The Living Circle is formed with arms outstretched).* Princes, let us receive him who has this day been admitted to our Order.

(The Marshal leads the Candidate into the Circle, on the right of the Sovereign. The Circle is again completed).

M.W.S. Excellent and Perfect Prince, we receive you into the Living Circle of our hearts.

(After a brief pause the hands are dropped).

M.W.S. Princes, we now invite you, according to Oriental custom, to break bread and eat salt with us ; at the same time pledging to each other our fidelity and friendship in the goblet of fraternal affection ; and let us invoke the blessing of Him Who is the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley, by Whose assistance

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M.W.S. we hope to progress here on earth towards that perfection which can be consummated only when, rising from the tomb, we ascend to join our great Emmanuel and are united with Him for ever in a glorious and happy Eternity.

(The Director of Ceremonies presents the platter to the Sovereign, who takes a piece of wafer and presents it to the Prelate on his left, who breaks off a portion. Both dip their pieces into the salt and eat them. The Prelate repeats these actions with his next neighbour, and so on round the Circle. Then the Director of Ceremonies hands the chalice to the Sovereign, who turns to the Prelate and faces him. The Sovereign says EM-MANUEL, and the Prelate gives the sign of the Good Shepherd, saying PAX VOBISCUM. The Sovereign drinks and passes the chalice to the Prelate, who repeats the ceremony with the Brother on his left, and so on. The Prelate lights the spirit in the other cup with a taper kindled from the altar candles. When all have partaken):—

M.W.S. All is consumed.

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra Pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

M.W.S.

Princes, we rejoice to have united in this Feast of Fraternal affection. May we henceforth treasure up the sacred doctrines of the Order in the secret repository of our hearts.

Excellent and Perfect Prelate, I now request you to remove the Sacred Word, that it be not exposed to the eyes of the profane, but be consumed according to ancient custom as a perpetual memorial of our veneration of Him Who came to consummate the redemption of all those who faithfully and sincerely put their trust in Him, our risen Emmanuel.

(The Prelate removes the Word from the altar, passes it to the west side of the table, faces east, and burns it in the cup of burning spirits. The fire is not extinguished but allowed to die down).

Prel. Consummatum est.

M.W.S. Princes, resume your seats.

CLOSING THE CHAPTER

(The Sovereign knocks once, repeated by the First and Second Generals).

M.W.S.

Princes, assist me to close this Chapter. *(All rise).*

M.W.S.

Excellent and Perfect Prelate, what is the hour?

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Prel. It is the first hour of the third day, being the first day of the week, the hour of a perfect Mason.

M.W.S.

Prel. What is the hour of a perfect Mason?
It is the hour when the Sacred Word is found and the Cubic Stone is changed into the Mystic Rose. The Blazing Star has reappeared in all its splendour; our Altars are renewed; the True Light restored to our eyes, the clouds of darkness dispersed; and the New Commandment is given to love one another.

M.W.S.

Let us then observe this New Commandment to love one another, the result and perfection of all preceding Masonry, which will enable us to erect an edifice in our hearts to the Glory of the Lamb; to Whom belongeth Might, Majesty, Dominion and Power, Who liveth and reigneth world without end. Amen. *(All give the third sign, and after a pause, drop it. The Sovereign knocks 6. 1., repeated by the First and Second Generals, the Captain of the Guard, and the Outer Guard. The Prelate closes the Bible).*

M.W.S. The Chapter is now closed in the Name of the Great Emmanuel. Depart in Peace.

* * *

Whatever may be the meaning of this degree, it is first of all abundantly clear from the most superficial reading of it that it is presented as a solemn religious rite, with many of the external trappings of Christian worship. It sets up its altars, and offers acts of prayer and praise. It has mystic rites which lead the initiate "from darkness to glory and perfection". Secretly and behind locked doors the Princes of the Rose Croix of Heredom perform these ceremonies the aims of which a former Grand Chaplain declared differed from those of the Church "only in their pagantry." He furthermore wrote that "we join and pray, not as private men asking blessings for ourselves, but as a Religious Society."¹

Even supposing this degree is perfectly orthodox in its Christianity, however, it remains a religious body outside the Church, unknown to the Church, resolutely refusing to disclose its teachings and its ritual to the Church, setting up its altars independently of the Church. There can, therefore, be no comparison.

1. *The Origin and Progress of the Supreme Council 33° of the Ancient and Accepted (Scottish) Rite*, by the Rev. Arnold Whitaker, Oxford, 1933. The author was Grand Chaplain of the Rite from 1920-1948, than whom no one surely could be in a better position to make authoritative statements on its religious nature.

son whatsoever between such a rite and other devotional guilds and fraternities within, or at least harmoniously known to the Church. Therefore the corporate worship of the "Religious Society" of the Rose Croix is blatantly schismatic. The Churchman, and particularly the clergyman, who in the course of initiation swears fidelity to it, is guilty of a dual religious allegiance. By calling the Rose Croix a Masonic order rather than a Christian sect, its initiates blind themselves to this fact in what is really little more than a verbal quibble; were these very same ceremonies, with appropriate changes of wording, widely advertised and performed publicly in chapels open to all, instead of secretly for the few, there can be no doubt that everyone would consider it a rather freakish Christian sect, not unlike that described in Ngaio Marsh's *Death in Ecstasy*. Many an Anglican cleric would denounce it as such if he found his parishioners sharing their allegiance between Church and Chapter. Even Bishops might then be found to take strong action if their clergy officiated in both. What a difference is made by a locked door!

Still supposing that the teachings of the Eighteenth Degree could be considered orthodox and Christian, a further problem arises in the fact that the English jurisdiction which makes this claim is still in full fraternal relations and intercommunion with the mother body, the Southern Jurisdiction of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in America, which not only makes no such claim, but specifically repudiates it. In its ritual of this degree it is stated that "All the Degrees of Scottish Masonry can be received by good men of every race and religious faith; and any Degree that cannot be so received is not Masonry, which is universal, but some other thing, that is exclusive, and therefore intolerant. All our degrees have, in that, one object. Each inculcates toleration, and the union of men of all faiths; and each erects a platform on which the Mohammedan, the Israelite, and the Christian may stand side by side and hand in hand, as true Brethren."¹

Even in America, however, there is an exception to this toleration, for in the Office of Installation, the Master-Elect is asked, "Do you promise never to consent to the admission into a

1. *Liturgy of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America* (1936) Part III, p. 173.

Chapter of Rose Croix of anyone who is or has been a Monk or a Jesuit, or is an Atheist?"¹ The tenses are interesting; there is always hope, it seems, for the Masonic conversion of an atheist, but none for the monk or Jesuit. The type of monk is not specified, and it would be interesting to know whether the ban includes the Buddhist monk and the Kelham Father (particularly the latter where the question is not wholly academic), as well as the Roman Catholic variety.

The structure of the American version of the Rose Croix is very similar to the English, but the interpretation differs. The pelican is not a symbol of Christ, but "represents the large and bountiful beneficence of Nature, from whose exhaustless bosom [sic] all created things draw their sustenance." And "the Eagle was, in Egypt, the living symbol of the God Mendés or Menthra, whom Sesostris-Rames made one with Amun-Ra, the God of Thebes and upper Egypt, and the representative of the Sun, itself a type of the infinite Supreme Reason of Intelligence." This same ritual points out that "the Cross, pointing to the four cardinal points, and whose arms, infinitely extended, would never meet, is an emblem of Space or Infinity... The Cross has been a sacred symbol from the earliest antiquity. It is found upon all the enduring monuments of the world—in Egypt, Assyria, India, and Persia. Buddha was said to have died upon one. The Druids cut an oak into its shape, and held it sacred, and built their temples in that form... The Cross also forms a part of the character representing each of the planets, Mars, Venus, Mercury, Saturn, and Jupiter." The fact that Our Lord was crucified is mentioned only in passing.

The rose, far from being identified with the Rose of Sharon, "was anciently sacred to Aurora and the Sun. It was a symbol of Dawn, of the resurrection of Light and the renewal of Life, and therefore of Immortality. The Cross also was a symbol of Life, and the two symbols, united, mean Immortality won by suffering and sorrow."² But the cross embroidered on the front of the American altar is the *crux ansata*, which is certainly not a Christian symbol, and the letters I.N.R.I. which flank it may be given the various interpretations of IGNE NATURA RENO-

1. *Chapter of Rose Croix Ceremonies*, revised, 1936. Published by the Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction.
2. *Liturgy*, pp. 176, 177.

VATUR INTEGRA,¹ or the alchemical IGNE NITRUM RORIS INVENTUR,² or the four elements in Hebrew, IAMAYIM, water; NOR, fire; RUAKH, air; and IABASHAH, earth.³

The Northern Jurisdiction for this rite in America, though less emphatic in its Christian interpretation than the English rite, nevertheless angered Albert Pike by Christianizing it to some extent. Pike looked on the changes as "unnecessarily offensive to a Hebrew", and he was not sure that it "would not exclude a Unitarian."⁴ Clearly he would have disapproved even more strongly of the present English rite, and yet his successors maintain cordial relations with it, and of course enjoy the right of visitation in this country. There must, then, be a fundamental unity between them.

Hence the fact that the initiate to the Rose Croix in England must profess a belief in the Holy and Undivided Trinity seems to take a secondary place. It cannot rank as a landmark, as it is a regional peculiarity and not universal in the rite; otherwise surely the Supreme Council in London would long ago have taken the same course with America as the United Grand Lodge of London took with the Grand Orient of France when the latter body ceased to make belief in the Great Architect as an essential of the Order. There is nothing in the English Rules and Regulations to prevent a Rabbi or a Dervish initiated in Alabama from joining an English Chapter and taking full part in its worship and religious observances, as long as they take the Oath of Allegiance to the Supreme Council, which is not taken in the name of the Trinity. In practice, however, this is unlikely to happen.

These are some of the arguments that can be brought against the secret ceremonies of the Rose Croix of Heredom even were these ceremonies compatible with Christian orthodoxy. Unfortunately they are not, which makes the argument ten times as strong.

Their ancestry, as we have seen, is not of great antiquity, nor was it orthodox. The Rosy Cross tradition, however, from which this degree derives its name and some of its symbolism and

1. "Entire nature is renovated by fire."
2. "By fire the nitre of the dew is extracted."
3. *The Inner Sanctuary*, by Albert Pike, p. 73 *et seq.*
4. *Proceedings of the Northern Jurisdiction*, 1877, p. 95.

teaching can be traced back possibly to the *Militia Crucifera Evangelica*, a German occult evangelical fraternity of the late sixteenth century. Little is known about it, for its chief literature, the *Naometria* of Simon Studion, is lost, and only partially known through the quotations of others. It appears to have been strongly Kabbalistic in inspiration. C. G. von Murr, who was certainly acquainted with the original, declared that it breathed the Rosicrucian spirit, and embodied real Rosicrucian doctrine.¹

But although Rosicrucianism had its origins in the mystics and alchemists of the sixteenth century, it did not really enter history until the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis Rosae Crucis* in 1614. This was an account of the legendary founder of the Order, Christian Rosenkreutz, his band of brethren seeking occult wisdom, his death, and the later discovery of the tomb. The story accounts, after its fashion, for the hypothetical transmission of secret knowledge from east to west. This was followed by the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, a manifesto of Rosicrucian principles, and the *Chemical Nuptials of Christian Rosenkreutz*, an elaborate allegory.

Although it certainly cannot be proved (and it has been hotly denied) that Freemasonry, either in the craft or higher degrees, grew directly out of Rosicrucianism, there is evidence of an overlap in Germany as well as England. A. E. Waite declares that "about the year 1777 the last transformation of German Rosicrucianism was drawing on the Masonic fraternity to recruit its own ranks...a Masonic qualification in Candidates was the first title for admission. We have further to remember that the Rosicrucian Mystery was one of Divine Rebirth, such indeed as we meet with—though under many veils—in the ceremonial of Masonry. It sought also that hidden knowledge which Masonry and several early aspects of the Secret Tradition in Christian times supposed to have been lost in Adam."² And in regard to the Eighteenth Degree in particular, "I am personally convinced that the whole arrangement of the Rose-Croix Grade, its clothing, its jewel, its entire *mise-en-scène*, the chambers in which it is worked are reminiscent of the older Order. The three points are in crude correspondence with the Hermetic Work in Alchemy—blackness, death, and finally

1. *True Origin of the Rosicrucian and Masonic Orders*, 1803.
2. *A New Encyclopædia of Freemasonry*, vol. II, p. 375.

resurrection into the red or perfect state... It follows that the various Masonic writers who have denied any connection between the Eighteenth Degree and the Rosicrucian Order have either spoken with an extraordinary absence of even elementary knowledge or with considerable want of sincerity. The bond of kinship lies upon the surface of the subject, and those who have eyes can scarcely fail to see."¹

However distant this alleged kinship, the main Rosicrucian symbol, a rose at the junction of a passion cross, is beyond all question a central emblem of this Masonic degree. If to the Rosicrucians it stood for the Cross of Calvary, red with the precious Blood, it also stood for the secret of the true light, or the true knowledge, which the Rosicrucian Brotherhood was to give to the world, for the rose symbolized secrecy, and the cross, light. As far as Rosicrucianism was Christian it was Lutheran and anti-Catholic in inspiration, but it owed much to the *Zohar*, the *Sepher Yetzirah*, and other books of the Kabbala.

The English rite of the Eighteenth Degree has been venerated with a good deal of conventional and orthodox Christian phraseology, but fundamentally it reverts to Gnosticism. Gnosticism is a difficult term to define precisely, as it covered many sects and mysteries based on *gnosis* or enlightenment. It was a theosophical philosophy, and in so far as it claimed to be Christian, it professed to reveal to an inner *élite* of initiates esoteric teachings concealed from the many. Dr. A. C. Headlam listed amongst its tendencies three points highly relevant to Freemasonry, "a syncretistic tendency combining in an artificial manner with some more or less misunderstood Christian doctrines, elements from classical, Oriental, and Jewish sources, or even from common magic;" "A tendency towards a Docetic Christology, i.e. one which looked upon the earthly life of Christ, or at any rate the sufferings, as unreal;" and "a tendency to represent *gnosis* (knowledge) as something superior to mere faith, and the special possession of the more enlightened."²

If the Rose Croix Mason feels bewildered and incredulous at these accusations, another quotation before substantiating the charge of Gnosticism in detail may make the position clearer.

1. *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*, p. 428.
2. *A Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by James Hastings, vol. II, p. 186.

"Gnosticism" says Fr. J. P. Arendzen¹ "threw itself with strange rapidity into Christian forms of thought, borrowed its nomenclature, acknowledged Jesus as Saviour of the world, simulated its sacraments, pretended to be an esoteric revelation of Christ and His Apostles... though in reality the spirit of Gnosticism is utterly alien to that of Christianity, it then seemed to the unwary merely a modification or refinement thereof."

The theosophical synthesis of pagan elements is more clearly apparent in the Royal Arch than the Rose Croix, though the American version of the latter is redolent of it, and it reappears implicitly in the English ritual of the thirty-first degree. The Rose Croix, however, is certainly Gnostic in its claims to hidden wisdom and esoteric enlightenment for the initiate only. The obligation pledges fidelity to the "secrets and mysteries of this Order," and the various emblems, principally the rose and the cross, are called "symbols of hidden Truths known only to the perfect Mason." The Word itself must "not be exposed to the eyes of the profane" (though it appears on almost every crucifix in every public place) but burned in a chalice. The Princes Rose Croix are bidden to "treasure up the sacred doctrines of the Order in the secret repository" of their hearts.

That a Docetic Christology underlies this degree is suggested by the fact that Christ's death and resurrection appear to be regarded, not as an objective act of redemption, but rather as a type of the experiences which the initiate must undergo in his quest for illumination. The emphasis seems to be on the initiate's impersonation of Christ in achieving his own salvation through enlightenment. He is aided, indeed, by faith, hope, and charity, but the fact that initials have been substituted in the Chapter for these words, with the Masonic craze for mystery, seems to imply that even these virtues should have a special and private significance for the Mason alone. The initiate gives his age as thirty-three, whatever it may be in reality. He travels for thirty-three days in seven concentric circles representing the seven periods of the world's existence. He passes through the blackness of death to his resurrection in the Red Room, and ascends the ladder to glory and perfection. He hears the Resurrection in the Closing ceremony described as "the hour of a perfect Mason". This seems a little sinister, but far

1. *Catholic Encyclopædia*, vol. VI, p. 594.

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less so than the description of Our Lord's triumphant redemptive death on the Cross as a dire calamity for Masonry—a phrase which carries the unfortunate suggestion that the defeat of Satan is being mourned. But in any case, why a calamity for Masonry in particular, unless Masonry represents an inner circle of illuminati, more particularly concerned than the rest of mankind? How absurd it would sound to call the Crucifixion a dire calamity for the Mothers' Union or the Church of England Men's Society!

The symbolic achievement of salvation by the Prince Rose Croix is attained without any acknowledgement or confession of sin, any cry of penitence or contrition, or any need for the divine forgiveness. It is laid down in the Rules and Regulations of the Order (No. 40) that "Good position and high moral character are indispensable requisites for admission as a Member of the Ancient and Accepted Rite," so perhaps the very idea of sin is insultingly superfluous, and a single reference to "us, Thine unworthy children" in the Opening is as far as an English gentleman of good position and high moral character can be expected to condescend without squirming. The defect is common to all Masonic degrees, however Christian, for respectability seems a more esteemed Masonic virtue than humility. But in this particular degree, based on the crucifixion and in a sense symbolically re-enacting it in each initiate, this defect has a special significance. Our Lord was crucified only incidentally by the wickedness or treachery of those immediately concerned. He died to pay the price of our sins, and the sins of the whole world, past, present, and future. He died that those sins might be forgiven to the penitent. But the Eighteenth-Degree Mason is given no clue of this, hence it is hardly surprising if the theology of atonement is warped and the Passion treated as a sort of dark night of the soul undergone by the Master-Hierophant, and followed by His Initiates, in the quest for illumination and glory.

The Feast of Fraternal Affection or Third Point is very similar, as Dr. H. S. Box has pointed out,¹ to the Valentinian Eucharist described in the Gnostic work *Pistis Sophia*. It has of course the nature of an *agape* or love-feast rather than a Mass or Communion. There is nothing approaching a consecration. Yet the

1. In a letter to the *Church Times*, April 13, 1951.

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words *Consummatum Est* appear to establish a link with Calvary, and it is difficult to see how a Christian can be quite easy in his conscience when participating in such a rite. Neither Irenaeus nor Tertullian nor any of the Fathers engaged in the struggle against Gnosticism would have tolerated loyal sons of the Church participating in such secret and macabre mysteries. Is that of no significance to the Church of England today?

A Masonic Bishop in the Craft degrees is reported to have said,—I know not to whom, or on whose authority—"Play about with King Solomon and his Temple by all means, if you must. But let's leave our dear Lord out of it."