

FOR THE CRAFTSMAN.]

Instruction on the "Rose Croix" Degree, given by Bro. Hermitte, 33°, at the session of Sov. Chap. Hope, No. 239, held in Bordeaux, France, on Nov. 3rd, 1876.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY BRO. THE REV. R. G. SUTHERLAND, B.A., HAMILTON.

Masonry is a mysterious and secret society, in the sense that it is founded on that longing after the Unknown and the Infinite which, as it leads man to the tomb, preserves him from despair: in the sense too that it gives a shelter to the presentments and instincts of humanity, by the aid of forms apparently whimsical.

In employing symbols, allegories, and emblems to instruct, discipline, and edify its adepts, Masonry obeys the fundamental law of all societies. Everywhere, and always, religion, justice, authority, etc., have had and will always have their watchwords and their figurative language.

So it is with all that goes to make up the moral being, when the myrtle and the ivy shall have lost their mystic meaning—love and constancy will have ceased to be—the one a sentiment, and the other a virtue.

Masonry should preserve all that is essential in its forms and legends; a Ritual is absolutely indispensable. Truth shines forth, athwart its veils and is to be discovered in its apologies.

Æsop Phædnes, La Fontaine, and the fable writers, in general, have told more truths than theologians, politicians and orators have.

Wisdom dwells in epigrams and proverbs.

True religion, or in other words, the realization of the Infinite, is kept up in the people by those outward rites, whose exact signification and object are never apparent on the face of them.

That aged woman who makes the sign of the Cross, in order to invoke Divine aid, and who is terrified at the

sight of a cross made by accident, appears to be a contradiction to herself. In reality she understands the sacred symbol as Jesus understood it—"Take up thy Cross and follow Me," said He. That is to say, "The cross is the sign of suffering, and he who will not undergo trials cannot be My disciple." But Jesus celebrated the Paschal Feast, destined to express the joy which men feel at the moment when the sun, crossing the equator in the March equinox, makes in space that sign of the cross by which spring is heralded.

In this sacred and poetic language there are secondary things "of fancy bred," which time brings and takes away. There are also primordial things whose origin cannot be discovered, and to whose authority we bow even when we have lost their meaning.

Of such is the sacred Triangle which sums up Symbolic Masonry. This sign, revered as it has been since the earliest ages, is depicted in modern temples and in Catholic Churches, is found in the most ancient temples of Egypt and of India.

Of such also is the Rose Croix degree, the only one in Chapter Masonry which has resisted the destroying and reforming influence of time. We propose to consider this degree in connection with its title which appears at first sight very singular.

The Rose, as we learn from mythology, was in ancient times the emblem of discretion. The first Rose was given by Cupid to Harpocrates, the God of Silence. Quitard, in his dictionary Proverbs, explains the following saying "you must not uncover