

purity and vice, with fraternity, sincerity, virtue and truth. When we fully appreciate duty and possibility, and govern our word and deed accordingly, then in truth may we anticipate fruition of our masonic dream, the true solution of these mystic symbols, disarm criticism, merit a measure of approval of the outer world, and commend our work as faithful craftsmen to the Supreme Architect of the Universe.

THE "WOODEN SPOON" CEREMONY.

Every June at the B.A. commencement the Senate House at Cambridge is the scene of a very quaint observance—the investiture of the Wooden Spoon. On this occasion the last man on the pass list of the Mathematical Tripos, gets, besides the University degree, the distinction of "the Wooden Spoon"—i.e., the presentation of a huge malt shovel. As he kneels before the Vice-Chancellor and is duly admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts, this malt shovel is lowered from the gallery and hangs over his head. When the institution is over he rises to his feet takes the shovel technically called the "wooden spoon" amid the defening plaudits of his college chums and the ironical cheers of others. He shoulders "the shovel" like a mace, and proudly marches out of the Senate House, mightily pleased with his new dignity. The colleg dons and University officials permit all this, well remembering the time when they as young men relished the fun. This custom is annually observed in the Cambridge Senate House with all its traditional honours as reverently as any heirloom of antiquity. The hero of the Wooden Spoon this year is a member of Corpus College.

HERMETIC BROTHERS OF EGYPT.

An occult fraternity which has endured from very ancient times, having a hierarchy of officers, secret signs and passwords, and a peculiar method of in-

struction in science, moral philosophy, and religion. The body is never very numerous, and if we may believe those who at the present time profess to belong to it, the philosopher's stone, the elixir of life, the art of invisibility, and the power of communication directly with the ultramundane life, are parts of the inheritance they possess. The writer has met with only three persons who maintained the actual existence of this body of religious philosophers, and who hinted that they themselves were actual members. There was no reason to doubt the good faith of these individuals apparently unknown to each other, and men of moderate competence, blameless lives, austere manners, and almost ascetic in their habits. They all appeared to be men of forty to forty-five years of age, and evidently of vast erudition. Their conversation was simple and unaffected, and their knowledge of language not to be doubted. They cheerfully answered questions, but appeared not to court inquiries. They never remain long in any one country, but passed away without creating any notice, or wishing for undue respect to be paid to them. To their former lives they never referred, and when speaking of the past, seemed to say whatever they had to say with an air of authority, and an appearance of an intimate personal knowledge of all circumstances. They courted no publicity, and, in any communications with them, uniformly regarded the subjects under discussion as very familiar things, although to be treated with a species of reverence not always to be found among occult professors.—*Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie*, IX, (Cryptonymus).

THE BLUE BLANKET.

As promised in my notes of last week, I now present the reader with another account of this remarkable banner. According to the particulars which have been forwarded to me, it appears that a number of Scotch mechanics followed Allan, Lord Stew-