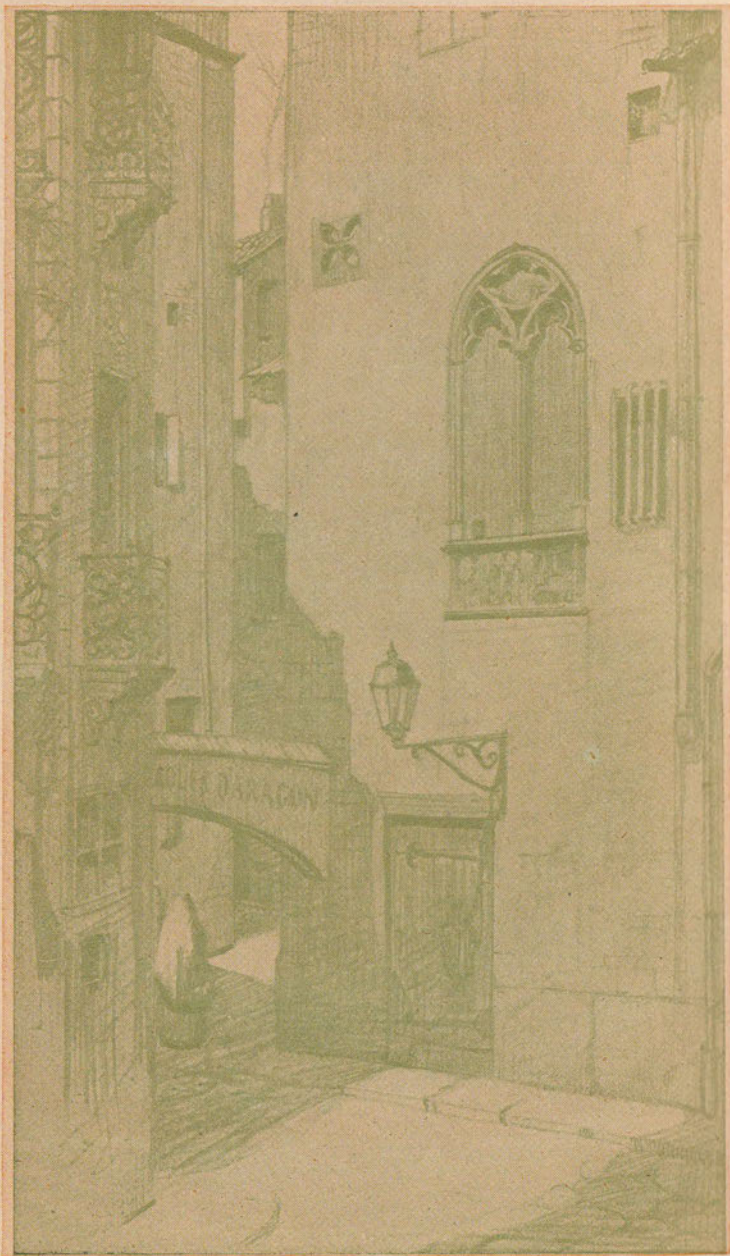


The  
Village  
of the  
Devil . . . .



VOLUME D

C R O M A A T



THE CHATEAU D'ARAGON IN MONTPELLIER

# CROMAAT

A MONTHLY MONOGRAPH  
FOR THE MEMBERS OF  
A. M. O. R. C.



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# THE VILLAGE OF THE DEVIL

## INTRODUCTION

At last the story is told! Strange, mystical and instructive, this story is one of the oldest traditions of our Order in France. It is the story told at the fire-sides of the homes of the oldest mystics of France and one which never fails to reveal the minds and lives of the provincials of France in the days when mysticism was in its glory and so-called modern civilization was in the making.

The question has often been asked: "Did the Emperor have any further experiences in France after his Initiation into the Order on the night of August 12, 1909?"

The account of my journey to France, as published in the May, 1916, issue of the *American Rosae Crucis*, was replete with incidents and experiences which have interested many of our members; but that account did not explain in detail the other personal experiences which constituted my further schooling in the mysteries of our Order and which are only vaguely hinted at in various writings in our former publication.

I have never felt at liberty, however, to recount these sacred and more or less secret experiences in a public magazine and have felt that most of them should be told in a more personal and heart-to-heart manner. The opportunity is now offered for such private communication between my Brothers and Sisters and myself, and I have inaugurated the story-telling by offering this tale of the Village of the Devil in this issue of CROMAAT.

I say this is a story; but in truth it is a mixture of fact, fiction and tradition. Of the traditional parts much also may be fact.

It may be of interest to know how the story came to me. On my way north from Toulouse to Paris I stopped at various cities where there were Rosaecrucians or Rosaecrucian Temples, shrines or relics. I was guided in this journey through the Rosaecrucian land of mysticism by Masters and Brothers of the Order who know where the strangest sights and most weird experiences are to be found. Finally I reached Montpellier again, after passing through Nimes and other localities described in this story. In Montpellier I met some of the oldest (and

retired) officers of our Order in France and in a very old building where once our Order held its convocations, surrounded by many relics and in the midst of intense vibrations, I sat and listened to the story which I have augmented for publication here.

But I was not satisfied with the hearing of the story—nor should my reader be. I asked the privilege of visiting the Village of the Devil, and there, in person, experiencing the strange influences which possibly no other American has ever experienced and which even the most determined tourists of France have not succeeded in locating.

In addition to the personal experience, which verified the greater part of the story, I spent several days searching through the rare Rosaecrucian archives for historical and recorded evidence of the facts and traditional statements made in connection with the existence of the Village.

The story as I now tell it contains all the verifications which were possible to obtain. I have written the story in the form of a personally conducted tour to the village, not in the way in which I personally reached the place, but in the manner by which our Brothers and Sisters may reach it. In fact, when our party of Rosaecrucian tourists from America reach France in 1919 on their way to Toulouse and eventually Egypt, I hope to personally conduct the party to the Village of the Devil in just the manner described in this story.

My readers will note with what detail and exactness I have given the location of the Village and of all the points necessary in reaching it and appreciating its existence. There has been no attempt to veil its location or withhold a single fact relating to my journey there. All that the student of the story will require to make plain the precise environment of the Village will be a map of Southern France; and on the larger maps, such as those issued by the French government, (and to be found in all large American libraries) one will find the cities of Montpellier and Montpellierette and the other villages mentioned. And, even on the common maps of France one may see in the south of the country the mountain range marked Cevennes Mountains and the River Tarn. In that section where the Tarn passes through the Cevennes are the Black Mountains—the canyons to which one must travel to visit the Village of the Devil.

There is one question which will probably be asked by many readers unless I anticipate it. "Why have you not shown some pictures of the Village?" I cannot show them because I did not make any. I was warned not to attempt to make any pictures of the Village and accordingly I did not take my camera with me on this trip. Pictures have always been forbidden and I trust that none will ever be taken of this place; for those who would see the sights described herein must journey to the place and personally view the sights. The Village of the Devil is more than a place which can be pictured; it is truly a condition of mind and soul as well, which cannot be pictured.

And now let me guide my readers to France on a personally conducted tour. Sit comfortably in an easy chair where all is quiet and journey with me across great spaces to a mystic land, leaving behind you the modernism of today and the consciousness of your physical presence while mentally you project your real self to the land we love so dearly.

We are indebted to the Master of Delta Lodge, No. 1, A. M. O. R. C., in Philadelphia, Pa., for the beautiful frontispiece etching of the Chateau D'Aragon in Montpellier.

THE AUTHOR.

# The Village of the Devil

## CHAPTER ONE

*It is generally conceded that Europe possesses the most interesting monuments of history. Americans especially make Europe their ultimate goal when planning a genuine sight-seeing trip, and few indeed are there of wealth or even moderate means who do not harbor an innate love for the beauties of France, England, Spain, Italy, Switzerland and Germany.*

*It cannot be said that this love for Europe is inspired by the fact that only in Europe can we find the ear-marks, so to speak, of the birth of the human race. While admitting that abroad we see the monumental evidences of the beginning of civilization, we are forced to admit, or at least give credence to the theory, that the earliest material evidence of human existence upon this earth is to be found in the caves or cliff-dwellings of the early mound-builders whose peculiar constructive work is still to be found along the Ohio River in the United States; and while we accept the scientists' claims that these prehistoric edifices antedate all known records of men, we may or may not accept the theory that the Ohio valley was the original "Garden of Eden."*

*The charm of Europe, however, does not exist altogether in its magnificent ruins and inspiring historical remains; but in the more subtle magnetism of its poetic romance and the mysticism of its traditions.*

*In this respect France is the most popular, and, rightly, the most interesting. Its history from the days of the Gauls through the 8th, 9th, 10th and up to the 15th century is one continuous tale of mystery, romance, valor, sacrifice and achievement. Its literature of these days—the songs of the troubadours in their romance tongue, and the monkish latin historical documents—alike revel in the delightful incidents so dear to the lover of French history and French mysticism.*

*The Courts of Love, the Flower Fetes, the various royal ceremonies in the chateaux of the Counts, Dukes, Lords and Kings, the imposing crusades, the romantic struggles for the hands of the beautiful heiresses, and the regal wars against religion, the suppression of vice and the loss of property and title—all these vie in their impressiveness and emotional settings. These were the days of pleasure, love and war, and France more than any other country, was the stage upon which the truly great scenes of life have been so wonderfully and fatally portrayed.*

Should one wonder, then, that the Frenchman is proud of his country, of its history and of its thousands of historical monuments, of which many lie in forlorn ruin and equally as many have been restored or rebuilt by a commission of scientists, architects and historians, which labor diligently to preserve for future generations of history-loving tourists, the most ancient and historical of the many chateaux, citadels, castles, forts, walls, churches and mystic shrines?

It is apparent to even the most casual tourist of Southern France that the provincial natives consider these monuments of history as personal assets. They bring to their villas a continuous train of tourists from all parts of the world, who by their extended visits, patronize their hotels, restaurants, stores, road-houses, garages and local means of transportation. The native finds in the tourist an incentive to keep thoroughly posted on the facts relating to existing ruins, the legends of those now gone and the history of those being preserved. He is always alive to the opportunity to act as a guide—at a small fee—and takes special delight in being able to point out many new and unsuspected wonders.

Is it not strange, then, that in Southern France, in the midst of sections where tourists travel the most, where artists wander yearly preparing the many books we now have on the "Chateaux of France" and the "Monuments of France," and where the natives are ever seeking new points of alluring interest to the tourist, there should have existed, unknown to the outer world until 1883, one of the most marvelous, weird and mysterious cities in the whole world? And, stranger still is the fact that until the present time, in the story the author now presents, this city of mystery has been unchronicled, its true history untold, and its beauty unpictured.

Before attempting to take my reader upon a personally conducted tour to this wonder of wonders, it is well that I describe some of the historic features of the surrounding cities in order that one may the more naturally comprehend the significance of the history and legend of the *VILLE DU DIABLE*. And this can be accomplished more interestingly by describing the ordinary route to this city from that of Paris.

Paris is the hub from which the various railroad lines radiate and we can make the trip to Southern France by night by leaving at about 7:30 P. M. and go by way of Dijon and Lyon to Avignon, where we must change cars. We arrive here early in the morning, and after a breakfast we find that there are several hours in which we can conveniently view the monuments of this city.

Avignon is a city of 41,000 inhabitants, the capitol of the department of *Vaucluse*. It is situated on the left bank of the Rhone and in the background rises an immense rock upon which we see the ancient Palace of the Popes, where from 1305 to 1377 seven successive Popes reigned here prior to the establishment of the Vatican at Rome. We



examine the City Walls built in the 14th century by the Popes, then visit the Cathedral built in 11th century (plainly showing where it has been rebuilt and remodeled) and then, desiring to reach our destination as quickly as possible, we take an omnibus and cross the river to Ville-neuve-les-Avignon to visit the Fort St. André. This beautiful monument of architecture is considered one of the rarest of the kind built in the middle ages. Its imposing front, its mighty and war-like appearance, showing plainly many evidences of struggle and strife, do not lead one to think that within its walls and towers are a peaceful convent and several houses containing very poor families.

We return to the GARE and depart for Nimes, the next important city on our route.

It is necessary to spend one whole day in Nimes in order to become acquainted with the many antiquities of special interest to the mystic.

We find this city to be a typical, prosperous provincial town of about 70,000 inhabitants, beautifully located at the Southern extremity of hills which join the Cevennes (the Rocky Mountains of France). Before us is spread a beautiful boulevard whose trees amply shade us as we retreat from the hot sun. Before visiting the many sights we inquire regarding the history of the city and learn that in B. C. 121 this city was called NEMAUSUS by the Romans and that it was the capital of the Volcae Arecomici. It became one of the principal colonies of the Gauls who took particular delight in embellishing it and in erecting many of the beautiful buildings and monuments we are about to see. During the 10th and 11th centuries this city was the property of and ruled by the Counts of Toulouse, from Guillaume in 800 A. D. to the long line of Raymunds ending in 1222.\* Until 1704, during the wars of religion, it suffered much because three-fourths of its population had embraced Protestantism and it is today an important town in this respect.

It was also the seat of much strife during the 12th century when the Raymunds VI and VII were being prosecuted and excommunicated for permitting heretics and mystics in their domains, and everywhere we find evidences of war, rebellion and defeat.

Passing up the main boulevard (Feucheres) from the Gare, we see before us, facing the Esplanade, the Arena, or Amphitheatre. It was built during the 1st or 2nd centuries and is typical of the Roman architecture. It is in the form of an ellipse, 146 yards long, 111 wide and 70 feet high. Its exterior is in better condition than those of Rome because of the Commission's constant restoration and because here, on

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\*The genealogy and history of these Raymunds was set forth in an article in the November, 1917, issue of the American ROSAE CRUCIS.

many Sundays throughout the year, as many as 24,000 spectators see typical Spanish Bull-fights; the city being under Socialist government the money thus derived from a pleasure which the provincial natives themselves abhor is used for the good of the community.

We turn and follow the beautiful boulevard VICTOR HUGO, where we find an open square, and facing THE THEATRE we see the ancient and strange MAISON CARREE. It is one of the finest and best preserved Roman temples in existence, 76 feet long, 40 feet wide and 40 high, with 30 unusually beautiful Corinthian columns. The date of its building is unknown, it being credited to the period of Augustus and the Antoinines; and foundations discovered recently show that it was probably located in the centre of other important buildings. It is this building, whose perpendicular and horizontal lines are strangely curved, that was imitated when the Notre Dame was built in Paris. The Maison Carree now contains ancient French coins and some sculptures.

We continue a few blocks further and there we enter the JARDIN DE LA FONTAINE, with its strange canals which feed water to this city in summer when water is very scarce and have their origin in the Roman baths beyond. This garden and its canals were originally of Roman construction but were greatly beautified and enlarged by many miles by King Louis in the 18th century.

At the side of the garden is the ancient Temple of Diana, a beautiful sight and still showing in its ruins the rooms of Diana and the rare carvings. Close by are the old Roman baths for men and women; the former being a stagnant pool now, enclosed by high marble walls; and we are warned not to approach the steps leading to the water too closely for "no one has ever learned the depth of the pool, and all who have fallen into it never returned," says the pleasing guide. The women's baths, so often referred to in romances and as often pictured in paintings and etchings are really magnificent and are below the street level under a private walk and enclosed by rows of columns.

Further on, outside of the city, we see the mysterious Roman ruins of some unknown building, never as yet given a name except that of "Les Trois Piliers."

We now hasten on to Montpellier, another ancient city and one which has considerable connection with the history of the Village of the Devil.

But before entering this city we must begin the strange and romantic story which links these two cities together and which, for the first time, reveals the legendary secret of our strange mysterious goal.



## CHAPTER TWO

The whole Southern part of France was at one time part of the Roman Empire, and Caesar in his "Commentaries" describes these regions as GAUL. Its history from then until its possession by the Franks, the Normans and the English is exceedingly interesting, but has no place here except to introduce into this story one of the characters heretofore unknown as associated in any way with the Village of the Devil.

During the first few centuries after Christ, France was governed mostly by the various Counts and Lords of its provinces. A King at that time was nominal as far as his influence over these southern SENECHAUSEES was concerned.

Toulouse and its county of the same name, known to the Romans as Tolosa, was always the centre of external strife and warfare; for its possession meant not only powerful rulership of vast lands and wealthy towns and products, but such rulership gave influence to conquer and rule over other adjoining counties and towns. Thus, the zeal to become Count or Lord of Toulouse was shown by every European nation, and after Pepin the Short ceased to exercise such rulership, Charlemagne, the great ruler of France and Germany, undertook to select the second Count. This, of course, was a new method to those who had believed that warfare and possession of the land gave governing authority.

The man chosen by Charlemagne was Guillaume. In these days there were no family or surnames and this Guillaume, like many others, was given a second name because of some peculiarity, and thus we find him called Guillaume Cortnez (from AU CORT NEZ).

He was a son of Count Theodoric and as Count of Toulouse this Guillaume had mediate or immediate rule over the County of Toulouse with its many villas, and also over the important and ancient cities of Beziers, Nimes, Agde, Maguelon, Lodeve and Uzes. The history of this man, in the many peculiar French manuscripts, is remarkable for its numerous legends, chronicles and poems of praise, notably: LE CHARROY DE NISMES and LE MOINAGE DE GUILLAUME. He was a sincerely religious man and a lover of peace and justice.

In a rare account of his life we find the following incident of interest to this story:

"He sought a place for a monastery where those, like himself, sincere in their religious beliefs and desiring quiet and peace, might

him. He would sit for hours, and, surrounded by these noble girls and women, would compose and sing words of love and admiration, while they would shower upon him flowers of many colors. Here, too, was the origin of the famous Flower Fetes, and the Courts of Love.

It was in this manner that Albane and Berthe were courted. Beautiful, young and noble, they were famed for their virtue. Their home was a strange old stone castle built upon the pinnacle of a large rock situated in the mountains leading to the Village of the Devil. Here they led a most enjoyable life, constantly courted by Dukes, Lords, Counts, Viscounts and Princes and at all times the centre of every conceivable form of entertainment.

In addition to their charms, they were wealthy. Considerable property had been given to them by their father, and since it covered a large and prosperous territory, there were always among their admirers those who sought to obtain possession of it through marriage.

And thus the two sisters eventually became engaged to two brothers, Ms. Jean and Pierre De Almond. Little is known of these two, except that they were gallant, romantic in their songs and ardent in their seemingly sincere love for the two girls. They were not of noble birth, but "cunning as a fox, and diligent in their aspiring fortitude." Always together, always intoxicated with plans for overthrowing kingdoms with their power, and always holding themselves aloft from the other gallants of the day, it is little wonder that they were considered as suspicious characters.

"The Devil's pair" was a common name for them; and "Freres du Diable" seemed to be the most apt description of John and Peter de Almond.

Their home was situated in the mountains in the vicinity of Millau; and these black mountains seemed to cloak the actual location of their claimed chateau. At least no positive knowledge is evidenced as to its exact situation, but from circumstances now to be related, it is apparent that their chateau or castle must have been in the immediate vicinity of The Village of the Devil.

Certain it is, that all this land was owned by these two VIRGINS. Albane and Berthe, a name given to them because of their undoubted purity even though in constant company with such suspicious characters as these two brothers. And still more certain is the fact that these two brothers desired to marry Albane and Berthe only that they might obtain possession of this land.

Rumors began to spread that Jean and Pierre held nightly conferences with his Satanic Majesty; for, did not many see, in the mountains near LA ROQUE STE. MARGUERITE, midnight fires of brilliant red? And, were not these conferences and signals followed by dire results in war and pestilence?

No wonder that these mountains became forsaken in the localities where small towns were situated! The provincial French were a mystic people and were awaiting the predicted second coming of Christ or the end of the world; and the year 1000 (when this was to take place) was rapidly approaching, bringing with it every conceivable form of superstition. Thousands were forsaking their homes, their friends and their wealth to journey to Jerusalem, that the coming of the Lord might find them within Holy precincts; and the thieving and cunning took advantage of these fears of the ignorant to secure power and wealth.

Just why these two brothers and two sisters never married is a matter of conjecture. But the legends relate that it became fairly well established that John and Peter were in some mysterious way associated with all that was evil, unfortunate and repulsive and that, literally, if not in fact, they were *FRERES DU DIABLE*. When this idea had implanted itself into the minds and hearts of Albane and Berthe, and when they discovered that possession of their property was the brothers' only motive, it was only natural that they should look with scorn upon their proposals and reject them with rebuke and disdain.

But this added only wrath to their many evil qualities and soon these two brothers were the subject of much discussion throughout the kingdoms of Southern France; and much attention at the time was directed to the Canons of the Tarn where, in the Black mountains, was supposed to dwell these two in some mysterious village.

Albane and Berthe, disappointed not only in their love, but in their faith in mankind in general, agreed henceforth to live a life of celibacy and religious activity, and a few months later retired to a convent built by order of their father some time previous to his death and which was located in the mountains some distance from that bearing his name.

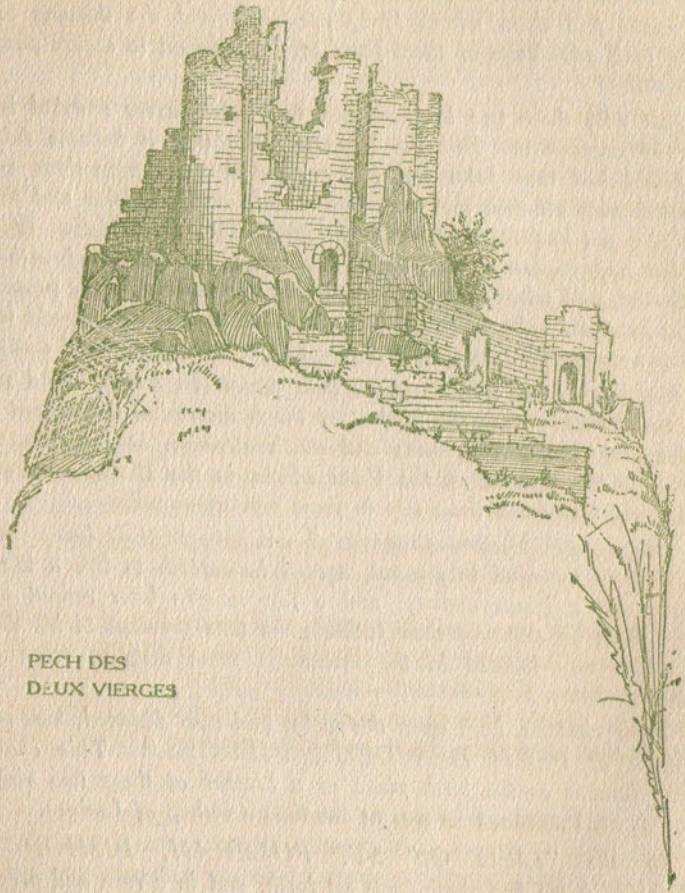
Their chateau, built upon the rocks, and now deserted, was given the name of *PECH DES DEUX VIERGES*.\* This chateau became famous as the birth place of a brother of these two virgins, known as St. Fulcran, who was at one time a bishop of Lodeve.

In the "*LIFE OF ST. FULCRAN, BISHOP OF LODOVE*"† we find these facts set forth, and in a rare and precious manuscript which was discovered at Campous, where many monks retired after their expulsion from the abbey of St.-Guillem-du-Desert in 1790, and which is now among the manuscripts possessed by M. Auguy de Vitry, of Gignac, France, we find the following interesting facts:

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\*The Rock of the Two Virgins.

†A very rare manuscript of unusual interest to mystics.



PECH DES  
DEUX VIERGES

"There is a legend in a manuscript regarding St. Guillaume, entitled 'LE GALLIA CHRISTIANA NOVA LE PLACE LE 34' which states that the Two Virgins (Deux Vierges) were of the antique family of Montpeyroux. One can still see, on the crater of a mountain, situated on one side of Montpeyroux a hermitage in ruins and some vestiges of this chateau where was born Saint Fulcran who was its Lord. It was called the CHATEAU DES DEUX VIERGES because of two sisters of the same Saint Fulcran who lived in celibacy AND ONE OF WHOM IS TO THIS DAY KNOWN AS A SAINT."

But before these two virgins retired to the convent, they expressed their utter disgust for earthly matters by renouncing all claim to their property. Their particular motive was to make barren all that section of their property which was within the precincts of the black mountains.

But in doing this they realized that the many little villas situated therein would suffer and many would be deprived of their homes and lands. Consequently these two sisters decided to found a large city where all who then lived in the Black Mountains might have free ground and the other necessities of life. After careful consideration they selected as the site for this new city two divisions of their land situated on the banks of the Lez, about ten miles from the Mediterranean Sea. These two sections they called MONTPELIER and MONTPELLIERETTE (from memory of the great bald mountain, MONT-PELE, which was situated in the mist of the Black Mountains).

These facts are verified by statements to be found in VERDALE'S RECORDS in the following words:

"From all time there has been a well-founded tradition supported by the public archives, which states that two sisters founded the city of Montpellier. One possessed Montpellier and the other Montpelierette adjoining. They were of ancient nobility, for it is proven that they were sisters of goodly Saint Fulcran, one time beloved Bishop of Lodeve."

In the testament of this St. Fulcran, which may be found in the ancient archives of Lodeve, and which is dated: "made on the 4th of February under the reign of Jesus Christ while hoping for a King," he mentions these two sisters, and calls them DAMES DE MONTPELLIER, "because," says the commentor, "they were responsible for the origin of this village."

The two sisters demanded that a commission be appointed to govern this city and that it should be built, managed and maintained on progressive lines for the general education and uplift of its inhabitants. How well these plans succeeded may be seen by visiting the city today, and noting, as we shall do in a few minutes, the many historical sights.

Gradually every home in the Black Mountains was deserted; and, when the year 1000 came and God did not visit the earth or cause its destruction, thousands returned to France from the Holy Land to begin life anew. Montpellier, with its strange boundary walls, became thickly populated and by the middle of the 11th century all knowledge of the old villages in the Black Mountains, and especially the village where lived the **BROTHERS OF THE DEVIL**, was forgotten and one part of France, once famous and infamous, was lost in oblivion.







### CHAPTER THREE

Let us now continue our journey by leaving the station at Montpellier and walking up the main street,—*RUE MAGUELONE*. We notice that modern Montpellier is a city of about 57,000 inhabitants, clean and cheerful and strangely white. This is due to the white limestone of the ground which lies pulverized upon the roads and streets and which the high winds keep constantly blowing over the buildings made of white rock. The appearance is like a city in a snow storm, for even the trees are always covered with this white powder and all the buildings are closely blinded with shutters thus whitened. While the effect is pleasing, and cooling in the shade, it requires one to keep well veiled when travelling, especially in automobiles; and in the sun it is anything but pleasing to stare into the reflected glaze of white light.

The streets are short and crooked, narrow and roughly paved. The buildings are generally very old and if we turn into some of the alleys we find many historical buildings being occupied by industries of modern times; for Montpellier is still progressive and cares naught for its antiquities.

On one side street or alley, unnamed, we can see the old Chateau de Aragon, where Dona Marie, Lady of Montpellier, lived and from which home she emerged in stately robes to become the Queen of Aragon in 1200. It is interesting, as a typical experience, to enter this old stone chateau. Its broad entrance, seen even in modern French buildings, designed to allow passage for horses and carriages, is paved inside the building with cobble-stones, and to one side is a very narrow door leading to circular stone stairs, about three feet wide, which give entrance to the various stone rooms and halls. While the main building looks small from the outside, we find that inside the adjoining buildings are all connected with secret passages and in many of the secret and oddly closed rooms one may still see beautifully carved mantles, doors and arches. This building, in 1909, while worthy of preservation for visitors, was occupied by a wholesale grocer as a storehouse, and in one of the prison rooms a coffee-roasting plant was in constant operation, much to the disgust of the antique and history-loving visitor, while on two upper floors there were old Rosaecrucian Lodge rooms which had been used from 1843 to 1859 by a Grand Lodge of Montpellier.

At the end of Rue Maguelone is the *Place de la Comedie*, adorned with the graceful *FONTAINE DES TROIS-GRACES*, built in

1776 and which faces the Theatre. At another part of the town we see the PEYROU, a fine promenade and park, and at the sides of the great railings of the PEYROU we see two stone groups, strangely, yet eloquently, telling the tale of the two sisters who founded the city; one group represents LOVE OVERCOMING STRENGTH, and the other, STRENGTH VANQUISHED BY LOVE. At the end of the park is the famous CHATEAU D' EAU, constructed in 1753.

Let us now continue on our journey to Millau, situated about 60 miles distant from Montpellier on the left bank of the river Tarn. This city was called AEMILIANUM CASTRUM by the Romans and is today a city of about 16,500 inhabitants.

Here we enter the CANON DU TARN and the Black Mountains. As the name indicates, the Canon of the Tarn is comparable with the celebrated Canyon of Colorado and is as wonderful in beauty, if not more wonderful in construction, than the former. It is the most curious of the gorges produced in the CAUSSES by the erosion of the streams during the glacial epoch in the CEVENNES.

As we enter the Canon we notice the sheer rocks which rise to a height of from 800 to 1100 feet and that the distance between their summits varies from one-half to three-quarters of a mile. Here in this section is the original Black Mountains, formerly mentioned, and it is difficult to imagine anything more weird and impressive. Gigantic ramparts and perpendicular cliffs at one time overhang the River Tarn and in other places they retire in terraces formed of several strata of the limestone and as varied in outline as they are in those peculiar and delicate colors which seem to vie with each other in assuming strange markings; the rocks themselves are shivered into a thousand different shapes and there appears yellow limestone, black schistous marl and brown and pink dolomite.

In passing through the Canon, and especially through the Black Mountain section, we must take strange winding courses in order to follow any semblance of a path. At times we are upon some high and mighty ridge overlooking a vast and bottomless valley; at other times we seem to be descending into the very bowels of the earth and as the way grows darker and the many small and uninviting caverns are brought to our notice, we do not remember that this place was claimed as the domain of his Satanic Majesty. And, were it not for the occasional spring, the few beautifully colored flowers and some vegetation and vines, we would feel that we were passing through Jules Verne's volcanic entrance to the center of the earth and immediately retrace our steps.

But we hasten on to the village of Peyreleau, situated on the banks of the Jonte, reaching there by way of modern paths and easing our walk upon the backs of mules. Here we prepare for our interesting journey to the strange, mysterious city of The Devil.



## CHAPTER FOUR

*In order properly to enjoy and appreciate our visit to the Village of The Devil, we should spend at least two days there, but since the village is uninhabited, it is necessary to spend the nights at Maubret, a hamlet several miles distant, which boasts of only a few beds and accommodations for but two or three tourists at one time.*

*Nevertheless we prepare for one whole day by taking the necessary provisions, food being unattainable en route. It is necessary to dress comfortably, but suitably for mountain climbing and with as little luggage as possible.*

*There are several methods of transportation, each having its advantages and disadvantages, but at Le Rozier, the village adjoining Peyreleau, we may hire a carriage seating three for 15 francs (\$3) and proceed to Maubert, a ride of two hours. Here we secure a guide and the question of transportation to the Village of The Devil is decided according to the guide we select. M. Lavinne, the most popular of the two rival guides possesses a typical French mule-cart seating from two to four persons, and his enthusiastic arguments relative to the advantages of his guidance and means of transportation are convincingly explained by as many gestures as words, and it is amusing to see him hold up his hands in horror and derision when mention is made of M. Robert who possesses a few mules and who likewise, though less strenuously, claims his guidance and mule-ride the safest means of traversing the mountains.*

*If we are alone we accept the mule ride, but if there are three or four of us we are tempted to ride in the cart. About one-half mile distant we enter the borders of the Village of the Devil, and before actually passing through its stone GATES we ascend the mountains on the right, where there is situated the ancient CITADEL, formed of rocks, and where, it is said, the Devil and his brothers who sought to marry Berthe and Albane, sent forth their midnight signals of fire and where the ghastly and villainous consultations were held. From this position we can overlook the city in general and stop a few moments to consider the story of the discovery of this city.*

*As formerly stated, this village was unknown to worldly history or research until the year 1883. This will not appear strange to those who have taken the journey. Until after its discovery there were no public guides to show the winding way, and the city of Maubert, if it may be called a city, was then unborn and there was no inducement*

for any tourist, no matter how keen his delight in mountain climbing, to pass through these black mountains without food or place to rest.

But in 1883, Mons. L. de Malafosse, a Rosaecrucian, whose chateau is near Mende, 35 miles distant, made the wonderful exploration of its location and called the attention of scientists to it. The matter greatly interested Mons. E. A. Martel of the French Alpine Club, who immediately visited the village and drew a plan of its **STREETS AND BOULEVARDS**.

The village is situated upon a plateau one and one-half miles square and it would seem that this plateau itself was especially created by nature for the sole purpose of supporting a village; for, in such a mountainous region a level plateau of such extent is remarkable and there is no parallel to it in the whole of Europe, except possibly the much smaller **BOIS DE PAIOLIVE**.

Now, while Mons. de Malafosse made an explanation of its location and called the attention of scientists to its existence, I have ample proof that the Village of the Devil and its surrounding Valley of the Devil was known to a few mystics and learned men many years before 1883; for I have in my possession a rare record of the legends of Auvergne in which mention is made of the supposed council of the Devil and his two brothers as heretofore described and giving an original sketch of these devils holding one of their midnight councils; and while this rare record, which was first brought to light in 1838, gives a few minor details as to what was believed to exist in the Valley of the Devil, it does not attempt to give the complete story of the existence of the village and of the romance connected with it.

Therefore, Mons. de Malafosse did not discover an hitherto unknown village, but, rather, rediscovered what was publicly and generally unknown. To quote de Malafosse in his original report: "We cannot, without having seen it, form an idea of this collection of apparent ruins, where, by the side of rocks representing gigantic monsters are facsimiles of imposing monuments. The whole entangled mass of streets, arches, passages and projecting cornices, sometimes intersecting one another at right angles, as in a town laid out by line, sometimes forming a crescent or square, is a veritable labyrinth of about 500 acres. Isolated rocks, in the shape of towers or pyramids, are more than 300 feet high and some of the **STREETS** pass between rows of **EDIFICES** 100 to 200 feet high. The whole of this huge space is abandoned to complete solitude."

This description presents the picture we see from the old citadel on its borders. Now let us descend the rock and enter the city itself by way of the main street, called the **BOULEVARD DIABOLO**.

We are at once impressed with the fact that no hand of man ever laid out this city; for we cannot believe that there ever existed a brain

so fertile in fantastic creation and so weird in constructive detail, as the intelligence which must have guided the building or planning of this strange city. And yet! Who can say that nature alone, even in her wildest dreams and most deluding schemes, ever produced the mystifying sights we now see? We try to be logical, reasonable and sane in our conclusions, but we are haunted with the possibility, yes even probability, that some diabolic power was manifesting itself when this city was built. The very atmosphere, heavy with the silence of death and laden with the pallor of solitude, mystery and forgotten life, makes us whisper in reverence,—reverence for what *WAS* and what *MIGHT HAVE BEEN*. No revelry or mirth here and no heart that can help but feel that in this forsaken place God and Devil, happiness and sorrow, love and hatred, power and weakness and life and death meet upon the border-line.

The ground before us is level, smooth, and in some places actually presenting a stone surface, like a paved street. On either side rise high *BUILDINGS* carved by the mysterious hand into the semblance of chateaus, forts, and cottages. *Windows*, broad and imposing, doorways, passages and even *BALCONIES* are in evidence and we cannot help wondering at the strange sight of an occasional stoop or arch at some entrances and at the finely projecting cornices of the higher buildings.

Walking through this main street we come to what might be called a corner, for here we notice a cross street, at exactly right angles, and faced on either side by similar structures. Further on we come to an imposing structure with an enormous entrance and we rightly name this *HOTEL DU VILLA*, or City Hall; and with little stretch of the imagination we can picture the silent mysterious figures of the former inhabitants of this city walking slowly and dejectedly into its court to plan the diabolical work accredited to them in the years 800 to 1000.

Further on we enter a *CIRQUE* or circle, such as are so artistically built in modern cities. We are told that this circle, one of the smallest in the city, is called the *CIRQUE DES ROQUETTES* and that its longer diameter is 1652 feet, the shorter diameter 650 feet and the walls 380 feet high. As we gaze upon this sight we allow our minds to wander and think of the legend of the Brothers of the Devil who lived here and try to picture the use they may have made of this cirque. Were the many men and women who strangely disappeared in their time brought here and put to an ignominious death? Were the fires of pestilence, plague and suffering kindled here, or were these brothers partly human after all and here worshipped a master of some kind? The human mind is fickle, its paths of reasoning are oddly branched, with byways of enticing illogical pictures and when awakened and alive with

the subtle power of suggestion we imagine many things; this may account for our sudden aversion to this cirque, for, do we not see in the interior gloom of this arena the transparent and luminous figures of men and women on bended knees begging for mercy and help? and cannot we hear the agonizing cries of children and the silencing groan of a life departing in agony while everywhere we see the dark crimson stain of innocent blood?

Horror fills our souls; we try to rise above the power that grapples with our reason, but we are held fast, captive in the hands of the same unseen and unknown might that wielded the instrument which carved the fantastic sights surrounding us.

We turn to the East and pass through another street unnamed but magnificent in its structures and passages covered with arches which darkened the unknown interiors of the courts; for while one may boast of having entered the various caverns of the Cevennes, especially those at Roquefort, where the famous cheese is made, and at other places where the environment may be as gloomy, still one would never attempt an entrance to the interior of these unknown courts and we are held, it seems, in iron bonds and our feet refuse the mental volition to trespass.

Before us we see the CIRQUE DU LAC, which is similar in construction to the Cirque just visited, but which at one time contained water. Now, however, as if to add to the forsaken, forlorn and cheerless aspect of the scene, the cirque is dry and we cannot help feeling that perhaps nature has refused to furnish to this ungodly place one of its most bountiful, sustaining gifts.

Near here are several AMATS or public SQUARES and again we stop to question whether nature alone constructed this village where there are so logically arranged and attractively located these circles and squares; and if further circumstantial evidence of this possibility we need only walk a short distance and view a perfectly proportioned FORUM, in outline and contour similar to those often seen on the continent.

But perhaps the most weird and suggestive view of all is that of the BOULEVARD MONUMENT, where are located seventeen obelisks or monuments, ranging in height from 100 to 300 feet. They stand at various open spaces between the numerous castles and each is different in shape and, apparently, designed to express symbolically the incident in memory of which they were erected. Of course, these are likewise mere freaks of nature, like the trembling rock in the near locality, which trembles every midnight so violently that one fears it may fall and injure the bystander. Yet, like the trembling rock, legend says that these obelisks were erected by the Devil and his two brothers in memory of the terrible plagues, wars, deaths and crimes planned and consummated by them.

As we stand here and view these strange monuments in the lifeless city and note just outside of its boundary line the beautiful vines, the arbutes and holly flourishing at the base of the majestic pines, and, raising our eyes see the same blue sky, the same sun, and the same spotless groups of clouds as pass over more cheerful and divine dwellings, we marvel at what these strange streets may have once been, what the buildings may have contained and what the inhabitants of this Village of the Devil may have done that God and nature in evident chagrin, sorrow and repulsion, should have brought death, barrenness, infamy and disconsolate gloom upon only one section of the world and this in the midst of fertile regions, surrounded by wondrous beauty, God-fearing people and progressive, active and religious nations.

Passing to the South we leave the Village by one of its main entrances consisting of an arch typical of the Roman PORT and flanked on either side by what may be called the Village Wall. We stand for a few minutes on a slight elevation which affords another general view of the streets and buildings and it is only at this time that we fully realize that all we have seen, the remarkable structures, the CIRQUES, arenas, forums, amphitheatres, castles, obelisks, etc., were the result of some strange freak of nature and that no human hand was concerned in the smallest detail of the construction of the village; that even the imposing courts, the doorways and windows were made by the action of water, wind and other elements in ages gone by and when all this part of the world was unknown to man.

Thus I leave you, my reader, on your way back to Montpellier and the land of the living. Your journey has been safe and interesting and we will rest a while in Montpellier while you review the wonders of the sights you have seen and I hasten on to my many other duties.

I will meet you again in Montpellier shortly, and from that old city we shall take a second journey to another strange city near by and there attend a few of the Rosaecrucian mystic convocations such as are unknown to this country and equalled perhaps only in Egypt in the Temples of our Order.



## THE SUPREME MATRE EMERITUS RAISED TO THE HIGHER REALMS

On January 21, 1918, there passed from this material plane to the Higher Realms, the soul of our dearly beloved Supreme Matre Emeritus, May Banks-Stacey, widow of the late Col. M. H. Stacey.

Mrs. Stacey was a direct descendant of Oliver Cromwell and an indirect descendant of Mary Stuart and Napoleon.

She was a native of Baltimore, her father having been an eminent jurist. She was seventy-six years of age at the time of her passing to the beyond, and leaves a daughter and two sons, both of whom hold high military positions.

Mother Stacey was a deep student of mysticism. She was a graduate physician and a graduate lawyer. She had travelled to nearly every foreign land and has been entertained by more potentates than possibly any other American woman.

While journeying through India her attention was given to the mystic teachings of the Hindus and these started her long career of research in that field. After having lived a while and studied with many cults, she finally visited Egypt and there came in contact with the Rosaeucrucian Masters. This was a few years prior to the coming of the Order to America.

Mrs. Stacey desired the privilege of bringing the Order's teachings to America and so expressed her desire, pointing to the fact that her American parents and relatives had been among those who established the first Masonic Lodge in Baltimore and Philadelphia and that she was not only a member of the Eastern Star but a Daughter of the American Revolution, Colonial Dames, etc. It was pointed out to her, however, that the Order could not come to America until the year 1915. It was further explained that when the Order did come it would come through the sponsorship of France.

Mrs. Stacey was given by the Masters in Egypt a certain mystical Jewel of the Order and several sealed papers which she was requested to hold until such time as another came to her with a duplicate of one of the seals and requested her assistance in establishing the Order in America. Mrs. Stacey then returned to India and after showing the recognition she had received at the hands of the Masters in Egypt she was duly initiated into our Order there and was given other papers signed by the Supreme Council of the World.

In writing of her part in the establishment of the Order in America, Mrs. Stacey has put upon official record in the Archives of the Supreme Grand Lodge in New York the following statement:

"I further state that the said Jewels and INCOMPLETE



instructions were delivered into my hands by the R. C. Masters of India, representing the Supreme Council of the World, and that I was there made an initiate of the Order and a Legate of the Order for America. I also state that the said Jewels and papers were represented to me as coming direct from Egypt and France, and that they were given to me to be formally handed to that man who should present certain papers, documents, jewels and "key" in America. Such a person having matured and being Brother H. S. Lewis, I did the duty expected of me, fulfilled my commission and with pleasure express the joy at seeing the work so well under way in accordance with the prophecy made in India to me in person.

"The history of the Jewels and papers are, to my knowledge, exactly as stated herein and as described by Mr. Lewis, our Imperator, in the History of the Order as published in the Official Magazine."

Mrs. Stacey retired as active Matre of the Supreme Grand Lodge after its first year and has since devoted her time to deep study and research.

She was greatly loved by all who knew her. Her kind smile and ever cheerful disposition as well as her deep knowledge of human nature and the trials of life on this earth, made her truly a Mother to all her "children" of the Lodge. As one of the co-founders of the Order in America her name ever shall be cherished and we know that in another incarnation she will take up the work which she was unable to complete at this time.





## THE SEAL OF THE UNITED STATES

The Great Seal of the United States is one of peculiar interest, and therefore we feel warranted in giving more details of its design and history than can be allotted to the Seals of the several States. Soon after the declaration of independence, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson were appointed a committee to prepare a great seal for the infant republic; and they employed a French West Indian, named Du Simitiere, not only to furnish designs, but also to sketch such devices as were suggested by themselves. In one of his designs, the artist displayed on a shield the armorial ensigns of the several nations from whence America had been peopled—embracing those of England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, and Holland. On one side was placed Liberty with her cap, and on the other was a rifleman in uniform, with his rifle in one hand and a tomahawk in the other—the dress and weapons peculiar to America.

Franklin proposed, for the device, Moses lifting his wand, and dividing the Red Sea, and Pharaoh and his hosts overwhelmed with the waters. For a motto, the words of Cromwell, "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God."

Adams proposed the Choice of Hercules; the hero resting on a club, Virtue pointing to her rugged mountain on one hand, and persuading him to ascend; and Sloth, glancing at her flowery paths of pleasure, wantonly reclining on the ground, displaying the charms, both of her eloquence and person, to seduce him into vice.

Jefferson proposed the Children of Israel in the Wilderness, led by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; and, on the reverse, Hengist and Horsa, the Saxon chiefs, from whom we claim the honor of being descended and whose political principles and form of government we have assumed.

Franklin and Adams then requested Jefferson to combine their ideas in a compact description of the proposed great seal, which he did, and that paper, in his handwriting, is now in the office of the Secretary

of State at Washington. This design consisted of a shield with six quarterings, *parti one, coupé two*, in heraldic phrase. The first gold, and an enameled rose, red and white, for England; the second white, with a thistle, in its proper colors, for Scotland; the third, green, with a harp of gold, for Ireland; the fourth blue, with a golden lily-flower, for France; the fifth gold, with the imperial black eagle for Germany; and the sixth gold, with the Belgic crowned red lion, for Holland. These denoted the countries from which America had been peopled. He proposed to place the shield within a red border, on which there should be thirteen white escutcheons, linked together by a gold chain, each bearing appropriate initials, in black, of the confederated States. Supporters, the Goddess of Liberty on the right side, in a corslet of armor, in allusion to the then state of war, and holding the spear and cap in her right hand, while her left supported the shield. On the left the Goddess of Justice, leaning on a sword in her right hand, and in her left a balance. The crest, the eye of Providence in a radiant triangle, whose glory should extend over the shield and beyond the figures. Motto: *E Pluribus Unum*—"Many in one." Around the whole, "SEAL OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, MDCCLXXVI." For the reverse, he proposed the device of Pharoah sitting in an open chariot, a crown on his head and a sword in his hand, passing through the divided waters of the Red Sea in pursuit of the Israelites. Rays from a pillar of fire in a cloud, expressive of the Divine presence and command, beaming on Moses, who stands on the shore, and extending his hand over the sea, causes it to overwhelm Pharoah and his followers. Motto: "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God."

Jefferson's device was highly approved by his coadjutors, and the committee reported on the 10th of August, 1776; but, for some unaccountable reason, their report was neglected, not having been even placed on record; and the affair was allowed to slumber until the 24th of March, 1779, when Messrs. Lovell, of Massachusetts, Scott, of Virginia, and Houston, of Georgia, were appointed a committee to make another device.

On the 10th of May following they reported in favor of a seal four inches in diameter, one side of which should be composed of a shield with thirteen diagonal stripes, alternate red and white. Supporters, a warrior, holding a sword on one side, and on the other the figure of Peace, bearing an olive branch. The crest, a radiant constellation of thirteen stars. Motto: *Bello vel Pace*—"For War or Peace," and the legend, "Seal of the United States." On the reverse, the figure of Liberty, seated in a chair, holding the staff and cap. Motto: *Semper*—"Forever"—and underneath, MDCCLXXVI. This report was re-committed, and again submitted with some slight modifications (substituting the figure of an Indian with bow and arrows in his right hand for that of a warrior) just a year afterward; but it was not accepted, and the matter rested until April, 1782, when Henry Middleton, Elias Boudine and Edward Rutledge were appointed a third committee to prepare a seal. They reported on the 9th of May following, substantially the same as the committee of 1779 and 1780; but, this

not being satisfactory to Congress, on the 13th of June the whole matter was referred to Charles Thomson, its secretary.

He in turn procured several devices, among which was one by William Barton, of Philadelphia, consisting of an escutcheon, with a blue border, spangled with thirteen stars, and divided in the centre, perpendicularly, by a gold bar. On each side of this division, within the blue border, thirteen bars or stripes, alternate red and white, like the American flag adopted on the 14th of June, 1777. Over the gold bar an eye surrounded with a glory, and in the gold bar a Doric column resting on the base of the escutcheon, having a displayed eagle on its summit. The crest, a helmet of burnished gold, damasked, grated with six bars, and surmounted by a red cap of dignity, such as dukes wear, with a black lining, and a cock armed with gaffs. Supporters, on one side the Genius of America, with loose Auburn tresses, having on her head a radiant crown of gold, encircled with a sky-blue fillet, spangled with silver stars, and clothed in a long, loose, white garment, bordered with green. From the right shoulder to the left side, a blue scarf with stars, the cinctures being the same as in the border. Around her waist a purple girdle, fringed with gold, and the word VIRTUE embroidered in white. Her interior hand rested on the escutcheon, and the other held the American standard, on the top of which a white dove was perched. The supporter on the other side was a man in complete armor; his sword-belt blue, fringed with gold; his helmet encircled with a wreath of laurel, and crested with one white and two blue plumes; his left hand supporting the escutcheon, and his right holding a lance with a bloody point. Upon an unfurled green banner was a golden harp with silver strings, a brilliant star, and two lily-flowers, with two crossed swords below. The two figures stood upon a scroll, on which was the motto, *Deo Favente*—"With God's Favor"—in allusion to the eye of Providence in the arms. On the crest, in a scroll, was the motto, *Virtus sola Invicta*—"Virtue alone is Invincible."

After vainly striving to perfect a seal which should meet the approval of Congress, Thomson finally received from John Adams, then in London, an exceedingly simple and appropriate device, suggested by Sir John Prestwich, a baronet of the West of England, who was a warm friend of America, and an accomplished antiquarian. It consisted of an escutcheon bearing thirteen perpendicular stripes, white and red, with the chief blue, and spangled with thirteen stars; and, to give it greater consequence, he proposed to place it on the breast of an American eagle, displayed, without supporters, as emblematic of self-reliance. It met with general approbation, in and out of Congress, and was adopted in June, 1782: so it is manifest, although the fact is not extensively known, that we are indebted for our national arms to a titled aristocrat of the country with which we were then at war. Eschewing all heraldic technicalities, it may be thus described in plain English: Thirteen perpendicular pieces, white and red; a blue field; the escutcheon on the breast of the American eagle displayed, proper, holding in his right talon an olive-branch, and in his left a bundle of thirteen arrows, all proper, and in his beak a scroll, inscribed with the motto, *E Pluribus*

*Unum.* For the crest, over the head of the eagle, which appears above the escutcheon, a golden glory breaking through a cloud, proper, and surrounding thirteen stars, forming a constellation of white stars on a blue field.

*Reverse*—A pyramid unfinished. In the zenith, an eye in a triangle, surrounded with a glory, proper. Over the eye, the words, *Annuit Coeptis*—"God has favored the undertaking." On the base of the pyramid, are the numeral Roman letters, MDCCLXXVI.; and underneath the motto, *Novus Ordo Seclorum*—"A new Series of Ages"—denoting that a new order of things had commenced in the Western hemisphere. Thus, after many fruitless efforts, for nearly six years, a very simple seal was adopted, and yet remains the arms of the United States.

Why did John Prestwich of England, suggest the Pyramid for America's seal? That is another story—and therein is the occultism and mysticism.



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. How is the selection of a new vehicle or material body made by the soul?

A. According to the soul's state of evolution. If we grant the doctrine of the evolution of the soul to be true, we must at once admit certain laws associated with the process of evolution. These laws are: the soul's evolution occurs through experiences in the material body and out of it, during its cycle of incarnations; the undeveloped soul appears first in the lowest form of material body—the purely animal body; development or evolution of the soul takes the soul into higher forms of material bodies, culminating in incarnations in human bodies; each material body into which the soul passes, *in the process of evolution*, must necessarily be a body or vehicle which will serve well the requirements of the soul in its needed experiences.

With the above outline it must be apparent that the material body required for the soul's incarnation at any time must conform to the requirements of the soul at that time. If the soul in one incarnation has learned well its lessons and atoned for its errors of expression, according to the law of compensation that soul will enter a body in its next incarnation which will permit that soul to live a better expression and evolve higher in its upward unfoldment. Such a body would have to be more perfect (physically) than the previous body of the soul, and it would have to be a body born in a family and in an environment where not only greater opportunities would be given to the soul for expression, but where certain tests and trials would come to the soul which it had not experienced before or which it required in that particular incarnation.

Thus a soul which had been expressing through a healthy, normal body in a family and environment where disease, poverty, temptation and sin were unknown, may have its next incarnation in a body born diseased in a family or environment surrounded with poverty, sin, disease and every form of evil. This would be the *karma* of that soul; it would test that soul as it may never have been tested before. The soul may feel that it is being tested—though this consciousness of test and trial may not come to it until after sorely tried; then it will cry "Oh God! why am I tested thus?" The soul may not understand, or it may comprehend with a divine intuition and, with brave effort and admirable fortitude say: "This is to teach me a lesson by which I will profit," and thus the soul, patiently suffering, ever learning and never condemning, will evolve in that incarnation as it could evolve in no other way.

That Divine Mind, that Great Consciousness, which sees all, knows all and is Just, Kind, Wise and Mighty, selects the proper body for a soul about to incarnate. There is no other answer unless we deny the very fundamentals of the law of the evolution of the soul. In the Eighth and Ninth Degree of our work you will learn more of this.

Q. What is the difference between the animal soul and its consciousness and the human soul and its consciousness?

A. The evolution of the soul, as suggested in the above answer. The purely animal soul is the soul which is little evolved and is learning the first principles of refinement. Just as the child mind must learn the alphabet before it can read and must learn to discriminate in the crude and gross things of life before it can discriminate in the more refined and cultured, so must the soul learn the crude lessons of life.

The first lesson for the soul to learn is to control the passions of life. These in their fundamental order are: craving for food; craving for possession regardless of law, craving for revenge, craving for domination at any cost, craving for gratification of lustful desires, etc. These are base and low cravings not found in even the lowest grade of developed humans, but common to the lower animals who live wildly. The domesticated animal which has learned not to steal its food but wait until it can eat with law and order, and has also learned to show appreciation for kindness shown, has a soul which has evolved higher in its cycle than a soul residing in a wild animal always seeking blood, revenge and prey. Gradually

such a soul passes from the bodies of the higher domesticated and intelligent animals to the least intelligent human bodies—those of peoples living wildly in uncivilized countries. From this phase of evolution the soul eventually passes into the bodies of humans living in more civilized lands. Where the process will end we do not know, and any one who claims to know speaks without knowledge. We can learn from evolved souls of their past—but they have not, and cannot, speak of the future.

Q. Do human souls ever revert to expression in the bodies of lower animals?

A. Some philosophies have taught that the soul of a human may incarnate in the body of a dog or other lower animal in its next incarnation. There is no law for this as a rule of the process of evolution, except in the cases where a soul in a human body has permitted that body to commit some terrible crime which can be expiated or compensated in no other way than by being incarnated in a lower animal's body and re-learning the fundamental lessons of life. The facts bearing upon this are so meagre, however, that little can be said. Human souls have been contracted which remember in this incarnation having been in the body of a dog or other animal for a period as a punishment to learn a lesson and seem to remember the lesson. It is only from the testimony of such honest and frank souls as will speak of such incidents than we can learn of this law; and the honest and frank who will speak thusly are few, unfortunately.

Q. I have read so much of late about the Great Seal of the United States with its Pyramid. It seems that nearly every school of occultism has something to say regarding the cause of the Pyramid being there and I am anxious to know the truth. Is there any occult explanation?

A. We thoroughly appreciate your desire to know the truth regarding the Great Seal. There has been much ado about nothing, truly; yet the truth of the matter is interesting and contains enough of occultism to warrant a complete explanation here.

See Article, "The Seal of the United States" in this issue of CROMAAT.



## THE NEXT ISSUE

will contain a complete System of Transcendental Geomancy, as practised by the Veiled Prophets of our ancient Order, and never published before, except in secret Manuscripts. By it our Members will be able to make Mysterious Divinations and Predictions regarding the future, and to answer all questions propounded of a personal and private nature.

Other interesting features will make the next Issue of great value to our Members of all Degrees.

