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THE APRON

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HIGGINS' MASONIC MONOGRAPHS

THE APRON

ITS TRADITIONS, HISTORY AND
SECRET SIGNIFICANCES

BY

FRANK C. HIGGINS, F. R. N. S.

President of the Magian Society
Past Pres. N. Y. Numismatic Club
Etc., Etc.

With 27 Illustrations by the Author



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By FRANK C. HIGGINS, F. R. N. S.
COURSE OF 1913-1914

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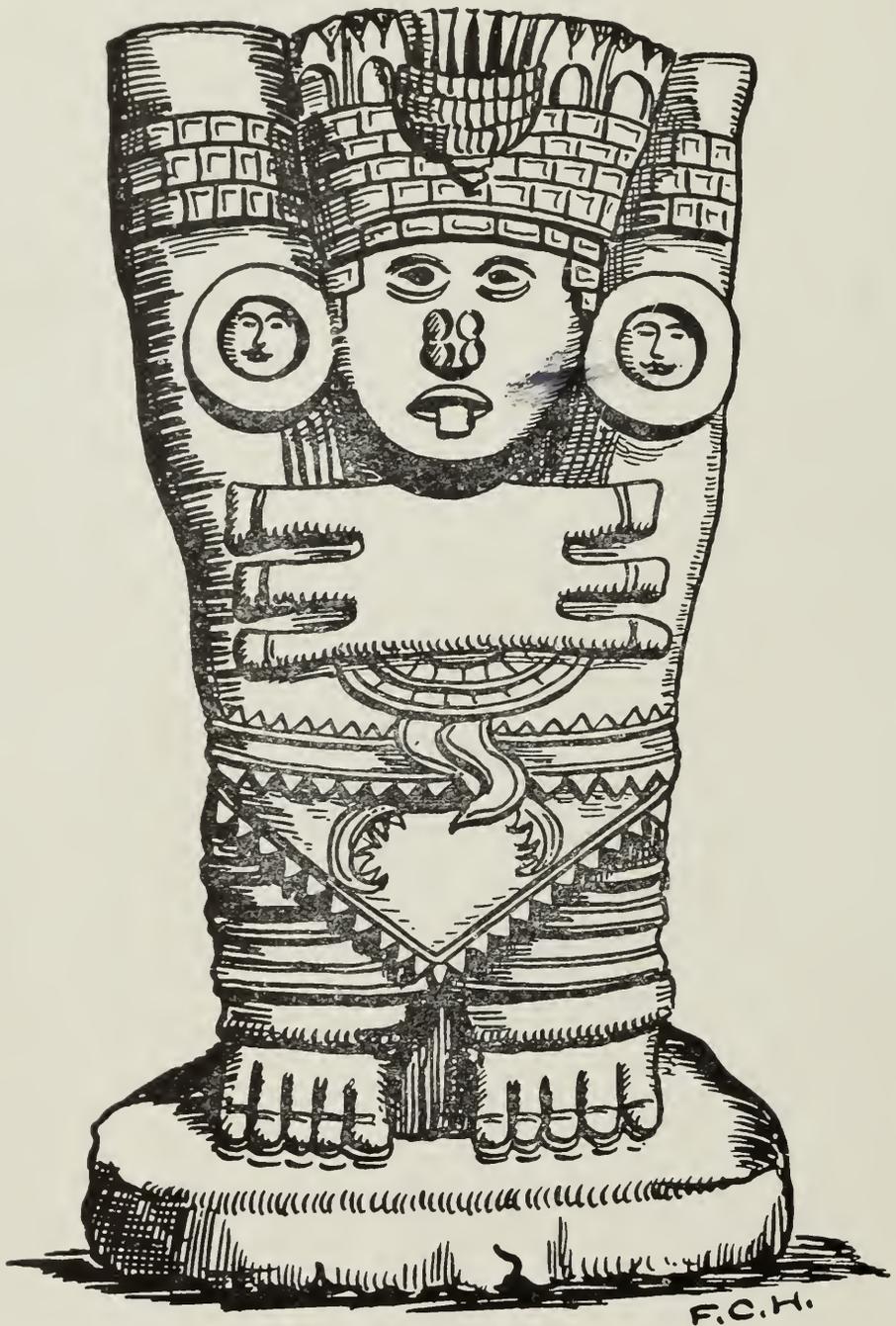
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AN AMERICAN MASON OF LONG AGO

Ancient Sun-god of the Mayas. One of many such statues found by Le Plongeon in the jungle forests of Yucatan, relics of a civilization which had perished long before America was discovered by the Spaniards. Wears the symbol of "Three (times) Three" and a Masonic Apron.

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HIGGINS' MASONIC MONOGRAPHS

THE APRON

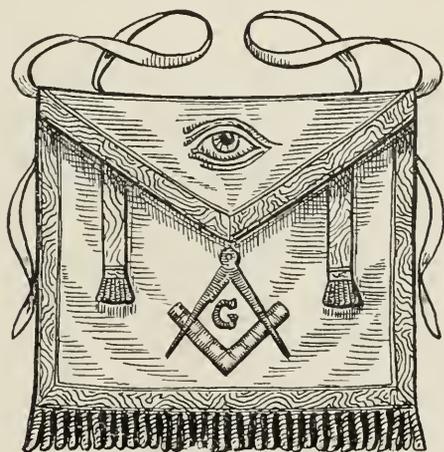
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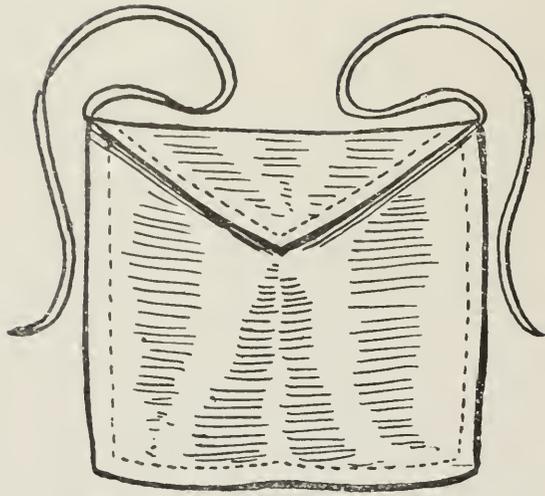
This little book is issued as a Challenge to the Dry-as-dusts of the Fraternity, who have too long been amiably permitted to prate of “the totally unsound and eventually to be exploded myths of Masonry.”

It is also a proclamation to the whole world of Philosophic and Religious thought, that Masonry is the original vehicle of Divine Revelation.

To the devoted, untiring and indispensable Vice-President of the Magian Society, Sir Knight, Companion, Brother and Friend, John G. Purdie, the writer inscribes it as a tribute of esteem and appreciation.

FRANK C. HIGGINS.

New York, February 24th, 1914.



More ancient than the Golden
Fleece or Roman Eagle.

THE WHITE LEATHER APRON.

“The LAMBSKIN OR WHITE LEATHER APRON is an emblem of INNOCENCE, the distinguished BADGE of a MASON.”

“Thus it was presented to us on our first entrance into the Ancient Craft;—Freemasonry’s first gift to the neophyte. And thus it was presented to the Initiates of centuries ago in the Ancient Mysteries;—a sign and token that the virile energy of manhood was not inconsistent with sex purity; a symbol of that control and restraint upon the animal passions and carnal lusts which prove a man free—slave not even to his baser self.”

“The APRON means all this to Freemasons, but it means more. There is something better than the cold chastity of the purist; something stronger than the placid purity of the devotee; something nobler than the icy innocence of the ascetic.”

“This APRON comes to us Freemasons as the SYMBOL of SERVICE, the BADGE of our MASONRY, SIGN and TOKEN that we are BUILDERS.”

“To every Mason comes his work; or, if it does not come it is for him to go to it. To some it is given to do great things. To every Mason is it given to do his greatest thing; striving, not to be better than others, but, day by day, to be better than self. And also, day by day, to make the world better for others.”

“So is the LAMBSKIN OR WHITE LEATHER APRON presented to the Entered Apprentice, not in reward but that it may be worn as the uniform of a high and holy Service, an Emblem that is symbolically adorned with that noblest of mottoes “Ich Dien” —“I SERVE.”

“Thus worn, the apron can be soiled only by sloth, can be stained only by idleness. It is purest and whitest when worn in self-forgetting Labor for others.”

Address of Ill. John Lloyd Thomas, 33° Commander in Chief A. & A. S. R., Valley of N. Y., in presentation of Apron to Most Worshipful William Sherer, Past Grand Master of the State of N. Y.

THE APRON

Its Traditions, History and Secret Significances.

The truest proofs of the time-defying antiquity of the Masonic Craft will not be found in documents or dates, but in the only manner in which it was expected by our venerable founders that they would be preserved, in the hidden mysteries of its symbolism.

Pre-eminent among these stands the Masonic Apron, without which no Mason of whatsoever rank is deemed to be "clothed," so long as the erection of the spiritual Temple upon which he is engaged is still incomplete.

Its presentation to the newly entered Apprentice and the beautiful allocution accompanying the gift are episodes in the life of every Master Mason which remain indelibly fixed upon the mind in after life and which are heard repeated over and over again with the same recurring pleasure.

The sentimental hints and associations of the Apron have therefore suffered no lack of panegyrists, so that perhaps no other symbol associated with Masonry has been so celebrated in prose and poem as this :

"Emblem of a life intense,
Held aloof from the world of sense,
Of the upright walk and lofty mind,
Far from the dross of Earth inclined."

It would almost seem, therefore, that the possibilities of rhetoric and rhyme had been exhausted in behalf of "the distinguished badge of a Mason," or, if such be not the case, that further effort would always continue in the same direction.

It will be the purpose of this paper to consider the Masonic Apron from a totally different and altogether new standpoint, that of an Archæological survival.

We are deeply interested in learning whether the sweeping claims of great antiquity and surpassing nobility put forward for the Apron, in the eloquent language of our ritual, are founded upon other than an attempt at grandiloquence for we must certainly recognize that statements are made which can only be true or untrue, without the slightest guarantee being afforded of their justice or clue given to their origin.

If the claims made are well founded, we are then certainly in the presence of a monument of the past, to the adequate explanation of which it would be impossible to grudge either the time or the labor expended upon such a task.

There is certainly not a single hint afforded to us by any of the monitorial explanations which we hear in the Lodge and comparatively little in the observations of standard commentators.

The following will serve as a fair average specimen of monitorial appreciation of the Mason's Apron.

"The lambskin, or white leather apron, is an emblem of innocence, and the distinguished badge of a Mason. You will observe it is not rounded, but a perfect square, and its right angles inculcate truth and honesty, the great lessons of morality. Its four equal sides are to remind the wearer that in innocence he is to practice the four cardinal virtues—temperance in word and act, fortitude in a noble purpose, prudence in wisely judging, and justice to the humble and greatest alike. The flap is an equilateral triangle, whose three sides refer to the three attributes of God—Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Omnipresence. The two strings remind us that reverence for and the practice of the Masonic virtues inculcated by the apron should be bound to the heart and conscience by double ties of love to God and man. The apron with its flap, represents the material, and the spiritual. The numbers of the apron's sides, four, and the flap, three, constitutes the sacred number, because it makes up the perfect figures of a square and triangle. The number also refers to the seven liberal arts and sciences, much revered among Masons, and which according to the legend of the Craft were the foundation of Masonry. There is one peculiar significance about the lambskin, and that is, it is one of the first symbols of the Masonic life, and also the last, when deposited in the grave of a departed brother. Brethren, think of the lambskin and ponder well the great lesson it teaches."

Even the casual reader will not fail to observe the palpable mis-statement about the flap of the Apron being an "equilateral Triangle." Were this the case, the point of the flap would reach almost to the bottom of the Apron.

It is also a favorite comment of many orators upon the symbolism of Aprons, that the upturned flap represents *Spirit* standing above *Matter* and that the turning down of the flap indicates the descent of *Spirit into Matter*, characteristic of the regenerated soul. This however may be regarded as one of what are sometimes called "unconscious prophecies," because the idea is certainly a happy one and the symbolism thereof most perfect, yet the sequel will prove that this is by no means the final solution.

Probably the most complete and circumstantial compilation of facts bearing upon the Masonic Apron, at the disposition of the craft, is the excellent article upon this object in Mackey's Masonic Encyclopædia, which says:—

"Among the Israelites the girdle formed part of the investiture of the priesthood. In the mysteries of Mithras, in Persia, the candidate was invested with a white apron. In the initiations practiced in Hindostan, the ceremony of investiture was preserved, but a sash, called the sacred zennar, was substituted for the apron. The Jewish sect of the Essenes clothed their novices with a white robe. The celebrated traveler Kaempfer informs us that the Japanese, who practice certain rites of initiation, invest their candidates with a white apron, bound round the loins with a zone or girdle. In the Scandinavian rites, the military genius of the people caused them to substitute a white shield, but its presentation was accomplished by an emblematic instruction not unlike that which is connected with the Mason's Apron.

"The apron" says Dr. Oliver, (S and S., Lect., P. 196) appears to have been in ancient times an honorary badge of distinction. In the Jewish economy none but the superior orders of the priesthood were permitted to adorn themselves with ornamented girdles, which were made of blue, purple and crimson, decorated with gold upon a ground of fine white linen, while the inferior **priests** wore only plain white. The Indian, the Persian, the Jewish, the Ethiopian, the Egyptian aprons, though equally superb, all bore a character distinct from each other. Some were plain white ones, other striped with blue, and crimson; some were of wrought gold, others adorned and decorated with superb tassels and fringes. In a word, though the principal honor of the apron may consist in innocence of conduct and purity of heart, yet it certainly appears through all ages to have been a most exalted badge of distinction. In primitive times it was rather an ecclesiastical than a civil decoration; although in some cases the apron was elevated to great superiority as a national trophy. The royal standard of Persia was originally an apron in form and dimensions. * At this day it is connected with ecclesiastical honors; for the chief dignitaries of the Christian church, wherever a legitimate establishment, with the necessary degrees of rank and subordination is formed, are invested with aprons as a peculiar badge of distinction, which is a collateral proof of the fact that Masonry was originally incorporated with the various systems of divine worship used by every people in the ancient world. Masonry retains the symbol or shadow; it cannot have renounced the reality or substance."

In the Masonic apron **two** things are essential to the due preservation of its symbolic character—its color and its material.

First. As to its Color. The color of a Mason's apron should be pure unspotted white. This color has in all ages and countries, been esteemed an emblem of innocence and purity. It was with this reference that a portion of the vestments of the Jewish priesthood was always clothed in white. "The priests of the Romans" says Festus, "were accustomed to wear white garments when they sacrificed." In the Scandinavian rites it has been said that the shield presented to the candidate was white. The Druids changed the color of the garments presented to their initiates with each degree; white, however, was the color appropriated to the last, or degree of perfection. And, it was according to their rituals, intended to teach the aspirant that none were admitted to that honor but such as were cleansed from all impurities both of body and mind. In the early ages of the Christian church a white garment was always placed upon the catechumen who had been newly baptized, to denote that he had been cleansed from his former sins, and was thenceforth to lead a life of purity. Hence it was presented to him with this solemn charge: "Receive the white and undefiled garment, and produce it unspotted before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may obtain eternal life." From all these instances we learn that white apparel was anciently used as an emblem of purity, and for this reason the color has been preserved in the apron of the Freemason.

Secondly. As to its Material. A Mason's apron must be made of lambskin. No other substance such as linen, silk, or satin could be substituted without entirely destroying the emblematic character of the apron, for the material of the Mason's apron constitutes one of the most important symbols of his profession. The lamb has always been considered as an appropriate emblem of innocence. And hence we are taught in the ritual of the first degree, that, "by the lambskin the Mason is reminded of that purity of life and rectitude of conduct which is so essentially necessary to his gaining admission into the Celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe forever presides."

The true apron of a Mason must then be of unspotted lambskin, from 14 to 16 inches wide, from 12 to 14 deep, with a fall about 3 or 4 inches deep, square at the bottom, and without device or ornament of any kind. The usage of the Craft in this country has, for a few years past, allowed a narrow edging of blue ribbon in the symbolic degrees, to denote the universal friendship which constitutes the bond of the society, and of which virtue blue is the Masonic emblem. But this

* This was in honor of a Blacksmith Patriot, not from Masonic motives.

undoubtedly is an innovation, for the ancient apron was without any edging or ornament. In the Royal Arch degree the lambskin is, of course, continued to be used, but, according to the same modern custom, there is an edging of red to denote the zeal and fervency which should distinguish the possessors of that degree. All extraneous ornaments and devices are in bad taste, and detract from the symbolic character of the investiture. But the silk or satin aprons, bespangled and painted and embroidered, which have been gradually creeping into our Lodges, have no sort of connection with Ancient Craft Masonry. They are an innovation of our French brethren, who are never pleased with simplicity, and have, by their love of tinsel in their various newly invented ceremonies, effaced many of the most beautiful and impressive symbols of our Institution. A Mason who understands and appreciates the true symbolic meaning of his apron would no more tolerate a painted or embroidered satin one than an artist would a gilded statue. By him, the lambskin, and the lambskin alone, would be considered as the badge, "more ancient than the Golden Fleece, or Roman Eagle, and more honorable than the Star and Garter."

The Grand Lodge of England is precise in its regulations for the decorations of the apron which are laid down in its constitution.

Particular attention is called to the latitude in the dimensions of the Apron permitted by the foregoing rescript, which might result in a 12x14 or 14x16 inch dimension with perfect propriety. The "3 or 4 inch fall" of the flap is equally indefinite, the whole showing that the Apron, as it is considered up to this present explanation, is by no means a work of precision nor is it considered in any other than the various symbolic senses commented upon by bygone writers.

It has indeed been put forward by a number of Masonic essayists that the Masonic Apron was the survival of the Badge of Honor originally bestowed upon the builders of the Pyramids, basing the contention upon the triangular form of the flap, but in every context it is made apparent that no notion whatever is entertained of what the connection between the two figures might be except inasmuch as both were based upon triangles.

We propose to now show that there is a direct and most important connection, if not between the Masonic Apron and the Egyptian Pyramids, at least between those widely differing symbols and the peculiar Wisdom to which either stood, in a way, as the representative and Key.

It has frequently been remarked by the writer, that among all the multitude of miniature objects, amulets, carvings, paintings and other objects found in Egyptian tombs and excavations, representing the myriad gods, goddesses and sacred objects of the land of wonders, there never seems to appear any such thing as a representation of one of the Pyramids.

The only graphic allusion to the pyramid which one seems to be able to discover among the Egyptian hieroglyphics is one representing the adoration of the Sun-god Ra, in which Mizraim

or Egypt is typified by a tiny Pyramid between outstretched arms.

It is only upon closer acquaintance with the ancient Egyptian symbolisms than is possible from regarding them as mere pictures, that it gradually dawns upon the student that innumerable figures in question are based upon mathematical and geometrical propositions so ingeniously managed as to betray no notion of their real character to the unaided perception.

The peculiar talent of the Egyptians in this particular direction has not escaped notice, for it is well established that the sole means of identifying property in land, after the successive risings and falls of the Nile had left the arable land upon its banks vast unbroken expanses of mud, lay in the hands of the geometrical surveyors. Then again the marvellous Astronomical Knowledge of the Egyptians and their wealth of monumental evidence of the great skill of their Architects, leaves us no room for doubt as to the presence among them of the requisite skill to have accomplished even greater wonders than they did.

We may briefly recapitulate the fact that much of our Masonic symbolism is of palpably Egyptian origin, having reached us, in some cases, directly and in others through medium of an earlier adoption by the Israelites.

Notable among these symbols is our so-called Mosaic pavement which was employed in connection with vertical columns or Obelisks to register the Solar phenomena of the recurring seasons, by means of the gradually lengthening, shortening, receding or advancing shadows which could be measured from day to day on the great courts of alternating black and white squares.

Then again, we know of the reverence of the ancient Egyptians for the famous Pythagorean Triangle, so-called because that Greek philosopher secured it from an Egyptian Priest.

In Egypt this was apparently termed "the Triangle of *Hur-Amun*" or Horus-Amon, the Savior Sun God with the Ram's Head, the type being that of the young Spring Sun, at the moment when the year began, in the sign of *Aries*. The peculiar shape of this triangle, which is composed of a right angle of three units of measure by four, the hypotenuse of which is exactly five, was liken to the form of an eye, the symbol of the

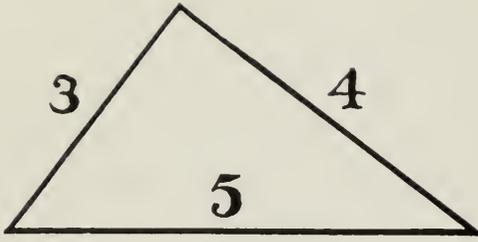


Fig. 1. The Egyptian sacred Triangle

Fig 2. The Eye of **Horus**.

Sun-god, the Sun itself being termed the "Eye of Heaven." This figure was the original type of the celebrated Egyptian Amulet, the "Eye of Horus" which has in course of time descended to our Masonic institutions as the "All Seeing Eye."

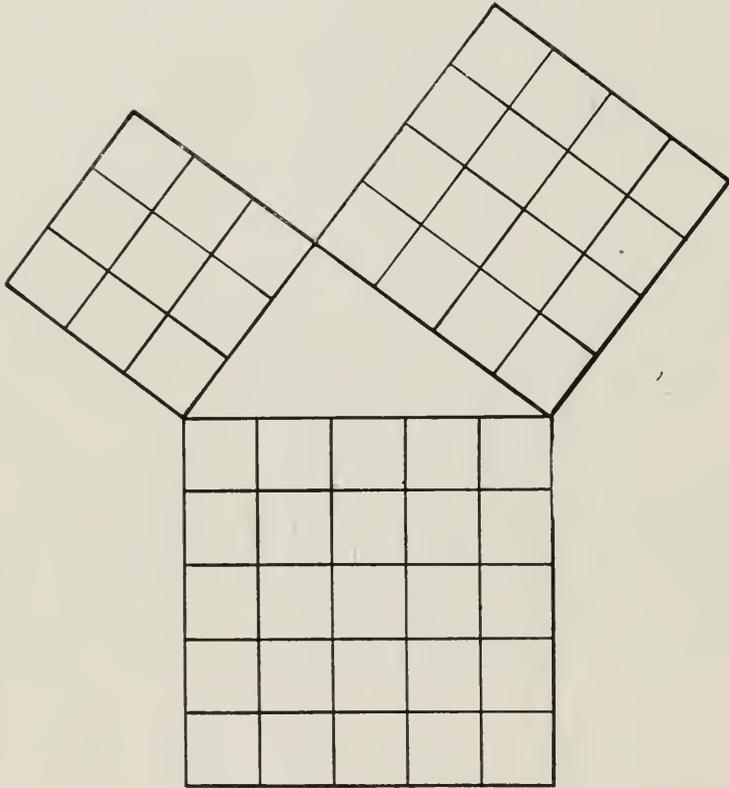


Fig 3. The Forty Seventh Problem of Euclid or "Pythagorean Proposition."

It is also known that this Triangle was extensively used to conceal the great mystery of the Egyptian religion, by which its initiates were taught that the multiplicity of gods comprised in the Egyptian pantheon, were after all only *one* Omnipotent but secret Creator, whom we are now able to learn by various inductive methods of great clearness, was none other than the great

JEHOVAH, whom Moses publicly proclaimed to his people. The key to the mystery lies in the letters I, O and H, which are also J, V and H, which were applied to the sides of the triangle in question and publicly denoted Isis, Osiris and Horus, while the Priests knew the initial letters of these words to be the secret mathematical *formulae* which to them seemed to be the *Key* to all visible creation because of its wonderful application to the main truths of Astronomy, Mathematics and Geometry. There is a vast philosophy attached to this wonderful proposition, of which we have especially treated in other forms.

If you will read in any good Mythology, the story of the death of *Osiris* slain by his brother *Typhon* and the long search for his mutilated remains by his disconsolate widow, *Isis*, you will understand how the hope of humanity was fixed on the "Widow's Son" the youthful Spring Sun God, H-U-R-A-M, as his name was abbreviated, whose birth also constituted the resurrection of his father, *Osiris*, with whom he was identical.

The Pythagorean Triangle is the same as that which is the basis of what is known as the Forty-Seventh problem of the Greek geometrician, Euclid. It is attributed to the latter, merely because it was included by him in his exhaustive treatise on the Science of which it forms a part. Pythagoras obtained it in Egypt but the Egyptians owed it to the Sages of India.

In Euclid, however, it demonstrates the mathematical fact that the sum of the sides of a right angle triangle are precisely equal to the square on its hypotheneuse and Euclid exhibits this problem by showing the squares of three and four, or nine and sixteen to equal the square of five, or twenty-five. This problem was however perfectly known to the forefathers of our race, thousands of years before and was made the centre of a philosophy far exceeding in importance the simple proposition defended by Euclid.

It can be shown in many ways that the Chaldean Magi developed the whole theory of Creation, which afterwards became incorporated in the Bible, from its critical examination. The proportions of its basic Triangle, however, gives rise to the *formulae* of several other remarkable triangles which were used to great effect in the elaboration of the philosophy of Divinity throughout the entire ancient World, especially those two which possess respectively a base of four parts and sides of three and a base of five parts with sides of four.

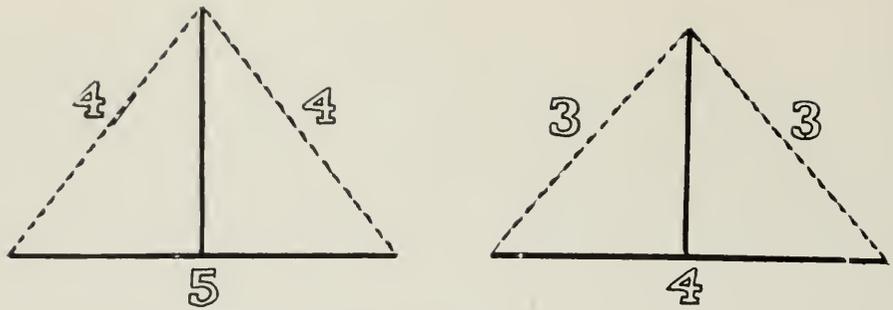


Fig 4. Triangles and **Taus** of the Squared Circles of Equal Perimeter and Equal Area.

These particular triangles have the peculiarity that the base of the first is the side of a square and its vertical axis the radius of a circle equal in area to that square, while the second shows the base of a square with relation to which the vertical axis is so very close to the radius of a circle of equal perimeter that the Egyptians really accepted it as such, although it goes a mere trifle over the mark and there is a secret way of discovering the exact truth, which they also possessed.

Now in multiplying the squares of this famous Pythagorean problem equally by four we secure the following figure:

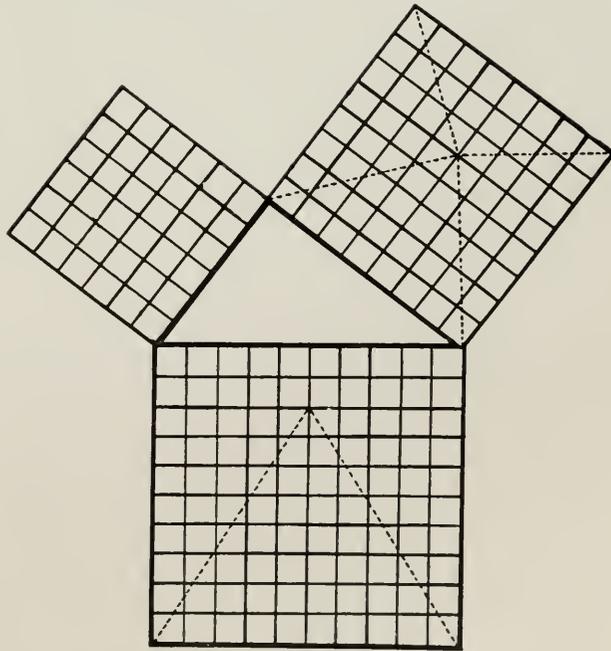


Fig. 5. The essential angles of the Key diagram Fig. 14.

which is the one upon which the Magian philosophy was really

based, because the 36 squares corresponded to the Sun, (*Osiris*) or "Spirit" which was accorded that number in the great Mathematical philosophy of the Ancients, the 64 square represented "Nature", (*Isis*) or "Matter" and the 100 square, "Human Destiny" as worked out in the scheme of the "Fall and Redemption" of Man. All of these abstruse propositions are fully and circumstantially treated of in our "*Origins and Symbols of Masonry.*" Our enquiries upon the subject of the Masonic Apron concentrate our attention more especially upon the sec-

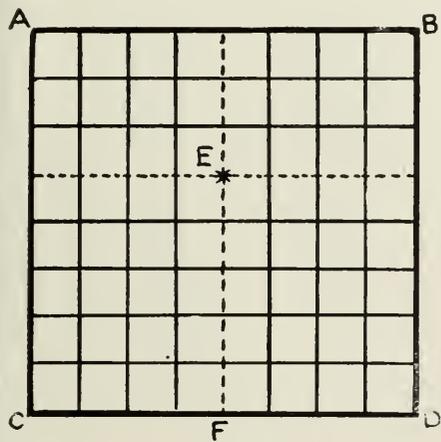


Fig 6.

ond of the three squares so grouped because of the fact that from this 64 square, Fig. 6, (Our familiar Chess Board) was developed almost all of the symbolisms of that which we term Masonry.

By experience it will be discovered that lines drawn from A and B to E will be of precisely the same length as the distance from E to F which is the vertical axis of the triangle E-C-D. The relation of this to the circle

squaring problem is that A-E, B-E, and F-E, are the radii of a circle of almost equal perimeter to the whole square.

Still more interesting, in the square taken as the base and the triangle E-C-D as the vertical section thereof, we have the precise geometrical proportions of the great Pyramid of Gizeh. It was long suspected that the Prophet Isaiah referred to this famous monument in saying (Isaiah XIX, 19-20)

"And in that day there shall be an Altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord (J-H-V-H) and it shall be for a sign and for a witness to the Lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt.

but the presumption is made a positive certainty when we contemplate the fact that the famous *Tau* of the Egyptians and Israelites is the foregoing base line and vertical axis in the proportions of 16

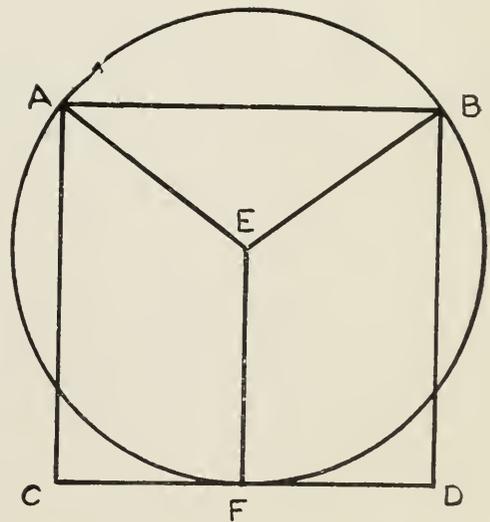
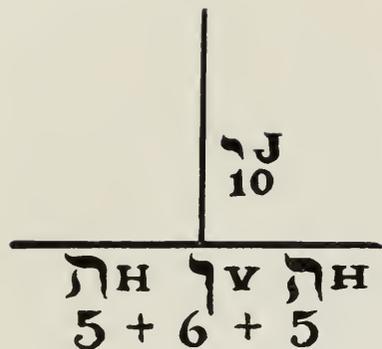


Fig 7.



The name of God expressed geometrically.

and 10, spelling the great and sacred name of the Almighty, geometrically. This fully explains the use of this *Tau* figure traced upon the door posts of the faithful in the blood of the sacrificed Lamb, a symbolism which was entirely related to the whole general proposition. This wonderful triangle was fitly consecrated to Jehovah, the God "Without Beginning and Without End" because with its two sides opened out as a new base with the old base as a vertical axis, one of its sides as a base and half the old base as a vertical axis or with its vertical axis as a new base with half one of its sides as a new vertical axis, the same figure is reproduced over and over again on increasing or diminishing scale and that to infinity, always employing the same factors redistributed according to dimensions.

The Royal Descent of the Masonic Apron

The writer was first moved to make a special investigation of the properties of the Masonic Apron upon the representations of Dr. John A. Weisse, M. D., the interesting author of the monograph published at the time of the erection of the Obelisk of Thothmes III, now in Central Park, New York, and entitled "*The Obelisk and Freemasonry.*"

This book being in most Masonic libraries may be readily referred to. Dr. Weisse's work constitutes still another of the extremely near approaches to truth which the writer is constantly encountering, where, for want of the Key to the whole general system, no satisfactory explanation is possible.

In calling attention to the elaborate ceremonial Apron worn by Egyptian Monarchs, as Chief Hierophants of the Sun-god *Amun-Ra*, Fig. 9, which he produces in colors from the Atlas of the celebrated explorer, Belzoni, Dr. Weisse says:—

"Wisdom was never more exemplified than when it adopted the Pyramidical and Triangular Form of the Sublime Architecture of the Heavens, machined on the firm basis of eternal stability.

"The united Brethren universally will adopt, I hope, the original form of Masonic Aprons and establish a jubilee to commemorate the restoration of that event by casting into the flames the present Aprons of the unmeaning form of St. Crispin." (Patron Saint of Cobblers and Shoemakers).

"The plate represents Pharaoh **Ousirei** (? **Osirtesen**) King of Egypt in Masonic communication with one of that order, whose head is covered with a mask representing the head of the Ibis (the god Thoth, Celestial Scribe or "Recording Angel").

The King is invested with the triangular Masonic Apron, holding in his right hand the grand Masonic emblem and last grade obtained (The **Ankh** Cross or "Key of Eternal Life").

The second drawing Fig. 9 represents the triangular Masonic Apron united with the Apron of Serpents."



Fig. 8
The god Thoth receiving the word of life from a Pharaoh.
From Belzoni.

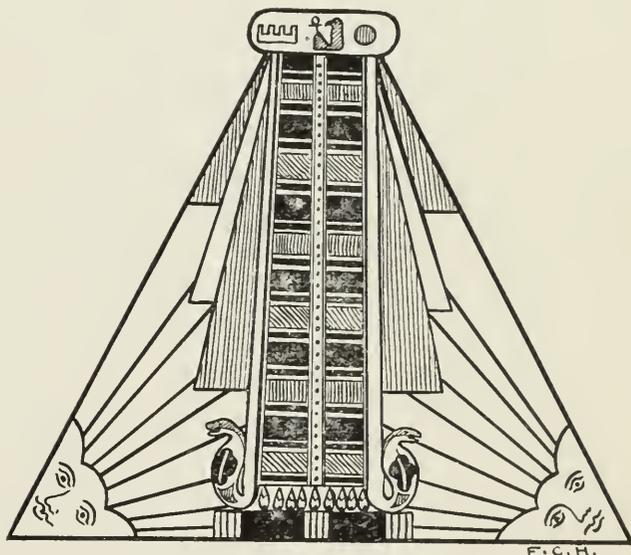


Fig. 9
Apron of the Egyptian Pharaohs as Grand Masters of the Mysteries. From Belzoni.

We may here leave to readers of the original work, Dr. Weisse's assertion at this point that "Masonic signs and symbols originated in the first separation which took place in the family of Adam." He is not the first to have jumped at the hasty conclusion that the Masonic Apron represented that of fig leaves invented in the Garden of Eden.

It shall now be our humble endeavor to rescue "the distinguished badge of a Master Mason" from the obloquy of comparison with the Shoemaker's humble but indispensable lap covering, though honest labor may even dignify the latter.

Examination of any of the old Egyptian monuments or pictures of such will reveal the fact that Aprons are the badges

or distinguishing marks of all the Gods, Kings, Hierophants and Priests engaged in the rites of public worship. Only, because of the fact that all of the Egyptian figures are exhibited in profile, we never have such a front view as would make this at once apparent.

The Apron of the ordinary celebrant seems to be a triangle of white cloth depending from the waist in front and having its corners pinned to the tunic at each side.

In the case of the Grand Masters, however, the Apron is most conspicuous because of the elaborate design upon it.

This design is evidently a representation of the rising and setting Sun, as to the lower corners and of the Sun at Meridian, the Monarch's name *cartouche*, at the apex. Esoteric ceremonial and exoteric superstition, among this people, conceded that the Monarch was the embodiment of the Solar deity.

The rays of the Suns are so directed as to describe a regular progression of geometrical angles, such as may be observed on a gnomon.

Over this Sun Apron, seems to be worn by the highest authorities another, called because of its peculiar decorative features, the Serpent Apron.

The "modern" Masonic Apron, Brethren, just as we wear it in Lodge and Chapter, today, has descended to us intact in every particular from the immensely ancient Jehovah worshippers, who builded the Pyramids both of Egypt and the American Continent.

This is not a matter for assertion alone, but one calling for serious and scientific proof, such as can be accepted even by the brother who credits absolutely nothing on faith or hearsay.

To convey this proof we must digress for a moment to the subject of Pyramid forms.

We have already shown you the triangle which constitutes the vertical axis of the great Pyramid of Gizeh, erected by the Hykos or Semitic Shepherd King, *Chufu*, called by the Greeks *Cheops*, about the year B. C. 2150 to commemorate, among other things, the great Solar Eclipse of the year in which it was begun.

All Pyramids involve the presence of two distinct triangles. One which constitutes the vertical section of such a monument and the other (four in number) which constitute its sloping sides. The geometrical law in this respect will be to the effect that the side of the vertical section will be the vertical axis of

the lateral side. The bases being the same. Let us illustrate it

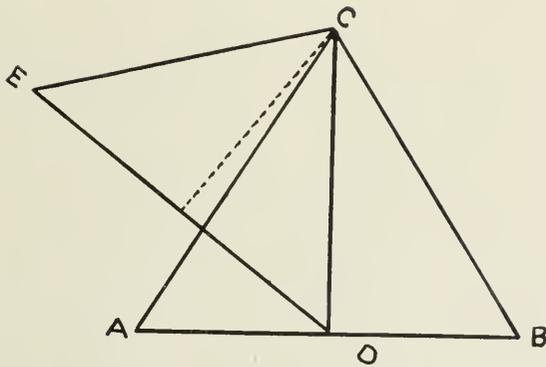


Fig. 10.

this wise. If you will cut four pieces like *c-a-b* of paper, you will find that they form a perfect Pyramid, shaped like *c-e-d*, on a square base. If on the other hand we perform the same operation on a reducing instead of an increasing scale the vertical axis of *c-e-d* will become the side of a triangle, *f-c-h*, which will be equal to two

Pythagorean triangles placed back to back. This latter triangle with its base of sixteen parts and lateral sides of ten *each*, seems to have been the emblem of the Sun-god (36) and certainly became the essential feature of the Masonic Apron, universally.

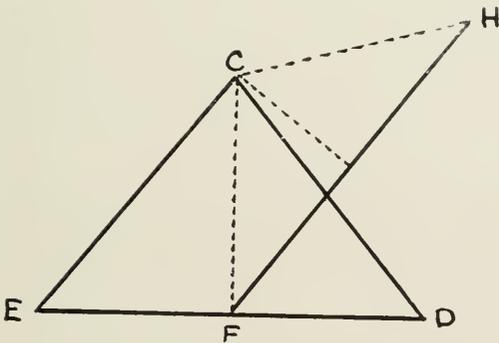


Fig. 11

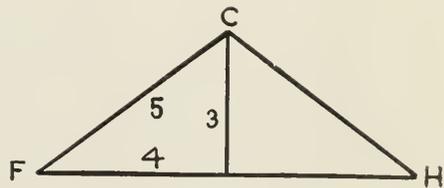


Fig. 12.

A circumstance which has, singularly enough, escaped the attention of Egyptologists, who usually unite in abusing the "second" and "third" Pyramids as bastard and meaningless imitations of the great "first", is that the "second" Pyramid that of Mycerinus, or *Men-Kau-Ra*, has for its vertical section two 3-4-5 triangles, as in Fig. 13, while the "Third" that of Chephren or *Kaf-Ra* is built on the plan of the great original in lesser volume. All the Pyramids in either

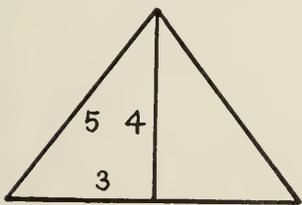


Fig. 13

Egypt or America must be studied on this system to yield their meanings.

The Belzoni Apron upon which Dr. Weisse dwells, is shown by the royal *Cartouche* at the apex, to be that of Pharoah Rame-

ses II, Builder of the great *Memnonium* at Abydos and oppressor of the Israelites, whose reign is placed at approximately B. C. 1270.

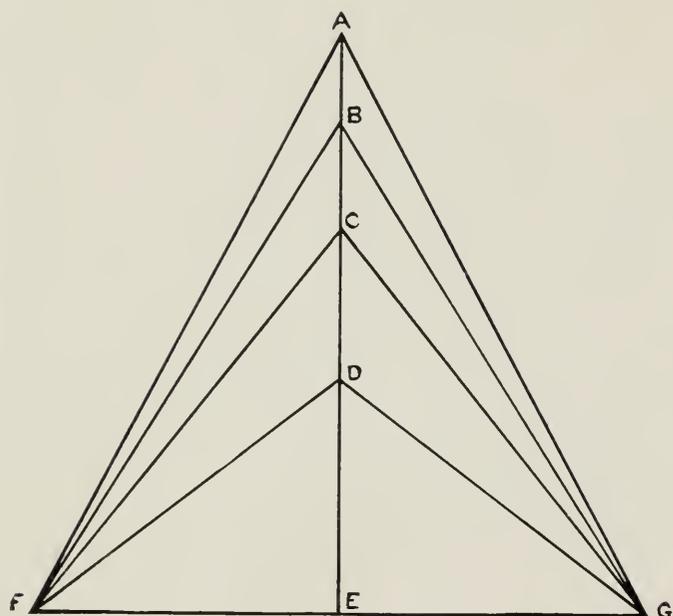


Fig. 14. Key to the Pyramids and Masonic Aprons of the world.

The secret of this Apron resides entirely in its proportions, which are those of a triangle having an apex of 54° and two bottom angles of 63° each. Fig. 14. These two numbers were both eminently sacred Masonic numbers, belonging to the NINE or "Three times Three" series. Now by following the law of Pyramidal progression which we have exhibited we will discover that all of our Pyramid proportions are herein concealed, as the following Key will quickly show.

The use of the Compasses will demonstrate the following geometrical verities.

$$\begin{array}{ll} b-g=a-e & d-e-g=3-4-5 \\ c-g=b-e & c-f-g=\text{vertical section of} \\ d-g=c-e & b-f-g=\text{lateral side of} \end{array} \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{ll} b-g=a-e & d-e-g=3-4-5 \\ c-g=b-e & c-f-g=\text{vertical section of} \\ d-g=c-e & b-f-g=\text{lateral side of} \end{array}} \right\} \text{The Great Pyramid.}$$

If we will now place the triangles $c-f-g$ and $d-f-g$ point to point we will find that they constitute a perfect square, the significance of which will be perfectly apparent.

It is this square with the triangle $d-f-g$ forming the flap which makes our modern Masonic Apron, Fig. 15. The reason why this design is worn as an Apron may be confidently assumed to have the ancient Phallic significance of the Hebrew letter *Jod*, which represents both the number "10" and the vertical line of the inverted *Tau*.

If any further corroboration were required than the facts as we give them, we may cite the fact that the tombs of Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia abound in stone, porcelain, glass and pottery Amulets having no other significance than to display the sacred triangles. The proof will be found in measur-

ing their angles or counting the dots or indentations which supply the relative proportions.

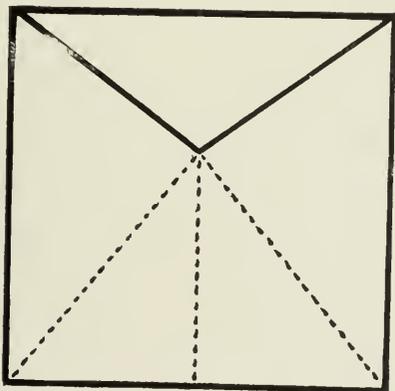


Fig. 15. "More Ancient than the Golden Fleece."

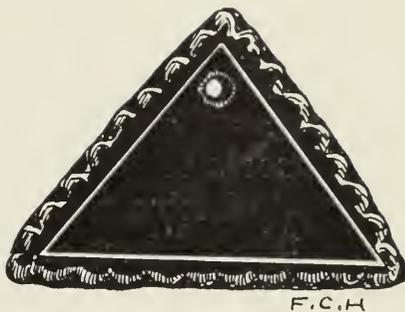


Fig. 16. Black stone Amulet from tomb of ancient Tyrian.

A still greater importance attaches itself to this Apron of Rameses II, Fig. 9, with reference to the parti-colored strip extending down the centre from the Solar disc bearing that monarch's *cartouche*, at the top to the twin Serpents representing the "Dual Principle" at the bottom.

It will be observed that this strip is composed of alternate bars of Red, Black, Green, Black, etc., to the extent of Twelve. Red is the Sun color and so represents Male or "Spirit," Green, the Earth color, representing *Female* or "Matter" and Black, the color born of the union of Red and Green, standing for the progeniture of both. Exoterically, *Osiris, Isis, Horus*.

Now if we will assimilate the Red to "J", the Green to "V" and the Black to "H", we will find that with three Red strips, three Green and Six black we have the equivalent of three times J-H-V-H.

This is the precise formula which the early Hebrews employed to represent the Sacred Egyptian triangle of 3-4-5. They redistributed the letters to read HHH-HVVH-VIHH, or "He that was, He that is and He that is to Come," paraphrasing the famous declaration of *Horus*, in the *Book of the Dead*, "I am yesterday, today, and to-morrow."



Fig. 17.

Fig. 17. "I am yesterday, today, and to-morrow."

The Masonic Apron in Ancient America.

Nothing is more certain than that Masonic knowledge extended over the whole of the habitable American Continent from the Great Lakes to the Andes, especially throughout the more settled regions of so-called Central-America.

The writer is less disposed to credit the one time existence of a separate Atlantean continent, which was the original seat of civilization, than a one time great extension of the American shores towards the North of Africa, so that intercourse between the American people and the Libyans was facilitated through a race which perhaps perished in the cataclysm which has left the scattered isles of the Carribean above water.

Nothing is more certain but that the Museums of this country are laden with unidentified relics of the ancient geometrical science which lay at the base of the cult of JEHOVAH, the Great Architect.

What is taken for mere ornament is really mathematical formula. Many of the Ancient American cliff pictures collected by the Smithsonian Institute expeditions are of a Masonic nature and bear upon the very subject we are discussing.

Jehovah worship was undoubtedly the worship of the ancient American races.

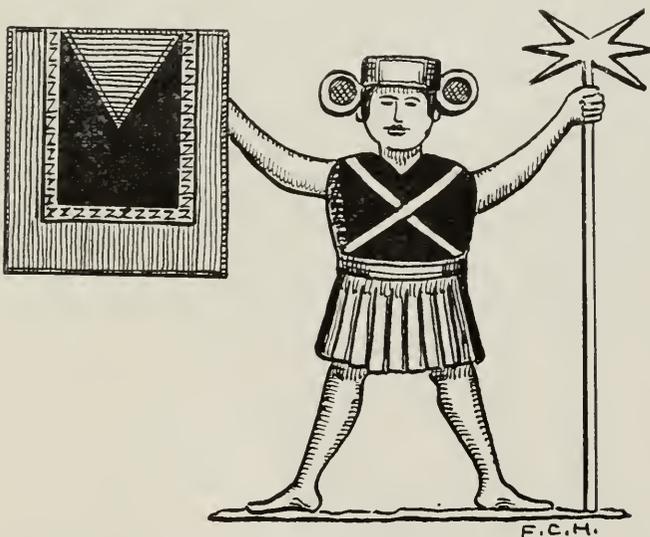


Fig. 18. Ancient Peruvian painting on pottery vase. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., N. Y.

The Peruvian collection of the American Museum of Natural History in New York is particularly rich in Masonic evidences, the so-called "Prayer sticks," borne by the Peruvian Mummies, relating to the Squared Circle, and there being hundreds of repetitions of palpable Pyramid formulae especially in the decorative scheme

of the ancient ceremonial cloaks or *Ponchos*, which are found numerous and intact, in nearly all their original freshness in the tombs of the prehistoric peoples who once inhabited the Andean regions. The general pattern of these garments

is shown by our sketch of a painting to be found in a piece of ancient Peruvian pottery in the American Museum of Natural History. The picture evidently represents a "Medicine Man" or some other priestly dignitary, armed with a ceremonial staff tipped with a six rayed star, the symbol of the Sun-god which is found so often on the breasts of the stone images of those peoples. The meaning of this *Poncho* design is aptly conveyed by the accompanying diagram which shows the mutual relations of the second and third squares of the "Forty-Seventh problem" to the circle which is that of equal Perimeter to the smaller of the two.

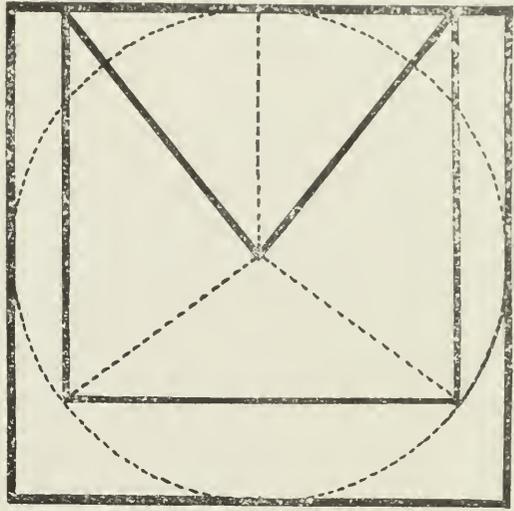


Fig. 19. Key to the Peruvian Poncho design.

One finds in the Peruvian collection of this famous Museum, many evidences of the ancient geometrical-mathematical Sun cult of the *Incas* but none more striking than the grotesque bird figures decorating cloth probably belonging to ceremonial dress in which the characteristic Pyramid forms of Egypt are displayed as the tails of the birds, with their base dimensions given in tabs while, their correct vertical *axes* are supplied in points on the bird's crests.



Fig. 20. The Geometrical Birds of the ancient Peruvians. American Museum of Natural History, New York. See also, Fig. 4.

The most wonderful circumstance however resides in the fact that the wonderful stone *colossi*, statues of the Sun-god of the ancient American race of the Mayas * which litter the jungle

* See Frontispiece.

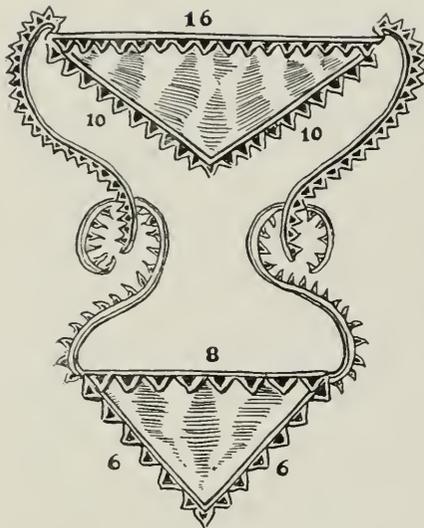


Fig. 21. Aprons of the ancient Mayas from statues in Yucatan.

forests of Yucatan on the sites of ruined cities, are all *clothed* as *Master Masons* in that wonderful Apron of which we have been tracing the significance, or at least an Apron consisting of the flap d-f-g on our Key diagram, so geometrically true and often correctly numbered by nicks or tabs along the edges, so truly and correctly that there cannot be the slightest shadow of a doubt entertained as to what is meant. Where there are variations, the triangle is one which is intimately connected with the system explained. That it was born of intimate knowledge of the Square and Compasses is attested by not only these but countless attendant details.

Dr. Augustus Le Plongeon, the great explorer of Yucatan the land of the ancient *Mayas*, who wrote many books in support of his claims of connection between that people and the ancient Egyptians, says of the old Maya race:—

“That they were acquainted with exact sciences, there can be no doubt. They were mathematicians, astronomers, architects, navigators, geographers, etc. As well as the art they possessed the science of navigation, since they knew how to calculate longitudes and latitudes, as proved by the construction of the gnomon found by me at Mayapan.

They were therefore familiar with plane and spherical trigonometry. They had computed the size of the earth, estimated the distance from pole to pole, calculated the length of the meridian. In the construction of their sacred buildings, they invariably embodied their cosmogonic and religious conceptions, particularly in their Pyramids. (*Teocalli* or Step Pyramids, notably at *Chichen-Itza*)

The several parts of these edifices were so arranged and proportioned as to agree with the ratio of the diameter to the circumference. $\text{Pi} = 3.1415$.”

If the wonderful lesson of the Apron could only be taken properly to heart by every serious minded Brother it would be but a short step from the puerilities with which this paper opens to the inception of a grand and dignified return to the original purpose of Masonry, erected, as we now see, thousands of years prior to any civilization of which we have any present record, to the same ever living God, whom we worship and reverence as

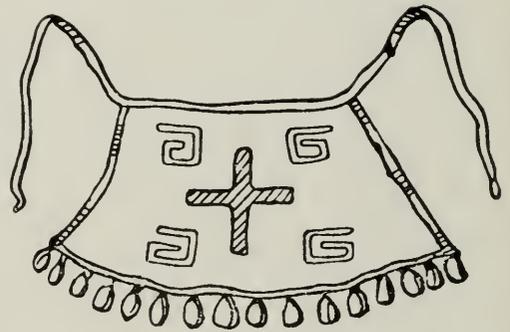


Fig. 22. Ceremonial Apron of ancient people of Nicaragua with Cross of the “Tetrax” and sixteen pendants. From “The Cross of the Magi”.

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