

Statutes for a Society of Unknown Philosophers

Treatises of Cosmopolite, Newly discovered
Having suggested the idea of a Philosophical Society, the author explains in several letters, the theory and practice of the Hermetic truths.

Idea for a new Philosophical Society

Preface

Having sailed around the unknown seas of the Ancient Philosophy for a very long time, we have finally arrived, through the mercy of our Lord, at a port. But since it is not just through destiny that we have avoided the dangers of such a sailing, we feel that we can best show the Lord our gratitude by dedicating to Him the infinite treasure which he has bestowed upon our hands, and to use it to His glory and for the service of others. Because if one is bestowed with the best things possible on Earth, where else should one's goal be directed, other than to heaven? For these are the sentiments which reason and our desire for salvation inspire in us. Knowledge on its own will inspire us just as much as these sentiments, but when we have neither of these motives, charity on its own will suffice. We are currently living in extremely bad times, when the whole Christian world is lamenting. It would therefore be a crime to hide in secret such a gift received from heaven; such a gift which could do so much to help the poor and miserable of whom there are so many in the world.

Inspired by these noble desires, and rather than restricting ourselves to just one part of the earth, we should immediately resolve to travel around the whole world. This is because all people, but especially Christians, can make use of this divine bounty which we have been given. This gift can be used by everyone of us to repair damaged churches and re-establish holy places by building sound foundations.

Such initially, were our ideals, but alas it soon became clear that we would be unable to carry them out, without finding thousands of contradictions [sans y trouver mille contradictions], the malice of men, even though it is so far away, has caused my life to be in danger on more than one occasion; this is not to mention the dangers which threaten our Republic, if I extend my thoughts further.

I have therefore been compelled to follow other ideas and to search for another means of achieving our goal. After some deliberation I have come to a clear solution: we should establish among ourselves a certain Philosophical Society in which the true identity of members will be concealed, and which will become generally well-known and will thus spread to all kingdoms in a short space of time. All Associate members will thus be wise and sensible propagators of the precious treasures of the Hermetic Science, regardless of their nationality.

It is with this view in mind that I prayed for enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, in order that I may write the Statutes and Rules of this new Cabale. These rules will govern the manner of conduct of the members of this society. Next, I have chosen people of whom I approve, to be founder members. And finally, for those who would hope to be able to join our ranks one day, I have written several treatises on this science. I have included in these works those ideas which my experience has taught me to be useful, so that even those people who are in the most distant lands will be able to gain some benefits from them. The result will be, that if they think a little, I hope that they will easily recognise the essential points and basis of our Philosophical secret. For this is the subject that demands some attention. It is this material which, I hope, the Patrons of the society will pass on to those whom they meet. As for the rest of the theory and practice, members will have to acquire this through studying, reading and even through experiments - they will then arrive easily at their goals.

These goals will be reached easily, unless God allows the veil of obscurity to spread over them. For God alone understands the depths of our hearts, knows our intentions, our malice, and to where our thoughts aspire. Only He can remove a certain obscurity in the spirit of these people. This obscurity acts as a veil and hinders them from observing those things which are clearer than broad daylight. Thus it hides from them the explanations of natural phenomena [*leur cachant par la ce gue peuvent les causes naturelles*], or at any rate, it prevents them from knowing for a while, until such a time when they have become enlightened.

Now on these treatises which I have written - I have allowed several of them to be printed. As for the others, which explain the same basic principles in some detail, I have recommended that these should not be made available to the public, or if some have appeared, I have immediately stopped them, in the belief that it would be more convenient and more useful to have them published at another time.

However, in order that such a delay should not cause the slightest prejudice against our Society which is being formed, I have considered it appropriate to communicate by letters to our Elders, the

best parts of these works. These are written in a simple and clear style. I have also requested that they should be made immediately available to our members, in accordance with the statutes and regulations which follow.

Statutes of the Unknown Philosophers

Chapter One The organisation of the Society

Article I — The Nationality of Members

This society must not be limited by any Country, Nation, Kingdom or Province i.e. any particular place. It should spread to all inhabited lands and especially those where Jesus Christ is worshipped, or where His Law presides, or where virtue is known or where reason is adhered to. For a universal good cannot be enclosed into a small reserved space, it must be carried by all to where it can help others.

Article II — How the Society should be subdivided

For fear however, that there will be confusion from such a vast array of countries, we have found it a good idea to divide the whole Society into companies, the companies into sections, and the sections into assemblies. These bodies should be distributed in such a way that each one is based at a fixed place and country. For example, each company should be enclosed in an imperium [Empire] which there should only be one president; each section should only be bounded by a Province, and the assembly should only stretch as far as a county of any particular country. Thus if someone from an unstable country [qui ne soit pas d'un pais stable] wishes to join the society, he will be obliged to choose such a place to live in, that he will not be a member of two companies, sections or assemblies at any particular time.

Article III — The number of Members

As regards the number of members in each company, section or assembly, it is neither easy nor useful to suggest any particular number. The reason for this will shortly become apparent. Providence will see to this because the glory and service of God is the ultimate and only name of this Institution. All that one can say in general is that members must exercise prudence with those whom they admit. This will be done according to the time, place and requirements of their Body, and thus they will admit fewer or more people. They

should remember however, that the veritable philosophy cannot be practised by a multitude of people - and thus we can be sure that the number of members will remain small. The most senior member or the president of each company will keep a register of all members. This will contain their names and countries. Their membership numbers will also be kept, for reasons which we shall discuss next.

Chapter 2

Conditions for membership

Article I — The social status and religion of members

It is not at all necessary that those who are accepted into this society should be members of any one particular religion or profession, or that they should all be of equal social status. What is required of them however, is that they should all worship Jesus Christ, that they should all love virtue and have the proper frame of mind for the Philosophy. Those members of mediocre background will thus be able to succeed in achieving the sole aim, which is to help all poor Christians and to offer comfort to all those afflicted with poverty, regardless of their status or whereabouts. Thus they will be able to do this, as well as those people from a higher social background. It would be a very sad state in Christendom, if people of a modest background, who are of high moral calibre, were banished from our society, in favour of those from the upper classes.

There is no reason to believe that those who are not members of the Roman Church abuse the treasures given to them by the philosophy, to make war with Catholics or to overthrow the Holy Apostolic See. For it is not possible that God will allow them to successfully complete the Great Work, of which our Philosophy discovers the principles, unless they purge their hearts of bad intentions even before they begin. They will never have their eyes opened to the mysteries of the Philosopher's Stone, if they do not cease to be blind to the mysteries of faith. If however, someone joins under the false pretences of being both keen and religious, and is subsequently discovered to be against Christianity, and especially against Roman Catholicism, he will be removed from the Society, even though he may already be a member.

Article II — Exclusion of People who have taken Holy Orders

Maybe it does not make any difference, as I am about to say, from what background members originate; but believe however, that clerics should never be accepted, nor anyone who has taken monastic vows, and especially members of orders of Mendicant friars, if this does not conflict strongly with the wishes of other members of the Society. For the same laws apply to both slaves and all people who

consecrate their lives to the service of God. The Philosophy demands people with free minds who are free to do as they wish; people who can work when they wish, and who can use their time freely on the Philosophy and on their new discoveries, without interfering in anyone's affairs.

Article III — Sovereigns only exceptionally to be admitted

Now among free people, the least suitable for this kind of occupation are kings, princes and other sovereigns. One can include in this group people who are of a higher social status than the average person but who have ended up by loss of fortune, as ordinary commoners. For none of these groups of people are really suited to our Society, unless certain distinct virtues, which shine throughout their entire conduct, exclude them from this group. The reason for this is that ambition would not be the driving force of these kind of people; for wherever this unfortunate situation is found, people no longer act by the motivations of piety and Christian charity.

One also has to add to this list of exclusions the poor and the destitute of all sorts; on the grounds that they would not be in a position to prepare the most sought after secret of Nature, even if they possessed the work which would instruct them in its preparation.

Article IV — Behaviour befitting members

Anybody from any social or other background must satisfy the following conditions to show that he has genuine good intentions for entry into the Society. He has to:

- a) be a practising Christian with strong convictions
- b) have strong faith
- c) have strong hope
- d) be generous
- e) have a good business sense [un homme de bon commerce]
- f) be honest in conversations
- g) persevere with determination regardless of results
- h) not to have any bad intentions
- i) ensure that any people who assist him in helping others do not come to any harm themselves

Above all, one should guard against any unhealthy connections with wine and women. Did not Harpocrates guard his freedom among goblets? And Hermes - was he wise, when surrounded by women? But what a mess! To achieve the reward of the highest virtues one must be prepared to sacrifice the pleasures of life.

Article V — Why these people should have a natural curiosity

It is not sufficient for our proselytes to have irreproachable manners: they must also have a genuine desire to penetrate the secrets of chemistry and a curiosity which stems from the bottom of the soul, and not to accept the false recipes of the charlatans, but the wonderful operations of the Hermetic Science. They must exercise care that they do not unintentionally start to scorn the Art, whose excellence cannot be appreciated all at once. This, after all, must not be understood in such a manner, that as soon as a man is curious, in the same way that the majority of alchemists are, he is immediately deemed to have that which is necessary to be admitted among us. For curiosity will never be more alive in those who, having been forewarned of false principles, devote themselves to the operations of a sophisticated chemistry. [*car jamais la curiosite ne fut plus vive que dans ceux qui ayant ete prevenus de faux principes, donnent dans les Operations d'une Chymie Sophistique;*] Besides, we should never allow the incapable and the indignant to enter the sanctuary of our truths.

Article VI — Secrecy - also an essential condition

To conclude this list of desirable qualities, one must include a perfect secrecy - which Harpocrates was able to keep so effectively. For if a man does not know how to keep his mouth shut and remain silent when the situation demands it, he will never have the characteristics of a true and perfect philosopher.

Chapter 3

Procedure for admitting new members to the Society

Article I — How to become a patron

Whoever becomes admitted to our Society can in turn accept new members, of whom he becomes the Patron. It is up to him to make known the rules of the Society to the new member, and that this member does nothing without informing his Patron and obtaining his consent.

Article II — How to gain members

Thus if someone, who is drawn by the reputation of the Society, wishes to become a member of it, he should befriend a person who he believes to be already a member. The member will begin to observe closely the prospective candidate's behaviour and his general attitude, and will keep him "in suspense" for some time without making any promises, until he is sure that the prospective candidate has shown sufficient proof of his ability and intentions. The prospective candidate must be watched closely unless his reputation

is so well established, that there is no reason to doubt his virtue and other qualities.

In this case, the member will propose membership to the person to whom he would become the Patron. He will explain to the new member frankly and without any disguises and favours, his good and bad points. At the same time, he will naturally keep his own person, family and proper name secret in case the proposed member does not accept the invitation to join. Even if he does not give an immediate reply, he must be told not to mention under any circumstances the fact that he was offered membership of the Society.

For it is one of the most important features of this Society, that not only are all of its members anonymous to strangers, but they are anonymous even among themselves; hence the name: "*Society of Unknown Philosophers*". The result will be that true Philosophers will thus be more easily protected from false accusations, misunderstandings etc., which have been customarily used against them. This would apply particularly to those who had made the Stone, and might then be misled from their true friends by demonic influences. The Society would thus be in danger of collapsing within a short period of time. If, on the other hand, a certain member is discovered to be dishonest or a traitor to the Society, then as a result of the anonymity of members, his exposure will not endanger or damage their reputation and they will not be involved in his misfortunes and be able to continue their work and experiments without fear. If, after this warning, anyone is stupid enough to make known his affiliations, he himself will suffer the unpleasant consequences.

Article III — The obligations of Patrons

The matter of the acceptance of a new member into the Society is not to be treated lightly. The new Patron must first interview the proposed member and discuss with him in detail the implications of his proposed membership. If there is any reason whatsoever to doubt the intentions of the new applicant, then the Patron is obliged to make no promises to him. He must then submit and discuss his proposal at a meeting of the committee, and to act on their instructions.

Article IV — The prerogatives of the General Secretaries

The General Secretary, or the most senior member of a given company, section or assembly is exempt from the aforementioned rules, in addition to many others of a similar nature. If however, the number of members drops, then it will be necessary to amalgamate the various assemblies into one section. The General Secretary of an assembly will then naturally lose his privilege; this will be left as a

matter for his own conscience. After the closing of such an assembly, no-one may succeed a General Secretary until such a time when growing numbers of members deem it necessary to reform more assemblies.

Article V — The Reception

When a new member has been accepted into the Society according to the principles already given, he must be received into the Society in the manner which I shall describe. If the newly accepted person is religious, then a Mass should be celebrated, with the intention of seeking guidance for him, from the Holy Spirit. If the circumstances are not favourable for such a mode of reception, then the person who is receiving the new member should organise a suitable ceremony.

Next, the person who is received must promise to keep secret at all costs the aforementioned statutes and above all any work which he undertakes. This must be done regardless of what may happen to him, whether it be good or bad.

Furthermore, he will promise to be loyal to the Society, and to treat as his own brothers any members of the Society whom he may meet. If he should ever come into possession of the "Stone", he will even promise by oath if his Patron requires him, to (as in all the other laws of the Reception, of which he must be aware, both the quality and the merit of those that are received) use the Stone only for those purposes which are recommended by the Company.

After that, the person who has acted as Patron in receiving the promises, himself repeats the promises in the name of the Society and all the members; he reassures the new member of their friendship, fidelity and protection, and vows that all the members will respect the statutes of the Society in the same favourable manner, if he does so. After these promises have been made, he whispers to him in the language of the wise men, the name of the *Magnesia*, or the true and unique material, of which the Philosopher's Stone is composed.

It would however be considered wise to have given him previously some sort of vague description of this substance, so that he may subsequently try to skilfully decipher it himself. If he has difficulties in solving the mystery ultimately, this information should at least be sufficient to give him some help in solving the problem himself.

Article VI — The Name which the new member must adopt

The new member will accept a cabalistic name. If at all possible, the name will be an anagrammatic form of his surname or the name of an Ancient Philosopher. He should make this name known to his

Patron, so that it may be inscribed without delay into the Register, or the Journal of the Society. This will be done by one of the Elders who will ensure that each President and each member of every section and assembly are aware of it.

Article VII — What the new member must give in written form to his Patron

In addition to that, if the Patron considers it necessary, he will demand, in order to bind the new member more closely, a handwritten acknowledgement of indebtedness which will be signed by him with his cabalistic name. He will have complete faith in the manner in which his affairs are handled, and in the oath which he has taken. The new member may likewise ask his Patron to give him a copy of the statutes, signed with his cabalistic name. This will serve as a proof for all members of the Society, that he is a member.

Article VIII — The Agreements which the Patron must receive from the new member

When he has the time, the new member will be permitted to copy out the statutes and the Table of signs and Cabalistic characters which are used in the Art, with his own interpretation. In case by chance he should meet someone from the Society, he and the other person will be able to mutually recognise one another, by use of the signs. Finally, he may also receive a list of Cabalistic names of members from his Patron. These names would naturally not be the real ones - for it would be assumed that the member knows the real ones.

As far as our other writings which the Patron might possess are concerned, the Patron is obliged to show these also to the new member either all at once, or a few at a time, as he sees fit. He must be careful to check however, that there are no false documents among those that he shows, or any other which are contrary to our doctrine. For a philosopher can disguise certain matters for a while, but he is never permitted to deceive him. The Patron will not be forced to make these sorts of communications, either faster or in larger numbers than he would wish. Furthermore, he does not have to send anything until he has tested the person who is to join and also shown that he obeys the statutes carefully.

Article IX — The obligations of a new member

There is nothing else left for the time being, except to encourage this new member to study with care our books or the works of other approved philosophers. He should do this either by himself or in the company of other members. He should be particularly keen to learn practical techniques, which will give weight to the theory.

He must take care not to be overcome by weariness during long hours of work, and he must not lose his patience and give up, when working on a particular experiment. He must understand that all other members are working for him and with him, just the same as he is working with them and for them. Without this work, he cannot hope to participate in their progress. For perfect science and peace are the fruits of hard work, in the same manner that glory is the prize of soldiers and Heaven is the goal of all good people. The vices of laziness and weakness are only the result of ignorance and errors.

Chapter 4

Statutes and rules for all members

Article I — Anniversary of the Reception

On every anniversary of his reception, every member who is a Roman Catholic should attend a thanksgiving Mass in order to receive further guidance from the Holy Spirit, which gives enlightenment in Science. All Christians should celebrate their anniversaries in a similar manner, in accordance with their religion. If however, someone should forget their anniversary celebration, they should not feel too guilty since this is only a recommendation, and not a precept.

Article II — Members must avoid discreditable conduct

Members must not get involved in dubious activities with metals, regardless of their nature. They must have nothing to do with charlatans or false recipe-mongers. For there can be no greater indignity than a Christian philosopher who is searching for truth and who wants to help others, and who gets involved in a deceitful act.

Article III — Working in Groups

Those members who as yet have no experience of dealing in operations involving fire, and who are thus ignorant of the art of distillation, are allowed to attempt these operations with mineral, vegetable and animal substances, since these processes are frequently necessary. Metals must never be alloyed however, and even more, alloys must never be used. This is because they are bad and must therefore be kept away from our members.

Article IV — It is possible to enlighten those who are on the wrong track

Occasionally it is possible to visit crude chemical laboratories, provided that the workers there are not of a bad reputation. Since it is people like these that eventually become members of the Society, they should be approached. If they are then seen to be in error, they

should be made aware of the fact, and subsequently instructed correctly according to our writings. All of this advice should be given with modesty, and in a charitable spirit, in order that the person does not waste any more time.

It is important however, not to say too much on such occasions: for it is enough to simply prevent the blind man from falling over the precipice and to put him on the correct track. One is under no obligation to guide him after that; indeed, this would positively be bad, especially if one then realises that the blind man lacks an enlightened spirit, and that he ignores virtue.

Article V — How to encourage people to join the Society

Consider someone, among those who are interested in chemistry, who is an honest person with a reputation, who respects wisdom and honesty and who is interested in the Hermetic science for curiosity's sake, and not for money. There will be no harm or danger in talking to him about the affairs of members of our Society, in order that if someone was called by heaven and destined for this work, this would be an opportunity for him to hit on the thought of joining us and fulfilling his destiny. In these discussions however, the fact that one is a member must not be mentioned, until the correct qualities have been recognised in this person, and the consent of the Patron has first been obtained. Otherwise there would be a risk of losing the title "Unknown Philosopher", which is against our statutes.

Chapter 5

On the types of activities which members should conduct among themselves

Article I — They should meet from time to time

Those members who know each other should meet occasionally when the opportunity presents itself, at fixed time and place. They should do this regardless of the company, section or assembly of which they are members. At these meetings members can discuss matters concerning the Society, books which they have read, and experiments and ideas which they have had. This is in order that they can learn from one another, as in any branch of science. These meetings must be conducted in a civilised and dignified manner. Wherever they take place e.g. in inns, the participants must conduct themselves to the highest standards, and leave an impeccable impression. Whilst these meetings will undoubtedly be very useful, they are nevertheless not obligatory.

Article II — Communication by means of letters

It is also possible to conduct business by means of letters between members. It must be borne in mind however, that members must never use their own names and must keep secret the most important points of the letter. Members should only sign these letters with their Cabalistic names, which should also be used at the beginning of the letters. The letter should be sent in an envelope which will bear the proper name of the addressee. If there is reason to suspect that the letters may be intercepted, one should use either numbers, a code, or allegorical words.

Communications by means of letters in this manner can thus be extended to the most distant members of the Society. The letters can serve as a means whereby Patrons can explain certain problems to their members, which arise as a result of their Philosophical research.

Article III — The way in which members should help and correct one another

If it is observed that a member does not obey strictly all the rules of the Society, and his conduct is not of the highest order as we would wish, he should be cautioned by the member who saw him, or, more importantly, by his Patron, in a delicate and friendly manner. The cautioned man must accept the criticism with grace and good spirit, and act upon it. If the cautioned man does not accept the good advice, he must not be immediately cut off from all business with other members, but he should be denounced in front of all the members of his own company, section or assembly, so that they are aware, and can discuss matters with him more cautiously, and not speak to him too openly. It is nevertheless prudent to act with some caution, since if the person in question suspects that he will be banned from the Society, he may do no harm to others, but he may also never have a chance of obtaining the Stone.

Chapter 6 **How to use the Stone**

Article I — How the person who has already made the Stone, should give advice on it

If one of our members is fortunate enough to bring the Great Work to a successful end, he should immediately give others advice on how to achieve the same result. This should not be done by writing in the sort of manner which is used here, but by an anonymous undated letter which is addressed to all General Secretaries of the companies. This is in order that those who are not able to *meet* the fortunate member, can be given some hope that they too may experience similar good fortune, and that they shall not get

disheartened by their efforts.

It will be up to the person who possesses the great treasure to choose among members, both known and unknown, those to whom he would disclose his technique. Otherwise, he would have to give the method to everyone, even those towards whom the Society has no longer any obligation whatsoever. If he were to do this, he would expose the Society to great dangers.

Article II — He must divulge his technique to those who ask for it

The fortunate member who discovers the technique for making the Stone is obliged without fail to reveal his findings to his Patron, provided that he is worthy of it. After that he should reveal them to all members, both known and unknown, who ask for it, provided that they will obey carefully the rules for keeping the secret. They will also be obliged to work hard and in secret, and never to misuse the grace which has been accorded to them. Failure to disclose one's findings in the manner described would be a criminal act which would be equivalent to disclosing the secret to traitors, cowards and others who want to make quick gains with a minimum of effort.

Article III — How to make the Stone

Now the means of communicating this secret is left entirely at the disposal of its possessor. He may wish to pass on a small quantity of the Powder which he has made, or explain clearly the procedure for making it, or he may simply choose to help those friends of his whom he believes may be able to make it. The last mentioned method would probably be the best, since each person would then be able to acknowledge the effort and results of the man who achieved the ultimate goal.

Those who are enlightened by similar means will not be able to use the Stone for the benefit of the other members, and not even their own Patron, unless they had earlier asked for permission from their instructor. For the secret itself is the least gratification which we owe him. And even the person who discovered it will not give it away easily but only to those who are very worthy of it.

Article IV the final one — The use to which the Stone must be put

Finally, we shall discuss the uses to which such a treasure may be put, in the manner which follows.

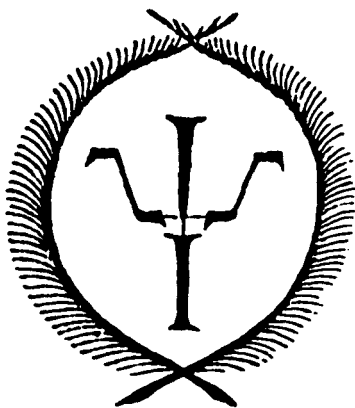
One third must be given to God. That is to say for the building of new churches, the repair of old churches, the building of church foundations and similar pious causes such as propagation of the faith, as long as this is done without spilling human blood. For the truth of the Christian faith is spread not by arms but by good deeds: Jesus Christ did not order his apostles to teach the Gospel with sword in

hand, but He only wanted them to act through the Holy Spirit, and that they should use the gift of languages to communicate with all people.

A second third should be distributed among the poor, oppressed people, and to the afflicted, regardless of how they may be afflicted.

The final third may remain at the disposal of the person who earned the money, in order that he may help his parents and friends - but only as much as they need, and no more. Thus, they should praise God, serve their country, and strive peacefully towards their own salvation. He must remember that it is very difficult to maintain moderation when there is a sudden change of fortune. Even when one gives money to the poor, this must be done sincerely and not just to impress others, otherwise one may lose oneself.

End of the Statutes and Rules of the Cabalistic Society
of Unknown Philosophers



An Abbreviated Summary
of all that is contained in these Letters,
locked up in the Seal or Hieroglyph
of the Society of Unknown Philosophers.

This symbol was not invented and chosen by chance: for the Trident is the Neptune of our parable, which contains in abbreviated form the entire theory and practice of the Hermetic Science.

Now in order that these particular mysteries can be understood, we shall explain them by means of two

Geometric models, i.e. by analysis or decomposition, and by synthesis or composition.

The unity of the whole figure is considered by analysis first. In the second place comes the binary, or dual nature, of the Cones, or right pyramid. Thirdly

is considered the triplicity of the voids or angles, and fourthly the quaternary nature of the Lines. Finally we discuss the extreme points, or the entire dimension of the whole figure, and the latitudes of the lines. For each of these features has its own Cabalistic significance.

By Synthesis, one considers firstly the change of the quaternary of the Lines into the triplicity of the voids or curves. Secondly, from the triplicity to the binary nature of the Cones. Thirdly, from binary to unity.

Let us now apply this dual approach. It is first necessary to know that both the one and the other represent, in enigmatic form, (i) the first generation or creation of corporeal beings, (ii) the production and multiplication of these same things by Nature, (iii) the products of the Art, which imitate both the one and the other.

Consider in the first instance, the unity of character of the whole misshapen figure, which is formless because its empty space remains unenclosed; it does not tend to a triangle, nor a quadrilateral nor a circle, nor towards any other perfect figure: this then I call the Catholic Water, or the first Being of Bodies, disguised in an inconspicuous way, so that it is indifferent from all perfect forms.

The duality or binary nature of the right Pyramids, or the concurrence of the cones or the vertices of the Pyramids, shows that they both have an elongated power, which is the active or passive form of the aforementioned first Being. Consider next the triplicity of the voids or curves, which are curved in three places and which face three opposite directions, i.e. the bottom of the interior of the trident faces upwards, its outside faces downwards, and the extreme points of the signs face the diagonal. This triple curve then, which is arranged in such a manner that the three areas of space are all adjacent to one another, signifies the Hyle, Archee, and Azoth [chaos, fire and the Philosopher's Mercury]. These three have the same ratio among themselves. The quaternary of these right lines of varying sizes, latitudes and positions, joined however at a single point, signifies the distinction between the four elements, and the distribution of the four primary qualities, both symbolic and dissymbolic. Now when considering the symbol conversely by synthesis, the triple conjunction of the Lines which are counterposed or next to one another, shows the composition of the three primary Principles: Salt, Sulphur and Mercury. This is achieved by the mixing and combination of the Elements, and by communicating the dissymbolic qualities.

From the symbolic point of view, we can see that the binary of the Cones and Pyramids which are joined at the base from different sides, represent the principal Principles of the second order i.e. Mercury and Sulphur, male and female, radical humidity and primitive heat. Finally the unity of all the character which results from the joined Cones, shows the Mercury of the Philosophers, the second Catholic Water, or our Universal Spirit. The extreme points of the Cones signify the masculine and feminine seeds of the same species. Where the lines touch at an angle, they represent the three families of inferior Mixtures, with the different forms which are made from the

aforementioned. That is how this Hieroglyph mysteriously explains what was made in the first Creation. It does not explain any less well what was next made by Nature. For the unity of the character signifies primary matter, (not make-believe and imagined as the false doctrines of Schools pretend), but corporeal and sensible, and already redressed in a certain primitive form, i.e. that of the simple Elements or principle Principles. The binary of the Cones represents the real and actual movements of the action and passion of all corporeal Beings, which cause perpetual corruption and generation.

The triplicity of the three kinds of curves or voids shows us the influence of the superior Beings, i.e. Stars and Heavenly Bodies, and the reflection of the inferior ones, with the joining and cooperation of what is in between. This occurs without any discontinuity from the centre of the Earth to the circumference of the entire corporeal Machine. The quaternary of the lines represents the flux of the Elements and the emission of their quintessence.

By synthesis once again, the triplicity of the voids and curves demonstrates the multiplication of the Principals of the first order: Salt, Sulphur and Mercury. The binary of the Cones represents the multiplication of the Principles of the second order, through the mixing of the preceding ones, in male and female.

Finally the curved unity of the Hieroglyph is the image of the multiplication of the Universal Spirit. The disjointed Lines, as well as the angles, signify multiplication - both from simple seeds, as well as species from one and the other Family of inferior Mixtures, by the triple digestion and coction of the Magistrty, and by the specification of the Universal Spirit.

This same symbol also represents the way in which the Art imitates Nature and the Creation; it explains these processes very well. For by analysis and synthesis, the unity of the character is the model of the second Catholic Water, which must be derived from the confused array of various things, through the gain of the Art. The binary of the Cones signifies substances of two different consistencies, which were taken from the clean body of the Universal Spirit; by solution and coagulation, and not by division of the mixture. The triplicity of the curves is the figure of contemporation, or equal mixing of mercurial, sulphureous and saline properties, which must give rise to the Universal Spirit. Finally, the quaternary of the lines denotes the harmony of the four Elements.

Thus, by reverse order or by synthesis, the triplicity of the curves describes the three principal parts of the Magistrty i.e. solution of the body, coagulation of the spirit, union of the body, the soul and the spirit, through digestion, ablation and fixation.

The binary of the joined Pyramids depicts the purifications of the Magistrty, by solution and coagulation, both in red and white.

Finally, this unity shows the virtue of the Elixir. The situation and the position of the extreme points signifies the projection of the Elixir onto a greater quantity of whatever Body it may be, and an actual transmutation of the imperfect forms into a very perfect one of a more noble species, or finally into a seminal substance.

The copy of an oath, found amongst the papers of a known adept,

after his death, which is administered upon the adopting of a Brother
into the Cabalistical Society.

[Contained in Mercury's Caducean Rod: or, The great and wonderful Office of the Universal Mercury, or God's Viceregent, Displayed. Wherein is Shewn His Nativity, Life, Death, Renovation and Exhaultation to an Immutable State; To which is added A General Epistle, discovering the Mysterious Fire of Pontanus. By Cleidophorus Mystagogus. The Second Edition. London. Printed by William Pearson, for Thomas Ballard, at the Rising Sun in Little Britain. 1704.]

For as much as the great God of Heaven and Earth, from whom we all proceed, in whom we live, and to whom we must return at our appointed time, hath adopted and chosen out from amongst mankind a certain number of Christians, for that eminent work of creating perfect things from imperfection, unto whom it is made manifest by the Spirit of Creation the universal first or fifth creating Quintessence, by which it is by many held to this day, the World was reduced from its rude and undigested Chaos, to a beautiful and pregnant matrix, fit for the receiving of seminal virtue, for producing all circular appearances, as daily doth appear by our most glorious production or manufacture; and for as much as it has been from all times thought fit to keep secret and undivulged, from the common knowledge of Mankind, the easy and facile way of our Great Work, both for the glory of God and common good and conveniency of government; and for as much as there are no obligations found like those which are freely entred into by a true sense of his great necessity, therefore I, R.S. do freely, for the reasons before mentioned, promise and swear by the great Jehovah, and by all things visible and invisible, and by the fifth produced Essence to me known, as I have evidently made appear to thee and the rest of my Brethren, I will not

reveal, acknowledge or declare till death me thereunto cause or move; or any way direct, or indirect, absolutely informing any person to the attaining of this secret and divine knowledge, unless I, the said R.S. do evidently know, that the said person hath found out things supernatural, which is daily experienced; wonderful and manifest effects me thereunto moving, or that the said party be so qualified by Nature, that three or four of the said brethren of the Society finding him fit for the said work, and give me their consent and permission, so as to do it. I also do promise that if God should, out of special mercy, reveal to me greater knowledge of the supernatural and hidden Mysteries that to some common Adepts, not to discover thereof to them by way of discourse, without I am directed by my Brethren so to do, or that I am assured he doth enjoy the same ever glorious Mercy and bright knowledge. I also promise by virtue of the foresaid oath, not to have to do with Kings or great men, and never to commune with any out of a covetous mind or design, but remain satisfied with that knowledge God hath showed me out of his wonderful providence to me; likewise I promise to make it my endeavour to find out one to enjoy this knowledge after my decease, unto whom I will, while I live, impart what I safely may, and at my death reveal the whole secret; also I promise in the presence of God, that I will never join with any upon a covetous pretence of advancing the Secret, unless it be with an Adeptist, known and approved of by my other brethren; neither deliver any true knowledge of our true Universal Magnet and Chalybs, and principally the Mercury and Gold, whether it be in an enigma or otherwise, as is designed or best thought fit for the preservation of this science; and if it should so happen that I should be racked and tortured to discover the same, and there is no hopes of avoiding the danger, by giving or delivering some other compound way, which hath been beforehand consulted of, and agreed upon, by the brethren; and if that will not do, then I promise to swallow my common pill without which I promise never to be, but constantly to have it about me, in the form of beads, or what shape shall be thought most fit, to which promise and covenant I bind my body and soul and my life, in the testimony of which I have set my hand with my own blood, and my seal with the true universal mixture, desiring to hold that Man excused, which observing my willful failing in any thing above mentioned, privately cuts me off from amongst men; and I desire of God, and of all my brethren to forgive him, and to esteem him with the highest veneration imaginable, knowing that his zeal for the glory of the Lord of Hosts hath been thereunto moved. Thus calling God, Heaven, Earth and all that is therein to bear testimony of this my free and voluntary condescension. Amen, Amen, Amen, and praise be to thee, O God, Holy, Holy, Holy, for ever, Amen, Amen, Amen.