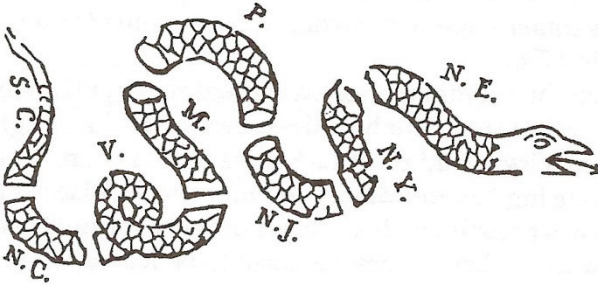


## PART I: The Faith of Our Founding Fathers



JOIN, or DIE.

The fractured rattlesnake pictured above is easily recognized by students of American history. It was designed by Benjamin Franklin at the time of the Albany Congress (the issue then at stake being joint action against the Indians rather than the British), and first appeared in Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* on May 9, 1754. As the Revolution got underway, the reptile proliferated everywhere in various popular forms, landing even on an early naval flag, and others. The rattlesnake was a Franklin favorite as a political emblem, and by 1774 it had evolved into a symbol of American unity, for its fragmented sections had then not only joined, but its tail had got in its mouth.

That the serpent came to represent a land originally discovered and colonized in the name of Christ the King by Christendom's Catholics - some of them canonized saints - proves the struggle on this continent has never been one of flesh and blood, but against the powers of darkness in the very highest places. Evidently, when the Immaculate Virgin of Guadalupe appeared to the Indian Juan Diego in the Spanish west in 1531 and promised to destroy the cult of the serpent there, the ancient dragon had nowhere to go but east, where he found more hospitable quarters among usurpers and heretics. Settling incognito in spots like his famous Green Dragon Tavern in Boston, he was free to get on with his Revolution with the help of Ben Franklin and his cronies, and did so.

He was incognito, of course, only to the ignorant, for by the time his tail reached his mouth he was quickly recognized by those

in the know as the age-old *Ouroboros*, Alchemy's symbol of eternal perfection. There is an alchemical figure in the Leyden Papyrus dating from 250 A.D., called "Cleopatra's Gold-Making" which features him prominently, circling the Greek motto "One is All," to which Americans may easily trace their well-known *E Pluribus Unum*, super-catchword of the man-made unity imposed on them in 1776.

From the beginning this old serpent was rightly named Lucifer, the "Light-Bearer," for he is the source of the "false light" which the Blessed Virgin told us at La Salette would soon "illumine the world," causing "extraordinary wonders every place because the true faith will be extinguished," Has not every spiritual master since St. Paul warned that the devil is most to be feared when he transforms himself into an "angel of light?" (2 *Cor. 11:14*). In what other guise can he hope to supplant Him who declared, "I am the light of the world!" (*John 8:12*).

The light the serpent offers can only be the light of his own tremendous natural knowledge, for he is forever cut off from the supernatural world of grace and the light of the Holy Ghost; but this knowledge which he retains in his fallen state is incomparably beyond what the most learned human scientist can acquire by his own efforts, and it can be spiritually transmitted - with God's permission. It comprises a cosmic understanding of natural forces and how they operate, together with detailed angelic grasp of the most hidden properties and constituents of all forms of matter and/or energy. The Book of Job tells how the devil has "gone round about the earth and walked through it" (*1:7*), and the Gospels confirm the power God allows him over nature.

Satanic natural knowledge is the primordial *Gnosis* the serpent offered Eve, when he persuaded her that by its light alone gods can be made here below without help from above. This makes Satan not only father of lies, but father of all so-called Illuminati or "enlightened ones" peddling freedom and salvation through science rather than through the Redeemer who tells us, "Without Me, you can do nothing!" (*John 15:5*). Knowing our weakness, God so far has restrained the serpent from putting his full intellectual arsenal into our hands, but at La Salette our Lady warned that because of man's sins, in 1864 "Lucifer, together with a great number of devils" would be loosed from hell and "little by little will abolish the faith." She prefaced this statement by saying

that the Pope must “beware of miracle workers, for the time has come for the most astonishing wonders to take place on the earth and in the air.”

It would be foolish to look for miracles in the Catholic sense. The wonders our Lady speaks of can only be marvels of the natural order. They will be scientific, in the deepest and truest meaning of the word. Didn't the great Bossuet say, “The very things God has revealed happen in ways we could never have foreseen?”

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It was to this end that Lucifer taught men Alchemy as part of witchcraft, as the Fathers of the Church declare, for despite all attempts to present these as contraries, there remains an intrinsic relation between science and occultism. Albert Pike, high priest of the Luciferians, knew whereof he spoke when he said, “At the bottom of magic ... was *science!*”

The occult liturgist Aleister Crowley was on solid ground when he:

*...resolved that my Ritual should celebrate the sublimity of the operation of natural forces without introducing disputable metaphysical theories. I would neither make nor imply any statement about nature which would not be endorsed by the most materialistic man of science. On the surface this may sound difficult; but in practice I found it perfectly simple to combine the most rigidly natural conceptions of phenomena with the most exalted and enthusiastic celebration of their sublimity.*

Thus may a “God of creation” - the prince of this world - be exalted without reference to the Creator of this same creation!

The psychic researcher Sir Oliver Lodge furthermore saw back in 1913 when addressing the British Association:

*I am one of those who think that the methods of science are not so limited in their scope as has been thought; that they can be applied much more widely, and that the psychic region can be studied and be brought under law, too.*

And Sax Rohmer comments:

*Certainly we are better equipped today, in some respects, for exploration, than were the ancients. Could we but establish links between the exact sciences thus far rendered exact - and those at present termed occult, great progress would shortly be recorded.*

He would no doubt be gratified at the number of such research projects now carried on with public funds. Hasn't the Church ever warned us that the devil uses the same natural means to confect false apparitions and other spiritism that science uses to produce its wonders on the material level? Although requiring divine permission, even diabolical possession is a merely natural phenomenon.

Schoolchildren are therefore rightly taught that modern sciences sprang from Alchemy and the occult arts, yet they are led to believe the association between them dissolved long ago, and that science inherited only a strange collection of flasks and retorts, or at most some primitive laboratory techniques. They are not told that the underlying philosophy remains unchanged. Nor are they told what the Great Work, the *Magnum Opus* secretly carried on by alchemists boiling and bubbling their brews and powders, actually was: the total regeneration of mankind by purely natural means, without reference to God or His supernatural economy. In negative terms it is the destruction of the Church. Yet, if modern science inherited anything at all from Alchemy, it is precisely the Great Work, no longer pursued secretly in dark corners, but now engaged in openly with unparalleled fervor by neo-alchemists all over the earth. As our Lady said, "Little by little they will abolish the faith," simply by shifting attention slowly but surely from the eternal things which are not seen to those temporal ones which are not only seen, but are now measured, manipulated and channeled into unheard of uses for pleasure and profit to the exclusion of God.

Like science today, Alchemy had its innocent side, taken seriously even by devout churchmen, intent primarily on a better understanding of God's creation or bettering the lot of their fellows. At least it was accepted as a fact of life by the Church. A treatise on the subject is attributed to Pope John XXII, who

nevertheless issued the Decretal *Spondent quas non exhibent* against its illegal practice. Rooted in philosophy, Alchemy's declared purpose was compatible with orthodoxy, for by seeking to perfect matter and its relation to the spiritual world, it could be directed to a right ordering of reality. Pope John's consistorial advocate considered Alchemy a true art, holding that alchemists do not sin as long as they attribute their power to God, an opinion approved by many later canonists.

This view was held as late as 1949 by Dr. F. Sherwood Taylor in *The Alchemists, Founders of Modern Chemistry*:

*Its philosophy aimed at the unification of all nature in a single scheme, the author of which was avowed to be God. The attitude of the alchemist was a religious one. His view was hierarchical: he ranged the substances of which the world was composed in grades of worthiness. The angels were worthier than man; man, than the animals; animals, than plants; plants, than the elements; the fifth element was worthier than the others; fire, than air; air, than water; water, than gold; gold, than the other metals. The changes in nature were thought of as exaltations or degradations of that scale.*

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Unfortunately Alchemy had its darker side, whose findings were never put into the hands of the mob like some products of its modern labs. From time immemorial it remained open to inspirations inconsistent with faith. Its very name *al-chemia* or "the black earth" was a synonym for the "Egyptian art," *Khem* being the ancient name for Egypt. It was, in other words, the Hermetic philosophy in practice. It could be called experimental gnosticism, the implementation under controlled conditions of the Secret Doctrine inherited from Cain and passed on to the Cathars and Albigensians of every age by the Hebrew kabbalists. Revealed only to carefully chosen adepts, it was habitually veiled in elaborate symbolism to escape the lawful authorities. By the 14th century many ecclesiastics were tried for practicing alchemy, often combined with charges of heresy. In 1323 all Dominicans not renouncing the art and burning their books within eight days were

declared excommunicated. Thereafter Alchemy had a bad name, but its progress was not checked.

The “*Khem*” of Alchemy carried overtones of the Greek word *Xumeia*, which referred to the casting of metals. This fitted the popular conception of an alchemist as some harmless old wizard who spent his days trying to make gold from the hypothetical “philosopher’s stone,” or longing to recapture his lost youth by concocting the “elixir of life.” Such illusions were encouraged by the craft, inasmuch as they provided ready pretexts for cozening countless Christian monarchs and nobility into subsidizing research. The Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf of Hapsburg supported whole stables of alchemists and dabbled himself, abetted by his unsavory Jesuit confessor Fr. “Zani” Damiano, handed over for execution by the Inquisition in 1616 for heresy and occultism. There were also many quacks, like the notorious Dr. John Dee and Sir Edward Kelly who took in Queen Elizabeth. Still, even the great St. Thomas Aquinas had addressed himself to the problem of whether gold produced by alchemy could be sold as real gold, and he had concluded it could, provided it really possessed the properties of gold. Today his conclusion remains valid for an artificial or synthetic product.

Needless to say, the “gold” alchemists were really after was not the metal we know, but the perfect substance, Prime Matter in solid form, whose liquid form was the celebrated “Elixir.” Its symbol was the sun, Ormuzd, the god of Mithraism, of Gnosticism - and of Freemasonry. Thus “was created the jargon of alchemy,” writes Grand Commander Pike in *Morals and Dogma of Freemasonry*, “a continual deception for the vulgar herd, greedy of gold, and a living language for the true disciples of Hermes alone!”

This living language, largely derived from the Kabbala, thrives now as the sacred tongue of speculative Masonry, into which Alchemy injected itself via the Rosicrucians, “true disciples of Hermes” who comprised the Society of Alchemists formed by Christian Rosenkreutz at the Hague in 1459. Under orders to maintain secrecy for 200 years, they nevertheless acquired powerful affiliates, particularly in Germany, and eventually the art spread to England, where even the scientist Robert Boyle, a professing Christian and father of “Boyle’s Law,” established an alchemical society at Oxford. The archeologist Elias Ashmole and

the celebrated Isaac Newton assisted in the project, for which a Rosicrucian from Strasburg came to lecture, with John Locke and Christopher Wren enrolled as pupils. Ashmole, whose "Astrological and Hermetical Association" permeated Europe and reached its zenith in 1675, had become a Mason in 1646, with Newton very probably doing likewise in due time.

It was Newton, says Bernard Fay in *Freemasonry and Revolution*, who made possible the great Masonic crusade of the 18th century now known as "the Enlightenment," which produced not only our American Revolution, but all the others, especially the Industrial one. By proposing his cosmic theory, which became a veritable cult among the intelligentsia, Newton united scientific astrology, pantheism and deism all under the same banner. As "science" they have marched together ever since.

Fay, who disclaims knowing whether or not the Jew Albert Einstein, the "new Newton," was ever a Mason, nevertheless points out that whole pages of his personal credo as enunciated in his *Religion and Science* are in perfect accord not only with Judaism, but especially with the Rosicrucian founders of modern Masonry, who saw religion as a kind of enthusiasm for the wonders of nature. Others allege that Einstein's space/time continuum lay concealed for centuries in the obscure language of the eighth of the Emerald Tablets of Hermes Trismegistus, legendary founder of Alchemy, where it can be deciphered today by the initiate.

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The foundation of the Grand Lodge of England, whereby Free and Accepted Masons officially merged with the Alchemical Society of the Rosicrucians, took place in London on June 24, 1717. The seven founders, all prominent alchemists, were the naturalist Jean-Theophile Desaguliers, a close friend of Newton's, who had been named Chaplain to the Prince of Wales by George II; the libertine Scotch clergyman James Anderson, Oxford graduate and preacher to the king; plus George Payne, James King, a certain Calvert, Lumden-Madden and Elliott. According to an Italian Masonic document which came to light in 1945, these men offered Masonry the advantages of their widespread wealth and influence, in return for which they were able to shelter their

alchemical researches behind the respectable facade of the Fraternity.

It was a congenial alliance. “Freemasonry and alchemy have sought the same results,” says Mackey in his *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*:

*...and they have both sought it by the same method of symbolism. It is not, therefore, strange that in the eighteenth century, and perhaps before, we find an incorporation of much of the science of alchemy into that of Freemasonry.*

Indeed not. The aforementioned Fr. Damiano wrote in his memoirs that once while listening to the Emperor voice his aspirations concerning the Great Work in the imperial apartments, “Without thinking, I heard myself murmur, ‘So mote it be!’ The Emperor looked at me in astonishment, realizing that I had spoken the magical formula adepts use when invoking the higher powers.” He would have been even more astonished had he been able to hear a future Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, Paul VI, use this now well-known Masonic phrase not once, but twice in the course of a speech he delivered before the assembled body of the United Nations of the World on October 4, 1965.

In the Great Work, of course, gold-making was the merest preparatory maneuver. As Pike explains:

*The Great Work is, above all things, the creation of man by himself; that is to say, the full and entire conquest which he effects of his faculties and his future. It is, above all, the perfect emancipation of his will, which assures him the universal empire of Azoth, and the domain of magnetism, that is, complete power over the universal Magical agent. This Magical agent, which the Ancient Hermetic philosophers disguised under the name of ‘Prima Materia,’ determines the forms of the modifiable Substance; and the Alchemists said by means of it they could attain the transmutation of metals and the universal medicine.*

Although “occult,” the Great Work is in no sense unnatural in the means it employs. On the contrary, it demands man’s total descent into the natural. Alchemy has never pretended to create



anything out of nothing. It will not admit that even God can do that, for God must “evolve” like the rest of the universe. Pike quotes Bl. Raymond Lulle, who postulates that even to make gold, one must start with some gold, for “Nothing is made out of nothing.” The regeneration of man Alchemy seeks through the perfection of matter is a glorification of matter, in complete accord with classical Marxism and the false theory of evolution on which Communism depends.

Masonry’s mystical theologian J.D. Buck writes:

*Magic contemplates that all-around development which, liberating the intellect from the dominion of the senses and illuminating the spiritual perceptions, places the individual on the lines of least resistance with the inflexible laws of nature, and he becomes nature’s co-worker or hand-maid. To all such, Nature makes obeisance, and delegates her powers, and they become Masters.*

Rather, they become God, for Buck blasphemously contends:

*In the Early Church, as in the Secret Doctrine, there was not one Christ for the whole world, but a potential Christ in every man. Theologians first made a fetish of the Impersonal, Omnipresent Divinity, and then tore the Christos from the hearts of all humanity in order to deify Jesus ... The hand of Providence is always a human hand. Humanity is both the vehicle and the agent of what man has called the providence of God. Humanity in toto, then, is the only Personal God; and Christos is the realization, or perfection of this Divine Persona, in Individual conscious experience ... It is far more important that men should strive to become Christs than that they should believe that Jesus was Christ, etc., etc.*

This is easily recognized as New Age religion.

Buck proves himself a true alchemist when he states:

*Man’s knowledge and power are no longer confined to, or circumscribed by, the lower plane, or the physical body: but, by transcending these by Regeneration and becoming perfect in Humanity, man attains Divinity. In other words, he becomes*

*CHRISTOS. This is the meaning, aim and consummation of Human Evolution; and this Philosophy defines the one-only process by which it may be attained. The Perfect Man is Christ: and Christ is God.*

Thus spoke the Serpent to Eve, explaining how she could become God through her own natural efforts. That such highly heretical doctrine is now heard even from Catholic pulpits in the United States shows how thoroughly the Ouroboros sponsored by Benjamin Franklin has anchored his Great Work in American minds. Swallowing his tail at an ever faster rate, he is bent on making us believe that this is the way to transform ourselves into an ever higher form of something already inherent within us. He says the Great Work works.

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“If you would study the secrets of Alchemy,” nevertheless warns Albert Pike:

*...you must study the works of the Masters with patience and assiduity. Every word is often an enigma; and to him who reads in haste, the whole will seem absurd. Even when they seem to teach that the Great Work is the purification of the Soul, and so to deal only with morals, they must conceal their meaning, and deceive all but the Initiates.*

There has hardly been a more devoted student of Alchemy than Franklin, who was well aware that the real aim of the Great Work was also social and political. A leaflet distributed by the Christophers in March, 1975 featured the following Prayer composed by him:

*God grant, that not only the love of liberty, but a thorough knowledge of the rights of man, may pervade all the nations of the earth, so that a philosopher may set his foot anywhere on its surface and say, ‘This is my country.’*

And this is followed by a truly singular rendition of the first verse of Psalm 126: “If the Lord does not build the house, in vain

the masons (!) toil.” Let him who reads understand where and by whom the dream of a man-made world government is nourished.

Franklin’s religion does not have to be conjectured. Not only do we know he assisted David Williams in his *Apology for Professing the Religion of Nature* (complete with liturgy!), but he also left in writing his own “Articles of Belief,” a document conveniently overlooked by those who would like to regard him as a Christian. Stirred by Newton’s novel theories of the universe, he espoused the cosmic spiritualism of Alchemy based on hierarchies, much as described by Dr. Taylor.

He says furthermore:

*I cannot conceive otherwise than that the Infinite Father expects or requires no Worship or Praise from us, but that he is even infinitely above it. But, since there is in Men something like a natural principle, which inclines them to DEVOTION, or to worship of some unseen Power; and since Men are endued with Reason superior to all other Animals, that we are in our World acquainted with: Therefore I think it seems required of me, and my Duty as a Man, to pay Regards to SOMETHING.*

*I conceive then, that the INFINITE has created many beings of Gods, vastly superior to Man, who can better conceive his Perfections than we, and return him a more rational and glorious Praise ... It may be that these created Gods are immortal; or it may be that after many Ages, they are changed, and others supply their Places ... It is that particular Wise and good God who is the author and owner of our system, that I propose for the object of my praise and adoration. For I conceive that he has in himself some of those Passions he has planted in us.*

Franklin concludes from this that his God might like some praise after all. “Let me then not fail to praise my God continually, for it is his Due, and it is all I can return for his many Favours and great Goodness to me.”

Clearly this created God with human passions, one among many, who made man merely one of the animals, is not the God of the Christians, but only Franklin’s. Bernard Fay notes, “It is difficult to affirm that Franklin’s credo was the Freemason’s

credo; but it is clear that it was a Masonic creed,” corresponding “more exactly than any other to the tendencies of Freemasonry and to the phraseology which Desaguliers and Anderson utilized in their ‘Constitutions of the Free-Masons.’” And we might add, corresponding to the tendencies of the dawning space-age: “This Masonic religiosity, as found in Desaguliers and Franklin, did not intervene as a conservative element in society, but as a ferment of transformation,” precisely the stuff of the Great Work, now carried on in the New World as in the old.

Like all sophisticated Gnostics of any age, Franklin publicly supported the prevalent religion. Using the handy, ambiguous language of Masonry, his utterances are often accepted as orthodox Christianity by believers or half-believers, but interpreted correctly enough by the initiated. Franklin was a member in good standing of the Presbyterian Church and never missed a sermon of the young liberal Rev. Hemphill, who seldom mentioned God. When despite Franklin’s defense Hemphill was evicted by his frustrated congregation, Franklin joined the Anglican Church.

He seldom attended its services, but when the famous preacher George Whitefield brought the “Great Awakening” to America, Franklin became one of his most ardent supporters. This led many to believe he had suffered a conversion, but Fay remarks wryly, “The support given by Franklin was only a Masonic support conforming with Masonic doctrines and the spirit of Desaguliers,”- indeed an early form of Marxist dialectics in action, for, “It is true Whitefield ... converted the crowds, but wherever he preached the parishes became detached from their pastors; wherever he passed, the life of the Church was disorganized” and the work of revolution furthered. As for Franklin, he said he saw “a positive advantage in the existence of many different churches, for that created competition, and after all, competition was good for every kind of trade.”

He seems to have believed in some sort of immortality, if we are to credit the famous Epitaph he wrote for his tombstone:

*The body of Benjamin Franklin, Printer, like the cover of an old book, its contents torn out and stript of its lettering and gilding, lies here food for worms. Yet the work itself shall not*

*be lost, for it will, as he believed, appear once more in a new and beautiful edition, corrected and amended by the Author.*

This is no Christian Resurrection of the body, glorified through the Son of God. The immortality he expects would be only natural, a re-incarnation into another body of some kind. The “work itself,” as Franklin calls himself, is subject only to alchemical transmutation according to the alchemical maxim known to every neophyte: “No generation without corruption.”

That Franklin recognized no extra-natural forces is easily proved by a celebrated anecdote. At a party at Lord Shelburne’s in England, Fay relates:

*There were a number of scholars from both the continent and England, some able ministers who succeeded in purifying God, such as Priestley and Price; other churchmen who were expert in avoiding God, like the Abbé Morellet of France who ministered to courtesans and atheists.*

Franklin and the Abbé were conversing:

*...about the Bible and Christ, and Franklin, half-smiling, said that the Biblical miracles no longer seemed like miracles to him, that he could calm the waters quite as easily as Jesus Christ. The Abbé was too polite to contradict him but too educated to believe the statement...*

*Franklin sensed what was going on in his mind, and calling the company together, they went to the pond. A slight breeze was ruffling its surface with a thousand tiny ripples, and Franklin slowly encircled it while the party waited in a curious silence. Then, raising his staff abruptly, Franklin whirled it three times above the water and inscribed some magic hieroglyph in the air. With a wave of his hand, Franklin then turned to the company and showed that the water was calming down.*

*In a few moments the pond was as glassy as a mirror and a vague light glimmered over the immobile watery surface. The spectators stared at each other without knowing what to think. Then they surrounded the doctor, overwhelming him with compliments and adulation, but he escaped from them*

*and disappeared down a shady walk, still conversing with Morellet. He leaned on his cane heavily and laughed softly. The Abbé was frankly mystified, so Franklin then showed him that his staff was hollow and that he had filled it with oil. It was this oil, spread over the water, which had stilled it. A hedge fortunately hid them from the others, for the Abbé burst into a clear peal of laughter which was joined by Franklin's.*

*They laughed all the more when they saw through the twigs that the party was still standing by the pond, fearfully exclaiming over the event. Franklin's miracles were the delight of the crowd, and deeply appreciated by the philosophers and Masons, for they enlightened humanity and made for progress. All the lodges of France and England sang the praises of their illustrious brother.*

Disbelief in the miraculous explains Franklin's presence at the opening of the first Unitarian Chapel founded in England by Theophilus Lindsay, which became the meeting place for liberal reformers hoping to replace "outworn" Christianity by scientific truth, and where the aforementioned Joseph Priestley, discoverer of oxygen, was one of the clergy. Another companion of Franklin's at this event was his close friend Francis Dashwood, Lord Le Despencer, who had asked his help in revising the Church of England's Book of Common Prayer. Franklin himself tells us of the happy days he spent at the estate of this notorious libertine and student of the occult, who all the while supporting the village curate, was said to celebrate black Masses amid the ruins of an old abbey where he officiated as "Prior" to a community known as "the mad monks of Medmenharn." His Lordship's American friend says of him, however:

*But a pleasanter thing is the kind countenance, the facetious and very intelligent conversation of mine host, who having been for many years engaged in public affairs, seen all parts of Europe, and kept the best company in the world, is himself the best existing!*

He and Franklin "decided that the prayer-book was entirely too long," writes Sydney George Fisher in *The True Benjamin Franklin*:

*Its prolixity kept people from going to church. The aged and infirm did not like to sit so long in cold churches in winter, and even the young and sinful might attend more willingly if the service were shorter ... All references to the sacraments and to the divinity of the Saviour were, of course, stricken out and short work made of the Athanasian and the Apostles' Creed. Even the commandments in the catechism had the pen drawn through them, which was rather inconsistent with the importance Franklin attached to morals as against dogma. But both editors, no doubt, had painful recollections on this subject; and as Franklin would have been somewhat embarrassed by the seventh (the Sixth Commandment in Catholic catechisms), he settled the question by disposing of them all.*

The *Te Deum* and the *Venite* were both deleted.

*The beautiful canticle 'All ye works of the Lord' ... was entirely marked out. As this canticle is the nearest approach in the prayer-book to anything like the religion of nature, it is strange that it should have suffered.*

Strange, too, that the only phrase Franklin asked Le Despencer to omit from his first Preface was the description of the Old Testament as “a Jewish book very curious, perhaps more fit for the perusal of the learned than suited to the capacities of the general illiterate part of mankind.” His reasons for this, who knows? Although eventually he wrote only the final Preface, in America the work - purged of all references to king and parliament - became known far and wide as “Franklin’s Prayer Book,” doing much to strengthen his public image as a believer.

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The popular scientific writer Roger Burlingame coined the phrase, “America was discovered; the United States was invented.” He meant only to make a distinction between a principle and its application, but the eyes of faith see deeper than that: America is the creation of Almighty God and can indeed only be discovered, whereas the United States, being merely a political

contrivance, can qualify only as a human invention. Mistaking one for the other has disastrous consequences, for contrivances may fall apart without warning, as the United States nearly did during its so-called Civil War and may do now by internal collapse.

Catholics who mistake the United States for God's America may furthermore easily fall into the heresy formally defined by Pope Leo XIII as Americanism. Basically, it is naturalism in American dress, and it accommodates itself to all the ideals of the Enlightenment. French radicals of the last century expected it then to produce a major schism in the Church under the able leadership of Catholic bishops in the United States, some of whom even dared preach Americanism to Europe. It was a threat, apparently, which drove Leo XIII to approve of democracy in practice, if not in principle rather than antagonize the enemy.

"But over there in America," wrote Emile Zola:

*...what fertile virgin soil for a triumphant heresy! How easy to see a Bishop Ireland one fine day like the banner of revolt and become the apostle of the new religion, A RELIGION RELEASED FROM DOGMAS, MORE HUMAN, THE RELIGION WE DEMOCRATS ARE WAITING FOR!*

The United States had been only too well prepared for such regrettable leadership. Like Franklin, most of its Founding Fathers were not Christians. Although they often made references to the Deity, the God they invoked was their God, the alchemical God of nature in Christian dress. In fact the most influential among them were not so much deists as thoroughgoing pantheists, for, being avowed rationalists, they looked for divinity only in nature. Themselves products of the Enlightenment, they could hardly have been anything else.

In Alchemy, a Green Dragon signifies the Great Work in its beginnings, and it cannot have been coincidence that the Revolution was planned and carried out by men who met regularly in a Boston tavern of that very name. So diligently did they promote the serpent's cause that America today finds herself immersed in a sea of neo-Gnosticism so pervading and controlling her moral, intellectual and political life that, by comparison, the Albigenian heresy which once ravaged the whole of Christendom now looks like a harmless childhood disease. God preserve us



from the Red Dragon, alchemical sign for the Great Work in its completion!