

Address delivered by Janes P. B. Hyndman from Station WHAP, New York City, on April 19, 1926 (9:15 P.M.) on Americanism. Subject:

THE SEAL OF AMERICA

What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light:
and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the
housetops. - Christ Jesus.

(Matthew 10:27.)

All teaching, as observed in a previous paper, must, of necessity, be by symbols. Christ Jesus taught by symbols, (parables). The Order of Masonry, known to-day as the Order of Free and Accepted Masons, the oldest and most powerfully significant symbolic system in the world, teaches wholly by symbols. Even the ordinary sciences, - mathematics, music - must be interpreted through symbols, since, in their essence, they are wholly metaphysical.

The American Federal Republic, as visible in its outward forms, is a symbol, Indeed, it is the. highest symbol of all the ages, since it represents, or symbolizes, the reality of the Kingdom of God, "on earth as it is in heaven", wherein Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, is supreme ruler.

The Flag and the Seal are the two oldest emblems of the United States of America. The Flag was adopted by Congress, on June 14, 1777, and the Seal on June 20, 1782. The present paper deals with the Seal of the United States of America.

THE SEAL

The symbolism of a Seal is highly significant. The Holy Bible uses this symbol in the most sacred sense. Throughout the history of the children of Israel, we read of the sealing of the tribes. John, the beloved disciple, in his Book of Revelation, plainly states that the followers of Christ, those who had come out of great tribulation, and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, were sealed in their foreheads.

The fathers of the American Federal Republic, as pointed out in a previous paper, were Free Masons. Every one of them was familiar with the symbolism of the Holy Bible; and while we of to-day discern the more hidden meanings, and the deep and spiritual sense of these symbols, more than did they, having learned this much on the foundation of their work, and because of the spiritual unfoldment which necessarily proceeds from the constant operation of the Holy Spirit of God, yet, the fathers were fully awake to the fact, that the birth of the American Federal Republic was the sign or symbol of the appearing on earth of the New Aera, the dawn of the Golden Age, the beginning of the

Seventh Millennium, the Millennium of Harmony on earth, with its correlative of the overthrow of anti-Christ.

The War of the American Revolution was fought, and the American Cause triumphed. This struggle, seemingly a struggle between a great world power and her restive colonies, was, in reality, the first blow struck in the great Battle of Armageddon, the battle between Christ and the dragon, or anti-Christ, the inevitable conflict between the pure evangelism of Christ Jesus, and its counterfeit in priestcraft and popery. The issue of the American Revolution became clear, when, with the close of the struggle, priests and princes were excluded from America forever, and the virgin soil of America was hallowed with the principle of freedom to worship God, in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Mayflower Compact, founded on the teaching of Christ, who is "alive for evermore."

Immediately after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, on July 4, 1775, the members of the Congress, assembled after dinner, were impressed with the importance and necessity of completing, in symbol, the evidences of independence, which was to be won by force of arms. Three of the five members of the Committee which drafted the Declaration of Independence, namely, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin, were appointed a Committee to prepare a device for the Seal of the United States of America, which was to be the official seal of sovereignty, and a national coat of arms. These patriots, makers and members of the new-born American Federal Republic, had no precedent in the old world, by which they might be guided; and indeed, it was highly fitting that they should not be guided by the practices and ideals of a system of priestcraft and kingship, which they had utterly repudiated, or, in the strong language of our citizenship law, "renounced and abjured." They therefore appealed to the Word of God, taking their symbolism from the history of the children of Israel, from whom, both racially, and in a more significant sense, spiritually, they were descended. Being ignorant of Heraldry, but conversant with sacred symbolism, they employed a professional herald and draftsman, named Pierre Eugène du Simitière, who lived in Philadelphia, to assist them. It was in this proposed design of the Seal, that the words "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God," appeared. Two features of this design were preserved in the final design, The Eye of Providence, and the motto "*E Pluribus L 'num*", meaning, Out of Many, One, that is, out of many who are called, but one is chosen, in consonance with the word of Christ Jesus, "Many are called, but few are chosen." This Committee reported to Congress on August 10, 1776, and its report was laid on the table. For nearly four years, the United States existed without a coat of arms, and Congress pursued its business without a seal.

The second committee appointed to devise a seal, was the Lovell Committee. This Committee was appointed by Congress on March 25, 1780. In the design which it submitted, the following new features were introduced: 13 diagonal stripes, alternate red and white, an olive branch, and a constellation of 13 stars, all of which were adopted in the final, design, except that the

stripes were changed to vertical. Charles Thomson, to whom, with William Barton, belongs the credit and the honor for the design of the Seal which Congress finally adopted, wrote the report for this Committee, which was submitted to Congress, and submitted in May, 1780.

In May, 1782, Congress appointed another Committee to design the Seal. This Committee was composed of Arthur Middleton, of South Carolina, Elias Boudinot, of New Jersey, and Edward Rutledge, of South Carolina. The Committee employed William Barton, A.M.; of Philadelphia, a professional herald, to assist them.

Barton submitted two designs to the Committee. In his first design, he added, among other features, the symbol of the Eagle, which was later included in the accepted design. In explaining the constellation of 13 stars, he says:

The same number (13) stars, upon a blue canton, representing a new constellation, which alludes to the new Empire formed in the world by the Confederation of these States --- their disposition in the form of a circle denotes the perpetuity of its continuance, the ring being the symbol of eternity.

Of the Eagle, he says:

The Eagle, displayed, is the symbol of supreme power and authority.

Barton's second design added, for the reverse of the Seal, the "Pyramid of thirteen strata or steps; in the zenith, an Eye, surrounded with a Glory, proper," which means, that the Pyramid of thirteen courses, was the chief feature of the reverse, and, above it, the symbol of the Eye of Providence, surrounded by rays of glory, in gold, or in their natural, or proper, color. These features were retained in the final design. In all, of these designs, supporters were introduced, as an essential feature of the Seal. These supporters, which in these designs were warriors or symbolic maidens, supported the shield, or chief feature of the whole design, or achievement.

The Barton design, which was complicated, was submitted to Congress on May 9, 1782; but Congress was not satisfied with it, and on June 13, it was referred to Charles Thomson, Secretary of Congress.

The whole matter now having, by order of Congress, come into the hands of Charles Thomson, he took a radical departure from all previous designs. Barton's Eagle was crested, after the fashion of the European heraldic eagle, and Thomson specified that it should be an American bald eagle, and that it should be the central figure of the design. He also corrected Barton's drawing of the Pyramid, to correspond to the lines and angles of the Great Pyramid, of Gizeh. Other radical changes were agreed upon between Secretary Thomson and William Barton. Their final design and report were submitted to Congress

on June 20, 1782, and Congress immediately, on the same day, ratified and adopted this design for the Seal and Coat of Arms for the United States of America.

The descriptive remarks accompanying the design are in the handwriting of Secretary Charles Thomson, and are couched in the technical language of heraldry. The Seal may be described, in popular language, as follows:

Obverse, or head side of Seal. The principal feature is the shield, escutcheon, or Coat of Arms, which is shown on the breast of the American bald Eagle. The lower part of the shield is equally divided by thirteen perpendicular bars of alternate silver and red, and the upper part, or chief, is blue. The American Eagle, whose head and tail are white, and his body of lead or dove color, is shown displayed, or with wings outspread and talons occupied, so that he is rising in the air. He has thirteen feathers in his tail, which is literally true of the average American Eagle. In his dexter, or right talon, he holds an olive branch, and in his sinister, or left talon, a bundle of thirteen arrows. In his beak is a scroll, with the words, "*E Pluribus Unum.*" Over the head of the Eagle, which appears above the escutcheon, a Glory, or group of golden rays appears, breaking through a cloud, and within this Glory appear thirteen stars, forming a constellation, represented in silver on a blue field. All of these features are shown "proper*", that is, in their natural forms and colors.

Reverse, or tail side of the Seal. A Pyramid unfinished. in the zenith, an Eye in a triangle, surrounded with a Glory, or golden rays, as of the sun. Over the Eye, the words "*Annuit Coeptis,*" meaning "He has prospered our endeavors." On the base of the Pyramid, the numerical letters MECCXXVI, (1776) and underneath, the following motto, "*Novus Crdo Seclorum,*" meaning, "A new order of Ages begins." The number of letters in these mottoes are symbolical, as is the entire emblem. The report states that the reference to the "new order of ages*" refers to the American Aera, which begins from that date.

In this design, there are no supporters. The escutcheon is borne on the breast of the American Eagle without any other supporters, to denote that the United States of America, under God, is supported by her own virtue. So bold a declaration was never before known in Heraldry, and could only have been put forth under the inspiration and authority of Christ.

Congress immediately had the obverse of the Seal cut in brass, and an impression in wax is found on a commission, dated September 16, 1782, granting full power and authority to George Washington, to arrange with the British for exchange of prisoners of war.

Chief Justice Marshall, then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, in an opinion of the Seal, stated that the Seal is used only on documents signed by the President, after the President's signature has been applied; thus making the document authoritative.

The first recorded public display of the American Coat of Arms, was in New Haven, Connecticut, immediately after the cessation of hostilities. The day was ushered in at the rising of the sun, with the discharge of 13 cannon, after which the women of the town paraded on the Green, to celebrate the Independence of the United States, under elegant silk colors, with the Coat of Arms of the United States most ingeniously represented thereon by these women.

The Seal of the United States has had a rather remarkable history, during the 144 years of its existence. In 1841, the Department of State ordered a new die of the obverse cut; but this die was not in accordance with the law of 1782, although it was used until 1883. Daniel Webster was Secretary of State when the new die was made, and it seems a remarkable incident, that his department should have permitted a die of the Seal, one which was in fact illegal, to have been cut and put into use. Finally, in 1883, Theodore F. Frelinghuysen, then Secretary of State, requested Congress, through the House Committee on Appropriations, to appropriate money for the cutting of new dies of the Seal. Congress thereupon appropriated \$1000, with instructions that a die of the obverse and reverse faces of the Seal be cut. Mr. Theodore F. Dwight, Chief of the Bureau of Rolls and Library of the Department of State, supervised the work. Several prominent men, including Professor Charles Eliot Norton, of Harvard, were in consultation with him; and when they came to the question of the reverse of the Seal, under pressure of a flood of protests ostensibly from "artists", they all gave their opinion, that the design for this side of the Seal was a dull Masonic emblem, uninteresting, and that it should be allowed to die a natural death, or to pass into forgetfulness. Thereupon, the express command of Congress was set aside and wilfully disobeyed, and no account was rendered of that part of the appropriation which should have applied to the cutting of the die for the reverse of the Seal.

In 1893, large representations of the obverse and reverse of the Seal were made, in full colors, for hanging on the walls of the Federal Building at the World's Fair Exposition; but another flood of protests against the reverse, ostensibly from "artists" once more, poured in to the authorities, and the reverse was turned with its face to the wall, while the obverse was hung.

On this occasion, Congress seemed to take on a feeling of panic regarding the reverse of the Seal, and was on the point of abandoning it; but this was not done. The reverse of the Seal of the United States is as much a part of that emblem, and of our national institutions, as any single feature of the Seal is a part of the Seal; and the use of the Seal without the reverse is a violation of the intention of the fathers of the Republic, who, intelligently, and under divine inspiration, put into the symbolism of the reverse, much of the deepest spiritual symbolism of America. The failure to cut the reverse of the Seal, and to use it in consonance with the obverse, is likewise illegal, and a violation of the express laws of Congress, as enacted in 1782 and in 1883.

The opposition to the reverse of the Seal has always come from Roman

Catholics, and the Roman Catholic hierarchy, who have hidden themselves behind the smoke screen of "artists". From the flood of protests which reached Congress, it would have seemed that America was prolific in the production of artists, especially of such as were qualified to pass upon so technical and intricate a theme as the reverse of the Seal of the United States of America. The objection was always the same, namely, that the design was a dull, uninteresting, prosaic Masonic emblem. Totten points out the deep symbolism of this marvellous feature of our wonderful Seal, for the Pyramid is God's oldest and most powerful symbol of spiritual man, whom God created in His own image. The cutting of the reverse of the Seal of the United States must and shall be consummated, and the American Eagle, the symbol of the power and authority of Christ, the eternal Son of God, shall take his place in the air.

The American Federal Republic was designed in the Mind which is God, for the overthrow of anti-Christ, the dragon, popery, with its priests and princes, against which every feature of every symbol of our national emblems inveighs. The time for the sealing of the people of God has come; and the instrument of sealing must be complete, according to the pattern shown in the Mount, according to the divinely inspired law set down by the fathers of 1782. Christ, the ruler of America, demands that the full law relating to the Seal of the United States of America, be put into effect, and that the die for the reverse be cut and placed in use forthwith.

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