



The Obelisk and Freemasonry

John A. Weisse

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An excerpt from the Preface:

In this epitome we shall quote Belzoni's manuscripts on Egyptian Freemasonry, illustrated by colored drawings, as found on the walls of the rock-excavated Masonic Temple, constructed by Pharaoh Seti I. (*Osymandias*) and his son Rameses II. (*Sesostris*). Any one who will take the trouble to read this epitome and consider its illustrations, will realize that secret societies like Freemasonry existed in remote antiquity, and were the prerogative of kings, hierophants, and magnates.

We must not omit to express our heartfelt thanks to those whose works, lectures, and conversations enabled us to write this epitome: Champollion, Dr. Young, Spohn, Bunsen, Gliddon, Lepsius, De Rougé, Wilkinson, Poole, Ebers, Birch, Chabas, Brugsch, Mariette, Maspéro, Macoy, Rawson, Amelia Edwards, London Athenaeum, Spohn's pupil, Seyffarth, who has been among us in New York for many years, and Mackenzie, whose *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*, published by J. W. Bouton, of New York, furnished us most valuable information.

Freemasonry, as connected with Belzoni's grand Masonic Temple found in 1818, and with Commander Gorringer's discovery of Masonic emblems and symbols on the obelisk now (June 16, 1880) on its way to New York, will be our chief aim. We shall also mention the 5 obelisks yet standing in Egypt, and relate the adventures of the 11 now in Rome; 3 elsewhere in Italy; 2 in Constantinople; 2 in France; 6 in England; 1 on its way to America; and of the one in Germany, which, though the smallest of the 30, is the oldest, being coeval with the Fifth Manethonian Dynasty, which, according to Brugsch, reigned "3700 to 3300 B.C."

As in Egypt, Pharaohs, princes, hierophants, and magnates were masons, engineers, and architects. Freemasons of our day may look with pride toward the cradle of civilization, of which the coming obelisk will be a worthy representative in the New World.

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