

## THE ENGLISH REVIEW

third by undue pondering upon the sinister incident of the smoking-room.

It happens that I am a reader at the British Museum, and spend a good deal of my spare time in that appalling library, that ordered chaos from which no cosmos can possibly arrive by any Fiat soever. However, I determined to find out as much as I could about Freemasonry from the "authorities."

Alas!

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It took me a very few hours to discover that Waite was as ignorant as he was pompous—and he was very very pompous.

I was nearly led away by Mackey, but discovered in time that his book was a system of deliberate falsification.

John Yarker was learned, accurate, and sincere; but those very qualities made him too cautious to assert what was doubtful. And about Masonry nearly everything is doubtful.

It was hardly encouraging when one afternoon I found a smiling professorial face bending over my shoulder.

"Studying Masonry, my young friend? I am the Grand Master of Germany, and I have studied it these forty years and more; and I know nothing whatever about it."

He was kind enough, however, to help me considerably with my studies; and I am able to present a rudimentary Synoptic Table of the principal rites.

I can make no pretence to completeness, to historical treatment—indeed, my main purpose is to show the utter impossibility of building a house even of stacked cards on such shifting sand as Masonic History.

### I. Common to, and essential to, all Freemasonry soever: The Three "Craft" Degrees.

1A. Swedenborgian Masonry: the 1°—4°, 2°—5°, and 3°—6° explaining the Three Craft Degrees respectively.

1B. Martinism, the Saï Bhai, and similar systems, which attempt to replace the Three Craft Degrees.

1C. The Three First Degrees of O.T.O., which claim to restore the lost meaning of the Three Craft Degrees.

1D. "Clandestine" Masonry; this adjective is applied by any Mason to any other Mason with whom he is not