

[Book Review by Tony Pope, published in *Harashim* #3, July 1997.]

ALBERT PIKE: THE MAN BEYOND THE MONUMENT

James T Tresner II, Scottish Rite Research Society, M Evans & Co, New York, 1995.

ISBN 0 87131 791 5 (cloth), 254 pp with endnotes, bibliography and index, US \$19.95; review copy from the Scottish Rite Research Society, 1733 Sixteenth St NW, Washington, DC 20009, USA, free with membership subscription of US \$20.

Jim Tresner is editor of the *Oklahoma Mason*, author of Masonic and other works, book reviewer of the Southern Jurisdiction's *Scottish Rite Journal*, and a life-long admirer of Albert Pike. For those who only know Pike through *Morals and Dogma*, this will introduce at least an outline of the whole, complex man: musician, teacher, frontiersman and pioneer, journalist, soldier, jurist, philosopher and poet. For those who have not read *Morals and Dogma*, and 'know' Pike only through quotations and misquotations of that work, it will truly be an eye-opener.

Tresner portrays Pike mainly by quotations from Pike's own writings, interspersed with comments from Tresner and others, and illustrated by many black and white photographs, engravings and prints. The picture may not be complete, because Tresner does not seek to refute all the accusations of Pike's many detractors. There is no mention, for example, of the allegations that he held high office in the Klu Klux Klan and wrote their ritual, or of the claim that he said he would leave Freemasonry if Negroes were permitted to join, and yet supplied Masonic ritual to Prince Hall Masons. But perhaps the whole truth could not be discovered by a single researcher, or contained in a single book.

Pike is not easy reading, and probably not of great appeal to the majority of students outside North America, but for those who have a need, or a desire, to learn more of the man, Jim Tresner makes the task easier. This book is worth a space on the library shelf.