

**The E.A.'s Handbook  
The F.C.'s Handbook  
The M.M.'s Book**

BY

J. S. M. WARD

## Contents

	PAGE
General introduction . . . . .	iii
<i>The Entered Apprentice's Handbook.</i>	
Author's Preface . . . . .	3
Introduction by John Cockburn . . . . .	4
The Mysteries . . . . .	6
Chapter 1: The Opening . . . . .	7
Chapter 2: The Tyler . . . . .	14
Chapter 3: Preparation . . . . .	21
Chapter 4: Admission . . . . .	26
Chapter 5: The Obligation . . . . .	34
Chapter 6: The Sign, Token and Word . . . . .	44
Chapter 7: The Charge . . . . .	48
Chapter 8: The Closing . . . . .	50
<i>The Fellow Craft's Handbook</i>	
Author's Preface . . . . .	55
Introduction by John Cockburn . . . . .	58
Chapter 1: Preparation, Pass Word and Opening . . . . .	60
Chapter 2: Preliminary Steps . . . . .	71
Chapter 3: The Secrets . . . . .	76
Chapter 4: Conclusion of the Ceremony . . . . .	81
Chapter 5: The Tracing Board . . . . .	86
Chapter 6: Closing Ceremony . . . . .	97
<i>The Master Mason's Book</i>	
Author's Preface . . . . .	105
Introduction by John Cockburn . . . . .	108
Chapter 1: Questions and Pass Word . . . . .	111
Chapter 2: The Opening . . . . .	119
Chapter 3: The Symbolical Journeys, etc. . . . .	124
Chapter 4: The Exhortation. . . . .	131
Chapter 5: The Secrets . . . . .	138
Chapter 6: The Badge . . . . .	143
Chapter 7: The Legend . . . . .	149
Chapter 8: The Tracing Board, etc. . . . .	160
Chapter 9: The Closing . . . . .	164
Chapter 10: Conclusion. . . . .	167

*Common abbreviations used in this volume.*

(Officers in a Craft Lodge)

W.M. Worshipful Master.

S.W. Senior Warden

J.W. Junior Warden.

S.D. Senior Deacon.

J.D. Junion Deacon.

I.G. Inner Guard.

Can. Candidate.

V.S.L. Volume of Sacred Law.

E.A. Entered Apprentice (the Masonic 1°).

F.C. Fellow Craft (the Masonic 2°).

M.M. Master Mason (the Masonic 3°).

*No. 1*  
*The Entered Apprentice's Handbook*

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

IT should be understood that the explanations which I now submit for your consideration are, in the main, my own views. Many brethren may disagree with me and are perfectly entitled so to do, but in coming to the conclusions I do, I have compared the meaning of similar symbols and initiatory rites, both ancient and modern, and applied the recognised rules followed in the study of comparative religion and folklore. In particular, the interpretation placed on their symbols by the most educated Hindoos has often supplied me with valuable indications, as has the Kabala. At the same time, I should like to place on record at the very beginning a clear statement that I make no claim to give any authoritative explanation, and that no such explanation exists. It is clear that the original meaning has in many cases been lost, like the genuine secrets of a Master Mason, and can only be recovered by the diligent search and hearty co-operation of all students, amongst whom I take my place, not as an inspired teacher, but rather as a humble seeker after the truth, and just as fallible as any other honest investigator.

Let us start by considering in rotation the opening incidents of the first degree, for one should start at the very beginning.

J.S.M.W.

June, 1923.

## INTRODUCTION

BY THE HON. SIR JOHN A. COCKBURN  
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W. BRO. Ward is one of the most able and earnest of Masonic students. He brings to bear on the task of research the mind of a scholar, enriched by extensive reading, much travel and a wide experience of men and affairs. In addition to being a well known author of Masonic Works, he was the Founder of the Masonic Study Society, whose first President was the late Sir Richard Vassar Trassar-Smith, 33°, and in whose ranks are to be found many eminent Masonic writers. Brother Ward has by precept and example led others to become eager explorers in the realms of Masonic truth. The present volume is No. 1 in a series of studies as to the meaning of our Ritual. It deals with the degree of an Entered Apprentice and is calculated to inspire the younger brethren with the resolve not to content themselves with the outward form of our ceremonies, beautiful though it be, but to gain a knowledge of the indwelling soul of Masonry and to comprehend the deep meaning of the ritual with which they are step by step becoming familiar. Hence they will learn to regard the Craft not only as a world spread, civilising medium, nor yet only as the most benevolent of all Institutions, but also as a mine of surpassing wealth in which the Wisdom of the Ages has become embedded and preserved. Bro. Ward at the outset disarms anything like hostile criticism by admitting that many brethren may not find themselves in complete accord with all his conclusions. Indeed, it would be surprising if this were the case. Like Holy Writ, the Ritual is capable of many interpretations. It is a gradual accretion in which

succeeding epochs have left their mark. Evolution takes place under, the alternation of forces that make for difference and agreement. The process demands a continual adjustment between these apparently contrary, but in reality complementary factors. Each age sets out to balance any deficiency in the preceding period. When materialism has been pushed to excess, the tendency is rectified by a spiritual revival. On the other hand, an age in which zeal for the gifts of the spirit has caused neglect of temporal welfare is naturally followed by a renaissance of the just claims of the flesh. The subject matter of Masonry is the relationship between Spirit and Matter, between Heaven and Earth, between God and Man, between the Soul and the Body. Emphasis is everywhere laid on the necessity of their reconciliation. Consequently to attain the *juste milieu* emphasis has sometimes to be laid on one side and sometimes on the other. For example, the Cross and the Square, which have now such deeply spiritual significance, were originally signs of Earth, and became respectively, the essential symbols of Christianity and Masonry, because it was necessary to proclaim the fact that professions of piety towards God were idle, unless they bore fruit in kindly relationship between man and man. Bro. Ward regards the J .W. as representing the body, and the S .W. the soul, although the emblems and jewel of the former are celestial and of the latter terrestrial. The fact is that things divine and human are so interwoven in Masonry as to be inseparable. Duty towards God and towards our neighbour are but different aspects of the same truth. For the Fatherhood of God implies the Brotherhood of Man, and, conversely, he who devotes himself to the service of his fellow creatures proves, through his brotherly relationship, his descent from the Father of All. The issue

of Bro. Ward's series of handbooks cannot fail to accomplish its main object, which is to lead not only juniors, but also those well versed in the ritual, to mark, learn and inwardly digest the significance of the ceremonies, which when properly understood, causes our jewels and emblems to glow with an inner light which infinitely enhances their beauty. The ready reception which Bro. Ward's books have already received at the hands of the Craft, prove that they meet a recognised requirement as expositions of the character of a ritual with whose external features we are familiar, and in which we take our daily delight.

J.A.C.

### The Mysteries

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In every race and every clime,  
Since the earliest days of Time,  
Men have taught the Mystic Quest  
Shown the Way to Peace and rest.

Bacchus died, and rose again,  
On the golden Asian Plain:  
Osiris rose from out the grave,  
And thereby mankind did save:  
Adonis likewise shed his blood  
By the yellow Syrian flood,  
Zoroaster brought to birth  
Mithra from His Cave of Earth.

And to-day in Christian Lands  
We with them can join hands.

J.W.



## CHAPTER I

### THE OPENING OF THE FIRST DEGREE.

THE W .M. calls the brethren together with one knock so as to remind them that the body must be prepared to obey the higher faculties, for if it is not, no spiritual progress is possible. The first question and answer of the J.W. indicate this quite clearly, for the J .W. represents the body and so he satisfies himself that man's body is on guard against outside influences.

The S.W., representing the Soul, next proves that all present have made some progress towards the light. It is only when this has been achieved that any real advancement becomes possible, and only those who have started can help those who still remain in spiritual darkness.

The next series of questions indicates that Man has a seven-fold nature.

The Ancient Egyptians held this view, and it is endorsed in Masonry by the fact that it takes seven to make a perfect lodge. There is also, no doubt, an astrological reference to the seven planets and a connection with stellar worship, but as our system is mainly solar, it is almost impossible to give a logical planetary interpretation to the seven who form a lodge, or to the seven officers. In short, the planetary symbolism has become disorganised by the stress laid on the solar aspect of the three principal officers who rule a lodge. Moreover, the predominance of the solar aspect has emphasised the triune nature of man, and symbolises it in these officers.

Thus it will be seen that too much stress must not be laid on the planets, as represented by the seven officers, and a passing reference to the fact that it is still remem-

bered in the number seven is all that can be logically maintained.

Similarly there is merely a hint of the sevenfold nature of man. If ours were a stellar system, then clearly the Tyler would represent the body, the divine spark would be represented by the W.M., the various officers between would symbolise the various subdivisions of the non-material parts of man, such as his astral body, his intellectual faculties, and so forth.

Since, however, our system is solar in the main, we should continue to interpret our symbols from that aspect, making but passing reference to stellar influences when they occur.

The duties of the Tyler are considered elsewhere, so we will pass to the I.G. Although in some popular workings he and the other two subordinate officers are not allowed to speak for themselves, the Wardens doing this work, in many other rituals they are allowed to answer the W.M. direct. The I.G. stands for the power which permits the Soul to enter flesh at any given moment. The Soul may desire to become incarnate, but unless its time has come it is turned back at the threshold, and even if it forces itself into birth it is cut short. Entry into life is not an accident, but ordained of God, Who works through His spiritual as well as through His human agents.

Those who saw Maeterlinck's play, "The Blue Bird," will remember that the same idea is dealt with in one of the scenes.

Spiritually, the I.G. represents the Warning which must be given to those who attempt, without due caution, to probe into the Mysteries of God. They must neither rush forward hastily, nor, having once started, withdraw suddenly; for, if they do, dire evil will befall.

This warning all the Mysteries gave, and it is certain

that those who dabble in the so-called occult run grave risks unless they use the utmost caution. Hence it *is* absolutely essential that the candidate should be properly prepared before he starts on his quest.

The J.D. represents the physical means by which the Soul, represented by the S.W., passes on the inspirations received from the Spirit, the W.M., to the material world. In this sense therefore he represents intelligence, and the five senses of man, whereas the S.D. stands for intuition, whereby the Soul obtains its inspiration from the Divine.

In the ancient operative days these officers no doubt had a practical use, the S.D. being the personal messenger of the Master, who took messages to the S.W., not merely when in Lodge, but when he was at a distance, employed on his task, or possibly when he was resting from his labours. In like manner the S.W.'s deacon was sent by him to find the J.W.

The J.W. describes his position in Lodge and indicates quite clearly that he represents the Sun at noon.

From the operative point of view it must be remembered that Noon has always been, and still is, a working man's dinner hour, hence the special duty of the J.W.; but in the spiritual sense, since he stands for the body, it is natural that he should have charge over the body's needs. As he also represents the preservative side of God, his interest in the physical well being of man is appropriate. With this in mind the F.C. will realise the significance of the Pass Word, and its connection with C. and W.,<sup>1</sup> which are the emblems of the God of Vegetation in the more primitive rites. When men evolved, and the solar system of religion developed, the God of Vegetation became the Preserver. This characteristic of the J.W. is

<sup>1</sup> [At first I read this "corn and wine" (Cere and Bacchus in classic language) but the context suggests 'W' here means "Water." — T.S.]

emphasised by the upright lines of his plumb, which reminds us of water which falls from heaven, and of the caste marks of Vishnu in India.

This aspect of the J.W. as representing the Preserver is carefully maintained throughout the whole of the three degrees and must never be forgotten. In like manner, the fact that he stands for the body is also maintained throughout. Bearing this in mind, we shall perceive the significance of the fact that the Architect of King Solomon's Temple was the J.W.

Finally, bread and water represent the bare necessities, without which mortal life cannot be preserved. Luxuries, which are obtained when we have acquired worldly possessions,<sup>2</sup> *i.e.*, wealth, lead to death of the soul, and even of the body, unless employed with the greatest caution.

Some masons claim that the J.W. originally sat in the North to mark the Sun at noon, meaning to see, or point out, that it had reached the mid-heavens. Honestly, I can find no real *evidence* in support of this view, which likewise places the W.M. in the West and the S.W. in the East.

It is due, in my opinion, to a complete misunderstanding of the use of the words "to mark." This phrase implies that the J.W. is placed on a certain spot to mark the position of the Sun at noon, and not that he may see it. In a closed-in building, as such a lodge room was, it would be desirable to mark the three positions of the Sun, for the candidate has to pass through each point in turn, and these three officers, who represent the Sun in its three aspects, would naturally sit in the positions in use in a speculative lodge.

<sup>2</sup> [Probably an allusion to the gloss on the Pass Word leading from F.C. to M.M. — T.S.]

Any arguments adduced from the rituals of the modern Operative Lodges are vitiated by two facts—(1) we have no evidence that this peculiarity is really old (it may be due to Stretton's inventive mind). and (2) the operatives, if old, would be descended from the Guild Masons and not from the Freemasons;<sup>3</sup> and this might be a peculiarity of theirs, or deliberately adopted so as to differentiate them from the Freemasons.

That the Guild Masons and Freemasons were quite distinct has been proved as far back as 1913, and the fact is gone into in my other book, "Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods." That the Operatives are not descended direct from the Mediæval Freemasons is shown by the fact that they have entirely different signs from our own.

Thus we need not discuss further the question as to whether the J.W. should be in the North or South.

The S .W., as he indicates in his reply to the W .M., represents the Sun in its setting, and so the Destructive Side of the Deity, or Shiva. He also stands for the Soul. Shiva shall close not only our mortal life, but Time itself. But I have dealt with this side of the S .W. very fully elsewhere.

It should be noted, however, that the S.W. is associated with level and horizontal lines, and not with perpendiculars, and here again he follows the Hindoo system, for Shiva's caste mark is two or more parallel lines. As the Great Leveller this is most natural, and it reminds us that in the sight of God all souls are equal, even if in mortal life their stations may appear to differ.

Shiva is associated with the element of Fire, whereas Vishnu is associated with Water, and as we see that great care has been taken to maintain the connection between the J.W. and Water, so we find that with us the S.W. is

<sup>3</sup> [This distinction is explained in the next chapter. — T.S.]

similarly associated with Fire, though perhaps less obviously. Firstly, his level is of a triangular form with the point upward, the world-wide symbol for Fire. Again, the S.W.'s Pass Word has hidden within it the same idea. A smith who works in metals can only do so by the help of fire, and in one ritual this fact is stressed. Thus metals come out from the dark earth, and the Sun sinks in the West into darkness and the grave, as does man.

But, by means of fire, man obtains wealth from the metals hidden in the earth, and in like manner the Soul of Man rises refined and purified from the grave by means of the divine fire within. Moreover, one cannot ignore the fact that there is here a hint of the necessity of the purging fire of Remorse to cleanse away our sins.

The S.W. is the Soul, the link between mortal life and the Divine Spark, but he acts on instructions from the Spirit; in other words it is only when God decrees our death that the Soul departs from the body.

The W.M. represents, as his words indicate, the creative side of God and the Divine Spirit in Man. He sets us to work on earth, but delegates to another the task of calling us back whence we came. He represents the male aspect of the Deity, as is shown by the tau crosses, called levels, on his apron, and by his use of the gavel, which represents the same emblem. The Tau Cross is, of course, a phallic symbol and stands for the male and creative aspect in Man.

As the three principal officers represent the Sun (a masculine planet) in various phases, it is natural that they should all wield the gavel, but the two wardens are less essentially male than the W.M., as is indicated by the fact that they do not have the tau cross or Master's level on their aprons. The Spirit, being active, is male; whereas both soul and body, being more or less passive, are

female. The feminine side of the S .W. or Soul is deliberately emphasised later,—in the first degree,—by a reference to the Moon, a feminine planet, the emblem of the Soul and of the psychic nature in man. Nor can we ignore the fact that the West is known as the feminine quarter of the heavens, whereas the East is the masculine, it is also worth noticing that Shiva is often depicted with the moon.

Finally, before declaring the Lodge open, the W.M. offers up a prayer, thereby reminding us that the Divine Spark in Man, or the Spirit, must turn to the Source of All for aid, if it would control body and soul.

The three knocks, as distinct from the one knock with which the proceedings started, indicate that the members are about to work for the union and advancement of body, soul and spirit, and not for the body only. But the way in which the three knocks are given show that, as yet, there is no unity between the three elements which constitute Man.

## CHAPTER II THE TYLER.

THE first thing that greets the eyes of the aspirant to our Order is a man, whom he soon discovers is called the Tyler, standing in front of the door with a drawn sword in his hand. He naturally wants an answer to the question which actually occurs in a certain famous old ritual, "Why does the Tyler wear a sword?"—and the answer is, "To guard the brethren and to hele the Word."

Let us consider this answer;—

"To guard the brethren." In certain old rituals of the 18th century we are told that Masons' Lodges formerly met in the open—"on the highest hill or lowest valley, where never dog barked nor cock crew." Brethren will no doubt have read the interesting article in the "Masonic Record" relating to this state of affairs, but I am bound to say that I do not think that the ordinary mediæval lodge met in such places. The reference to the cock, together with certain details we possess with regard to those lodges which did meet in the open, (they were mostly in Scotland) indicate that they were not ordinary Craft lodges, but much more probably Templar Lodges. The Templars in the 18th century claimed to be descended from a body which had been suppressed in the years 1307 to 1314, and actually prescribed. There was every reason therefore why they *should* meet in out of the way places, but no such reason existed in the case of a lodge of ordinary Freemasons. That such a phrase should have wandered into a craft ritual from Templary is perfectly natural, but it is not safe to argue from this that all masonic lodges met under the canopy of heaven. In



those early days, many higher degrees were worked in ordinary Craft Lodges, in a way not permitted to-day; and this may easily account for phrases more appropriate to a Templar Preceptory being found in a Craft working. I might add that until the middle of the 19th century Templar meetings were always called "Encampments," indicating that they were camps held in the open fields. But in mediæval times we know that the Freemasons had Lodge buildings, and if they went to a new place to build a church or castle, the first thing they did was to erect a temporary Lodge room, which they attended before starting the day's work. Those interested will find abundant details in Fort Newton's admirable little book, "The Builders." There also it is clearly shown that there were two kinds of masons in those days, and the man who conclusively proved this was not a modern Speculative Freemason.

The two groups were the Freemasons and the Guild Masons.

The former were lineal descendants of the Comacine Masons—who, incidentally, knew a certain Masonic Sign—and these men were skilled architects free to go anywhere. They had a monopoly of ecclesiastical building and of work *outside* the towns, e.g., castles.

The Guild Masons were humbler folk. They were not allowed to build outside their particular city, but had a monopoly of all building inside that city, with one important and significant exception:—they were not allowed to build ecclesiastical buildings. In return for their charter they had to maintain the fortifications.

When a church had to be built the Freemasons were sent for, and apparently they called on the Guild Masons to help them with the rough work, e.g., to square the stones, etc.

I suggest that Speculative Freemasonry is mainly descended from the Freemasons, whereas the few Operative lodges that survive are probably descended from the Guild masons.

This theory is borne out by the fact that while the Operatives have our grips, they have not got our signs, yet these signs are unquestionably old.

They would all have the same grip for convenience in proving to the Freemasons that they were really masons, but they would keep their signs to themselves, as did the Freemasons, since they did not want the other group to have access to their private meetings.

Further, we find that the Master Masons of the Freemasons were entitled to maintenance as "gentlemen," clearly indicating that they were different from ordinary craftsmen (See Fort Newton). After the Reformation no doubt Freemasons and Guild masons tended to amalgamate and this explains much.

Now if the Freemasons erected a lodge before they started to build a church or castle, we shall see that their meeting in the open would be merely occasional, e.g., while the temporary lodge was being built, and not a regular custom; but the very fact that it *was* a temporary building, and open to approach by all and sundry who came to the site of the new building, is quite sufficient to explain why they had someone on guard.

Why, however, is he called a Tyler, instead of Sentinel, or some similar name?

There are three explanations, and you can adopt which you please:—

1. To tile is to cover in; hence the Tyler is one who covers or conceals what is going on in the Lodge.

2. In the old mediæval Templar ceremony there were three sentinels; one inside the door, one outside, and one

on the roof or tiles, who could see if anyone was approaching the building. It will be remembered that the old Templar Churches were round, so that a man perched on the roof was able to see in every direction.

3. That the tilers were inferior craftsmen as compared with the genuine freemasons, poor brethren, as it were, and not admitted to full membership, although one or two were chosen to act as Outer Guards.

I am not greatly impressed with the latter theory, and my personal predilection is in favour of No. 1; but there is a good deal to be said for No. 2. The tyler guarded the brethren from "cowans" or eavesdroppers.

The former word is still used in the country districts of Lancashire and Westmorland for a dry-dyker, that is, a man who build, rough walls between the different fields, of rough, uncut, and unmortared stones. When I was living in Yorkshire I had a number of fields so surrounded; the stones for which were picked from the hillside and piled one upon another. No particular skill was needed to build such a wall; I repaired several myself.

In other words, a "cowan" is one who pretends to be a mason because he works in stone, but is not one. Some fanciful derivations have been suggested from "Cohen," the Jewish priest. I disagree entirely from this view. Why should the Jewish cohens be more likely to pretend to be freemasons than any other priests? As the other word is spelt as we spell ours, and means what I have stated, I see no reason to invent this suggestion regarding the Jewish priests, who were always few in number, and in the Middle Ages hardly existed;—the Jews were driven out of England by Edward I, and not re-admitted until the time of Cromwell.

"Eavesdroppers" means men who listen under the eaves. The eaves of a primitive or of a mediæval cottage

overhung a considerable distance beyond the walls, and between the roof and the wall was an open space. Through this space the smoke of the fire escaped; the general arrangement was very similar to that found in the tropics. The walls of such a cottage were often only five to six feet high, and thus a man could stand under the eaves in the shadow, hidden from the light of sun or moon, and both see and hear what was going on inside, without those who were in the lodge knowing he was there.

But the Tyler was on guard outside the door of the Lodge; he was armed with a drawn sword, and woe betide any eavesdropper he discovered, for our mediæval brethren undoubtedly interpreted their obligations literally.

Incidentally, I understand that nominally the duty of carrying out the penalty still rests on the shoulders of the Tyler.

With regard to the use of temporary buildings on or near the site of the building, it should be noted that during the building of Westminster Abbey there was at least one, if not two, such lodges, and they are mentioned in the records of the Abbey, and referred to by W. Bro. J. Walter Hobbs in his interesting articles on that venerable pile.

Thus we can see that it was essential that there should be an Outer Guard to keep off intruders, owing to the fact that Lodges were usually held in temporary buildings, often with overhanging eaves and an open space between the top of the walls and the beams which supported the roof.

The word "hele" should, in my opinion, be pronounced "heal," not "hale." The use of "hale" is owing to the fact that the words "conceal," and "reveal," were

pronounced in the 18th century, "concale" and "revale." Since the words<sup>1</sup> obviously were a jingle, I consider it is more correct to-day to pronounce it "heal."

Moreover, the word "hele" means to cover over. You still hear the phrase used "to hele a cottage," or even a haystack, and the word "Hell" implies the place that is covered over, e.g., in the centre of the earth. "Hele" is connected with "heal"—to cover up, or to close up, a wound,—and the meaning therefore is tautological, viz. to cover up the word. (The Masonic s—t.<sup>2</sup>)

The use of the pronunciation "Hale" is to-day most misleading, and is apt to cause a newly initiated Bro. to think he has to "Hail" something, or "proclaim it aloud."

The C. is taken in hand by the Tyler who makes him sign a form to the effect that he is free and of the full age of 21 years.

Why "free?" Well, in mediæval days he had to bind himself to serve as an apprentice for seven years. Unless he was a free man, his owner might come along and take him away, before he had completed his apprenticeship and, worse still, might extort from him such secrets as he had learnt from the masons. Thus the master might be enabled to set himself up as a free lance, not under the control of the fraternity.

The twenty-one years is, I believe, an 18th century Speculative innovation aiming at a similar object. I think there is no doubt that usually in the Middle Ages an apprentice was a boy who placed himself under the control of a Master with his parents' consent. The Master was henceforth "in loco parentis."

In the 18th century without some such safeguard (as 21 years) some precocious youth might have joined the

<sup>1</sup> [*i.e.* the phrase "hele, conceal and never reveal" in the Obligation. — T.S.]

<sup>2</sup> ["Secret," probably. — T.S.]

fraternity without his father's consent. The father might have been one who disapproved of Freemasonry., and in such a case would probably not hesitate to exercise his parental authority in the drastic manner at that time in vogue, and so extort the secrets, which he could then have "exposed."

To-day it is still a very reasonable clause, for it presupposes that a man has reached years of discretion and knows what he is about. Any real hardship is removed by the fact that Grand Lodge has power to dispense, which power it constantly uses in the case of the University Lodges at Oxford and Cambridge. I myself was one of those who thus benefited. It is, I believe, still the custom in England that a Lewis, the son of a mason, may be admitted at 18, though the right is seldom claimed; but in some countries, I understand, it is a privilege highly valued, and regularly used by those entitled to it. In masonry a *lewis* is a cramp of metal, by which one stone is fastened to another. It is usually some form of a cross, and a whole paper could be written on its significance, but this casual reference must suffice.

### CHAPTER III PREPARATION.

THE next thing that happens is that the Can. is prepared by the Tyler.

This is a very important matter. There seems little doubt that originally candidates were stripped naked, and even to-day in the U.S.A. C.'s are left in their sh-s<sup>1</sup> only.

In Burma we changed out of everything into a one-piece pyjama suit, a most convenient arrangement.

What we now have is a system by which the parts which have to be bare are made bare.

We take our obligation on our left knee, therefore that knee must be bare. Why? So that our flesh may be in contact with Mother Earth. It is possible that there was a practical as well as a symbolical meaning in this, and also in the case of our deprivation of metals. In some of the ancient mysteries it has been suggested that a charge of electricity was passed through the Can. as he knelt at the altar, either from a battery, or by what is now called magnetism. If any question the use of electricity in those days, I would point out that certain statements of Herodotus, to the effect that the Egyptian priests brought down lightning by means of rods, can best be explained by admitting that they had some rudimentary knowledge of electricity.

The bare breast is in order that the sharp instrument can be applied. The Scotch ritual, however, says it is to show your sex, but I am inclined to think this is a modern gloss. Personally, I should not regard this as conclusive

<sup>1</sup> [Shorts? Shirts? Shoes? The American working in *Duncans* (late 19th century) is unhelpful on this point. — T.S.]

proof in itself, for I have seen (when abroad) many well grown girls who had nothing worth mentioning, while many native men had quite well developed busts. It should always be remembered that this is the degree of birth and we were born naked.

We are slipshod because we are about to tread on holy ground, just as in the East we wear slippers when entering a mosque. It is probable that the Scotch ritual *has* preserved a real tradition when it refers to the custom in Israel of removing a shoe, as a witness, when confirming an obligation. Those interested will find the details in Ruth, where Boaz undertakes to marry Ruth.

A cable tow is placed about his neck.

This picce of symbolism is old and world wide. On a vase found at Chama in Mexico, several candidates are going through a ceremony very similar, apparently, to a certain degree in Masonry.<sup>2</sup> One is being taught a certain sign, and the others who stand waiting their turn all have cable tows with a running noose about their necks. In India this cable tow is the emblem of Yama, the God of Death, with which he snarcs the souls of men and drags them forth from their bodies. It is carried by Shiva to indicate his destructive character in relation to human life.

There are in masonry meanings within meanings, and I will therefore indicate a few of those associated with the cable tow, but I shall not do so with all the details I shall touch upon.

The cable tow is an emblem of Death. It is fastened round the necks of captives as showing that they are at the absolute mercy of their conqueror. Thus the burgesses of Calais had to come before Edward III. in their shirts—note that—with cable tows round their necks.

<sup>2</sup> See "Freemasonry and the Gods."



They were only saved by the desperate pleading of good Queen Philippa.

But this is the degree of birth. Some come into the world with a caul which may strangle them if not removed, and in any case we are said to be born in original sin and therefore doomed to die. Birth, in the very nature of things, means death, and that is why the Hindoos have made Shiva, the Lord of Death, also the Lord of Birth. We ourselves are captives—souls bound by the chains of the flesh, and offenders against the Law of the King of Kings. Further, we come in bondage to sin, seeking to be freed from our bonds by the word of God. The holding of the cable tow, and the dangers entailed, are sufficiently explained to need no further mention just now, though this does not imply there are not inner meanings.

The hoodwink is always found in every great initiatory rite. In general, it reminds us that as in the physical world we came out of darkness into light, so in the intellectual, and finally, in the spiritual world. We come into masonry seeking the Light of God's word. In other language, to try and comprehend through the use of symbols what God really is.

But as the veil of darkness is slightly lifted as one grows in years and our intellect awakens, so it is in the Craft, and the first thing we see there is the V.S.L., itself a symbol of Divine inspiration; for without the Divine spark, which speaks from the inmost recesses of the soul, we shall remain in spiritual darkness all our natural life.

The Can. is then brought to the door of the Lodge and challenged, but, strange to say, in our ritual there is no pass word. There was once, I have no doubt, and it is still in use in Scotland, Ireland and U.S.A. Moreover, it is one of the tests there when visiting, and if a man cannot give it he will run a serious risk of being refused

admission. Strange to say, we do get it *inside* the Lodge, though perhaps most brethren do not realise it. It is "The Tongue of Good Report" (sometimes it is "Free and of Good Report" though this is less usual).

But before entering we are deprived of metals. Now, among the Dervishes M. = mineral substances, but we interpret it Metal. It is Metals!—that is important. "Valuables" is a real, but subsidiary, meaning.

Let us consider this carefully. There is an explanation of why it is done in the lectures,—now, alas, seldom read in Lodge,—and also, of course, in the questions. These lectures were the real instruction; on them were based the tracing board lectures, which were pictorial summaries, on which were set certain questions.

Now the lectures (which can be bought at any Masonic furnishers) tell us that at the building of the Temple no metallic implements were used. Why? Because metals came from below. They were the gifts of the Chthonic Gods—the Gods of the Underworld—useful, no doubt, but being gifts of the Gods of the Underworld they were in their very nature evil, and abhorrent to the Gods of Light, whom the white races worshipped. For this reason the Egyptians continued to use stone knives to open up the corpse preparatory to embalming it, long after they used metal knives constantly. The holy dead must not be polluted with the gifts of the evil powers. If there is anything in the theory of an electric or magnetic discharge being made at the time when a metal point is applied to naked left breast at the obligation, this would also be a practical reason; the presence of metal might make such a charge dangerous. But the first reason is no doubt the original one, and probably the only one.

The idea that we bring nothing into this world is, of course, likewise obvious; but its full significance is lost in

our ritual, although seen in the Irish. There a Can. is deprived of metals in the first and in the second degrees. The significance of this will be realised by M.M.'s if they ponder awhile on the meaning of the S.W.'s Pass Word—“How hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom of Heaven.”—That worldly possessions hamper a man's spiritual progress is proclaimed by every religion in the world which can truly be called great. The Buddhist monk and the mediaeval friar alike agree on this.

Why pass words at all? Here we wander into a strange field, no less than that of old world magic, I think. The Can. enters an E.A. Lodge from the outside world. Prior to his entry this Lodge has been opened by a peculiar ceremony:—a ceremony which, in the technical language of magic and the occult, raises the vibrations of those present; thus they are, as it were, raised to a higher key, and force is generated. Now those who have studied such matters know that a body of men who are all concentrating on a particular subject do generate a peculiar, subtle, but powerful force, which has not been accurately defined by science, but is loosely called magnetic. In the old days of phenomenal magic certain words, when uttered in the correct tone, were believed to be in consonance with this “power,” like a tuning fork is to a violin. Therefore we give this pass word to the Can. to raise him quickly to the same “power” as the Lodge. But I am afraid I may be getting rather deep for our younger readers. All I need say further is that such pass words are universal in the great mystery rites, ancient or modern, and it is not surprising, therefore, that in some rituals we find a pass word leading to the 1°.

## CHAPTER IV ADMISSION.

NOW our Can. enters and is received on a sharp instrument. This signifies many things, one idea lying within the other. It reminds us of the pain we, as distinct from our mothers, suffered when we entered this physical world. It is a test of our courage and obedience. Probably in olden days blood was drawn as a sacrifice. The Can. comes seeking for knowledge; self restraint and quiet confidence should mark his bearing.

In all primitive initiatory rites most painful tests are applied, and if the candidate does not bear them with courage he is rejected, and told that henceforth he is to dress as a woman and will be treated with contempt by the men of the tribe.

We note that the instrument is a Latin cross, the age old symbol of suffering, and this is the only place in the Lodge where the Can. sees this cross, (e.g. when it is shown him later) though M.M.'s may realise that there does come a time when he treads the Way of the Cross of Suffering.

The use of a Latin Cross as the sharp instrument is peculiarly significant, for it is associated with pain and the danger of death, and tells us, in symbolic language, that the way of life is the path of suffering, and begins with the threat of death and ends in death itself; but by this hard road we draw nearer to the object of our quest.

Next the Can. kneels while the blessing of Heaven is invoked. This needs no explanation, for he is about to start on The Quest and needs the divine help. But the phrase "Relying on such sure support, you may safely

rise and follow your leader, . . . , for where the name of God is invoked we trust no danger can ensue" seems pointless in Emulation working, for the danger was at the door and is passed. But at Leeds they have a working which is, they say, derived from the Old York ritual, and it does explain this passage.

I saw this ceremony at Alfred 306, Leeds. The Can. was brought in hoodwinked and bidden to kneel, and after the prayer, the W .M. said:—

"Mr Brown, it is but fair to tell you of the perilous position in which you are now placed. Before you stands one with a drawn sword in his hand, pointed at your naked left breast, and behind you one holds the end of the cable tow which is about your neck; *in this position of difficulty and danger*, in whom do you put your trust?"

Answer:—"In God."

W.M.:—"Right glad am I to see your faith is so well founded; relying etc."

Here you see the Can. *is* in danger.

Next the Can. is taken round with the Sun, for this is the road of life. And in all ancient religions on entering a temple a man had to follow this path. In Burma to this day you are expected to pass round the pagoda in this manner. The words are—"Brethren in the North, East, South and West will take notice." It is clear therefore that emphasis is laid on the fact that the candidate is following the path of the Sun, for otherwise why not employ the more usual phrase, "North, South, East and West?" Now the Swastika, which may be regarded as the "lost sign" in Freemasonry,<sup>1</sup> indicates the path of the Sun and is the emblem of life, whereas the Suwastika<sup>2</sup> is the emblem of the life beyond the grave, for, according to

<sup>1</sup> First suggested by Wor. Bro. Sir John Cockburn.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.*, the reversed Swastika.

ancient symbolism and eschatology, the departed soul went through the underworld the reverse way, just as the Sun was supposed to do, *e.g.*, W. S. E. N. This, then is the road of the Spirits.

Thus the candidate starts on the symbolic journey of life, and in some of the eighteenth century rituals there is evidence that the way was made hard and difficult, to symbolise the trials and tribulations we meet with in life, particularly if we strive to attain to the Light. This lesson is still taught in certain foreign rituals.

In "Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods" I have discussed the probability of the theory that the Swastika<sup>3</sup> was once used in our Lodges to represent God, as it still is in the operative lodges, and have shown that a square = a gamma, the Greek "G," and therefore that the fourfold gamma represents the four letters of the Hebrew alphabet which denote the sacred name of God. I refer again to this point later, and so will content myself with saying that in an operative lodge the Swastika, is formed of four gallow-squares, one of which always rests on the open volume of the Bible, while the other three belong to the three Grand Master Masons, and are placed by them on the Bible before opening the Lodge, in such a way as to form a Swastika.

Thus even to-day in the manner of our progress round the Lodge we are reminded of that age-old symbol, which is found all over the world representing Life and the Sun, the latter being itself an emblem for God.

The Can. is then told to step off with the left foot first. Why? Because the Preserver in ancient mythology is always depicted as trampling with his left foot on the Serpent of Evil. This is so, alike in ancient Egypt, in India and elsewhere.

<sup>3</sup> First suggested by Wor. Bro. Sir John Cockburn.

But some may ask "Why should Horus or Krishna plant his left foot on the serpent of Evil? Major Sanderson, who has spent many years in Nyasaland as Medical Officer of Health, and has been initiated into many native rites, tells me that among many primitive races there is a superstition that when entering a shed where rice is stored one must enter right foot first, "so as not to hurt the Spirit who rules over the rice store." The same idea prevails among these people wherever food is stored, and we here get an explanation of "left foot first."

When fighting against the Spirit of Evil you do desire to hurt him, and so reverse the superstition, and step off left foot first. This is Major Sanderson's view, and I consider it is probably the correct one.

It may also be well to point out that our ceremonies have come in contact, at various periods, with many different religious beliefs, and this fact explains why there are often several meanings attached to certain points in the ritual, all of which may be correct.

The great serpent, Apepi, in Egypt, represents the powers of spiritual evil, *e.g.* the Devil. But it also specifically refers to ignorance, according to the Indian legend in which Krishna tramples on the five-headed cobra. The five heads, moreover, also have a reference to our five senses, which in that allegory must be cleansed of every evil thought.

Thus we may consider that the World is represented by the Cable Tow. and hoodwink, and the brotherhood helps us to free ourselves from them. The Flesh is represented by the first regular step in which we "trample" on the Tau Cross,<sup>4</sup> while the Devil is represented by the snake, of whose existence we are reminded by the warning to "step off with the left foot first."

<sup>4</sup> [The only Tau cross is that *made* by the feet in taking the step. — T.S.]

Strictly, the Can. should enter the Lodge in the North, not in the West. The North is the place of darkness, and at birth we come out of darkness into physical light, and so in the spiritual journey. This is done at Leeds.

Out of the darkness, Light. But the Light shineth in the darkness and the candidate comprehends it not, for the darkness of gross materialism is upon him until he kneels before the emblem of the divine light, the V .S .L.

The Can is then challenged by the J.W. and the S .W. The J .D. gives the pass word "Free and of G.R.," and the Wardens acknowledge its potency and bid him enter (Note "enter") as if he were outside a door on which he had knocked for admission. This brings to our mind the three regular knocks.

For reasons which cannot be stated here, but which I will deal with more fully later, I suggest that the E.A. knocks remind us that man is Body, Soul and Spirit, and as in this stage of ignorance the Body is as important as the other two, the three knocks are all of equal duration. Lest any misunderstand this, I would argue that in the process of creation first the Spirit comes from God; secondly, clothes itself with a Soul, and finally enters flesh. Thus, the first knock represents the Spirit, seeking God whence it came, the second, the Soul, and the third, the Body.

To understand the full meaning of this passing by the Wardens one needs to consider why the Can is being led round the Lodge. There are two reasons given—

- (1) To show that he is properly prepared.
- (2) To show that he is a fit and proper person to be made a mason.

Being made a mason symbolises the birth of the Christ within, and before anyone can attain to this mystical rebirth he must have progressed some way along the road of evolution, have gained certain experiences, and



learnt certain lessons. Think again of the Pass Word, Free and of Good Report! In the earlier stages man is bound in materialism—earthly things satisfy, and he is ruled by his physical passions. The Can. for masonry has begun to desire more than the material: he has felt the desire for spiritual growth and knowledge. and so has become “free.” This is recognised as he passes the J.W.—who represents the Material Nature. Next he approaches the S .W.—the representative of the Soul—and with the aid of the Pass Word is again bidden to enter. Notice, having passed the material stage, when the Body reigns supreme, the Soul immediately takes control, and presents the Can. to the W.M.—*i .e.*, the Soul calls upon the Divine Spirit of God to give Light to the Can.

The reply is significant, but is almost incomprehensible unless one understands the symbolical journey which the Can has just taken, and one is apt to wonder why the questions which follow were not asked at the very beginning of the ceremony. Really they are most important! They constitute the final testing of the C. before he is bidden to advance towards the E. to receive the Light, and enter on the pathway which begins with initiation and ends with God Himself. Also they are very searching: the Can. being required to declare solemnly that he comes seeking knowledge, not because others deaire hiin to do so, nor yet for unworthy motives of personal gain, but because he is prompted from within by a genuine desire to help Humanity. Then follows a hint that the journey upwards is by no means easy, and patience, perseverance, caution and courage are essential if we are to achieve our goal. The Can. having replied satisfactorily, the S .W. is given permission to direct the guide to instruct him in the proper method of advancing towards the Light.

This is by three squares which symbolise, not only uprightness of life, but also the three letters of the Great Name, *Yod, He, Vau*; Male, Female, and Variable. In other words, God the Father, Mother, and Child; and the fourth square is on the altar, which gives us the final *He*, or the complete name of Him we seek,—Jehovah, or J.H.V.H. But the letter HE (pronounced Hay) is female, and its female aspect is emphasised by the position of the Square and Compasses, which form a lozenge, itself a well known symbol for the Vesica Piscis, as all who study heraldry know; for in heraldry a woman's arms are placed, not on a shield, as are a man's, but on a lozenge.

A great truth is here taught,—that each soul is part of the Divine whole and cannot be separated from the God we seek. The Can. is only just about to emerge from the darkness of gross materialism, yet the God he seeks is within him. True He is so veiled that many do not realise His presence, just as hundreds of Candidates tread out the proper steps without ever realising their full significance, but those who rise above the material start on the path of return to God, and each stage that they pass, as they progress along the path, reveals more fully His Nature and Being.

Notice, the C. only treads three squares—*Yod, He, Vau*; Male, Female, Variable; the fourth square needed to complete the whole is on the Pedestal. This is particularly significant—never whilst in the flesh shall we be able fully to comprehend His nature. No finite mind can comprehend the Infinite Deity. It is only after we have left the first initiation long behind, and travelled far, that we can hope to obtain that transcendent knowledge which enables us to understand, fully, the Nature and Being of Him Who is the beginning and end of all.

Again comes the reminder that Masonry is free;

entrance to the path can only be gained by those who hear the call from within. No-one is coerced;—even at this late stage the Can. is given an opportunity to retire. Thus he is asked if he is willing to take a serious Obligation, and on his agreeing to do so, the W.M. directs him to kneel on his left knee, etc. It should be noted that the left side of an individual is usually said to be ‘Feminine,’ and it is not surprising, therefore, that in this, the first and femine degree, the C. is told to kneel on his left knee. Notice the exact position! On the left knee, keeping the right foot in the form of square. Now when you kneel on the left knee you must of necessity form a square at that knee, and, if you try it, you will find that you cannot keep the right foot in the form of a square without keeping the right knee in the form of a square also; so once again we get three squares, with the fourth on the Pedestal. Thus we get another glimpse of the truth already hinted at, that each soul is part of the Divine whole, and cannot be separated from God. The Can. is only just about to emerge from the darkness of ignorance and, yet he is instructed so to kneel that by his very attitude.—*i.e.* by forming three squares with his body (the fourth being on the Pedestal)—he shows symbolically that the God he seeks is within. Possibly the Can. is not conscious of His presence, any more than he realizes the significance of the steps by which he approached the Pedestal, or of the posture he assumes as he kneels thereat, yet verily God is with him, and within him, and, be the journey short or long, back to God he must return. Once a Mason, ever a Mason; there is no such thing as straying *permanently* from the path.

## CHAPTER V THE OBLIGATION.

WHY should there be any Obligation? In all the ancient mysteries an obligation was exacted for this reason:—The secret teachings in in these mysteries disclosed an inner meaning, often of a most exalted kind, unsuitable for the general public, who were lacking in education. In the ancient world the external religion, with its worship of many gods, suited the ordinary man of the world, who was incapable of comprehending more advanced spiritual truths. It would have been dangerous, alike to the populace and to the preacher, to have shouted aloud such a doctrine as the essential unity of God, and still more fatal to have attempted to describe His Nature. The danger to the populace would be that the preacher might destroy their belief in the religious system in which they had been reared, while failing to convert them properly to the new doctrine. For the preacher, the fate of Socrates, and the failure of the so-called heretic King of Egypt—who tried to popularise the worship of the one God, under the symbol of the Aten-disk, or disk of the Sun—are sufficient evidence of the risks which would be encountered.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, these mysteries all purported to teach certain occult secrets, whose diffusion among vicious, or ignorant, men would have been dangerous. Even in the Middle Ages these dangers were still very real. Any de-

<sup>1</sup> [Akhenaten's failure was largely to the entrenched power of the Theban priesthood who were themselves heading towards monotheism by assimilating all the gods to Amun-Rē. Atenism tended rather towards exclusion. — T.S.]

violation from orthodoxy might have endangered the social fabric of the community, and such an attempt was certain to involve the advocate of new doctrines in a struggle with Church and State which could only end at the stake.

Within an oath bound Society men felt free to speculate and compare their personal standpoints, while to the outside world they continued to conform to orthodoxy. The fate of the Templars must have been an ever present warning to the speculative mind, in the Middle Ages.

In addition, there is little doubt that the building trades, like other Guilds, had important trade secrets, and wished to safeguard these from interlopers. A mediæval Guild, on the one hand protected the interests of its members, while on the other it trained those members, and inspected and passed their work; thus protecting the community from deliberate fraud or careless work. Nor must it be forgotten that in a building bad work might involve actual danger to the users of that building. For all these reasons it was right and proper that no one who was not a member of the fraternity should be in possession of its trade secrets.

The obligation is undoubtedly ancient, but its full significance is realised by few.

The penalty is death, and in the Middle Ages I do not doubt that it would have been enforced, though to-day it is purely symbolical.<sup>2</sup>

Studying it carefully, we note in passing the word "hele,"—whose meaning has already been explained,—and also that every printed ritual in existence is a clear breach of our Obligation. The strict interpretation of this

<sup>2</sup>[The traditional penalty clauses were excised from the oaths by the Grand Lodge of England in the 1980s or 1990s and are now only mentioned in the lectures and the explanation of the signs. — T.S.]

clause is one of the reasons why we cannot expect to find any mediæval rituals, although the fact that the bulk of the members in those days could not read or write would lessen the temptation to make them.

From a practical point of view, however, the essential object to-day is to prevent anyone who has not been regularly initiated from entering our Lodges and the printed ritual usually does this, for signs, words, and grips are missing, and a careful cross-questioning would undoubtedly lead to the discovery of an imposter, even if he could produce a stolen Grand Lodge certificate.

In the altered conditions of the present era our secrecy is more of the nature of privacy, unlike that which prevails in a political secret society, which usually has revolutionary tendencies.

The old penalty has many striking points. It means that the culprit will be slain, and his body buried in unconsecrated ground. More than that, the ground can *never* be consecrated, and, according to the beliefs of the middle ages, and also of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, the soul of a man so buried could not rest in peace, but would wander up and down in misery till the Judgment Day. Suicides, for a similar reason, were buried at the cross roads, and to prevent their bodies being used by vampires a stake was driven through the middle of the body to keep it nailed down. (It should be noted that even in England the penalties vary in different localities).

Thus the culprit is not only doomed to death, but to be a wandering outcast spirit till the day when the Great Judge consigns it to Hell. It is not perhaps a very charitable, or Christian idea, but that is what is meant, all the same.

The tongue is removed so that he cannot speak on his own behalf at the Judgment Day.

The more effective punishment is, of course, a later "gloss" inserted at a time when, owing to better police supervision, it would have been dangerous to the members of the Order to enforce the ancient penalty. Today, in England, it is the only effective penalty, but in some foreign countries death is still enforced under certain circumstances. In such cases, however, the Lodges are usually strongly political, and revolutionary in tendency. But with us it still retains an obvious symbolical meaning.

Immediately after the Obligation the W.M. says, "Having been kept . . ." etc. We have seen that the Can. has already been asked several questions, these have gradually led up to this, the greatest and most important! Now the climax is reached. It is as if the W.M. says, you have declared that you are here of your own free will, not for unworthy motives, but led by an earnest desire for knowledge. Your humility and obedience have been tested, and you are therefore entitled to request the fulfilment of the greatest desire of your heart. The question put at this moment can be answered by no one but the C.,<sup>3</sup> for it is meant to teach him that essential lesson that no appeal for Light is ever made in vain. His answer given, the W.M. says, "Then let . . ." etc. Notice the word "*restored.*" Mystical rebirth marks the beginning of our journey towards the Light, of our ascent towards God, but it is a restoration—a journey back to Him from Whom we came.

Exactly the same procedure is followed in the initiatory rites of the Turkish Dervishes. Among them, how-

<sup>3</sup> [Even in the absence of a direct prompt the question—"Having been kept for a considerable time in a state of darkness, what . . . is the predominant wish of your heart?" is fairly leading; on the other hand "in whom do you put your trust?" requires some thought, and one suspects Can.s generally are prompted on that one. — T.S.]

ever, the incident is followed by a beautiful exposition of the mystical meaning of Light. It is the Divine Light, emblem of God Himself, and of Divine inspiration. It is, moreover, present, not only in the sacred writings, but in every true believer's heart. The light of the sun itself is but a faint similitude of the Divine Light of God's love, through which, and in which, we have our being.

Though not expressed in our ritual, this act has the same inner meaning, as I have explained.

So to the Can. Light is restored, and he sees, what? The V.S.L., the Square and the Compasses. The V.S.L. is in a place of honour, because without its divine standard and authority the Square and Compasses placed thereon would be practically meaningless. These latter form a lozenge, which as I have already said, is a well known symbol for the Vesica Piscis, which represents the female or preservative principle of the Deity, without which we could not exist for a single day, or hope to be preserved from the powers of darkness which threaten us upon our spiritual journey.

Thus the W.M.'s words teach the aspirant that we have a duty to God, ourselves, and our brother men.

The Can. is raised with the proper grip, but this is not explained at once. Rather his attention is directed to the three lesser lights, which we are told represent the Sun, Moon and the Master.

As our Lodges are at present arranged the W.M. should point to the South for the Sun, and to the West for the Moon, but it must be admitted that the lesson to be derived from these three luminaries is not very clear, Indeed, the Moon plays no real part in our mysteries, which are essentially solar in character, while the implied contrast between Sun, Moon, and Master is in no way helpful.



In reality the three lesser lights are the W .M, and his two wardens with their respective candles, and these officers have a real symbolic meaning of great importance, which symbolic characters they maintain consistently throughout all three degrees.

My personal view is that it was to the lights on the pedestals, and their respective officers, that this phrase originally applied, and that the Sun and Moon are 18th century interpretations.

#### THE THREE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS.

In any case this makes a convenient place in which to consider the symbolic meaning of the three principal officers in a lodge. The W.M. represents the rising Sun, and in this sense he covers two distinct meanings: the first in connection with the nature of God, and the other with regard to the nature of man. And a similar dual character exists in the case of S.W. and J.W.

The W.M. represents God the Creator—He who calls the Lodge into being—He who created the World out of Chaos. In India this aspect of God, the Incomprehensible, has been individualised as *Brahma*, so that the devotee may be able to comprehend Him, at least in part.

It is the Master who opens the Lodge, who calls it out of nothing. He sits in the East, the place of light; but though he opens, he does not close the lodge.

That is the work of another aspect of the Divine Being.

In the nature of man the W .M, represents the Spirit, the Divine Spark within us, ever striving for the light, never truly separated from the divine source of its being. This dual aspect of the W.M. and his principal officers must be borne in mind, if we are to delve down into the inner, or esoteric, meaning of our wonderful rituals.

The S .W. represents the Setting Sun, and hence the destructive, or transformative, aspects of the Deity. Among the Hindoos this aspect is called *Śiva*. He shall one day close the Grand Lodge of this World, when time shall be swallowed up into Eternity. The S .W. closes the Lodge. As the Destroyer he reminds us that Death, the great leveller, will bring all men low, and his symbol is the Level.

This in itself reminds us of the caste mark of *Śiva*, which is a horizontal line. But in the nature of Man he represents the Soul, which alone enables the Spirit to raise the body towards divine things.

Without the medium of the Soul, the Spirit would be unable to influence the body. It is for this reason that the Can. is invested in craft masonry by the S.W. or Soul, and not by the W.M., representing the Divine Spark. Thus we learn that we must raise ourselves, step by step, towards the Divine Light. *Śiva* is, above all, the great M.M.

The J.W. represents the Sun in its Meridian. He stands for the Way of Life, the balance between birth and death. His is the sunny side of life. He calls us from labour to refreshment and refreshment to labour. In the divine aspect he represents the Preserver, called *Viṣṇu* in India, of whom it is stated that as Rama he sent the skilful craftsman, Hanuman, to build the bridge for Him, by means of which He crossed the straits to fight against the powers of evil, in ancient Ceylon.

*Viṣṇu* is associated with the element of water, and with corn, and his caste mark is a perpendicular straight line, referring to the rain which falls from heaven. This symbol is remembered in our lodges by the plumb rule.

In the nature of man he stands for the body, which perishes. He is Hiram Abiff in the Grand Lodge at Jerusalem. He represents the life and sufferings of the

body, only terminated by death, the body which in every man dies before its divine work is accomplished. Our divine temple is not finished at death: all that we can hope is that the foundations have been well and truly laid. In short, in this life we cannot hope to "see God face to face," nor, being finite, can we truly comprehend the Infinite, but we can hope to make such progress that, when called hence, we shall be able to continue, and complete, the work of our own salvation on the foundations of a good, and spiritual, earthly life.

Finally, it is to be noted that in every degree these three officers co-operate to advance the Can., and so it is in the spiritual life, for body, soul and spirit must co-operate, if real progress is to be attained.

Next, the Can. is informed of the three great dangers—note the triplicity again—and the few sentences devoted to them must be considered in the light of what has already been written by me on the Sharp Instrument, the Cable Tow, and the Obligation.

At the door of the Lodge the Can. was in great danger, because entrance thereat marked the beginning of the ceremony of initiation into Masonry, and initiation symbolizes the mystical re-birth—the end of the descent into matter and the beginning of the ascent to God—and there can be no more critical time than that. The Sharp Instrument warns us of the dangers of rushing unprepared into the field of occultism, while the Cable Tow indicates the danger that the Divine Spark may be quenched; strangled by materialism, if we do not continue steadfastly. But even when these dangers are passed, throughout the whole of our mystic journey there remains that last danger of our obligation, namely, that of infidelity to the vows which marked our entrance, or of abandoning our further quest for light;—knowing the right, but deli-

berately choosing the wrong. This means death; not primarily physical death, but that greater death, referred to by our Hindoo Brethren as "Being born again at the bottom of the ladder of evolution up which we have for so long been ascending."

We next come to the moment, so long expected, when the secrets are disclosed. No doubt many Brethren could not suppress a slight feeling of disappointment at their comparative insignificance. Was such a tremendous Obligation necessary to safeguard a Sign, Word, and Grip, which appear to be purely arbitrary?

This question is a fair one, and the answer is that the Obligation safeguards, not so much the Grip, etc., which are but the outward and visible signs, as the inner esoteric meaning, hidden in our ritual, and never properly explained.

Firstly, the W.M. instructs the Can. in the first regular step which on investigation proves to be the tau cross.

The tau cross was originally the phallus, and has many inner meanings. It is the emblem of generation, and creation, but since these powers may be prostituted they must be brought under control. As the first regular step, it represents our natural and animal passions, which must be trampled underfoot and brought under complete control, otherwise we cannot make any advancement in Freemasonry. In plain language, unless we bring our passions into complete subjection, we cannot hope to advance towards a true knowledge of God. For that, I consider, is the real search. or quest. in Freemasonry.

Therefore in every one of the Craft degrees, we trample on the tau cross.<sup>4</sup> It will be remembered that one

<sup>4</sup> [This interpretation is absurd, as already noted. One can hardly be said to "trample" on a figure which is only formed by the position of one's feet. If not a blind, it demonstrates the writer's hylophobic bias. — T.S.]

of the charges against the Templars in 1307, was that they trampled on the cross, and this charge seems to be correct. Yet these same men adored the Cross three times a year in their ceremonies, and moreover fought and died for it on many a corpse strewn field in Palestine.

I have no doubt this act of theirs was a symbolic act, associated more with the cross as an emblem of our passion, than with the Christian cross of suffering.

Yet symbols merge by imperceptible degrees into each other, and so it is that we can truly say that Christ was crucified on the Cross or our passions. In mediæval pictures you will usually find that while Christ hangs on a Latin, or four-armed cross, the two thieves are hung on the Tau, or three-armed crosses. This indicates that they died for their own sins, but Christ who hangs on the cross of sacrifice died for the sins of others.

Thus, my brothers, the first regular step is full of inner meaning, nor is this the only place in which we meet with the tau cross in the craft. Its higher and holier aspect when associated with the W.M. I shall discuss later.

## CHAPTER VI CONCLUSION OF THE CEREMONY.

HAVING taken the regular step the Can. is given the Sign. This he is told refers to the Penalty of his Obligation, and no doubt it does, but it also seems to refer to something much more startling. The part of the body indicated has always been regarded as an important occult centre. In some strange way, the laws of which are but little understood, it has always been associated with the phenomena known amongst psychic students as Materialisations. As, however, this subject lies somewhat outside our theme, we will discuss the point no further.

But all our penalties have a striking analogy to the legend of the creation of man as given by the Hindoo sages. From Brahma sprang all four castes. From His head came the Brahmins, from His Breast the Kshatra, or fighting caste, from His Belly the peasants, and from His feet the Sudras. The latter were not true Arians, and were not twice born men; in other words, only the first three castes were regarded as really and truly admissible to the Temple of the High Gods, and free to participate in Their worship.

It will be noted that in this degree the Sign suggests the cutting off of the first caste from those below. This Sign, Bro. Major Sanderson suggests, was originally a mantra, or magic prayer, which must be most carefully guarded from the profane.

The Token appears to be an arbitrary one, although it may possibly refer to a certain pillar. Explanations of this, together with the meaning, derivation, and significance of the Word, are reserved for the next volume, for

reasons which will be obvious to those entitled to know them.

No doubt, however, the basic idea of both pillar and word is phallic, and other interpretations have evolved later.

Having received sign, word and token, the Can. is warned to be cautious and told how to receive a challenge, then, having been given *strength* to help him on his way, he is sent forth in order that the important lesson of caution may be implanted in his mind.

The testing by J.W. and S.W. are obviously of practical use, but I think that here also there is an inner meaning. The Body and Soul test the Cand. to see that the lessons have been well and truly learnt; also there seems to be a definite astrological reference.

Having satisfied these important officers, the S.W. asks for some special mark of favour. That is, the Soul calls on the Spirit, but is told that it is the Soul which must invest the regenerate man with the outward signs of the change he has undergone. This point has already been mentioned, but its deep significance must not be forgotten. It may truly be said that it is the S.W. who sets the seal on the candidate's initiation. and proclaims him as at length a member of the Order.

The address of the S.W. and the subsequent one by the Master, are fairly self-explanatory. But one or two points deserve stressing.

The reference to the antiquity of the apron refers mainly, of course, to its use among the Operatives, and implies the dignity of honest labour. The present form of our apron is comparatively modern, but there is evidence that our predecessors, the Comacine Masons, wore aprons when they met in Lodge, and aprons have had a special significance among many religious systems. Thus

some of the Chinese gods wear aprons, and I have a photo of one (the original of which belongs to Bro. Vince, of 10, Duke Street) and this "God" is making a certain high degree sign. Among the ancient races of America the apron was also evidently used with a religious significance (see picture of the Toltec Preserver in "Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods.")

The address of the W .M. lays stress on the importance of not entering the Lodge if a brother is at variance with another. At first sight this may seem a somewhat unnecessary charge. Normal, well conducted gentlemen are not likely to start an unseemly wrangle in Lodge, even if they are at enmity;<sup>1</sup> and should two men so far forget the common decencies of life as to do so, the W.M. has ample power to deal with the situation.

The real significance of the injunction, however, is that it implies that the mere presence of two brethren who are at variance will disturb the harmonious atmosphere of the meeting. This is a purely spiritual atmosphere, and the belief that such disturbance would occur without any open disagreement, is correct.

In short, such differences disturb the spiritual atmosphere, prevent concentration, and can be detected by sensitive individuals.

Every Lodge has an "atmosphere of its own," and any sensitive man who comes to it can detect it. I have myself noticed the different "atmospheres" of various lodges, and also variations in that of my own.

Too much regard therefore cannot be paid to this rule, and if ignored the Lodge will certainly suffer.

The Can. is placed in the Northeast corner of the Lodge for the reason given in the ritual, but it is impor-

<sup>1</sup> [It is perhaps, though, being optimistic to assume your membership consists entirely of "normal, well conducted gentlemen." — T.S.]



tant to remember that he himself is building his own temple—a spiritual temple to the glory of God.

Why should the cornerstone be laid in the Northeast? This was for a very practical reason: namely, that the Operatives could work round with the Sun, and thus obtain the maximum amount of light. Symbolically, it refers, of course, to the journey of the soul, which begins in the North, enters life at the East, at birth, and so proceeds to the West, where death ends our day.

The position in which the Can. stands is not only a square, the emblem of rectitude, and of God, but at the particular point he makes a “lewis,” or angle clamp, which binds, together the life which has been, (in the North) and his future life (in the East). In physical life the North is pre-natal, but in the spiritual it is before we turned to better things. Above all, such a clamp gives rigidity and strength to the corners, and assures stability. It will be noted that this position in like manner makes a “footing stone.”

The testing of the candidate is explained, but perhaps I ought once more to remind my reader that it is absolutely essential that we should leave behind us the baleful gifts of the underworld, and the canker of wealth, which destroy spirituality.

The lecture on the working tools explains itself. It appears to be mainly 18th century work.

## CHAPTER VII THE CHARGE.

WHEN the Can. has been restored to his personal comfort he receives the charge. The first significant point is the phrase "Ancient, no doubt it is, as having subsisted from time immemorial." In "Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods" I have endeavoured to show that this phrase is literally true, and a strong claim can be made that modern Freemasonry is the lineal descendant of the Ancient Mysteries, via the Roman Colleges of Architects, the Comacine Masons, and the Mediaeval Freemasons.

The other significant phrase is that relating to "The Ancient Landmarks." Much learned discussion has taken place concerning what these are. Common sense indicates the following points as obviously falling within this heading, whereas many others may be matters of opinion, on which brethren are entitled to differ.

1.—*The signs, words and tokens.* If these were changed it would shatter the universality of Freemasonry, and prevent old masons recognising new ones, or members of various jurisdictions doing so. It must be acknowledged that the charge made by the Ancients against the Moderns, that they had removed the Ancient Landmarks, was largely justified, for they appear to have transposed the words in the first and second degrees. Still, apparently, they did not entirely change them.

2 & 3.—*Belief in God and a Future Life.* If these are removed, then the object and purpose of masonry is destroyed, since it is the "quest of knowledge of, and union with, God." Again, the elimination of the idea of a future life would destroy the teaching of one of the most

important craft degrees.<sup>1</sup> If these landmarks were removed, Freemasonry would either perish, or else have to substitute a new object, as the Grand Orient of France has done. This having become atheistical, had to turn masonry into a secret political society, with disastrous results. Hence it is that the Grand Lodge of England felt compelled to break off fraternal relations with that body.

4.—*The Order of the Degrees.* If these were reversed or changed it would reduce the whole system to nonsense.

The remainder of this address is fairly clear as it stands. It contains excellent teaching, the meaning of which lies on the surface, and so we need spend no further space on it here.

The first tracing board contains a great deal of useful instruction, but it is so seldom given in most lodges that we will pass it by, hoping at some future date to give it the attention it deserves.

The purpose of these tracing boards will be explained in the book dealing with the second degree, and we can therefore take leave of the Entered Apprentice. There is no pretence that we have exhausted the subject, much more could be written, but in a small book like this the author must restrict himself to giving an outline explanation, and suggestions for study, in the hope that his readers will follow the hints given, and discover further meanings for themselves.

<sup>1</sup> [Maybe . . . but it should be remembered that H.A. died, was buried, and stayed dead, and (after a couple of re-interrals) buried. — T.S.]

## CHAPTER VIII THE CLOSING OF THE FIRST DEGREE.

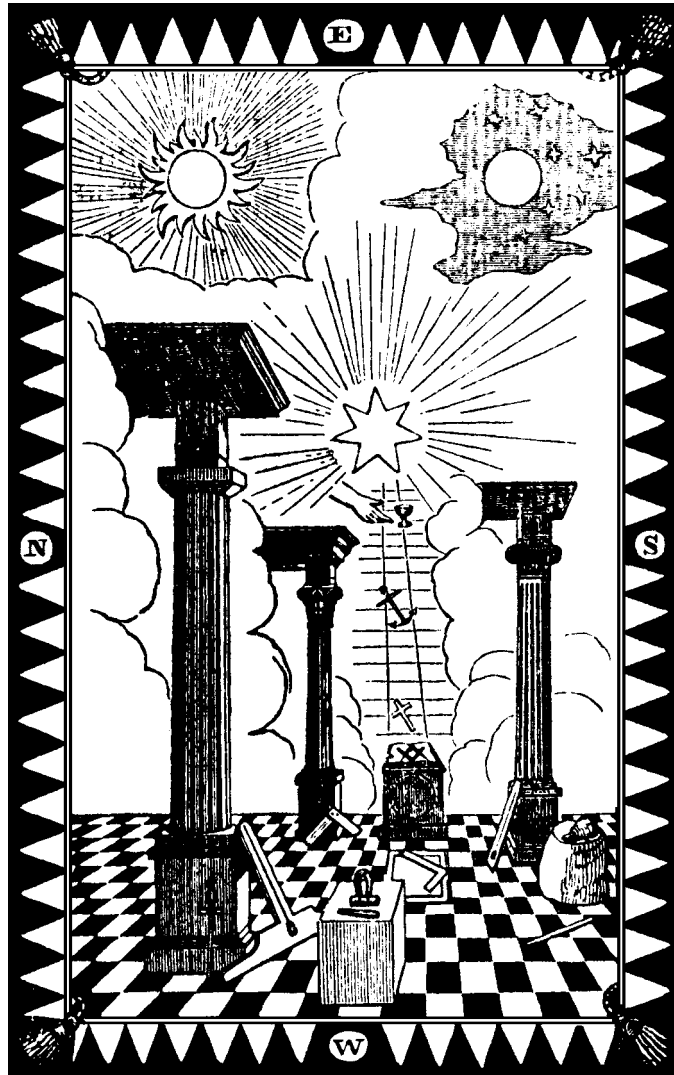
THE first degree closing is remarkably short, and its meaning is fairly clear. The candidate has not yet advanced sufficiently far to be able to appreciate any more esoteric teaching. He is therefore given one brief and tremendous lesson. The Destructive side of the Deity is invoked, and the same officer, it must be remembered, is also the Soul.

Thus, at the very beginning of his symbolical career, the novice is warned of the inevitable end. During the ceremony of his initiation the fact has been impressed upon him that his spiritual advancement is by means of his soul, *i.e.* when the S.W. invests him with his apron. Now he is warned that the same soul which may help him to rise, may also cause his spiritual destruction. But even more this fact should show him that, when he has learned all that life can teach him, the Soul, acting on the instructions of God, calls him to other fields of usefulness.

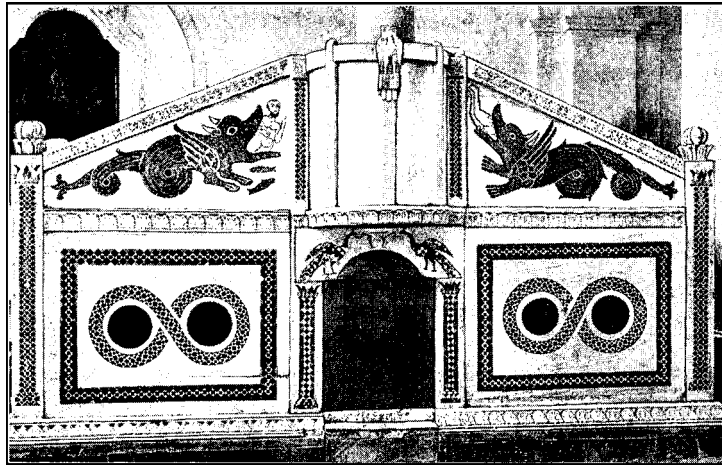
It should also be noted that the S.W. closes in the name of the Great Architect, and by command of the W.M., thus reminding us of Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.

## CONCLUSION

This then concludes our consideration of the meaning of the first degree. The author has not tried to be exhaustive, and would stress the point that usually he has only attempted to give one esoteric meaning, although often there are other inner meanings, each within the other. But he trusts he will have helped his brethren to perceive that there are indeed deep and invaluable meanings hidden within our ritual, and that his readers, having once started on this line of study, will not rest content until they themselves have discovered further inner meanings. If this be so, then this little book will not have been in vain.



No. 2  
*The Fellow Craft's Handbook*



PULPIT AT RAVELLO CATHERDAL, SORRENTO.  
COMACINE WORK. A.D. c. 1280.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THOSE who have read the first volume of this series, which deals with the E.A. Degree, will realize that our ceremonies have a deep inner meaning and teach profound spiritual lessons seldom realised by the average Mason.

In the second volume we are dealing with the degree of Life, in its broadest sense, just as in the first degree we were dealing with the degree of birth, and as life in reality is educational for the Soul, we are not surprised to find that throughout the whole degree the subject of education is more or less stressed.

We should, however, realize that each of the degrees builds on the one which has gone before, and the ingenuity with which the lessons inculcated in the first degree are carried forward and developed in the succeeding degrees is one of the most striking characteristics of our Masonic ritual.

This is true not only of the obvious exoteric moral instruction conveyed in the ceremonies, but even more of the deep mystical and spiritual lessons which lie hidden beneath the surface. For example, in the first degree we perceived that the steps which led the initiate to the Pedestal when combined with that which we found thereon symbolically produced the Name of God, and in the second degree the main lesson is that the Brethren discover the name of God in the Middle Chamber, while the manner of approaching the Pedestal gives us the Divine name, written with the five letters which denote that the Creator has become Messiah, the King. Thus we learn among other lessons that the second person of the

Trinity comes forth from the first.<sup>1</sup> When we come to the book which deals with the M.M. we shall perceive that that degree likewise builds on what has gone before.

In the first few years of my Masonic career I utterly failed to realize the tremendous importance of the second degree, and used glibly to say that, while the first and third degrees impressed me greatly, and had valuable lessons to impart, the second disappointed me by its lack of depth and mystical teaching. Many brethren have said practically the same thing to me, but I have come to the conclusion that those of us who think this are mistaken. The truth is that the real inner teaching of the second degree is less obvious than that of the first and third, but every whit as important, and until one has grasped its full significance one has no conception of the wonderful symmetry of our Craft rituals. In short, the interpretation of the second degree forms the key to the full interpretation of the third.

It is to impress this fact on my Brethren that I have written this book, and in particular have laid so much stress on the manner of approaching the Middle Chamber, and the full Kabbalistic meaning of the Name there discovered.

It must never be forgotten that while there are meanings within meanings in the Craft ritual, all of which are important, the great lesson of our system is the Mystic Quest after God, and the journey of the Soul towards union with its Creator.

With these brief words of introduction I venture to place in the hands of my Brethren this little volume, which, while not attempting to be exhaustive, will, I

<sup>1</sup>[This is an allusion to the Kabbalistic mis-spelling of Jesus or Joshua as **יהשׁוּעָ**, the letter *shin* in the middle of the Tetragrammaton or Jewish Name of God. — T.S.]

hope, be of some help to those who, amid the turmoil of mundane affairs, have little time to devote to an extensive study of the inner meaning of those ceremonies, which they have nevertheless grown to love and venerate.

As one or two Brethren who have read this manuscript have asked me to refer them to a copy of the *Kabala*, where they can themselves read what those ancient sages wrote concerning the descent of the letter "Shin," I would refer them to "*Kabala Denudata*," translated by Mathers,<sup>2</sup> where they will find that, and many other points of peculiar interest to Masons.

J.S.M.W.

Sept., 1928.

<sup>2</sup>[*The Kabbalah Unveiled*, trans. and ed. by S. L. "MacGregor" Mathers, London: Redway, 1887, many reprints. This comprises three relatively minor tracts from the *Zohar*, done into English from the Latin of Knorr von Rosenroth's *Kabala Denudata*. It does not contain any references to the doctrine to which Ward alludes. The letter *Shin* is explained (intro. para. 11) as being symbolic of the spirit of Elohim according to the numerical value of the letters; and in intro, para. 12 the correct Hebrew spelling of Yeshua or Jesus is given, namely ישוע, not יהושע; the latter was an invention of Christian Cabalists. — T.S.]

## INTRODUCTION

BY THE HON. SIR JOHN A. COCKBURN  
M.D., K.C.M.G., P.G.D. Eng., P. Dept. G.M.S. Australia.

IN this little volume W. Bro. Ward justly emphasises the importance of the 2°. In former times it was no mere passing stage of a Mason's career.<sup>1</sup> In the Fellowship of the Craft lay the whole body of Masonry. An Apprentice was regarded as a brother but not as a member of the Lodge; while a Master Mason was merely, as we still state in the ritual, an experienced Craftsman selected to preside over the Lodge in the capacity of Master.

The ceremony of Admission to the Fellowship of the Craft has been abbreviated and shorn of some of its characteristic features; for example a "Mark," which placed on the stones wrought by a Craftsman entitled him to his wages, is now no longer allotted to him. Nevertheless it is in the 2° that the essential elements of the Craft are revealed. The degree is founded on that symbol which is the basis of Masonry, and is regarded as the test of rectangularity in the material, as well as of rectitude in the moral, world. The candidate is now enlightened as to the meaning of the "Hieroglyphic bright which none but Craftsmen ever saw." He learns that it represents the ineffable name of the Grand Geometrician, as written in the four letters of the Hebrew Alphabet, to which attention was specially directed in the Middle Chamber. It is as a craftsman that he becomes cognisant of the second Pillar placed at the porchway of the Temple, and he is taught that stability can only be attained by the significance of both Pillars being conjoined. Herein is contained the Mystery not only of Masonry but of all the

<sup>1</sup> [Likely a pun on "passing" was intended — T.S.]

religions; viz., the Union of Heaven and Earth, and the Mediation between God and man. As an Apprentice he has been taught to walk uprightly in the sight of God: his mind has become imbued with moral principles: he now has to address himself to the much more difficult task of applying these principles in his everyday relationship with his fellows. The lesson of the J.W.'s plumb has now to be blended with that of the S.W.'s level. Spirit and Matter, theory and practice, with their innumerable analogies, have to be reconciled in solving the problems which are constantly encountered in life.

In the tables of the law one column contains the commandments relating to our duty to God, the other our duty to our fellow men. The Fatherhood of God involves as a corollary the Brotherhood of man. Therefore it is manifest that a stage in the progress of a Mason that lays stress on applied religion demands close attention. Although on the surface the ceremony of passing may appear less attractive than that which precedes and that which follows it, a close study will convince the reader that the 2° contains many lessons of priceless value which will well repay the labour of investigation.

J.A.C.

## CHAPTER I PREPARATION, PASS WORD AND OPENING CEREMONY.

THE questions which are put to the Can., are really a test of the lectures, which to-day, unfortunately, are hardly ever given in open Lodge. The system as codified at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was really a most efficient method of educating the Can., and had been carefully arranged so as to make sure that only when he was properly prepared should he come forward to be passed to the second degree. After having passed through the ceremony of initiation a summary of its main tenets, illustrated as it were on the blackboard, was given to him in the form of a lecture on the Tracing Board.

The tracing boards were originally drawn in sand on the floor of the Lodge, and therefore correspond closely with the pictures and diagrams still used among primitive savages in the initiatory rites of a boy into manhood. These primitive tracing boards are still drawn on the earth by means of specially prepared and consecrated flour, and they are an essential part of the ceremony. To-day the masonic tracing board has degenerated into a somewhat crude painting on canvas stretched on a wooden frame, and its original purpose is therefore apt to be overlooked by the Can. This is peculiarly so in the case of the first degree tracing board, since the lecture on it is very seldom given. In the second degree, as will be shown later, the tracing board still plays a very important part, and we shall have occasion presently to consider it in full, but the connection of the tracing board with the questions must be grasped,—hence this short preamble.

Under the old system, at the next meeting of the Lodge the W.M. went through the lecture proper. He asked the S.W. a sort of catechism, which the latter had to answer. This would take well over an hour, or, in other words, as long as the ceremony of initiation. This catechism *did* give the exoteric meaning of most of the ceremony, together with a good deal of traditional history of real interest. Undoubtedly much of it was allegorical, and although the bulk of it was 18th Century work, nevertheless it contained several very striking reminiscences of the Ancient Wisdom. For example, the question "Whence come you?" A.—"From the West," . . . Q.—"Whither directing your feet?" A.—"To the E. . . . in search of a Master." Here we have something of deep symbolical meaning, and of peculiar significance in view of a slightly different, though cognate, phrase in a later degree.<sup>1</sup>

As, however, we are not attempting to interpret the meaning of these lectures in this book, we must pass the matter by, with the hope that our readers will make a point of obtaining a copy of these lectures (purchasable at any Masonic furnishers) and study them at their leisure.

But the point which must be realised is that, while the tracing board is a summary of the first degree lecture, the questions asked of a Can. are on that lecture itself. In short, the Can. has to pass an oral examination, and the last question, namely, "These are the usual questions, I will put others, *etc.*," although to-day practically meaningless, had originally an excellent object. It indicates that the Can., and also the other members of the Lodge, had heard the full lecture and that the former must be prepared to answer any question on it.

In the North of England it is very usual, in addition to these questions, to ask the Can. to repeat the whole of his

<sup>1</sup> [*i.e.*, in the opening of M.M.]

Obligation, and if he is unable to do so his passing is deferred until he can.

Turning to the questions themselves, it will be noticed that great stress is laid on the fact that the Can. must be properly prepared. A fact that is little known to most brethren, but well worth bearing in mind, is that the Ancient Kabalists had a secret interpretation of the Old Testament, and one of the keys was to read backwards the Proper Names contained in those books. Now, if the words dedicated to the first and second degrees are read backwards, instead of the official interpretation given they produce the phrase "Being fortified by the practice of every moral virtue, we are properly prepared." The significance of this in relation to what has gone before, and also to what will follow after, is self-evident.

The inner meaning of the manner of preparation having been given in the E.A.'s Handbook, it is unnecessary to write further on the subject, but of course if any of our readers have not seen that book they should certainly get it, as otherwise they will fail to understand the importance of these early questions.

We now come to the question which is rightly termed a paradox.<sup>2</sup> The explanation thereof, though ingenious, is obviously somewhat Jesuitical. The truth of the matter is that in Operative days lodges were held at mid-day, and probably on a Saturday, which has always been the time when the workmen receive their wages. The Speculatives, for their own convenience, changed the time to the evening, a fact which was resented by the old operative members. In the first quarter of the 18th Century, at York, Operative Lodges continued to meet at mid-day, while the Speculatives met in the evening. To-

<sup>2</sup> [The allusion being to the 'symbolic' rather than straightforwardly true response to the question as to when the Can. was initiated. — T.S.]



day, with the disappearance of the Operatives, a Bro. may well wonder why this untrue statement is still left in the ritual.

The fact that it *is* there warns the careful student that some deep symbolical meaning must be attached to the time. The full significance of the phrase is only revealed towards the end of a Brother's symbolical career in the Craft, and a detailed discussion must therefore be postponed to another book, but it is permissible to point out the following facts:—The sun is at its full strength at Noon; in his open pomp and glory; vested, as it were, with his full regal powers. What more suitable time then for a solar cult to hold its meetings? and we must remember that Freemasonry is distinctly solar in its symbolism.<sup>3</sup> Again, we were told that the J.W. marks the Sun at its meridian, and we have seen that this officer represents the body.

Hence our meetings are held while the body is at its full strength, and in possession of all its faculties. Thus it is peculiarly significant that this question is put to the Can. in the first degree, which degree deals with the "Natural" man. If the "Natural" man cannot protect himself at high noon against possible dangers, he is certainly helpless at any other hour of the day. We may therefore say that one meaning of this phrase is that the Can. enters Freemasonry at the time of his greatest strength and physical well being. That this is not a fanciful interpretation is proved by the insistence that a Can. must be perfect in all his parts. In the old days no man who was blind, maimed, halt, etc., could be made a Mason, and in Scotland a Master of a Lodge still has to take an Obligation not to admit such a man. The reasons

<sup>3</sup> [Since however the E.A. degree represents birth, this is not necessarily the most appropriate symbolic time for initiation in that degree. — T.S.]

for this are both practical and symbolical. As an Operative Society Masonry was like a modern benefit society, and had to maintain sick Brethren, and the widows of those who died. It is obvious, therefore, that they were justified in refusing to admit a man, not yet a Mason, who might easily become a burden to the society. Also, symbolically, every Mason is a sacrifice, and the old Jewish regulations laid down explicitly that the ram offered for sacrifice must be without blemish, and perfect.<sup>4</sup> These points must suffice for the moment, except that it is well to bear in mind that Christ was hung on the Cross at 12 noon, and our readers would be well advised to ponder over that fact and correlate it with Masonic tradition.<sup>5</sup>

The next question and answer have misled many thoughtful Brethren as to the true meaning of Freemasonry. It should be remembered that it is addressed to an E.A., who as yet has had hardly any indication that Masonry is anything else than a system of morality. The first degree, for the most part, aims at teaching its members simply to be good men and true, and strictly to obey the moral laws, but subsequent degrees teach much more than this. Until a man has grasped these elementary lessons it is not only useless, but dangerous, to try and develop his intellectual faculties, which is the main exoteric purpose of the second degree. For a Mason who has taken his third degree to give this answer as an explanation of what Freemasonry is shows that he has failed to grasp the inner meaning of even the second degree, much less of the third. In short, this explanation by itself is only true when restricted to the first degree, for Free-

<sup>4</sup> [See also Deut. xxiii, 1. — T.S.]

<sup>5</sup> [The allusion is of course to the M.M. legend in which Hiram Abiff is struck down at high noon. — T.S.]

masonry is much more than a mere system of morality, whilst even in the first degree the veil is very thin.

The Grand Principles, in modern language, may be interpreted as true comradeship, charity, and the search after truth, the latter phrase being better explained by the term the Mystic Quest after God.

The remaining questions are of a practical nature, except that the phrase "Perfect Points of my Entrance" is often somewhat a mystery to the newly made Brother. Two interpretations of this phrase are sometimes given. Firstly, that it refers to the Step, which is a tau cross, and means that we will trample under foot our animal passions. This is the manner in which we enter the Lodge when once it is properly opened. But from the point of view of the Can. it cannot refer to this, for at his initiation he did not know the Step, and so the other interpretation is the only one possible, namely, "of, at and on." This is interpreted as meaning that the Can. entered Freemasonry *of* his own free will and accord, *at* the door of the Lodge, *on* the point of a sharp instrument (See lecture).<sup>6</sup> Having satisfactorily answered these questions the Can. is led to the W.M., representing the Spirit or Wisdom, and receives from him a Pass Word, which will enable him to enter the Lodghe when it has been raised to the higher degree. We have already in our first book explained briefly why Pass Words are necessary, but we will repeat our explanation for the convenience of any who have not yet read that book. They are a relic of old world magic. The Can. goes out from a Lodge in the first degree, and re-enters it in the second degree. In his absence the Lodge is raised by a ceremony which, in the technical language of magic and the occult, "raises the vibrations" of those present to a higher key, and in

<sup>6</sup> [The lecture printed by Carlile gives these somewhat differently. — T.S.]

consequence force is generated. Those who have studied such matters know that a body of men who are all concentrating on a particular subject do generate a peculiar, subtle, but powerful force, which has not been actually defined by science, but is loosely called magnetic. In the old days of phenomenal magic certain words, when uttered in the correct tone, were believed to be in consonance with this "Power," like a tuning fork is to a violin. Therefore we give a Pass Word to the Can. to raise him quickly to the same "Power," as the Lodge. Such Pass Words were usual in all great mystery rites, ancient or modern, and it is therefore not surprising to find them in Masonry. It is worth noting that the Ancients were right when they charged the so-called Moderns, in the 18th Century, with having altered the Words and Pass Words. As a matter of fact they reversed them, and the Word now given to an E .A. was originally given to an F .C., and vice versa, and the same fate befell the Pass Words. Those foreign Grand Lodges who derive from England before about 1745 (for example, the French and the Dutch), still have the Words and Pass Words in the old order, and in South Africa E.A.s and F.C.s of the Dutch Lodges are for this reason forbidden to visit the English Lodges until they have been made M.M.s.

The interpretation of this Pass Word will be given at a later point in the book; all we need do now is to stress the fact that, as it is represented in our Lord by Corn and Water, it is clearly associated with the J.W. In the last book I pointed out that the J.W. represents in man, the body. This therefore indicates that the simplest necessities of life, to the spiritually minded man, are plenty. All he requires, as the Buddha taught, is sufficient to keep his body in health, whereas luxuries clog the soul and retard its upward progress.

I also pointed out in the last book that the J.W. represents God the Preserver, whose emblems in India, Mexico, etc., are Corn and Water. From the anthropological point of view, it is worth remembering that among primitive peoples God the Preserver is also the God of Vegetation, and the Rain God. He who makes the corn to grow and provides food for his worshippers. Thus we perceive that Freemasonry is perfectly logical in its use of this Word.<sup>7</sup> Another fact of interest is that Quetzacoatl, the Mexican Preserver, wears ears of corn in his hair when he is wounded by the giant of evil near to a Fall of Water, and at that very instant makes the Sign of an F.C.

The Can. then departs to be prepared, and in the interval the Lodge is raised to the second degree. We will, however, consider the manner of his preparation before going on to the raising of the Lodge. This varies in several details. Most English workings are the same, but the Scotch and Irish have certain variations which are worthy of mention. According to the Scotch rituals he brings into the Lodge a square supported in his left hand, but, as with us, the I.G. presents the angle of a Square to his naked breast, although to the right breast instead of to the left breast. In the Irish Lodges the same breast is made bare as with us, but he is still divested of all metals as he was in the first degree, and a cable to is would *twice* around his neck. Thus it will be noted that everything save the breast is reversed. The Scotch, more logical, reverse even this. In American rituals the Irish arrangement of the cable tow in the second degree is also found. The reason for the deprivation of Metals in the Irish ritual is because, as with us, the Pass Words have been re-

<sup>7</sup> שִׁבְלִית, used variously to mean "an ear of corn" and "a stream," from the root שָׁבַל, "to go; to go up, to grow; to flow plentifully." (Gesenius, *s.v.*.)]

versed. It has a deep symbolical meaning, and is logically correct, but I must defer the explanation to the next book.

Reverting to the English method of preparation, we must realise that the right side is the masculine side; it is also the stronger side. It therefore implies, firstly, that we symbolically have passed out of the control of the women of the household and have gone on, as it were, to school. In the first degree we were symbolically "Babies" or children, under the care of women. In the second degree we are youths sent to be educated at school, and the whole exoteric meaning of the second degree is the training of the intelligence. This corresponds to a boy's training when he goes to a public school and is surrounded entirely by men. At home, under his mother's influence, he learnt only the simple lessons of morality; the lessons of the first degree.

The second meaning, *i.e.*, the stronger side, is stressed in the Scotch rituals, where the Can. is afterwards told that he knelt on his right knee to take his obligation because the F.C. obligation is even more binding than the E .A.'s obligation. This latter fact is also accentuated by the nature of the penalty, but this we will deal with later.

The Can. is not hoodwinked, because clearly he is no longer in that state of absolute darkness which enshrouded him when he first entered Masonry. He has seen the Light, and can never again return to the same darkness, although he may not as yet fully understand all that the Light means, and it is to teach him the true nature of that Light, which is really the Light of God, that he takes his second degree.

In view of what has been written concerning the preparation in the first degree, no further explanation is necessary.

THE OPENING OF THE SECOND DEGREE.

The W.M. asks the J.W., representing the body, whether he is a F.C., to which the J.W. replies that he is, indicating the test to be applied. Now, what does the Square mean in this case? It is not, be it noted, the W.M.'s square or tau cross, but it is an emblem of rectitude of conduct.

The right-angled square has always had this significance, and in many an Egyptian papyrus the Gods, when sitting in judgment on a soul, are depicted as seated on squares, implying that they are just judges.

So the J.W.'s answer implies that he must be proved by his moral conduct in the physical world.

The F.C. degree indicates that the soul and body are now working in union, as is shown by the knocks, although, as yet, the purely spiritual faculties have little influence. So it naturally follows that in this stage of man's development we have a right to expect that he will conform to all the moral laws, and to the higher dictates of his nature. For example, he should have a kindly and charitable disposition. If he has these, he is a fellow craft, but as yet we must not look for great spiritual insight. It is through his body that a man is able to perform the moral duties of his station.

The S.W., or Soul, has little work to do at this stage, for it is through the body that we prove ourselves, and so it is the J.W. who is bidden to satisfy himself that all present are F.C. This being done, he confirms their testimony in his own person, and the fact that he literally is proved on the square must not be overlooked.

It should be noted that it is no longer the Creative Aspect of God Whom we call on, but the Preservative. He Who places limitations on us for our preservation, for,

unless we conform to the rules of the Great Geometrician we cannot hope to be preserved.

It should be remembered that by these ceremonies the Lodge has been raised to a higher plane of spirituality. Its spiritual and psychic vibrations are much higher, and to help the candidate to reach the same plane a Pass Word has been given him.



## CHAPTER II PRELIMINARY STEPS.

THE Tyler gives the knocks of an E.A. for the Can. thereby emphasising the fact that it is an E.A., a stranger to a F.C. Lodge, who seeks admission. The I.G. should therefore say, "“here is an alarm,” as is done in most old provincial workings, instead of “a report,” a word suitable for announcing that there is a F.C. outside. Symbolically the difference between the knocks of an E.A. and a F.C. is most significant. The three separate knocks indicate that the body, soul and spirit are all equal and at variance, whereas the one and twopence show that the two lower, namely, soul and body, are now united. This means that the soul of the F.C. dominates the body, and in view of the fact that spiritual progress while on earth is dependent on this, the arrangement of the knocks is most important.

The Can., having been properly announced, is admitted on the Square, implying that he has been proved to be a man of rectitude, and has therefore learnt thoroughly the lesson of the first degree, which is good morals. Throughout the whole of this degree stress is laid on the fact that only a man of good moral standing can be permitted to extend his researches into the intellectual spheres.

The other important point which is early impressed on the Can. is the fact that God is called by a new title. He is no longer spoken of as the Great Architect, but as the Grand Geometrician. We shall revert to this point later, but even at this early stage it is desirable to point out that the aspect of God emphasised in the first degree was the

creative aspect (Brahma of the Hindoos), this is most appropriate for a degree dealing with birth, both physical and spiritual. The second degree deals with the preservative side of God: it is essentially the degree of life, which is educational for the soul. After invoking a blessing the Can. is led round the Lodge with the sun and tested. Note, it is the body, or J.W., which now does the testing, but when the Can. is led round the second time, to show that he is properly prepared and in possession of the Pass Word which will make him in tune with the rest of those present, it is the S.W., or Soul, which tests him. Moreover, the Soul first satisfies itself that the Body has done its work properly, therefore the Can. advances with Step and Sign, before giving the Pass Word.

Having satisfied himself on this point the S.W. calls on the Divine Spirit, represented by the W.M., for help, but is told, as in the former degree, that it is the Soul that must instruct the Can. to advance towards God. The Soul therefore tells the S.D., representing intelligence, to instruct the Can. how to advance.

This method of advancing is exceedingly interesting, and worthy of detailed consideration. The Five Spiral Steps undoubtedly have reference to the five senses, which represent the physical man, whilst their spiral nature recalls the Point within a Circle hinted at in the tracing board of the first degree, and remind us that round it the Brethren cannot err. This clearly teaches us that we advance spiritually from, within, by bringing under control all five senses and directing them towards that Middle Chamber, where dwells the Divine Spark, or God. As this subject will be treated at greater length when we come to the tracing board we will merely point out that this manner of approach brings the Can. to the V.S.L., which is God's revealed word. It should also be

compared with the manner of approach in the first degree, which in the last book we saw disclosed the fact that the God we sought was within us, while His triple nature, and likewise that of man, is also hinted at. Here we are taught the same idea, but from a slightly different angle, and are reminded that we are approaching Him by means of our five physical faculties. But as we arrive at the same place we perceive He is the same God, although during our obligation we learn of another aspect of His nature.

One other fact is worthy of our attention. Whereas in the first degree the Can. was instructed to advance towards the Pedestal, in this he is told to advance to the East. What is the reason for this difference? It will be remembered that in the first degree he is hoodwinked, and therefore unable to tell which is East and which West; by the time he reaches the second degree not only can he see, but his previous experience tells him exactly where it is he will take his Obligation. Esoterically, in the first degree he had no clear idea where to go for light, he was merely groping blindly, although led by a friendly hand : but in the second degree, having learnt that the true light comes from the East, there is no reason why this phrase should not be employed.

The position in which he takes his Obligation again makes the three Squares, but the instrument which he has to hold, and the manner in which he holds it, produce two more, making five in all—corresponding to the five senses, this irrespective of the sixth on the Altar or Pedestal. To begin with, these five squares indicate that all our senses must be dedicated to, and ruled by, the strictest moral conduct, *e.g.*, “Speak no evil, see no evil,” *etc.*, but when we recollect that in the first degree we got by means of the Squares a suggestion of the Divine

Name, we shall not be surprised to find that here again the Divine Name is indicated, but with two profound differences. Firstly, the Name is complete within ourselves, that is, without needing to utilise the Square on the Pedestal, and secondly, it is no longer the four lettered Name of the Creator, *Yod-He-Vau-He*, but the five lettered Name of the Preserver, *Yod-He-Shin-Vau-He*, or, *Yeheshuhe*, which we call *Jesue* or *Jesus*. As we learn from the Kabala, the Shin has descended to earth, and by combining with the other four letters has made the Divine Name masculine instead of feminine, for Shin is masculine. Secondly, it is the name of the Messiah. Now it has already been pointed out that the manner in which the Can. Kneels, and also his preparation, emphasise the masculine aspect of this degree. Likewise the Name by which God is spoken of emphasises His Preservative character, in contradistinction to the first degree where God is spoken of in his Creative aspect and the feminine side is stressed. Finally, the fact that the whole Name is made by the man himself must be considered in conjunction with what has been said about the manner of advancing by the Winding Staircase, and the Middle Chamber. The Kabala teaches us that Messiah is made flesh, and this implies more than the fact that on a certain historic occasion God became manifest in a human body. It indicates rather that God is always being made manifest in every human being, and so the Can., though he knows it not, is a manifestation of God on earth. Thus in a sense he himself represents the missing letter Shin, and so, when our ancient Brethren entered the Middle Chamber to receive their wages and saw the mystic name *Yod-He-Vau-He*, they themselves represented that fifth letter, which turned the name of the Creator into the name of the Preserver and Saviour of mankind. Perhaps

I should point out that this is not strictly orthodox Christianity, but Kabalism, although its similarity to much that is taught to us as Christians is clear.

Before leaving this subject I should like to remind any M.M.s who read this book of the manner in which they approach the Pedestal in the next degree, for if correlated with what has gone before, the full significance of that manner of approach will be evident to them.

The Square on the Pedestal indicates that there is still another aspect of God about which as yet the Can. learns nothing, and its combination with the Compasses to make a lozenge should remind him that, though this degree is essentially masculine, God the Preserver has also His feminine aspect. The variation in the position of one of the points is explained at the time, but there is also a deeper meaning. One symbolical meaning of the Square is the material world, and, therefore, the body of man. In the first degree the body is dominant, and overshadows the spiritual side of the Candidate's nature. In this degree the body is dominated by the soul, but as yet the spirit has not gained control over the latter. The Compasses, representing the higher or more spiritual side of man, reveal this fact by disclosing one point only.

The Obligation explains itself, and the Penalty will be dealt with in the next chapter, as it can be more appropriately considered in conjunction with the Signs. As in the former degree, the Can. is raised with the proper grip, which is subsequently explained to him.

### CHAPTER III THE SECRETS.

AS before the Can. is taught by making the tau cross to trample under foot his animal passions, thereby reminding him that spiritual progress always entails increased moral rectitude. The first difference the Can. notes is that the Sign is of a three-fold nature. This no doubt has a reference to the triple nature of man, but to the Can. the most important fact is that, whereas in the first degree the Sign refers only to the Penalty, in this degree two other lessons are taught him. The first part is the Sign of Fidelity, and implies not merely fidelity to his Obligation, but obedience to the rules of the Grand Geometrician of the Universe. We can only hope to be preserved if we conform to those rules laid down by Him for our preservation.<sup>1</sup> The second part of the Sign, or Hailig Sign, is said in our rituals to be the sign of Prayer, or Perseverance, but in its essence it is the sign of preservation, the sign associated with God the Preserver, under whatsoever name He is called, throughout the world. In my former book, "Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods," I have adduced abundant evidence of this, and here it is only necessary briefly to summarise that evidence. In ancient Egypt it is associated with Horus;<sup>2</sup> in India with Hanuman, the skilful craftsman who built the bridge of

<sup>1</sup> [These "rules" are simply the likes of the law of gravitation, of Inverse Squares, &c., not commandments which one can "obey" or "break." "Give due regard to" might be a better way of putting it, which fits with the notion of the natural sciences as the proper study of the F.C. — T.S.]

<sup>2</sup> [There is a posture appearing in Egyptian inscriptions which resembles the combination of the second and third signs (r.h. raised, l.h. on breast), it is believed to signify 'jubilation' or praise of a god. — T.S.]

Rama, the seventh incarnation of Vishnu the Preserver. It was in this position that he brought the fruit of the tree of life to the dead and dying in the battle which Rama waged against Ravena the Demon King. In Mexico Quetzacoatl makes this sign when he is wounded by the evil giant. The Roman College of Architects at Pompeii painted it in a fresco depicting the preservation of Œdipus. The lineal descendants of the Roman Collegia, the Comacine Masons, in the 13th Century made a marble pulpit for the church of Ravello near Sorrento, not very far from the buried city of Pompeii. This pulpit they adorned with mosaics depicting Jonah coming up alive out of the whale's mouth, and as he does so he makes this Sign—Hailing Sign and Sign of Fidelity complete.<sup>3</sup> Now we are told that Jonah persevered in prayer for three days while he was in the belly of the whale, and was therefore preserved. Furthermore, we must recollect that the early Christians, their medieval successors, and even the modern clergymen, have always regarded Jonah as the prototype of the Christ, for just as Jonah lay for three days in the belly of the whale and came forth alive, so Christ lay for three days in the tomb,<sup>4</sup> and then rose from the dead. It is therefore not surprising to find that in England a 13th Century carving at Peterborough of the Holy Trinity depicts Christ making this Sign, for, to us Christians, Christ is the Preserver, since by His death we are saved. Thus it will be seen, firstly, that the Sign is of great and genuine antiquity, and has been passed down

<sup>3</sup> [See frontispiece illustration.]

<sup>4</sup> [Not according to any of the canonical Gospels he didn't. All of them have him buried somewhat hurriedly at evening just before the Sabbath, and the tomb being found empty in the early morning "just after sunrise" (Mark xvi. 2) or "while it was still dark" (John xx. 1) on the day after the Sabbath. Given this was a month or less after the Spring Equinox, this means, about 36 hours. — T.S.]

by a regular line of successors from the days of the ancient mysteries; and secondly, that it is clearly associated with God the Preserver and the idea of preservation. This fact emphatically shows that when we speak of the Grand Geometrician of the Universe we are speaking of the Preervative aspect of God.<sup>5</sup> It is also worth noting that except in London and those parts of England where the influence of London workings has spread, the left arm is always held in a line with the shoulder, and not at right angles. In the ancient representations of it both the London and the Provincial forms are shown,—a fact of considerable interest. Among the various initiatory rites of the savages, as, for example among the Yaos, in Nyasaland, this Sign is also used with the inner meaning of preservation, and two pillars form an integral part of their ceremonies.

The Penal Sign is also old. For example, it is shown on numerous Egyptian frescoes, and referred to in the Book of the Dead. The significance of the Penalty itself lies in the fact that among the ancient Egyptians the Heart was regarded as symbolising the good and bad in man. It was weighed at the judgment against the feather, the symbol of truth, and if a man's life had been evil the Heart and the Feather failed to balance, and he was rejected. If therefore the Heart could not be produced, clearly the man was doomed to destruction. This point should be compared with the Tongue in the first degree, and just as in that degree the Throat was indicated

<sup>5</sup> [No, it shows your lack of critical faculties and incapacity for basic informal logic, or indeed coherent thought. If a sign is regularly depicted in religious art where it may be seen by those who are not initiates of a Mystery-Cult where it is used as a token of initiation, this obviates any need to assume a continuous transmission *within* such a cult . . . in fact, it makes it implausible that it *was* a secret token of a Mystery-cult in those places and times where it was thus displayed more or less publicly. — T.S.]



because it is an important occult centre, so here the Heart is considered to have a similar significance.

The part pressed in the Grip has always been regarded by palmists as masculine, just as in the previous degree it was feminine.

The meaning of the Word will be revealed in the chapter dealing with the tracing board, for obvious reasons, and those entitled to know will recognise where it occurs.

As before, the Can. is instructed how to give and accept challenges, and then is sent round the Lodge to be tested by the officers, who represent the Body and Soul respectively. This part of the procedure having been adequately dealt with in our first book need not detain us now, for those parts which are peculiar to the second degree also arise in the tracing board. It is however worth noting that the phrase about the house standing firm for ever is not found in any passage of Scripture. It suggests the existence of an ancient masonic tradition whose full history it is difficult to discover, but which is in closer analogy with certain phrases in the Book of the Dead associated with, the Pillars, Tat and Tattu, which *do* convey the meaning thus indicated.<sup>6</sup> It therefore looks as if we have here a genuine old tradition, now disguised under a Biblical form, but not derived direct from the Bible.

Once again the S.W., representing the Soul, calls on the Divine Spirit for some outward mark of his favour,

<sup>6</sup> [The *Djed*-pillar (*dd* earlier transliterated *Tat*, *Tet* or *Tyet*) does indeed have the signification of "stability" (possibly it represents a stylised backbone); "Tattu" (*ddw*) though was the name of a town (called Busiris by the Greeks), the hieroglyphic form of which had the *Djed*-pillar duplicated, there are references in the Book of the Dead to the *Djed*-pillar being set up there, possibly indicating some kind of religious festival. The *Djed* pillar was *single*. — T.S.]

and is told that he himself must invest him with the distinguishing badge. To-day this badge has on it two rosettes, symbolising the rose, and made of light blue. Light blue was the colour of Isis, and later became the colour of the Virgin Mary. The Rose is her emblem, and these two facts imply that all below the M's. chair are regarded as passive or feminine, whereas only those who have actually ruled the Craft, and represented the Creative Spirit, are masculine. Thus on the P.M.'s apron we get the Tau Cross, instead of the rosette, an emblem of the masculine and creative power. The shape of our modern apron is undoubtedly of comparatively recent date. Our ancient Operative Brethren had large aprons, unadorned, and members of the different degrees were distinguished by the manner in which the apron was worn. Thus in the E.A. degree the triangular flap was worn with the point upward,—the triangle of course represents the spiritual, while the Square part of the apron represents the material. It was worn up to indicate that the spiritual had not yet entered into control of the material man. It was usually turned down in the second degree, but, to distinguish between the second and third degrees, one or other of the corners was turned up. The apron was suspended by strings round the waist, and these are still used on the aprons of the first and second degree, although in a M.M.'s apron these strings have been replaced by a band of webbing. There are still however aprons in the higher degrees which are kept in place by cords, and we shall consider the whole matter more fully when we come to discuss the M.M.'s apron which is full of both historical and symbolical interest.

## CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION OF THE CEREMONY.

WHEN the S.W. has completed his task of investing the new F.C., the W.M. further points out that the purpose of the degree is to indicate that a Brother must polish his mind by a study of the liberal arts and sciences. This reminds us that whereas the E.A. is likened to the rough ashlar, which rests on the J.W.'s pedestal, the F.C. is likened to the perfect ashlar of the S.W. The two ashlars are respectively therefore associated with the J.W. as representing the body, and the S.W. as representing the soul. Thus once again we are reminded that although the E.A., as indicated by the knocks, has not yet subordinated the body to the Soul, the F.C. degree teaches the important lesson that the soul must dominate the body, and that the intellectual faculties must be educated so that the F.C. may the better discharge his duties to his fellow men, and appreciate the wonderful works of the Almighty.

In the few operative lodges which still E.A. are, of course, torn up on his being made a F.C. Another important incident which takes place there is his formal testing to prove that he is a "square" man. This is done by passing a foursided square, the *four* arms of which are extended, over his head and down to his feet, whilst to see that he is *straight* a five foot board, called the "straight edge," is placed against the front of his body. The principal interest to us speculatives of this peculiarly shaped square is that by means of it half the secret masonic cypher was produced. The rest of the cypher was made up out of the St. Andrew's cross, used in the sixth degree

of the operatives.<sup>1</sup>

After this brief admonition the Can. is placed at the S.E. corner of the Lodge and instructed to stand in a position which forms a lewis, as in the former degree. (See E.A.'s Handbook). Having explained the reason for this, which symbolically denotes that he is an adept, but not yet a master, the W.M. closes his brief peroration with the peculiar phrase "... that as in the previous degree you made yourself acquainted with the principles of moral truth and virtue, you are now *permitted* to extend your researches into the hidden mysteries of nature and science." Now this is a very pregnant phrase and often puzzles the Brethren. Only a few minutes before the new F.C. is told by the W.M. that he is *expected* to do this. Now he is told that he is *permitted* to do it. So puzzling is this to many Brethren, that in one London ritual at least, the word *permitted* has been changed to the word *expected*. This change, however, in my opinion, is a grave mistake, for the word *permitted* is there for a very special reason. In the Ancient Mysteries it was believed that the masters of the higher grades held certain important secrets of nature, or, in plain English, had certain occult powers, such as second sight, hypnotism, and power to heal, and therefore, naturally, its reverse, the power to make men ill. To this day in India the higher Yogis claim the same powers. They claim also the power to communicate with beings not of this world.

<sup>1</sup> [The "square" described is thus in the form of a "noughts-and-crosses" grid, or # sign. The cipher is an adaptation to the English (specifically, as having 26 letters) alphabet of the "Kabbalistic" AIQ-BKR cipher which involved writing the Hebrew alphabet in the square grid with three letters in each space. There are some minor variants, but at bottom it's a simple letter-substitution cipher and thus easily breakable if used for a text of any significant length. This Masonic cipher is more normally associated with the Royal Arch, although it is used on the 3° tracing-board. — T.S.]

Now the ancient Masters of Wisdom declared that if these powers were obtained by a man of low moral character, on the one hand his very life might be endangered, by his attempting to get into touch with possibly hostile spiritual forces, while, on the other, he might use these powers for evil, and so become a danger to the community. Therefore, only those who had given unmistakable proof, through many years, that they were men of the most exalted moral character, were permitted to obtain that degree which entitled them to extend their researches into the hidden mysteries of occult science. Whether or not we to-day believe in such powers is a matter of personal opinion, although the hypnotic power is generally acknowledged by men of science. But, even if we restrict the meaning of the phrase to modern scientific knowledge, we shall perceive that there is here a most important lesson.

Every thinking man who has lived through the great war must realise that during it science has been used for the vilest, as well as the best, purpose. Poison gas, and the aeroplane which drops bombs on defenceless women and children, are but two of many examples which make us realise the dangers which threaten the human race if the hidden secrets of nature and science are discovered, and used for evil purposes. Indeed, it is not too much to say that if we continue to make further scientific discoveries, and use them irrespective of our duties to our fellow men, we may utterly destroy civilization. Therefore this word "permitted" conveys a most profound message. It warns us that knowledge without morality may be a curse, and not a blessing. Thus we can see that the ancient Masters of Wisdom were wise in their generation when they refused to permit *a* man to delve into the hidden mysteries of nature and science until he had

given proofs that his morality was such that he could be safely entrusted with these secrets. And so this little word *permitted* is one of the most important words in the whole ceremony, and in no way conflicts with the earlier phrase that the Can. is *expected*. He is *expected* to study these secrets, and is told why: it is because he has made himself acquainted with the principles of moral truth and virtue in the former degree, and it is assumed that being acquainted with them, and having passed the tests which qualify him for admission into the second degree, he will in the future act up to these principles.

The explanation of the working tools is 18th century work, apparently, and requires no further explanation, whether we take the short form usually given in Emulation working, or the longer explanation sometimes given in some of the Lodges. Perhaps, however, the word 'enthusiast' used in this connection needs a little explanation. It meant in the 18th century language, a 'bigot' or an extremist,<sup>2</sup> just as the words 'zeal' and 'zealot' did. In the course of years the exact meaning of many words in the English language alters, and some acquire a sinister meaning, while others become more kindly. To-day, the words "enthusiast" and "zealot" are generally used in commendation, whereas in the 18th century they were phrases of censure.

#### THE CHARGE.

The charge after passing is not given in Emulation working, but as it occurs in some other workings it is deserving of a short mention.<sup>3</sup> For the most part it is

<sup>2</sup> [More than that, it has the connotation of (specifically religious) insanity, from Grk. *ἐνθεος*, lit. "full of a god," hence 'inspired' or 'possessed.' The 18th century in England saw something of a reaction against religious "enthusiasm" following various events of the century preceding. — T.S.]

<sup>3</sup> [A version may be studied in Carfile. — T.S.]

ordinary 18th century work, without any very deep meaning, but we may point out that a craftsman is told plainly that though he may offer his opinion on such subjects as are introduced into the lecture,—*i.e.*, the lecture of the second degree, now seldom given,—he must only do so under the superintendence of an experienced master. In brief, he is not yet a fully qualified Freemason.

The other important point in the charge is the emphasis laid on the necessity for studying geometry. In the operative days a sound knowledge of geometry was important in the laying out of the ground plans, and a careful study of the ground plans of Glastonbury, and other great medieval churches, shows that not only was geometry of practical use, but that the main axial lines of the building were so drawn as to produce various geometrical figures of a symbolical nature. Many of these were of a most complex kind, and would require elaborate drawings to explain their meaning, we will therefore only mention the constant use of the equilateral triangle—the emblem of the Trinity—its duplication to form the lozenge, the circle, and the ellipse, or the *vesica piscis*.


In general, Geometry symbolises the laws of the Grand Geometrician of the Universe, more especially those to be found in nature and science. Laws, be it remembered, which cannot be violated without jeopardising our moral and spiritual well-being, thus endangering our preservation, for which purpose they exist.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> [They cannot be “violated,” period. See note p. 76. Possibly, “ignored” or “disregarded” would be a better way of putting it, but “moral and spiritual” would still be redundant. — T.S.]

## CHAPTER V THE TRACING BOARD.

THE main teaching of the second degree is contained in the picture of the tracing board, and with regard to at any rate some of the incidents and facts an allegorical meaning is evident.

The first important architectural feature mentioned is a pair of columns stated to have been set up at the porch-way or entrance of the Temple. These pillars seem always to have had a peculiar fascination for our masonic ancestors, and even in the early days of the Comacines we find them setting up Boaz and Jachin in the porch of the medieval church at Wurzburg, but their symbolical history runs back very much further even than the days of King Solomon's Temple. The two pillars Tat and Tattu are found in the early papyri of the Book of the Dead in Egypt, and appear to have had the meaning of "In Strength" and "To establish firmly,"<sup>1</sup> but even among the primitive initiatory sites of the Yaos in Nyasaland the boys, after various adventures, have to pass between two pillars. The original meaning of these pillars was un-

<sup>1</sup> [The casual nature of this reference makes it difficult to work out exactly what Ward is referring to. The *djed* pillar (*ḏd*, ) certainly seems to have been a symbol of "stability" and there are related words written with the same glyph denoting "stable, enduring" and "stability, duration" (see Faulkner's dictionary); the only thing I can find for *Tattu* is *Ddw*, *Djedu* (Busiris), a town in the Delta important in the cult of Osiris and frequently mentioned in Middle Kingdom "Coffin Texts" (Budge, *Book of the Dead*, also uses the reading "Tattu" for *Ddwt*, Mendes). The name was written with a duplication of the *Djed*-pillar glyph and there are references to the setting-up of a *djed*-pillar in *Djedu*, apparently some kind of festival in the Osiris-cult (e.g. BD cap. 18). Ward's analogy falls down because the *djed*-pillar is depicted as *single* (except in the hieroglyphic writing). — T.S.]



doubtedly phallic, and in rites dealing with whence we come are obviously appropriate. The use of the word *s*.<sup>2</sup> in a ceremony which, like these Yao rites, aims at increasing the procreative powers of the members of the tribe by a magical ritual, is obvious, but at a later date more ethical meanings were naturally grafted on to the basic one. That this original idea was not forgotten when the twin columns were set up by King Solomon is clear from the description of the chapiters. The net work, denoting union, combined with the lily work, denoting virginity, and the subsequent reference to the pomegranates with their abundant seeds convey the same lesson, as do certain other adornments of the columns, but already other more evolved ideas had been grafted on to the age old symbols. Thus, the fact that they were formed hollow in order to serve as archives for Freemasonry, for therein were deposited, etc., seems to refer to the doctrine of re-incarnation. The constitutional rolls in this case are the effects of his past lives which are already latent in the child. It is clear at any rate that there must be an allegory here, for the statement if intended to be accepted literally is absurd. No sensible person would really put the constitutional rolls inside a hollow pillar, they would be placed in the muniments room of the Temple.

The reverence paid to pillars or to monolithic stones is well known to every anthropologist, and undoubtedly was Phallic in origin. In the Bible, for example, we find constant denunciations by the prophets against the worship of stocks and stones;<sup>3</sup> the stock being a pillar of wood corresponding to the stone monolith, to which the

<sup>2</sup> [Probably "strength" again, but I am not totally sure on this. — T.S.]

<sup>3</sup> [And yet the mythical ancestor of the Israelites is represented as setting up a stone pillar, and anointing it with oil as a symbol of his God (Gen. xxviii, 18 *sqq.*), and elsewhere as setting up pillars and cairns as memorials of pacts with his in-laws (ib. xxxi, 45). — T.S.]

worshippers were in the habit of addressing prayers containing the phrase "Thou hast begotten me."

The use of the two pillars also reminds us of the gateway of birth through which we enter physical life, and so by analogy we get the idea that we must enter the mystical temple of Divine Life between similar pillars. From such ideas would naturally evolve the suggestion that of the two pillars one was black, the other white; one of fire, the other of cloud.<sup>4</sup> Thus we get the opposition between light and darkness, day and night, good and evil, male and female. Moreover, we do know that in many of the ancient mysteries, and in the savage initiatory rites of a boy into manhood, it was very usual for the Can. to be obliged to pass between two pillars.

The opposition between light and darkness is also taught by the checkered pavement of our lodges. This pavement is a symbol used in many religions, and the Persian poet Omar Khayyam writes as follows:—

"Life is a checker board of nights and days,  
Where Destiny with men for pieces plays,  
Hither and thither moves and mates and slays,  
And one by one back in the closet lays."

Certainly this is one of the meanings of the mosaic pavement, although in addition, as Sir John Cockburn has pointed out, the word "mosaic" may be connected with the same root as the word Moses, which means "Saved from the flood." If this be so the checkered pavement would be derived from the mosaic effect produced by the receding flood of the Nile as it left the land on either side dry after the floods. Let us now consider the names given to these two pillars by the Jews. If we turn to the

<sup>4</sup> [This seems a complete *non sequitur*, since the external human anatomy alluded to does not display such marked asymmetry. — T.S.]

Hebrew words themselves we shall find that they had a secret inner meaning among the Kabalists. These Jewish sages had a special and secret interpretation of the Old Testament, and one part of this secret was to read certain significant names backwards. If this is done in the case of the two words under consideration we find that their conjoint and full signification is "Being fortified" by the practice of every moral virtue we are now "Properly prepared" to undergo that last and greatest trial.<sup>5</sup> The official interpretation given is not without significance, so far as the first word is concerned, for God said that He would establish the House of David for ever, but while we can perceive the importance of the ancestor of King Solomon<sup>6</sup> what of the Assistant High Priest? Firstly, it must be recognised that the first column was considered to be the Royal column, and the other was the Priestly, and the explanation may refer to this. In that case we obtain a declaration as to the necessity for Church and State as the foundation for civilization. It is interesting, however, to note that those who look for a Christian interpretation of our rituals are able to point out that while the first name refers to the founder of the House of Jesse, the other name is that of the last male ancestor of Christ, namely, the husband of St. Anne, and the Father

<sup>5</sup> [The phrase "last and greatest trial" is from the 3<sup>o</sup> initiation. I am still at a loss as to where Ward gets these Kabbalistic glosses from since neither of my Hebrew dictionaries has any entry at all for זעב or ניכי, nor does the Kabbalistic lexicon in tom. I of *Kabala denudata*. — T.S.]

<sup>6</sup> [*i.e.*, the Boaz of the Book of Ruth, the male-line great-grandfather of David. The genealogy at the end of that book has a tacked-on look to it, of a kind with the way the compilers of the Jataka declared characters in the Indian folk-tales they adapted to be previous incarnations of Gautama the Buddha. The assistant high priest called *Jachin* is likely an invention of an author or reviser of the degree; the only biblical personage of that name was one of the sons of Simeon, mentioned in passing in the books of Genesis and Numbers. — T.S.]

of the Virgin Mary.<sup>7</sup> Thus the names of these two pillars represent the beginning and the end of the House of Jesse, from whom was drawn the body of the Saviour of Mankind.

As there is a school of symbologists who consider that the whole of the Craft degrees can be interpreted in the Christian sense, these facts cannot be ignored. If their interpretation is correct the apparently casual reference to Hiram Abiff, the son of a widow, takes on a new significance in association with these pillars. In any case this is the first mention in his progress through masonry that the Can. hears of the famous Architect. Hiram Abiff is regarded as a prototype of the Great Master, and there does certainly seem to be a striking similarity between the chief incidents in the lives of both of them.<sup>8</sup> But this fact will become more evident when the F.C. has taken his M.M. degree.

<sup>7</sup> [The genealogies in Matthew and Luke trace Joseph's ancestry through David to Abraham, &c. (and thus include Boaz) but make no mention of the ancestors of Jesus on the mother's side. Likely someone noticed the absurdity of tracing the male-line descent to David and Jesse in order to fit various supposed Messianic prophecies while denying that Joseph was anything other than an adoptive father, and so fabricated a further genealogy on the mother's side; in any case the *Protoevangelion of James* (one of the earliest "infancy gospels") called Mary's parents *Joachim* (Ἰωακείμ) and *Anna*, and made a miracle out of Mary's birth. The story was further elaborated by the Infancy Gospel of pseudo-Matthew which makes both parents of the tribe of Judah and family of David. In any case the *Protoevangelion* is generally regarded as a piece of pseudoepigraphy of the mid-second century C.E. — T.S.]

<sup>8</sup> [In the first book of Kings (vii, 13-47), Hiram (Hiram) from Tyre is a craftsman in bronze who only turns up after the shell of the temple is completed, and makes the pillars and their ornaments, the brazen sea and various other bronze furnishings, then after finishing his work drops out of the narrative. In 2 Chronicles ii. 13 *sqq.*, Hiram-Abi (his mother is there from the tribe of Dan rather than Naphtali) comes with a recommendation from the King of Tyre extolling his skill in "gold and silver, bronze and iron, stone and wood ... yarn and fine linen" despite which he is only credited with the same bronze-work as in I Kings. — T.S.]

Before leaving the subject of these two pillars it is of interest to point out that pillars are regarded as emblems of stability among many races, and on a “*chop*,” or certificate, used by one of the great Chinese secret societies the character KEH, meaning a pillar, is used, which has among the Chinese the further meaning of Stability.<sup>9</sup>

Sir John Cockburn recently pointed to a most pregnant fact. It is well-known that in the course of oral transmission foreign words become so corrupt in form that there comes a time when they cease to be intelligible, and in consequence attempts are made to replace them by a word whose meaning is known, and whose shape is similar to that of the corrupt word. Many masonic students suspect that this has occurred in our ceremonies, and Sir John suggested that the Greek words *Iacchus* and *Boue* were the original names attached to these pillars. *Iacchus* or *Bacchus* was the God of Youth and of the procreative powers, who in some of the Grecian mysteries was slain and rose again, while *Boue*<sup>10</sup> means the primeval chaos, the dark womb of time, and so the womb.

This interpretation cannot be rejected lightly. Firstly, the appropriateness of such words to these two degrees is self-evident, but even more striking is the fact that the Supreme Council 33° of France gives to its members an esoteric interpretation of all the important words used in Freemasonry, and it interprets J. as the phallus, and B. as the womb.<sup>11</sup> Spiritually interpreted this would mean that

<sup>9</sup> [My knowledge of Chinese being nil, I can't trace this character. — T.S.]

<sup>10</sup> [I can't find this in Middle Liddell, but cf. the French word for 'mud' and Heb. בִּהַי in Gen. i. 2. The *Báav* mentioned in the cosmogy of Sancho-niathon (there glossed “night”) may be related. — T.S.]

<sup>11</sup> [This though is simply a gloss on the initial letters, J and B. In this whole line of argument, Ward forgets a fact which he previously alluded to, that the 1° and 2° words were swapped round by the “Moderns” in the 18th century following exposures of the ritual. — T.S.]

the God of Life and Light, Iacchus, descended into the womb of chaos and brought forth Life.

The tracing board having at considerable length, and in great detail, described these pillars, goes on to give a certain amount of information about the men who actually built the Temple, and a very clear distinction is drawn between the reward received for their labours by the E.A.'s and the F.C.'s. The E.A.'s, representing those who as yet are not very spiritually evolved, obtain merely simple maintenance, whereas it is specifically stated that the F.C.'s were paid their wages in specie, which however they could only receive in the Middle Chamber. In other words, their wages were of a spiritual nature suitable to their more evolved spirituality, and that this was so is proved by the fact that they received them in the Middle Chamber, which is an allegory for the secret chamber of the Heart where dwells the Divine Spark. In all mystical language, and all descriptions of mystical experience, this hidden chamber of the Heart is spoken of as the place where dwells the God in man. It is in reality a state of mystical experience, where the soul realizes, and for a brief moment of time becomes one with, the Divine Source of all. That this is so intended is clearly indicated by the statement that, when our ancient Brethren entered the Middle Chamber their attention was peculiarly directed to certain Hebrew characters, usually depicted in our Lodges by the letter G. denoting God, the Grand Geometrician of the Universe. Now the Hebrew characters stood for *Yod-He-Vau-He*, or Jehovah, the Great Architect of the Universe, but since, as has already been explained, each F.C. in himself stands for "*Shin*," in combination with himself he finds in the Middle Chamber the name of the Messiah, Yeheshue, (Jesus) Who is the Grand Geometrician of the Universe or God made Flesh, Who

dwells among us. Bearing this fact in mind we shall the better understand the ceremony of closing, wherein the J.W., representing the Body, declares that in this degree they have discovered a sacred symbol, representing God. The fact that it is the J.W. who makes this announcement, and not the S.W., is explained by the correct interpretation of the Winding Staircase. This Staircase is our own body, as we shall explain later.

The ancient Brethren were not permitted to ascend this Staircase until they had satisfied the J.W. that they were truly F.C.'s, but he does not ask of them the F.C.'s Word as one might expect, but the Pass Word leading to that degree. This is of course right, for he deals with the simple necessities of life which the E.A. receives, and which to the truly spiritual man, such as the F.C. claims to be, are plenty, whereas the true W., with its priestly meaning, belongs to the S.W. or Soul. The J.W. has no part or lot in that, but it is his task to see that the Body is in good condition, for a diseased body may easily hamper the Soul in its progress. Masonry deprecates those foolish ascetics who torture and illtreat the body, as much as it does gross and luxurious livers, who over indulge the physical and thus hinder the soul's advance.

The explanation of the origin of the Word,<sup>12</sup> although taken from the Bible, no doubt has an inner meaning. In one version we are told that Jephtha, like Joseph, and before him Ishmael, was rejected by his relations, and went out from his father's house to a strange country. When, however, Gilead was threatened by the Ammon-

<sup>12</sup> [The context indicates it is the Pass Word *Shibboleth* being referred to. See Judges xi, 1 - xii, 8 for the story of Jephtha, in particular xii, 6. The whole episode can scarcely be called edifying, it describes one of the nastier tribal wars preceding the establishment of the Israelite monarchy, and has the 'hero' killing his daughter as a human sacrifice to Yahveh following one of his victories. — T.S.]

ites and sent a deputation to him begging him to come to their help and organise armed resistance, he forgave the unkindness he had suffered and saved his native city. Thus we can see that, like One who came after him, he was "The stone which the Builders rejected which became the headstone of the corner." So here again we get a reference to the Saviour of men and to Preservation.

The Winding Staircase with its three, five, seven or more steps, must have puzzled many thoughtful Brethren, who have no doubt wondered why it was that those who codified our rituals could not make up their minds concerning the exact number of steps the Staircase had. This very fact warns us that it is an allegory, for the thing disguised under this name can be considered to consist of three parts, five parts, seven parts, and possibly more. The three who rule a Lodge represent the Body, Soul, and Spirit which constitute Man. The five who form a Lodge are the five senses of the physical man. But the physical man has both soul and spirit, each of which has its own peculiar sense, the Soul having psychic faculties, and the spirit the mystical and inspirational. There have been in the past, as the Bible indicates, men who had second sight, and there were the prophets who spoke by Divine inspiration. Although the ordinary man while on earth only functions through the five physical senses, those who are approaching perfection, such as the great Masters and religious teachers of the world, function through all seven. The reference to the five noble orders of architecture is certainly an 18th century addition, for our medieval Brethren cared nothing about them, while the reference to the seven liberal arts and sciences is probably a Post-Reformation gloss. They are good enough for an exoteric interpretation, but obviously disguise something more profound. The five noble



orders of architecture when applied to the Temple of King Solomon, are of course an absurd anachronism. Perhaps at this point one should explain that the Temple at Jerusalem, masonically, is an allegory for the Temple of Humanity raised to the glory of God, or, to use a Christian simile, the Church of Christ on earth, into whose fabric every true mason is built, dedicating his body and soul as a perfect ashlar in its construction. This Winding Staircase spiralled round a central column, so that when the Brethren reached the top they had advanced neither to the East nor to the West, but were still revolving around the centre. To an Eastern Brother this Winding Staircase will certainly recall the ladder of re-incarnation, by the gradual ascent of which the Soul in time returns to God, from Whom it came, travelling upwards in a spiral.

But to the Western mind this Staircase is our own body, subdued, brought under control, and dedicated to the glory of God. This done we receive our wages, which are knowledge of God in that hidden chamber which is within us. No other man and no external organisation can really give us knowledge of God, that is an experience which each must discover for himself, and in himself, as every mystic has taught, no matter to what external religion he conformed. Mysticism is not an organised religion, in rivalry with any of the established faiths, but is the real truth enshrined in every religion, and the force which gives that religion vitality.

Therefore it is that we find among Mahommedans, Buddhists, Jews, Hindoos, and Christians men who, while they often employ different symbols, use them to describe precisely the same spiritual experiences.

Finally, let us note that the last guardian who has to be passed is the Soul, which itself passes the man who is a

true F.C. into that hidden Chamber. When he has thus proved himself a true priest in the spiritual sense, the Soul enables him to discover the God Who is within him, and that this Divine Spark is ever linked to the Source of All. It should, however, be clearly understood that this discovery of God within ourselves is not the end of the Mystic Quest, for the evolving Soul has other experiences to go through, some of a most painful spiritual nature, before he achieves final and complete union with the Source of his being. But until he has had this first experience, this first realisation of the Divine Spark within him, he cannot start on the real quest; for he is not yet properly prepared. He may, and will, come out from that secret Chamber again and again, to take his part in the ordinary life of the world, but having once glimpsed the splendour of the Divine he will realise the glorious heritage to which he is the heir, and will not be content until he has completed his journey. Nevertheless, it may truly be said that these occasional experiences, brief and passing though they be, are the just reward of his labours. This then is the great lesson of the second degree, that by ourselves, and in ourselves, we can discover and realize God, more especially in His Preservative aspect. This discovery means more than an acquiescence in the statement of others that there is such a Being as God, it is the realisation by oneself of this stupendous fact, a thing almost impossible to describe in words except to those who have experienced it, while to them it needs no description.

## CHAPTER VI CLOSING CEREMONY.

AS in the first degree the Spirit calls the Body and Soul to show that they are on guard against this world. The Spirit then asks the Body what it has discovered now that it has conformed to the laws of rectitude, as a true F.C., and the Body replies that it has discovered a Sacred Symbol. This sacred symbol, of course, is that same letter G mentioned in the tracing board, which corresponds with the Hebrew characters for the Name of God. As we have already explained the full significance of these four letters we will not now discuss them further, but a few brief lines dealing with the valuable suggestion of Sir John Cockburn, that the letter G was originally depicted in the mediæval lodges by a square, calls for some consideration. Sir John has pointed out on many occasions that the square, more particularly the gallows square, was always regarded with very great veneration by the Mason; because not only was it an important working tool, with a symbolical meaning attached to it, but it was also the shape of the gamma, or G, in the Greek alphabet, as well as in the ecclesiastical script used in mediæval Europe. Thus the letter G and the gallows square were the same shape, and stood alike for God and His great characteristic "Justice." Indeed, the square is often found embroidered on the vestments of the disciples in mediæval paintings, and when depicted separately these are called "gammadias," that is, "gammas," but when combined to form the Swastica it is called the "gammadion." References to this identification of the square and the G. are found in several old rituals, as Sir John points out, —

Q.—Why did you get to be made an F.C.?

A.—On account of the letter G.—

and an old masonic legend found in one of these rituals, describing a murderous assault made by some of the workmen on one of the chief overseers of the work, relates that one of the wretches struck the overseer a blow over the heart with a square. When the victim was subsequently discovered those who found him noticed a faint trace of the letter G on his breast, and they understood it as symbolising the whole hearted devotion which the victim had always displayed towards God, the Grand Geometrician of the Universe.

Another interesting point about the square is that if four right angles are joined together with the angles inward, an equal-armed cross, or cross of the cardinal points, is formed. This cross of course has many inner meanings, but one at least is that it represents the earth and matter, just as does the four-sided square, which also can be formed out of four galleys squares. Finally the Swastica, which later symbolised the sun, is also composed of four right angles: hence the vital fluid permeating matter makes of it a living soul. In this last aspect the Swastica becomes an emblem for God Himself, and thus the square in itself represents not only God, but also the universe which He preserves by His Divine Spirit.

So it will be seen that the sacred symbol which the F.C.'s declare that they have discovered is of far greater significance than most brethren would suspect; in fact, in these few brief words of the closing ceremony we obtain a summary of the whole purpose of the degree, and realise why, throughout the whole of it, the square is emphasised. Nor must we forget that the J.W. when he announces this discovery stands in the correct position to indicate that he represents that fifth letter, the missing

“sh,” which changes the name of the Creator into that of the Preserver—Yeheshue. Moreover, he declares the sacred symbol is situated in the centre of the building. Bearing in mind that in the tracing board we were told that our ancient brethren discovered this symbol in the Middle Chamber we shall perceive that the Lodge itself is now the Chamber into which the Can. has ascended by the winding stairgave of the five steps which led him to the E.

The fact that it is in the Centre reminds us of that hidden centre in every man, where resides the Divine Spark, and brings to our recollection the statement in the first tracing board that there is a point within a circle around which the Brethren cannot err.

In lodges in the Provinces, which have their own Temples, it is usual to see depicted on the roof a pentacle, in the middle of which can be seen the letter G. In this case the pentacle represents man with his five senses, with the G at the centre to remind us of the Divine Spark within. On the floor directly underneath is inlaid in brass a point within a circle, which circle is bounded on the north and south side by two grand parallel lines, usually described as the two St. Johns, but stated in our ritual to represent Moses and King Solomon. They also undoubtedly symbolize many other things, *e.g.*, the two pillars of night and day, good and evil, male and female, etc. The point I wish to stress, however, is that the brass point at the centre of the circle is directly underneath the G in the pentacle on the roof, thus emphasising the interpretation we have been studying. It is a thousand pities that in most of our London Lodges both these essential ornaments of the Lodge are omitted from the decorations, as by so doing their intimate connection is apt to be overlooked by the brethren, and even the words of the ritual

become untrue. Thus the F.C. degree teaches us that we only begin to recognize the God within us when we have lived a good life. There is also, probably, a reference to the word "Generation," which is naturally associated with the life of the fully developed man. The meaning of this is that, while the power of begetting is a Godlike gift, for it creates physical life, yet we must use it with respect, and for the noblest ends. It is only when we are masters of our passions in this respect that we are fitted for the last and greatest trial.

It is noteworthy that it is the J.W., representing the Body, who plays the most important part in the closing of this degree; which is of course appropriate, as we have been dealing throughout with the body and its five senses. This phase is carried through to the very end, as is shown in the curious doggerel lines with which the J.W. performs the last act of closing. As given in Emulation they are only three, but in the Provinces they are four, and form a curious jingling rhyme which runs as follows—

Happy have we met,  
 Happy have we been,  
 Happy may we part,  
 And happy meet again,

Personally I prefer this version to that in Emulation which, for some unaccountable reason, omits the second line, although it is quite as important as the first or third. Clearly the Brethren might be happy to part because they had been unhappy during the ceremony! The inner significance of the lines, however, is that the body bears testimony that earthly happiness can only be found by those who know God.

The closing prayer by the W.M. contains one important phrase, which seems to be an ancient landmark

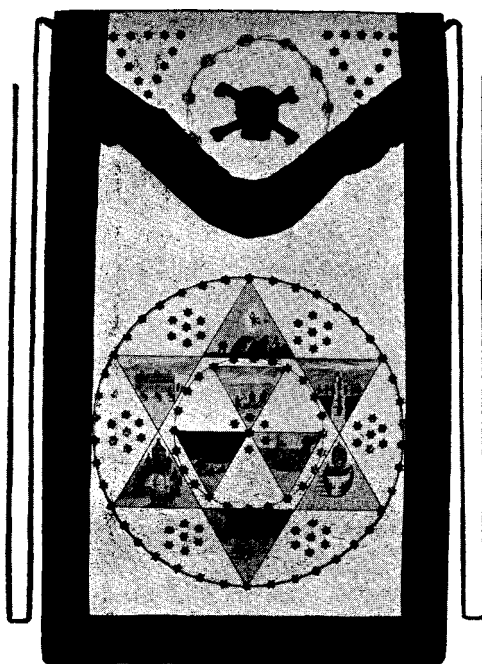
carried down in our ritual from a long distant past, *viz.*, the All-seeing eye. This Sacred Eye was a divine emblem, and an important talisman among the ancient Egyptians, even as it still is among the Chinese, who paint it on the bows of their ships to protect them and preserve them from misfortune. It is essentially an emblem of God the Preserver, and its inclusion in the closing prayer of the second degree indicates how carefully the preservative aspect of God is stressed, from the beginning to the very end of the ceremony.

This concludes all that it is possible to deal with in this little book concerning the second degree, but those whose interest has been aroused will be well advised to do two things; firstly, to study the ritual itself, in order to discover additional inner meanings, which do exist, although they have not been dealt with here, lest we should befog our newly passed Brethren; and secondly, study the lectures on this degree, which contain a great deal of interesting information, much of it with an inner meaning seldom appreciated by those who have only read them through hastily. Finally we will add that in the M.M.'s Handbook will be found an explanation of several points which we have had to omit in this book, but which show how carefully each of our degrees is linked up with the one that follows, and how they gradually unfold to the attentive student many important and illuminating truths.





No. 3  
*The Master Mason's Book*



OLD IRISH APRON. DATED 1790.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE third degree in Freemasonry is termed the Sublime Degree, and the title is truly justified. Even in its exoteric aspect its simple, yet dramatic, power must leave a lasting impression on the mind of every Candidate. But its esoteric meaning contains some of the most profound spiritual instruction which it is possible to obtain to-day.

Even the average man, who entered Freemasonry with little realisation of its real antiquity and elaborate symbolism, cannot fail to be impressed with the solemnity of this, its greatest degree. In its directness and apparent simplicity rests its tremendous power. The exoteric and esoteric are interwoven in such a wonderful way that it is almost impossible to separate the one from the other, and the longer it is studied the more we realise the profound and ancient wisdom concealed therein. Indeed, it is probable that we shall never master all that lies hidden in this degree till we in very truth pass through that reality of which it is an allegory.

The two degrees which have gone before, great and beautiful though they be, are but the training and preparation for the message which the third degree holds in almost every line of the ritual. Here at length we learn the true purpose of Freemasonry. It is not merely a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, but a great adventure, a search after that which was lost; in other words, the Mystic Quest, the craving of the Soul to comprehend the nature of God and to achieve union with Him.

Different men vary greatly; to some the most profound teachings appeal, while to others simpler and

more direct instruction is all they crave. But there is hardly a man who has not, at some time or other, amid the turmoil and distraction of this material world, felt a strange and unaccountable longing for knowledge as to why he was ever sent here, whence he came, and whither he is wending. At such times he feels like a wanderer in a strange land, who has almost forgotten his native country, because he left it so long ago, but yet vaguely realises that he is an exile, and dimly craves for some message from that home which he knew of yore.

This is the voice of the Divine Spark in man calling out for union with the Source of its being, and at such times the third degree carries with it a message which till then, perhaps, the brother had not realised. The true Secrets are lost, but we are told how and where we shall find them. The gateway of death opens the way to the point within the circle, where the longing spirit will find peace in the arms of the Father of All.

Thus it will be seen that the third degree strikes a more solemn note than even that of death itself, and I have endeavoured in this little book to convey in outline some part at least of this sublime message.

As in my previous books, I freely confess that I have not covered the whole ground. Not only would it be impossible to do so in a book of this size, but in so doing I should have defeated one of my principal objects in writing it, namely, to inspire others to study for themselves, and endeavour to find in our ceremonies further and deeper meanings.

The success of the earlier books shows clearly that my efforts have not been in vain, and that the brethren are more than anxious to fathom the inner meaning of the ceremonies we all love so well. This book completes the series dealing with the meaning of the three craft de-

grees, but their popularity has convinced me that the experiment of producing a small and inexpensive handbook has been completely justified. I have therefore been encouraged to write further volumes, and since the value of our teachings depends largely on the antiquity of our Order, the next volume of the series will be an outline history in which I shall endeavour to prove that Freemasonry is, as it claims to be, "from time Immemorial."<sup>1</sup>

In conclusion I would add that the title of this work has been changed from "The M.M.'s Handbook" to "The M.M.'s Book," as I find there already exists a book published by Messrs. Geo. Kenning entitled "The Master Mason's Handbook," which gives useful, practical information to members of our Order. Though the subject matter of the two books differs completely, yet it would obviously be unfair and misleading if, in view of their previous use of the title, I also employed it.

J.S.M.W.

The Sun is like a spark of fire,  
 A transient meteor in the sky;  
 The Soul, immortal as its Sire,  
 Shall never die !  
 Shall never die !

<sup>1</sup> [Nos. 4 & 5 in this series were "The History Handbook" and "The Higher Degrees Handbook." They are not included in the present volume. The latter was a brief survey of various appendant degrees including "Mark and Ark," Royal Arch, the Cryptic Degrees, the Allied Degrees, Rose-Croix and Kadosch, the Royal Order of Scotland and various chivalric bodies. — T.S.]

## INTRODUCTION

BY SIR JOHN A. COCKBURN

M.D., K.C.M.G., P.G.D. Eng., P. Dept. G.M.S. Australia.

W. BRO Ward has lost no time in supplying his large circle of readers with this little book on the 3°. With becoming reverence he touches on the last great lesson which Masonry presents to the mind of the Craftsman. Among the manifold blessings that Freemasonry has conferred on mankind none is greater than that of taking the sting from death and robbing the grave of victory. No man can be called Free who lives in dread of the only event that is certain in his life. Until emancipated from the fear of death he is all his life long subject to bondage. Yet how miserably weak is this phantom king of Terrors who enslaves so many of the uninitiated. As Francis Bacon remarked there is no passion in the mind of man that does not master the dread of death. Revenge triumphs over it; love slights it; honour aspireth to it; grief flieth to it. Death has always been regarded as the elucidation of the Great Mystery. It was only at the promise of dissolution that the seeker after the Elixir of Life exclaimed *Eureka*. Masonry regards death but as the gate of life, and the Master Mason learns to look forward with firm but humble confidence to the moment when he will receive his summons to ascend to the Grand Lodge above.

Brother Ward very properly attaches much significance to the Pass Words leading to the 2° and 3°. In the Elusinian Mysteries an ear of corn was presented to the Eoptai. This, as an emblem of Ceres, represented by the S. W., is appropriate to the F.C.'s who are under the guidance of that officer; while the name of the first

artificer in metals, which is reminiscent of Vulcan the Celestial Blacksmith, seems specially befitting to the attributes of the J.W., as it was in the days before 1740. The author sees in the lozenge formed by two of the great lights a representation of the *Vesica Piscis*. This symbol, whose literal meaning is "the bladder of the fish," is of deep significance. Some see in it the essential scheme of ecclesiastical architecture. But as the spiritually blind are unable to discern similitudes, so those who are gifted with deep insight are apt to over-estimate analogies. The *Vesica Piscis* being, as Brother Ward rightly states, a feminine emblem, and therefore one sided, can hardly represent the equilibrium attained by the conjunction of the square and compasses. These respectively stand for the contrasted correlatives which pervade Creation, and, like the pillars, are typical when conjoined of new stability resulting from their due proportion in the various stages of Evolution. The progressive disclosures of the points of the compasses seems to indicate the ultimate realisation of the spirituality of matter; the atonement and reconciliation at which Freemasonry and all true religions aim.

Brother Ward repeatedly points out the similarity that exists between the lessons of Christianity and of Freemasonry. It is indeed difficult to distinguish between them. The Ancient Mysteries undoubtedly possessed in secret many of the truths proclaimed in the gospel. St. Augustine affirms that Christianity, although not previously known by that name, had always existed. But whereas the hope of immortality was formerly in the Mysteries confined to a favoured few, the new Covenant opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. Incidentally this little volume clears up many passages which are obscure in the Ritual. For example, there could

be no object in directing that the F. C.'s, who, on account of their trustworthiness, were selected by the King to search for the Master, should be clothed in white to prove their innocence. That was already beyond question. The order was evidently meant for the repentant twelve who took no actual part in the crime. This and similar inconsistencies in the Ritual may be accepted as evidence of its antiquity. Had it been a modern compilation such contradictions would have been studiously avoided.

It is probable that many earnest Masons may not agree with all of Brother Ward's interpretations. Nor can such unanimity reasonably be expected. Freemasonry, as a gradual accretion of the Wisdom of Ages Immemorial, bears traces of many successive schools of thought. But all its messages are fraught with hope for the regeneration of humanity. The author intimated his desire in this series of handbooks to lead others to prosecute the study of Masonry for themselves; and indeed he has abundantly proved that in its unfathomable depths there are many gems of priceless ray serene which will well repay the search. Brother Ward is heartily to be congratulated on having attained the object he had in view.

JOHN A. COCKBURN.



## CHAPTER I QUESTIONS AND PASS WORD.

THOSE of our Brethren who have read the previous two books of this series will not need much help in understanding the significance of the questions which are put to the Can. before being raised. Practically every question has been dealt with in detail in the previous book; the majority of them are taken from incidents in the Lectures and Tracing Board, and since the latter was explained at some length we shall not now detain our readers long.

The manner of preparation for the second degree stressed the masculine side, which is characteristic of it. The admission on a Square indicated that the Can. had profited by the moral training received in the First degree, and that his conduct has always been on the Square.

There is, however, a deep esoteric meaning in the apparent platitude that it is the fourth part of a circle. The circle among all the ancient nations is a symbol of God the Infinite, Whose name we discovered in the second degree in the Middle Chamber, where we learnt that it consisted of four letters. Thus the Can. was admitted on one letter of the Mystic Name, and if the four Squares are united with the circle in a peculiar way they form the cosmic cross, emblem of matter, within the circle of the Infinite.

We have in the last book considered at such length what is implied by the words "Hidden mysteries of nature and science," that we need here only refer our readers to that section wherein we saw that in former times these

hidden mysteries undoubtedly referred to certain occult powers, which would be dangerous if acquired by a man who had not proved himself to be of the highest moral character.

The "wages" we receive consist of the power to comprehend the nature of God, Who resides in the Middle Chamber of the Soul of every Mason. The F.C. receives his wages without scruple or diffidence because the Spiritual benefit he receives from Freemasonry is in exact proportion to his desire, and ability, to comprehend its inner meaning.

He cannot receive either more or less than he has earned, for if he has not understood the profound lesson of the Divinity within him, naturally he cannot benefit by this fact.

His employers are the Divine Trinity, of Whom Justice is one of the outstanding attributes. God could not be unjust and remain God. This conception is almost a platitude, but the average man, while realising that God will not withhold any reward earned, is at times apt to assume that because God is love He will reward us more than we deserve. This is clearly a mistake, for God could not be partial without ceasing to be God, therefore the F.C. receives exactly the Spiritual wages he has earned, and neither more nor less, but some F.C.'s will nevertheless obtain a greater reward than others, because spiritually they have earned it.

The significance of the names of the Pillars was explained in the last book, but in view of the nature of the third degree it seems advisable to point out once more that their secret Kabalistic meaning is (1) Being fortified by every moral virtue, (2) you are now properly prepared, (3) to undergo that last and greatest trial which fits you to become a M.M. Thus we see that even the Words

of the preceding degrees lead up to this, the last and greatest.

The remark of the W.M. that he will put other questions if desired, as in the former case, indicates the possibility of members of the Lodge asking questions based on the Lectures of the Second Degree, or even on the Tracing Board. It is, indeed, a pity that this right is practically never exercised. For example, a particularly appropriate question would be "What was the Name of the man who cast the two great pillars?" As it is, the Can. in a dramatic way represents the closing incidents in the life of this great man, whose importance till then he had hardly had any opportunity of realising.

Having answered these test questions, the candidate is again entrusted with a Pass Word, etc., to enable him to enter the Lodge after it has been raised to the Third degree during his temporary absence. We have in the previous book explained that the raising of a Lodge should alter the vibrations of those present by a process well recognised in the ceremonies of Magic, and, to enable the Can. quickly to become in tune with these higher spiritual vibrations, a word of "power" is given him, which in a moment places him on the same plane as the other members of the Lodge. This word he has to give, not only outside the door of the Lodge, but also immediately before his presentation by the S.W. as "Properly prepared to be raised to the Third Degree." It is only after this has been done that the real ceremony of the Third Degree, so far as the Can. is concerned, begins, and therefore that the full force of the vibrations of the M.M.'s come into play.

The Pass Word itself is of the greatest significance, more especially when combined with the Pass Word leading from the First to the Second degree. At one time

the Pass Words were reversed. *Tubal Cain* being the Word leading to the Second, and *Shibboleth* the Word leading to the Third. This is still the case in those foreign Grand Lodges, such as the Dutch and the French, which derive from us before 1740, when the Words were altered owing to certain unauthorised revelations.

This alteration was one of the just grievances which brought about the secession of the so-called "Ancients" who charged Grand Lodge with altering the Ancient Landmarks. When the Irish followed our example they continued the prohibition of the introduction of metals until the Third degree, which is a logical procedure, for clearly you have no right to bring them into a Lodge until you have been symbolically introduced to the first artificer in that material. As the Words now stand they convey the following spiritual lesson:—The F.C. is one who finds the simple necessities of life, such as Corn and Water, sufficient for his requirements. They are plenty to the spiritually minded man, whose soul becomes clogged and hampered by the acquisition of worldly possessions, and since it is hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, immediately the Can. has symbolically received worldly possessions he is slain.

Tubal Cain conveys the lesson that worldly possessions in themselves bring death to the soul, and prevent its upward progress. To-day, the river of death connected with the Pass Word leading to the Second degree has largely lost its significance, whereas, when it was a Pass Word leading to the Third, it was in itself a fine allegory.

We must remember that Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* was well known and widely read at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, and those who were re-organising our rituals at that time could not have been blind to the

similarity of the allegory hidden in the Word *Shibboleth*, and the account by Bunyan of Christian's fording the river of death on the way to the Holy City. The change of about 1740 destroyed this allegory, and its survival in the Tracing Board is now merely one of those numerous footmarks which to the careful student are invaluable indications of the various transformations through which our ritual has passed during the course of years. Nevertheless, I do not regret the change, as I think the present spiritual lesson is even finer than the former one, but the other arrangement was more logical. Firstly, from the practical point of view the F. C. required the use of metal tools to perform his operative tasks, and in the process of his work acquired worldly possessions, in contradiction to the E.A., who did only rough work and received only maintenance: *i.e.*, corn, wine, and oil. Secondly, from the symbolical standpoint the sequence was also more logical, for the F.C., having acquired wealth by means of his skill, was brought to the river of death and passed through it in the Third Degree.

According to Bro. Sanderson, in his "Examination of the Masonic Ritual," the actual translation of the Hebrew word *Shibboleth*. is an "ear of corn, or a f.<sup>1</sup> of water,"—hence the manner in which it is depicted in a F.C.'s Lodge—while the word *Tubal-Cain* in Hebrew means only a "blacksmith," though another word similarly pronounced means "acquisition." Hence, as he points out, "an allegorical title has, in translating the Old Testament, been mistaken for the name of an actual person, for the name itself means "A worker in metals." Therefore the

<sup>1</sup> [Probably "fall," but "flow" would be more accurate. A modern Hebrew-English dictionary has "current (of river)" and records an idiom equivalent to the English "a drowning man will clutch at a straw" involving a play on the double meaning of the word. The root signifying "plenty" is rather שָׁבַע, with related verbs and adjectives. — T.S.]

connection with Hiram Abiff is obvious. Bro. Sanderson, quoting from the "Secret Discipline," by S. L. Knapp, says, "In a work on ancient ecclesiastical history the following occurs, 'By a singular *platus linguæ* the moderns have substituted Tubal-Cain in the Third Degree for *tymboxein*—to be entombed.'" While I am unable to say whether Knapp is justified in this statement, it is quite probable that this Pass Word, and indeed all the Pass Words, are comparatively modern substitutes taken from the Bible to replace ancient Words of power whose full meaning was lost, and whose form in consequence had become corrupt and unintelligible. The Greek word *tymboxein* would be peculiarly suitable for a Pass Word leading to the Third Degree, in view of its meaning, and mediæval magical ceremonies are full of corrupt Greek words indiscriminately mingled with equally corrupt Hebrew and Arabic. There is, therefore, nothing intrinsically improbable in the suggestion that this ancient Greek word was the original from which *Tubal-Cain* has been evolved. We know as a fact that large pieces of Biblical history were imported wholesale into our rituals in the 18th Century, and what more likely than that an unintelligible word, already so corrupt as not even to be recognisable as Greek, should be amended into a well known Biblical character? However, the word as it stands, because of its Hebrew meaning of acquisition, can correctly be translated as *worldy possessions*, while as meaning an artificer in metals it clearly refers to Hiram Abiff, who made the two pillars, and whom the Can. is to represent. Thus, following this line of interpretation we perceive that the Can. really represents Hiram Abiff when he enters the Lodge, although under the disguised title conveyed by the Pass Word.

In dealing with these Pass Words I have endeavoured

to show that there are meanings within meanings, and the same is true of practically every important incident in the whole ceremony. In a book of this size it is obviously impossible to attempt to give all of these meanings, and even if one did the result would be to befog the young reader and so prevent him from getting a clear and connected interpretation of the ceremony. It is for this reason that, in the main, I am concentrating on one line of interpretation, but I have thought it desirable in this section to give a hint to more advanced students, so that they can follow up similar lines of investigation for themselves.

#### PREPARATION.

In English and Scotch working there is no cable tow around the Can. in preparation for the Third Degree, but in the Irish working it is wound once around his neck, in the Second degree twice, and in the First three times. If we regard the cable tow as symbolising those things which hamper a man's spiritual progress, the gradual unwinding of it as used in Irish workings becomes of great significance. This interpretation implies that the Can. is hampered in Body, Soul and Spirit in the First Degree, whereas by the time he has reached this point in the Third Degree Body and Soul have triumphed over the sins which peculiarly assail them, and in that stage symbolised by the Degree itself the Spirit has only to triumph over Spiritual sins, such as Spiritual Pride. With this exception the manner of preparation is the same in all three British workings, and indicates that the Can. is now about to consecrate both sides of his nature, active and passive, creative and preservative, etc., to the service of the Most High.

The explanation already given in the previous books of the various details, such as being slip-shod, holds here,

and a brief glance at the other volumes will render it unnecessary for me to take up valuable space in this third book. The Can. is then brought to the Lodge door and gives the knocks of a F.C. These Knocks indicate that Soul and Body are in union, but the Spirit is still out of contact, whereas the proper Knocks of a M.M. (2/1) indicate that the Spirit dominates the Soul and is in union with it, the body having fallen away into insignificance. It will be remembered that in the first book of this series I pointed out that the three separate knocks of an E.A. symbolise that in the uninitiated man, Body, Soul and Spirit are all at variance. Meanwhile the Lodge has been raised to the Third Degree, by a ceremony whose profound significance demands consideration in a separate chapter.



## CHAPTER II THE OPENING.

HAVING satisfied himself that all present are symbolically upright and moral men, the W.M. asks the J.W. if his spiritual nature has evolved sufficiently to control both soul and body. The J.W. suggests that he should be tested, not only by the emblem of upright conduct, but also by the Compasses. Now these combined with the Square form a lozenge, which is itself a symbol for the Vesica Piscis, emblem of the female principle. The Compasses, moreover, are the instruments with which geometrical figures are created, and more especially the Circle. By means of circles the triangle, emblem of the triune nature of God, is produced, while the Circle itself is the emblem of Eternity and therefore of Spirit. A point within the circle forms the symbol for the Hindoo conception of the Supreme Being, Paramatma, whence we have come and whither we shall all ultimately return. At the centre of the Circle rests all knowledge; there shall we find every lost secret. Now such a figure can only be drawn with the help of the Compasses, and in drawing it the following significant symbolical act takes place.

One point of the Compass rests at the centre, and the other makes the circle of the Infinite. No matter how far the legs of the Compass be extended, or how large the Circle, the fact remains that one leg is always at the centre. Thus the Compasses, while they travel through infinity, are at the same time never separated from the centre, and from that point cannot err.

This instrument may therefore be considered as standing for the Divine Spark in Man, in all its manifes-

tations. One of these is conscience; but the Divine Spark has many attributes and names.

So the J.W.'s reply indicates that he is prepared to be tested both by the moral code and by the spiritual laws of our being.

But after these preliminaries the proceedings become of an even more exalted nature. All that has gone before has been but preparation for the Great Quest on which we must now set forth. It is the quest of the Soul for realisation of God, and at-one-ment with Him. This is the Mystic Quest of all ages, and, true to the ancient symbolism, it starts from the East, the place of Light, and goes towards the West, the place of darkness and death.

The East represents God Who is our home. It indicates that each soul comes out from the place of Light, from Light itself—that is, from the very substance of God. It descends through the Gateways of the Dawn and becomes incarnate in Matter. But it brings with it a sense of loss and separation, for it has come out from God, and the Divine Spark within it longs to return whence it came. Having lost the secret of its true nature and the way of return, it wanders in darkness—seeking—and for most men the way of return is through the Western portal, the gateway of Death, for so long as we are finite beings we cannot hope to comprehend the Infinite.

Yet there are some few exceptions to the general rule, who, while still in the flesh, have a vision of the Divine splendour, are caught up in it, and become one with God. To such men the return to ordinary mundane existence seems unreal and shadowy. Where others believe in God they *know* Him, but it is almost impossible for them to convey to others the experience through which they have gone. Yet that such experiences are real, as real as any other fact in life, is attested by a long line of witnesses

right throughout the ages.

To the average man, however, the first real step towards the realisation of what constitutes God is through the portal of physical death;—but even then the end is still far off.

Hence the answer explaining how the true secrets came to be lost indicates, not the cause of the loss, but the first step towards the recovery, and this fact is borne out by the subsequent events in the ceremony itself.

Note, it is the body only that dies, and by its death enables the Soul and Spirit to re-discover in part the secrets which were lost. Yet this death of the Body effectually debar the communication of these secrets to the sorrowing F.C.'s left behind. It is the passing through that veil which separates life and death which starts us on that road which ends with God.

It must never be forgotten, however, that the genuine secrets are never recovered in the Craft, although symbolically we rise from the grave, for that secret can only be discovered at or with the Centre—*i.e.*, with God. To that exalted position we can only attain after long journeys through the planes of existence beyond the grave. In our symbolism there is nothing which indicates that immediately after death man is fit to pass into the presence of the King of Kings.

But the Divine Spark within us is never really separated from the Great and All-Pervading Spirit. It is still part of it, though its glory is dimmed by the veil of flesh. Therefore, just as one arm of the compasses ever rests on the centre, no matter how far the other leg travels, so however far we may travel from God, and however long and hard the journey, the Divine Spark within us can never be truly separated from Him, or err from that Centre. Thus the point of the Compasses at the centre of

the circle may be considered to be the Spirit, the head of the Compasses the Soul, and the point on the circumference the body.<sup>1</sup>

So the task is set and the brethren go forth on the quest, that quest which must lead through the darkness of death, as the ceremony that follows tells in allegory. It is not correct to say that the search hinted at in the Opening ceremony is suddenly abandoned, and those who think this misinterpret the whole meaning of the legend. Never in earthly life shall we find the answer we seek, nay, even death itself will not give it; but, having passed beyond the grave, through the four veils of the Scottish rite,<sup>2</sup> and so into the Holy Royal Arch, we find an *excellent* answer in allegorical and symbolical language, whilst the jewel of the degree emphasises what the end of the quest is.

Nor must it be forgotten that the body alone cannot realise the nature of God, and that is why without the help of the other two, Hiram Abiff neither could, nor would, disclose the Secret.

The W.M.'s promise to help indicates that the Spirit will render assistance, but though the Spirit subsequently raises man from the grave it is not sufficiently evolved to give him the true secret. This can only come about when the Spirit has raised the Soul to a far higher stage of spirituality.

<sup>1</sup> [In considering this analogy the student may wish to meditate on the fact that the centre is in this instance only such *by virtue of* one point of the Compass having been put there; and that *wherever* that point is put thus becomes the Centre. In whom do you put your trust? — T.S.]

<sup>2</sup> [This appears to refer, not the the 33° Scottish Rite so called, but to a Scottish version of the Ceremony of Passing the Veils (a preliminary to Royal Arch) which forms the basis for the degree of "Excellent Master," an intermediate degree between the Craft and Royal Arch in Scotland. A "monitor" for that degree was one of the books in the publishers' adverts in the original print editions of Ward's handbooks. — T.S.]

Though this is the degree of Destruction that form of the Trinity is not invoked, and the title used corresponds more closely to the Hindoo name for the All-Embracing than to their form of the Destroyer. This no doubt is deliberate, for the symbol of this degree is the same emblem which among the Hindoos denotes the Most High, namely the Circle with a Point within in it.

In some Scotch rituals after the Lodge has been opened in the first degree the Immediate Past Master, or the D.C.,<sup>3</sup> opens the V.S.L., and, strange to say, does so with the words, "In the beginning was the Word." Similarly, when the Lodge is closed in the first degree the book is closed with the words, "And the Word was with God." Here then we get two striking features: (1) The use of words from the first chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, and (2) Their correlation with the phrase in the Third Degree, "At, or with the Centre." This procedure suggests that the lost Word is the Logos, or Christ, and remembering what we have previously pointed out in the earlier books, *i.e.*, that there is a perfectly logical Christian interpretation of the whole of the Craft ceremonies, this fact becomes of increasing significance.

Before closing this chapter, I would like to add that the Third Degree lends itself to a Christian interpretation even more markedly than the former ones, and several of the higher degrees in Freemasonry adopt and expand this line of teaching.

In view of the fact that in the Middle Ages Freemasonry was undoubtedly Christian, we cannot lightly reject this view of the inner meaning of the ceremonies, but as the frame work of our ceremonies apparently goes back before Christian times, a non-Christian interpretation is equally permissible.

<sup>3</sup> [Director of Ceremonies?]

### CHAPTER III THE SYMBOLICAL JOURNEYS, ETC.

THE Can. is admitted on the Compasses, and this fact is of far greater significance than most brethren probably realise. Firstly, as has been noted, one arm of the Compasses is always at the Centre, no matter how far the other may travel. But from the point of view of the Can., though he knows it not, this act in a sense indicates that his heart, and therefore he himself, is at or on the Centre. Secondly, the Compasses in this degree link up with the Square used in the former degree on a similar occasion. We have seen in the previous books that the Square and Compasses are united on the Pedestal in such a way as to symbolise the *vesica piscis*, the emblem of the female principle, and symbol of birth and rebirth. Hence symbolically the Can. passes through the *vesica piscis*. Also after entering the Lodge in this, as in the previous degrees, he kneels while the blessing of Heaven is invoked, and as he does so the wands of the deacons are crossed above his head. He thus kneels in a triangle, emblem of Spirit, and itself connected with the lozenge. Two equilateral triangles make a lozenge, which is produced from the *vesica piscis*—formed by two circles, as shown by the first proposition in Euclid. In view of the great stress laid upon Geometry throughout the whole of our rituals these facts cannot be ignored. Our Operative Brethren must have realised that the whole science of Geometry arises out of this first proposition, which shows how to make a triangle (the emblem of the Trinity and the Spirit) by means of two circles whose circumferences pass through the centre of each other. In

doing so they form the *vesica piscis*, which gives birth first of all to the triangle, and secondly, to the double triangle, in the form of a lozenge. This last emblem is symbolised by the square, denoting matter, and the Compasses, denoting spirit. The above facts throw a flood of light upon the interplay between these Masonic emblems.

Before leaving this subject it is worth while pointing out that the Can. likewise takes every Obligation in Craft masonry within this triangle, and that the same method is employed in other ancient rites, including those of the Society of Heaven and Earth in China, where the Can. kneels on one sword, while two others are held over his head so as to form a triangle of steel.

The Can. now starts on his three symbolical journeys. He first satisfies the J.W., representing the Body, that he is an E.A., *i.e.*, a man of good moral character. He next satisfies the S. W., representing the Soul, that he has benefited by the lessons of life and acquired intellectual knowledge. Then comes the third journey when he is once more challenged by the Soul, who demands the Pass Word, the full significance of which has already been explained. Let us combine these meanings! He comes laden with wordly possessions, which in themselves carry the seeds of death, unconsciously representing in his person the worker in metals who made the twin columns, and is about to be entombed (*tymboxein*).

Therefore the Soul presents him to the Spirit as one properly prepared to carry out the part of his great predecessor. There is a point here which we need to realize, for it is one which is often overlooked. In the previous degrees only one Deacon was instructed to lead the Can. by the proper steps to the East, but here both are needed. From the practical point of view there is no obvious reason why the help of the J.D. should be

invoked at all, and as the ceremony is usually carried out he does nothing but look on. I believe, however, the S.D. should first go through the steps and the J.D. should assist the Can. to copy his example. If this were so we should get an almost exact repetition of the analogous ceremony in the Royal Arch where the Principal Sojourner, corresponding to the S.D., is helped by an assistant. Thus, with the Can., in both cases we get a Trinity, only one of whom actually descends into the grave, or in the other case the vault.

As Major Sanderson has pointed out in his book, "An Examination of the Masonic Ritual," any man among the primitive races who actually stepped over an open grave would be considered to have committed sacrilege, and almost certainly would be slain. But on the other hand we do know that in many initiatory rites either the Can., or someone else for him, steps down into a grave, and is subsequently symbolically slain therein. If this be the true interpretation of this part of the ceremony, the reason for the presence of the two deacons in addition to the Can. becomes clear. It is only the Body that descends into the grave, the Soul and the Spirit have no part therein. Thus, for the moment, though only temporarily, these three represent the triune nature of man, while the three principal officers represent the triune nature of God. The fact that this is undoubtedly true in the case of the Royal Arch, makes it almost certain that the same idea underlies this apparently unimportant difference between the arrangements in the third degree, and those followed in the first and second.

Again and again when one comes to study carefully the details of our ritual, one finds little points, such as these, which would certainly not have survived the drastic revision of 1816 if there had not been present some



men who really did understand the inner meaning of our ceremonies, and refused to allow important lessons to be lost by the removal of what, at first sight, appear to be unnecessary details.

Therefore, those of us who value the inner meaning of our ceremonies owe a deep debt of gratitude to these men, even though their actual names be unknown to us, and on our part a duty is imposed on us that we shall not hastily tamper with the rituals, merely because we do not ourselves see the full significance of a phrase, or think that by revising it we can make the wording run more smoothly.

The next factor we must consider most carefully is the actual steps themselves. These make the Latin cross of suffering and sacrifice.

Sometimes the steps<sup>1</sup> are not done quite correctly, for the Can. should be careful to face due North, due South, and due East respectively. This procedure undoubtedly refers to the three entrances of the Temple through which Hiram Abiff endeavoured to escape. Hence it is we see that the Master himself trod out the cross of Calvary during the tragedy, and in a sense made the Consecration Cross of the Temple.

In a mediæval church, and even to-day at the consecration of a church according to the Anglican ordinance, there should be a dedication cross marked on the building. In the Middle Ages these were usually marked on the pillars, and apparently corresponded to the mark made by an illiterate person when witnessing a deed. The Consecrating Bishop sometimes drew this cross on the pillar or wall, or sometimes merely traced over a

<sup>1</sup> [Here and in the previous paragraph the print edition had "Sp . . s" but correlating this passage with the version of the Emulation M.M. in Hannah suggests that "Steps" was what was meant. — T.S.]

cross already painted there for the purpose. Any new piece of work in a church, even if only a new fresco, had its dedication cross. For example:—At Chaldon Church, Surrey, the dedication cross is marked on the margin of a fresco depicting the "Brig of Dread," described at length in "Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods."

Bearing these facts in mind, we shall perceive that, even from the Operative point of view, the manner of advancing in this degree, and the manner in which Hiram Abiff met his end, had a peculiar significance. The Great Architect of the Temple must have traced the dedication cross the whole length and breadth of the Temple in his own blood. Moreover, such dedication crosses as have actually survived are nearly always found to be painted in red. Thus, Hiram Abiff's last work was, as it were, to commence the consecration of the Temple which was completed by King Solomon, for until that cross had been marked either on the wall or pavement, according to mediæval Operative ideas the building could not be consecrated. Therefore, the Can., who is re-enacting the same drama, must obviously do likewise, and in so doing dedicates the Temple of his body.

But there is still more hidden within this ceremonial act. The ancient Knights Templar were accused of trampling on the cross, and a careful examination of the evidence taken at the trial shows that in reality they took a ritual step, somewhat similar to those taken by the Can. in this degree.

One of the esoteric meanings indicated is the Way of the Cross which leads to Calvary. Furthermore, having thus traced out a cross he is subsequently laid on it, and this fact is emphasised by the position in which his legs or feet are placed. The foot of this cross reaches to the Pedestal on which rests the O.T. If, therefore, this sym-

bolical cross were raised as it was on Calvary it would rest on the O.T., and the Can. would face the East, and would be, as it were, on a mountain. This fact should be born in mind by those who seek a Christian interpretation of our Craft ceremonies. Mystically interpreted, it indicates that every aspirant for union with the Divine must tread the Way of the Cross, and suffer and die thereon, in order that he may rise to a new life, a realisation of his union with the Infinite.

Even those who are disinclined to admit the possibility of a Christian interpretation of the Craft degrees, must recognise the fact that this cross is the cross of sacrifice, and means that the true aspirant must be prepared to sacrifice everything in his search after Truth.

The number of the steps is the combination of the Trinity and of the four elements, representing matter. It is the same number as forms the perfect lodge, and also the seven elements which form man, whether we interpret it according to the ancient Egyptian system, or in the more modern form of the five physical senses, the Soul and the Spirit. In the latter case it indicates that the man must be prepared to sacrifice—or shall we say dedicate to God, Body, Soul and Spirit.

There are yet other profound meanings in this one ritual act, but enough has been written to set my readers pondering for themselves, and we will therefore proceed to consider the next point in the ceremony.

The Obligation itself contains one or two interesting points. Thus it indicates that a M.M.'s Lodge must always be open on the Centre. This shows us at once that we are dealing with a ceremony with a mystical meaning, for the Centre means the same as the Middle Chamber in the second degree—the secret chamber of the heart, where dwells the Divine Spark—and so tells us in veiled

language that all that happens thereafter is a spiritual experience which sooner or later comes to every mystic. The special moral obligations which the Can. undertakes should be noted, but require no explanation. It is, however, difficult to understand why they should be deferred until this stage. In the ancient charges similar obligations are imposed apparently on the E.A., and this seems more logical.

The Penalty varies even in different parts of England, but in essentials is always the same. You are slain at the Centre, and the manner of disposal is very reminiscent of the way in which the dead are cremated in India in honour of Shiva. There the corpse is burnt near running water, preferably near the Ganges, and the ashes are thrown into the air over the river to the four cardinal points, that the winds may scatter them. It must be remembered that Shiva represents the destructive attribute of the Deity, and he makes the Penal Sigh of a M.M. on his statues. His is the element of fire, and all these facts must be born in mind when considering our own Penalty.

The position of the Square and Compasses, in addition to the explanation given, indicates that the spirit, represented by the Compasses, now dominates the body, typified by the Square.

## CHAPTER IV THE EXHORTATION.

THE opening part of the exhortation give convenient summary of the previous degrees,<sup>1</sup> and quite clearly indicates that the first inner meaning of the series is Birth, Life, which is of course educational and preparatory for its sequel, Death. The phrase relating to the second degree "And to trace it, from its development, through the paths of Heavenly Science, even to the throne of God Himself," shows plainly its real significance. As pointed out in the F.C. Handbook, the F.C. in the Middle Chamber discovers, not only the name of God, but that he himself is the fifth letter "Shin" which transforms the name Jehovah into the name Jeheshue, or Messiah, the King.

But according to the old<sup>2</sup> Kabala Jeheshue must be raised on the cross of Tipareth, and the significance of this fact is impressed on our Can. by the incidents now to take place. The average Christian need not trouble about the subtleties of the Kabala, for the story in the New Testament supplies him with a very similar interpretation. The W. M. having, almost casually, given him this key to the inner meaning of what is about to follow, proceeds at once to the most dramatic part of the cere-

<sup>1</sup> [Before the retrospective of the degrees, the W.M. informs the Can. "you are now entitled to demand that last and greatest trial &c." although it is not clear in how many workings he is expected to actively and verbally "demand" it before the ceremony proceeds. — T.S.]

<sup>2</sup> [*sic* — all this is Renaissance (possibly even later) Christian Cabala, which was in any case largely an exercise in religious propaganda conducted with the aim of "proving" that Jesus was the Messiah (see e.g. the various acrostics from **בראשית**, the first word of the Torah, expressing Christian doctrines in Mathers, *Kabbalah Unveiled*, introduction §12) and thus converting Kabbalistically incline Jews to Christianity — T.S.]

mony. Up to this point almost all forms of our ritual are practically the same, but henceforward there are many marked differences. "Emulation" ritual may be regarded as containing the bare minimum, but the additional details found in many Provincial workings in England, and in Scotland, Ireland, America, and many of the Continental Lodges, are too important to be ignored. There is no reason to assume that they are innovations; on the contrary all the evidence points to the fact that they are integral parts of the ceremony which, for various reasons, were omitted by the revisers of our ritual who met in the Lodge of Reconciliation. I shall therefore proceed to note and explain them where necessary.

Whereas in Emulation as soon as the Wardens. are called on the Deacons retire, in most other workings in the Provinces etc., they fall back to the head of the grave. Thus with the W.M. the Wardens form the triangle of Spirit, and with the Deacons the Square of matter, on which the triangle rests, for the Master descends from his chair and stands in front of the Pedestal. As a practical piece of advice I would recommend that the J.W. should not direct the Can. to cross his feet until after the S.W. has dealt with him, for it is impossible for him to drop on his respective knees if his feet are crossed, whereas by carrying out these instructions before the last attack he will fall the more readily.

In most of the old Scotch rituals the Can. journeys round the Lodge, is attacked by the J.W. in the South, by the S.W. in the West (note that), and returns to the Master in the East, where the final incident takes place. I think, however, our English system of having the attack in the North instead of in the West is much preferable, and is probably the correct form. In the Scotch ritual the three villains have names, and the same is the case in America.

They are *Jubela*, *Jubelo*, and *Jubelum*. The word itself clearly comes from the Latin word meaning "To command," and refers to the fact that they commanded him to give up the Secrets. But the terminations of the three names appear to have a curious esoteric reference to India. It can hardly be by accident that these three names form the mystic word AUM. The U in India in this case is pronounced almost like O, and when this word is disguised as it usually is, it is written OMM.<sup>3</sup> If this be so we have the Creative, Preservative, and Annihilative aspects of the Deity emphasised in the Third Degree, and it is the Destructive aspect, symbolised by the letter M, which deals the final stroke.

This variation is therefore of importance, but I must warn my readers that not all Scotch workings have it. Some of them being much more akin to our own, even having the attack in the North. Practically all of them, however, have the perambulations, during which solemn music is played. The usual procedure is for the brethren to pass round the grave once making the Penal Sigh of an E.A. When this is done the J.W. makes his abortive attempt. The second round is made with the Hailing Sign of an F.C., after which the S.W. tries and fails. The third round is made with the Sign of Grief and Distress of a M.M., on the conclusion of which the Can. is rased by the lion's grip. It is a great pity that the use of this name for the W.M.'s grip is falling into disuse in London, for it has in itself important symbolical references, to which we shall refer later in the chapter.

In many parts of England it is still customary to place

<sup>3</sup> [Symbolically the word is considered as having three letters, *A*, *U*, *M*, but in writing it the *A* and *U* are elided into *O* according to the rules of *sandhi* and the *M* is sometimes represented by the *anuswara*, *i.e.*, nasalising the end of the vowel sound, thus ओँ, or in Roman letters, oim. — T.S.]

the Can. either in a coffin or in a grave made in the floor, and the same method is found in most other parts of the world. Indeed, in the Dutch ritual the Can. is first of all shown a coffin in which is a human skeleton. This is subsequently removed, though he does not know it, and he thinks when he is laid therein he will find himself in its bony clutches. Even as near London as Windsor there is a Masonic Temple which has a special chamber of death with a grave actually in the floor, and until recently it was still used, although whether it is to-day I cannot say.

Let us now turn to consider the meanings of the main incidents. The first meaning of the degree is obvious; it prepares a man for his final end and hints of a possibility of life beyond the grave, but it must be admitted that the lesson is not driven home with the same force as it is in most of the ancient mysteries. Osiris Himself rose from the dead and became the Judge of all who followed after Him, and because of this fact His worshippers believed that they too would rise. In our legend, however, it is only the dead body of Hiram Abiff which is lifted out of the grave in a peculiar manner, and in the legend there is not even a hint as to what befell his Soul. The question is often asked why they should have raised a carcass and placed it on its feet, and I have never heard any answer. One explanation probably is by analogy with the Greek story of the manner in which Hercules recovered Alcestis and ransomed her from the bondage of *Thanatos*—Death himself. We are told that Hercules wrestled with *Thanatos* and would not let him go until he had agreed to allow Hercules to bring her back from the realm of the Shades to the land of living men. It may be that the corpse here represents Death. It is also worth noting that Isis joined together the fragments of the body of Osiris, and the "Setting up" of the backbone of the God was a ceremony



carried out every year by the ancient Egyptian Priests.<sup>4</sup> The body of Osiris apparently was raised from the bier by Anubis in precisely the same way as the M.M. is raised. When it was set on its feet life returned to it. One fact is certain, that in every rite which has as its central theme symbolic death the Can. is raise by the same grip, and in precisely the same manner, and this manner becomes a method of greeting and of recognition among all who have passed through this type of ceremony. For example:—it is known and used in the Dervish rite, among West African Negroes, among the Red Indians of Central America, and was apparently known to the ancient Druids, for it is carved on a stone found at Iona. In the ancient rites of Mithra it also appears to have been the method used upon a similar occasion. These facts show that it is an ancient landmark and one to be most carefully guarded.

The use of the phrase the *lion grip* is peculiarly significant, as Major Sanderson shows in his new work "An Examination of the Masonic Ritual." Therein he points out that in the Book of the Dead the Supreme God, whether Ra or Osiris, is appealcd to as the "God in the Lion form," and in all such cases the prayer of the Soul is that he may be permitted to "Come forth" in the East, rising with the sun from the darkness of the grave. The lion, in Egypt, was the personification of strength and power, but it is usually associated with the idea of the regeneration of the Sun, and therefore with the resurrection. Maj. Sanderson goes on to point out as follows. "Shu (*Anheru*, 'the Lifter') who as the light of the Dawn was said to lift up the sky-goddess from the arms of the sleeping Earth, is often represented as a lion, for only through him was

<sup>4</sup> [The ceremony of setting up the *Djed* pillar, previously alluded to in my notes. — T.S.]

the rebirth of the Sun made possible. Osiris is called the lion of yesterday, and Ra the Lion of to-morrow:<sup>5</sup> The bier of Osiris is always represented as having the head and legs of a lion." Thus as Major Sanderson indicates, the expression "the lion grip" is a survival from the Solar cult, and therefore a landmark which should be carefully preserved.

The Bright Morning Star whose rising brings peace and Salvation was, almost certainly, originally Sirius, but to Englishmen it must seem strange that Sirius should be said to bring peace and Salvation. The association of these ideas with the Dog Star is undoubtedly a fragment which has come down from Ancient Egypt, for the rising of Sirius marked the beginning of the inundation of the Nile, which literally brought salvation to the people of Egypt by irrigating the land, and enabling it to produce food. That Sirius was an object of veneration to the philosophers of the ancient world is well known to all archæologists, and many of the Temples in Egypt have been proved to have been oriented on Sirius. There is also a good deal of evidence showing that some of the stone circles in Great Britain were similarly oriented on Sirius by the Druids. It is therefore not surprising that this star is still remembered in our rituals. Naturally it has acquired a deeper spiritual meaning in the course of years, and may be regarded as representing the First Fruits of the Resurrection, the sure hope of our Redemption. This aspect is set forth in the lectures drawn up by

<sup>5</sup> [One of the standard vignettes to cap. xvii of the *Book of the Dead* depicts two lions facing away from each other with a sun-disk supported on their backs, the one on the right captioned "Yesterday," that on the left captioned "Tomorrow." The corresponding text reads "To me belongs yesterday: I know tomorrow" with the gloss: "As for yesterday, that is Osiris. As for tomorrow, that is Rē on the day in which the foes of the Lord of All were destroyed ..." (Faulkner trans.). — T.S.]

Dunckerley, who regarded it as the star of Bethlehem, and as typifying Christ. See Rev. xxii, 16.

At this point the Can., who has been carefully put in the N., the place of darkness, is moved round by the right to the South. From the practical point of view this is to enable the Master to re-enter his chair from the proper side, but there is also an inner meaning. Immediately after death the Soul is said to find itself on the earth plane amid murk and darkness. Lacking mortal eyes it cannot perceive the sun, and, on the other hand, is still so immersed in matter that it cannot yet see clearly with its spirit eyes, but this stage rapidly passes away, and the Soul is received into a higher plane of existence, being brought thither by messengers of Light. The position in the North represents this period of darkness on the earth plane, and that this is not accidental is shown by the fact that in most rituals the lights are not turned up until the phrase "That bright morning star, etc." has been uttered. Then the Master, representing one of these spirit messengers, leads the Can. gently round to the South, thereby symbolising his entry into the place of light. And who is this messenger? Every installed master who has received the Pass Word *leading* to that degree<sup>6</sup> should realise that, no matter how unworthy, he represents the risen Christ. Thus we see the peculiarly appropriate nature of the act coming after the reference to the bright morning star, which also in another sense represents the risen Christ.

<sup>6</sup>[According to Hannah's account of the ceremony of installation of a W.M., besides the Installed Master's word, some workings have a full opening for a "Board of Installed Masters" with a pass word, which is RABBONI, apparently an Aramaic word, glossed *διδασκαλος* ('teacher, master') in John XX, 16 where Mary of Magdala addresses Jesus thus. — T.S.]

## CHAPTER V THE SECRETS.

HAVING thus been brought into the place of light, the Can. is given not the Genuine Secrets, but only substituted ones. This fact must often have puzzled the Can. The practical reason given in the ritual, though perfectly intelligible to a Royal Arch mason, cannot be the real one. In view of the unexpected calamity no-one could have thought King Solomon was breaking his obligation by nominating a successor to Hiram Abiff and giving him the full Secrets. Actually, according to the Royal Arch story, he did something much worse, for he wrote them down and placed them somewhere, in the hopes that they would be subsequently rediscovered, and he had no assurance that their discoverers would even be masons, much less that they would keep their discovery secret. Of course this is also an allegory, and from this standpoint perfectly correct. The lost Secrets are the nature and attributes of God, which must be realised by each man for himself, and no other man can really communicate them. Moreover, this complete realisation of the nature of God, and the union of the Divine Spark within us with the Source of All, can never be achieved during mortal life. Even after death we shall need to leave the world long behind and traverse far, before we can hope to attain that state of spiritual evolution which will enable us to approach the Holy of Holies, and gaze with unveiled eyes upon Him, Who is the beginning and the end of all.

With regard to these substituted secrets, let us note that they grow out of those used by the F.C. Having

already shown in the last book that the signs of the F.C., and in fact the real secret of that degree, is the transformation of Jehovah into Jeheshue, we see that this is most appropriate. To use modern language, the second degree teaches of the birth of the Christ Spirit within us, while the third indicates that mystically we, like the great Master, must die and rise again. As St. Paul says, "Die daily in Christ."

The signs given are probably all of great antiquity. Of some we have evidence which shows that they were venerated in ancient Egypt and Mexico, are still employed in the primitive initiatory rites of the savages, and are associated with the Gods in India. For example, the Penal Sign is used by Shiva, the Great Destroyer, Who when He makes it holds in His hand the lariat of death. The sign of grief and distress is found all round the world, as I have shown in full detail in "Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods." Ancient Mexico, where Quetzacoatl makes it, can be matched with Easter Island in the far Pacific, Peru, West Africa, East Africa, New Guinea, Malaya and many other places.

Major Sanderson points out that the second Casual Sign is depicted in Egyptian pictures as being used by those who are saluting Osiris in his coffin. Those who desire will find it in Papyrus 9,908 in the British Museum.

The English sign of grief and distress (for up till now we have been speaking of the Scotch form) is almost certainly not the correct one. Its general appearance would incline one to believe that it is a penal sign, though whence derived it is difficult to say. A little thought will indicate the nature of the penalty as being somewhat similar to that of one of the higher degrees. So far as I can find it is not recognised as a sign of grief and distress anywhere, except among masons who are de-

scended masonically from the Grand Lodge of England. That is to say, while every mason throughout the world would recognise the Scotch form of the sign, also many primitive people who are not masons at all, only English masons would recognise our form.

The so-called Continental form undoubtedly comes from a well known high degree, where it is much more appropriate. Nor is it correct to say that it is used on the Continent. It is apparently restricted to the Latin countries, whereas even in Germany it is the Scotch form that is employed.

The sign of Exaltation is a form used to this day in most parts of Asia to indicate worship, and was similarly employed in Ancient Egypt. Major Sanderson suggests that it was copied from the position in which Shu upheld the sky.

Thus we see that five out of the so called seven signs can be shown to be of ancient origin, and it is quite probable that further research will enable us to prove that the other two are equally old.

Such signs as these had originally a magical significance, and the explanation given in the ritual as to their origin is no doubt of a much later date than the signs themselves. Indeed, a careful study of certain of the signs will show that they are not the natural signs which would have been used to indicate the feelings they are said to express. For example, in the sign of horror the left hand would not naturally be placed in the position we are taught to put it in, if this sign had originated as related in the story. So obvious is this that some modern preceptors of Lodges of Instruction have to my knowledge altered the position of the left hand in order to make it conform to the story, but I venture to think that in so doing they are committing a very serious mistake,

nothing less than the removal of an ancient landmark.

Some day we shall probably discover the real origin of this sign, but if it is altered that will of course become impossible.

The lion's grip and the actual position of raising are equally old, and, so far as we can find, this manner of raising is employed in every rite, whether ancient or primitive, which deals with the dramatic representation of death. As a manner of greeting it is employed by the initiated men in many Red Indian tribes, in West Africa, among the Senussi in North Africa, and in the Dervish rites.

The parts of the body brought in contact with each other are all parts presided over by some sign of the Zodiac, and there would appear to be some old astrological meaning which has now become lost. It may possibly have been connected with Gemini, the Twins, and this fact is made the more probable by the survival of the name "The Lion's Grip." The explanation given, although possibly of fairly recent origin, nevertheless contains a valuable inner meaning, for it shows that we cannot hope to advance towards God unless we do our duty to our fellow men. Thus in dramatic form is shown that the brotherhood of man necessitates the Fatherhood of God.

It hardly seems necessary in this book to point out again that the regular step is a tau cross, and teaches us that we must trample under foot our animal passions, if we desire to approach near to God.

We note, however, that the Can., in advancing to obtain the secrets, has perforce to make three tau crosses, and the Christian Mystic will doubtless perceive in this a hidden reference to the three crosses on Calvary.

Finally, as has already been pointed out, the penalties

of the first and second degrees draw attention to two important occult centres, so also in this degree the Solar Plexus, the most important occult centre of all, is indicated, and since the object of every Mystic is to achieve the Beatific vision, the fact that the monks of Mt. Athos, near Salonica, do so by fixing their eyes on this part, shows that there is a very special reason for the present form of the penal sign of the third degree.



## CHAPTER VI THE BADGE.

ON his re-entering the Lodge the Can. is presented, and in due course invested by the S.W., as in the previous degrees, thereby indicating that even after death man's spiritual advancement is registered by the Soul. The Badge itself, however, is full of symbolic meaning, and though in its present form it is of comparatively recent date, it is evident that those who designed it had a much deeper knowledge of symbolism than some modern critics are apt to believe.

Firstly the colour, which is that of Cambridge University, and likewise that used by Parliament when fighting King Charles, has a much deeper significance than is generally known. It is closely related to the colour of the Virgin Mary, which itself had been brought forward from Isis, and the other Mother Goddesses of the ancient world. It is possible that the designers were also influenced by the existence of certain Orders of Knighthood which had their appropriate colours, for the aprons of Grand Lodge Officers have Garter blue, but this blue is also the colour of Oxford, and the colour associated with the Royalist cause at the time of the Civil War. At any rate, it is appropriate that our aprons should thus employ the colours of the two great Universities of England. There is, of course, an exception in the case of the red aprons allocated to Grand Stewards, for which there are historical reasons into which we need not now enter. We may, however, point out that the dark blue aprons of Grand Lodge are often, though erroneously, spoken of as the Purple, indicating a Royal colour, and thereby implying no doubt that Brethren

entitled to wear this colour are rulers in the Craft, and represent the masculine element. Light blue, on the other hand, represents the feminine or passive aspect, and is most appropriate for the ordinary M.M., whose duty it is to obey, and not to command. Indeed, the M.M.'s apron contains other emblems which indicate this feminine aspect. These are the three rosettes, which symbolise the rose, itself a substitute for the Vesica Piscis, and they are arranged so as to form a triangle with the point upwards, interpenetrating the triangle formed by the flap of the apron. The two triangles only interpenetrate half way, therein differing from the double triangles seen on the jewels worn by Royal Arch Masons, which completely overlap. These two triangles deserve a little careful study. The lower triangle with its point upwards is the triangle of fire, the emblem of Shiva, and the symbol of the Divine Spark. The triangle made by the flap of the apron, which has its point directed downwards, is the triangle of water, and is thus to some extent representative of the Soul. These two triangles are within a square, the emblem of matter, and therefore of the body, and so we see that the M.M.'s apron symbolically represents the triune nature of man, whereas the Royal Arch jewel, (the only high degree jewel which may be worn in a Craft Lodge) has these two triangles within a circle, which is the emblem of the Infinite. In this case the triangle of water presents the preservative aspect, the triangle of fire the destructive aspect, the point or eye at the centre the creative aspect, and the circle the everlasting nature of the Supreme Being. There is therefore a curious correspondence, and also a marked difference, between the jewel of the Royal Arch Mason, and the apron of the M.M.

Viewed from another standpoint the apron has another set of meanings. The triangle represents Spirit, and

the square, matter. The flap forms a triangle entering into the square, and so depicts the entry of Spirit into matter, and therefore man. The E.A.'s apron should have the flap pointing upward, indicating that the Divine Wisdom has not yet truly penetrated the gross matter of our bodies. This custom is unfortunately going out of use in modern Masonry, which is a great pity, as undoubtedly a valuable lesson is thus lost. The F.C. has the flap pointing downward for several reasons. Firstly, to indicate that wisdom has begun to enter and therefore to control matter; secondly, to represent the triangle of water and thus indicate that Soul and Body are acting in unison; thirdly, because this triangle is the emblem of Vishnu the Preserver, and so emphasises the fact that the aspect of God taught in this degree is the preservative aspect, whereas the addition of the three rosettes in the third degree shows, not only the union of Body, Soul and *Spirit*, but also that the great lesson of this degree is the importance of the Destructive side of the Deity, or, as we may prefer it call it, the Transformative side.

What, however, of the two rosettes worn by the F.C.? Firstly, they stress the dual nature of man, and have a very clear reference to the two pillars. Similarly, no doubt, they indicate that the F.C. is not yet a complete and united being; Body and Soul are in union, but unlike the M.M., these two are not in complete accord with the Spirit. Thus we obtain correspondence between the knocks of the F.C. and the two rosettes. Furthermore, the triangle is incomplete, showing that the F.C. is not yet a complete Freemason, and this correlates with the position of the Compasses when taking the obligation in the F.C. degree.

Two other features of the apron must also be considered. Firstly, the tassels, which appear originally to

have been the ends of the string with which the apron was bound round the waist. There is little doubt that in the 18th century the aprons had not the present symbolic tassels, but were fastened round the body in a very similar way to that in which the E.A. and F.C. aprons are to this day. It is interesting to note in this connection that the actual aprons worn by the officers of Grand Lodge for the year, as distinct from the Past Grand Officers aprons, have no tassels at all.

In the course of years, no doubt, the ends of the strings were ornamented by tassels, and to this day the aprons of the Royal Order of Scotland are bound round the body by an ornamental cord with tassels, which are tied in front in such a way that the two tassels stick out from underneath the flap. These tassels, when the final form of our aprons was fixed, were separated from the bands which fasten the apron, and attached to the apron itself, becoming as we now see simply strips of ribbon on which are fastened seven chains. When this change took place it is clear that those who made the alternation deliberately chose the number 7, and intended thereby to convey a symbolic meaning. We have already explained the numerous symbolic meanings of the number 7, for example, it represents God and Man, Spirit and Matter, etc.

Naturally they had to have two tassels to balance, and it would have been very inartistic to have had four chains on one tassel and three on the other, and so it would be unwise to lay too much stress on the number 14, which is the sum total. We may regard it merely as a curious and interesting coincidence that the body of Osiris was stated to have been divided by Set into 14 pieces. But in addition to these details as to the historical development of the tassels, we must not forget that in many of the 18th Cen-

ture aprons the two pillars are depicted. These aprons were usually decorated by paintings on the leather, and varied considerably from Lodge to Lodge, but one of the most usual kinds of decoration included the two pillars, and the remembrance of these may very probably have influenced those who designed our present apron.

The modern arrangement by which the apron is fastened, namely, a piece of webbing with a hook and eye attachment, gave a fine opportunity for some really profound symbolism, and I feel certain that it was not accident which led to the universal adoption of the snake to serve this purpose.

There are two kinds of symbolism attached to the snake in all ancient religions. Firstly, the snake as the enemy of man, and therefore as the representative of the powers of evil; and secondly, the snake as emblem of the Divine Wisdom. "Be ye wise as serpents" does not refer to the craftiness of the Devil, but to the Divine Wisdom itself. In Ancient Egypt the Soul as he passed through the underworld met with serpents of evil, and also with serpents of good. In India, legend tells us of a whole order of beings, the Serpent Folk, who were of a Spiritual nature different from man, possessed their own rulers, and were endowed with superhuman wisdom. Some of these are considered to be friendly to man, while others are hostile. The Sacred Cobra is well known to every student of Hindoo religions, and is essentially good. Actual worship is paid to the Serpent throughout the whole of India, and in many other parts of the world, and in the Kabala we get clear traces of the fact that under certain circumstances the serpent is regarded as "The Shining One" — the Holy Wisdom Itself. Thus we see that the serpent on our apron denotes that we are encircled by the Holy Wisdom.

Finally, the serpent biting its tail, and thus forming a circle, has always been regarded as the emblem of eternity, and more especially of the Eternal Wisdom of God. Nor must we forget that the snake is peculiarly associated with Shiva, whose close symbolic association with the third degree has already been clearly shown.

Much more might be written on the meaning of the apron, but we cannot devote any more space to this subject, interesting though it may be, although before considering our next point it will perhaps be well to recall what has already been mentioned in the E.A. Handbook, viz., that aprons, in addition to their Operative significance, have right through the ages been employed in connection with religious ceremonial. On the monuments of Egypt a garment, which can best be described as a triangular apron with the point upward, is depicted on the monuments, in circumstances indicating that the wearer is taking part in some kind of ceremony of initiation. In ancient Mexico the Gods are depicted wearing aprons, and it is not without interest to note that the modern Anglican bishop wears an apron, although it appears to have developed from a long flowing robe somewhat the shape of a cassock.

## CHAPTER VII THE LEGEND.

AFTER the ceremonial investiture of the Can. the W.M. continues the narrative of the traditional history. At least this is the case in most English workings, but in some Scotch workings the whole story is told first, and subsequently the Can. and the other Brethren act the chief parts. Perhaps one of the most important points to realise is the correct meaning of the name H.A.B.<sup>1</sup> Major Sanderson in "An Examination of the Masonry Ritual" gives the following interesting interpretations, which we will proceed to expand further:—"The title H.A.B. is taken direct from the Hebrew of 2 Chron., Chapter 4, Verse 16, and means, 'Hiram his father.'<sup>2</sup> H. means 'Exaltation of light, their liberty or whiteness, he that destroys';<sup>3</sup> It is of interest to note that *abib* in Hebrew

<sup>1</sup> [The usual romanisation used in Masonic ritual is *Hiram Abiff*. The name of the artificer is spelt **הִרָם**, *Hiram*, in Kings, the same as Solomon's patron the King of Tyre. In the second book of Chronicles both the king and the bronze-worker are rendered **חִירָם**, *Huram* or *Churam*, though in the king of Tyre's letter to Solomon (ii. 13) where he extols the skills of his craftsman, the latter has the surname or epithet **אָבִי**, *abi*, which at iv. 16 becomes **אָבִיו**. The additional *vau* is possibly just a grammatical particle, either that or the text is corrupt. *Abi* pointed thus means "my father." — T.S.]

<sup>2</sup> [Translated thus in the KJV, *loc cit*. NIV seems to treat "Abi" as a proper name and leaves it untranslated. — T.S.]

<sup>3</sup> [Gesenius (*Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, s.v.) suggests that *Churam* may be derived from **חָר**, "noble, free-born" (also "a hole"); we also find **חָיִר**, "to be white," **חֵיִרָה**, "nobility" (proper name in Gen. xxxviii), **חָרַר**, a root meaning "to burn"; **חָרַם**, "to shut in, contract; to prohibit to common use, consecrate to God"; a related verb has the transferred meaning "to destroy utterly" from the genocidal wars between the Israelites and other Canaanite tribes where defeated villages were "devoted" to Yahveh by killing the people and livestock, burning the buildings to the ground and sowing the fields with salt. I've no idea where he gets "Exaltation of Light." — T.S.]

means 'Ears of corn,' or 'Green fruits,'<sup>4</sup> and there is just a possibility that this is the correct title of H."

Bearing these translations in mind we at once perceive a whole series of inner meanings hidden in the name of the principal Architect.<sup>5</sup> Taking the Christian interpretation of our rituals:—firstly, we shall remember that Christ said "If I am raised up (or exalted) I shall draw all men unto me." Secondly, Christ died to make us free, that is, to give us liberty from the bonds of death and hell. Thirdly, mediæval divines were never tired of referring to Christ's whiteness and purity, and relate many beautiful legends and allegories to drive home this lesson. One phrase alone will suffice to bring this aspect of the Christ to our minds, *i.e.*, that He is constantly spoken of as "the lily of the valley." Fourthly, He came to destroy the bonds of death and hell, nor must we forget the old prophecy spoken concerning the coming Christ and the serpent, representing Satan, "It (Christ) shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel," Gen. 3. v. 15. It is of interest to note that Quetzacoatl, the Mexican Preserver, who fought and overthrew the great

<sup>4</sup> [אָרְבֵּיב, "an ear of corn, a green ear," from the root אָרַב, "to be verdant, to germinate; putting forth, protruding, germinating with impetus, shooting forth"; possibly connected with the roots אָרַב and אָרַב (whence אָרַב, "love"). Gesenius, *s.v.* I should probably stop this line of speculation before it lands in Thomas Inman territory, since as noted the terminal *vau* only appears at 2 Chron. iv. 16, and is probably as noted either a grammatical particle or textual corruption and in any case the Book of Chronicles was probably one of the latest parts of the Tanakh to be written down, the epithet was probably just stuck in there to distinguish the craftsman from his liege. — T.S.]

<sup>5</sup> [As indicated in previous notes, making this personage the principal architect of the temple was a conceit of an author or reviser of the Masonic rituals, in I Kings he doesn't even appear in Jerusalem until after the shell of the temple is completed (assuming of course that the narrative is in some vague semblance of chronological order); the works he did are enumerated at 1 Kings viii 41-45 and 2 Chron. iv 12-16. — T.S.]



giant of evil, was himself smitten in the foot, near to a fall of water, subsequently died from the wound, and ultimately rose again from the grave. Krishna in India similarly died from an arrow wound in the heel. Moreover, in mediæval frescoes Christ is constantly represented as crushing the head of the great dragon under His left foot, while in His right hand He upraises a staff on which is a cross. Such scenes are usually described as "The Harrowing of Hell."

Fifthly, if the word *abib* is the correct rendering for the second half of the name in question, we get a clear reference to the Sacramental bread. The ears of corn are obviously synonymous with the wafer, or consecrated bread, which alone was given in medieval days to the laity: while the alternative translation, "Green fruits," brings to our mind the Biblical saying that Christ is "the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Corin. 15. 20).<sup>6</sup> Bearing this possible Christian interpretation in mind, installed masters will perceive the deep significance of the Pass Word which leads from the degree of M.M. to that of I.M.

But in addition to these Christian interpretations of H.A.B. there is yet another, which in some senses may be regarded as older, and the key to which is supplied by India. In this sense H.A.B. takes on the characteristics of Śiva, the Destroyer.<sup>7</sup>

Firstly, "Exaltation of life" reminds us of the legend

<sup>6</sup> [A far simpler reading would be that H.A.B. is, by a one-place Cæsar shift, I.B.C., John Barleycorn, the Frazerian vegetation-spirit (Robert Burns, while not the original author of the song, gave it something of a working over which influenced many subsequent versions, and is known to have been a Freemason). The objection stated in my note, p. 49, is probably just as damaging to this, though, as it is to the notion of Hiram-Abi as a type of Christ, Osiris, &c. — T.S.]

<sup>7</sup> [Except that only the most *incredible* torturing of symbolic interpretation can assign any of the characteristics of Śiva to Hiram-Abi either as depicted in the Tanakh or the Masonic legends. — T.S.]

that Śiva on a certain day increased in stature until He over topped the universe, and, as a result, overthrew Brahma, the Creator, and was acknowledged by Viṣnu as His superior. On that great day He gathered unto Himself the beginning and the end of all things, Alpha and Omega, and henceforth birth and death alike were in His hands.

Secondly, "Their liberty" refers to the fact that, to the pious Hindoo, Shiva by death grants liberty from the toil and anguish of this world, and sets the soul free to mount to greater heights of spirituality.

Thirdly, Shiva is always spoken of as the "Great White God, white with the ashes of the dead who are ever burned in His honour." Nor must we forget that these ashes are always scattered to the four cardinal points of Heaven.

Fourthly, He is in His very essence "The Great Destroyer."

The "Ears of corn" are symbols of Vishnu the Preserver, Who Himself, according to numerous Hindoo legends, was slain, and rose from the dead, thereby He paid allegiance the Lord of Death; and so

Fifthly, we obtain the idea of the resurrection as symbolised by the ears of corn, which are planted in the earth and bring forth an abundant harvest, the "Green fruits" of the fields. In this connection it is as well to remember that the central theme of the Eleusinian mysteries was the ear of corn which was shown to the Candidate at the most solemn point of the whole ceremony, and similarly taught the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead.

The next point that strikes us in the legend is the number of craftsmen who "went in search." The Irish version is of peculiar interest, for it relates that it was the twelve who relented who afterwards "went in search,"

and not a new company of fifteen. In many ways this is more logical, and certainly has a deep symbolic meaning. It is logical in that it shows that the penitent twelve did their best to make amends for ever having allowed themselves to listen to the wicked schemes of the other three, and the subsequent decree of King Solomon, ordering them to wear white gloves and white aprons as a mark of their innocence, is most appropriate. It was a public announcement that King Solomon forgave them their indiscretion and acquitted them of responsibility for the crime.

On the other hand, in our version there seems no logical reason why King Solomon should order an entirely new batch of F.C.s to wear these emblems of their innocence, since they clearly had nothing to do with the crime, and moreover, all the others, except the penitent twelve, were equally innocent, and should therefore likewise have been instructed to wear white gloves and aprons. It must be remembered that these white gloves, *etc.*, were not bestowed as a reward for having taken part in the search, but are specifically stated to have been ordered to be worn to denote innocence.

The Irish account goes on to state that the twelve set out from the Temple and went together in one company until they came to a place where four roads met, and formed a cross; then they divided into four companies, and three went North, three East, three South, and three West. Thus they trod the Way of the Cross. In some old Irish workings we are told that the three who went North never returned. This symbolically implies that they went into the Place of Darkness. As the tendency in modern Irish masonry appears to be to adjust its ritual in main essentials to our English workings, it is but fair that I should say that I have a tangible proof of this form of the

legend, in the shape of an old Irish apron dated 1790, which, unlike modern Irish aprons, has a number of paintings on it depicting incidents in the ritual. One of the paintings shows the twelve F.C.s separating at the four cross roads. (See frontispiece).

It is clear from all accounts, whether English, Irish, Scotch or American, that the scoundrels, the agents of death, were found by those who went in the direction of Joppa, that is in the West, but we are left in considerable doubt as to whether the body was found in the East or in the South. Symbolically, however, it would clearly be in the South, for H.A.B., like the Christ, was struck down at High Twelve, when the sun is in the South. From a practical point of view it is fairly obvious that the scoundrels who were carrying away the body could never have reached Joppa if they had once gone East, for they would have had to fetch half a circle round Jerusalem, a procedure which would have rendered their chance of escape almost hopeless. By going South they might hope to throw their pursuers off the track, and then turn back at an angle, reach Joppa, and escape by boat. That this was their intention is clear from many old forms of the legend, and especially in those worked in America. King Solomon, however, foresaw this possibility and prevented their escape by forbidding any ships to sail. In the American working one of the officers of the Lodge enacts the part of a sea captain, and even wears a yachtman's cap. The villains come to him and beg him to take them aboard, but he refuses because of the embargo ordered by King Solomon. That the same incident was known in the old Irish working is shown by the little picture on the same Irish apron depicting the arrest of the villains on the sea shore, for in the background there is a ship.

Let us interpret the meaning of the Irish working first.

From the Christian standpoint the twelve F.C.'s represent the twelve apostles, Matthias replacing the traitor Judas.<sup>8</sup> But in the non-Christian, and possibly earlier interpretation, these twelve would of course be the twelve signs of the Zodiac, searching for the sun which had been eclipsed.<sup>9</sup> We must never forget that in addition to the deep spiritual meaning hidden in our ritual there is also a Solar Myth embedded, which has in the course of years become allegorized and filled with deeper spiritual truths.

But being English masons we must be prepared to find an explanation of the fifteen. In ancient Egyptian times the month consisted of 80 days, and the year of twelve such months, plus five extra days. Now the first fifteen, of whom twelve recanted, presumably represent the first half of that month, while the second half of the month is represented by the fifteen who went in search. But spiritually the meaning of the fifteen is fairly clear. Man has five senses and is triune in nature, and this implies that Body, Soul and Spirit must co-operate in trying to find God, and employ on that quest their five senses.

Lest there be any misapprehension here I would explain that man is considered to have not only the five physical senses, but also corresponding senses of Soul and Spirit. The phrase "To see with the eyes of the Spirit" is perfectly well known, and similarly we can speak of the eyes of the Soul. To give concrete examples: Students of psychic science constantly speak of clair-

<sup>8</sup> [Once one goes into details, this is of course impossible to reconcile with the actual legend. Note that later in this chapter, Judas is not included in the "Christian" gloss on the three treacherous Fellow-Crafts. — T.S.]

<sup>9</sup> [Again, this ignores the detail of the twelve having been originally part of a group of 15. It seems that some versions of the M.M. legend, possibly deliberately worked over to fit astronomical symbolism, had the murderers as three out of twelve, representing the winter signs. — T.S.]

audience and clairvoyance. While it is not necessary to accept this type of phenomena, it is clearly obvious that if man survives death at all his Soul must have a means of communicating with other Souls, and that these correspond in some way to our physical senses. In like manner how are we to describe the visions of the great seers and prophets, related in the Bible, except by the possession of spiritual sight?

Bearing this in mind we obtain the following interpretation of the fate which befell the three F.C. Lodges into which the fifteen formed themselves. Those who found nothing represent the physical senses of man, which are useless beyond the grave: the next company must therefore represent the Soul, for it is the Soul which realises, despite the logic of the physical world, that death does not end all, and so it was one of these who raised the Master. But the power which tells us what is right and wrong, and which ultimately punishes us for our offences, is what we call conscience, and this assuredly is the Divine Spark within us—the Spirit.

Let us now turn to consider the details connected with the discovery of the body. The incident of the shrub is such a striking analogy with a similar one found in the *Æneid*, wherein Æneas finds the body of the murdered Polydorus by plucking up a shrub which was near him on the side of a hill, that one is led to suspect that in the revision of our ritual this incident was copied from Virgil. But, on the other hand, it is quite possible that both refer back to an ancient source and have an allegorical meaning. One is the more inclined to think this explanation is the true one, because the Acacia has from time immemorial been more or less sacred in the near East. In ancient Egypt the earliest forms of the legend of Osiris relate that it was an acacia which grew

up round the coffin of Osiris, and not a tamarisk as in the later versions. (See "An Examination of the Masonic Ritual," by Major Sanderson). In like manner this tree is sacred in Arabia, India, and many parts of Africa, while it is the Shittim wood of the Old Testament, from which the ark was made. No doubt in this reverence for the acacia we have a survival of the primitive veneration for trees, usually spoken of as "tree and serpent worship." In India the assouata tree is stated to be a symbol of Trimurti, the Three in One. Its roots represent Brahma, its trunk Viṣṇu, and its branches Śiva, the Destroyer.

At any rate we can regard the acacia tree as in itself an emblem of the resurrection, for the tiny seed which is buried brings forth a mighty tree covered with fragrant blossoms.<sup>10</sup>

The account of the manner in which the Casual Signs came into existence, though ingenious, can hardly be taken as historic.<sup>11</sup> As we have already dealt with this point previously, we shall only say that every folk-lore student is well aware that: in the vast majority of cases, legends purporting to explain the origin of a certain custom do not give the real origin at all, but merely indicate that the origin of the custom has been lost, owing to its great antiquity. The very manner in which some of the signs are given is sufficient to indicate that they did not originate in the way suggested, while, on the other hand, we find these same signs all round the world, with entirely different explanations as to their origin. They are indeed ancient landmarks, and the utmost care should be taken not to alter them in any way.

<sup>10</sup> [But this could be applied to any one of a number of plants; in any case, the notion that the seed planted in the ground "dies" is a pernicious lie of the Osirian vegetation cults based on ignorance of biological facts. — T.S.]

<sup>11</sup> [This is true, but trivially true, since the entire legend in its present form is clearly a modern (*i.e.*, 17th century or later) invention. — T.S.]

The next incident in the legend is the capture of the scoundrels. In some rituals it is given with much interesting detail of a picturesque nature. All agree that they were apprehended in a cavern, and many say explicitly that it was near the sea shore. Some of the rituals state that the fugitives were overheard lamenting as follows:— "One said, 'Oh, that my throat had been cut across, rather than I should have done it,' while another more sorrowfully exclaimed 'Oh, that my heart had been torn out rather than that I should have struck him,' and a third voice brokenly said, 'Oh, that my body had been severed in two, rather than that I should have smitten him.' " This last version is of interest as explaining the legendary origin of the penalties of the three degrees, and incidentally it shows how legend incorporates facts into a story, in order to explain something whose original meaning is lost.<sup>12</sup> It would also appear from this version as if the scoundrels had not intended to actually kill their victim but merely to terrorise him, and in the excitement of the moment lost their heads. Symbolically this contains a valuable piece of teaching. According to one interpretation the three scoundrels represent "The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John, 2. 16). In other words, the sins of the flesh, the sins of the Soul, such as covetousness, and spiritual pride, the most deadly of all.

These sins assuredly destroy man both physically and spiritually, yet it can truly be said that in giving way to them no man intends to destroy himself. From the more strictly Christian standpoint the three scoundrels are

<sup>12</sup> [Uh . . . facts? where? Certainly it seems as if the reviser or author of that working was trying to provide an ætiological myth for the penalty clauses, but it seems just as laboured as the origins given to the sign of Horror, &c., and the "substituted" word in the legend. — T.S.]



Herod, Caiaphas, and Pontius Pilate, and it is perfectly clear that Pilate and Herod, at any rate, did not wish to kill our Lord, but were caught in a position from which they found it impossible to escape.

Returning to the deeper mystical interpretation we notice that the scoundrels were found in the West, the region of Death, which teaches us that the just retribution for all our sins, whether of body, soul, or spirit, will overtake us after death, and that though in one sense it is God, here shadowed forth by King Solomon, who punishes, yet in another sense it is our five spiritual faculties which themselves rise up in judgment against us. We ourselves, doom ourselves, and therefore we can obtain nothing but strict justice.

Without pretending that we have exhausted this subject, this brief explanation of the true character of the scoundrels and their captors must suffice, and we will only mention in passing that here also there appears to be a half forgotten astrological reference to the three winter months which oppress the sun.

## CHAPTER VIII THE TRACING BOARD, ETC.

THE next part of the narrative is incorporated in most English workings with the tracing board. The most interesting feature is the description of the grave. It is obvious that peculiar stress is laid on the centre, even in the present form of our ritual, because of the way in which the measurements are given. Why should it not have been said that it was six feet long? In some old rituals the grave, or rather the monument, is described as a dome, which made a complete circle at its base, and was three feet from the centre every way. If so it must have been like a small replica of the earliest form of the Buddhist Pagoda, and the Master was thus buried at the centre. In that case the top of the dome would have been five feet from the surface of the ground, and we should thus get the correct symbolic use of 5 as representing the body, and 3 as representing the spirit, while enabling the humanbody to be decorously interred. It seems probable that when the grave was made to conform to the type familiar in England, a desperate effort was made to retain the 3 and 5. It is worth noting that there is no mention of the use of any coffin, despite the picture on the tracing board, and if a coffin had been used at the supposed date of the incident it certainly would not be of the European shape depicted, but much more like an Egyptian Sarcophagus. Nevertheless, though the ritual does not justify the existence of any coffin on the tracing board, it was an integral part of the ancient mysteries of Osiris, and its retention in our ritual is almost certainly an ancient landmark. On the same tracing board may be seen certain

letters in the Masonic cypher, which are practically never explained.<sup>1</sup> Very often when transliterated, among other things, they will be found to give the Pass Word leading to the third degree. This fact is of interest, for the true meaning of that word, as already explained, is a worker in metals, the correct description of Hiram-Abi. The fact that he was buried as near the Sanctum Sactorum as possible, symbolically denotes that he had reached the centre, and was in union with the Source of All.

The Dormer window historically is the hypostyle, the method by which Egyptian and classical temples obtained light. The pillars of the central nave of such temples rose considerably higher than the roofs of the aisles, thus leaving openings through which the light could enter the building. These, however, were many in number, and it is difficult to justify the apparent statement that there was only one such opening. Symbolically it is intended to represent the means by which the Divine Light penetrates into the deepest recesses of every man's nature.

The squared pavement has already been explained under the section dealing with the mosaic pavement, in the first degree, and our readers are therefore referred to it. Briefly, it indicates that man's progress towards the centre is through alternate experiences of good and evil, darkness and light, mercy and severity, life and death.

The Porch which is the entrance to the Sanctum Sanctorum is the gateway of death.

The working tools, as in other cases, contain much sound moral teaching of typical 18th Century work, but

<sup>1</sup> [The writing on the version in Hannah appears to have been flipped left-right, possibly due to an engraver's error; but the letters appear to be "H.A.B. A.L. 3000" flanked by "T. C." with "M. B." (for the "substituted" M.M. word) below. — T.S.]

there is one implement which deserves rather more than passing attention. For what follows I must express my indebtedness to W. Bro. Sir John Cockburn, P.G.D. The skirret does not appear to be much in use among Operative masons. It is used by gardeners, but the Operative mason has other means for marking out the ground for the foundations. This implement has more than a superficial resemblance to the Caducus of Mercury, and Sir John Cockburn suggests that it has been employed to replace this "Heathen" emblem. For my part, I think this is most probable, for it is clear that a deliberate attempt was made at the beginning of the 19th century to eliminate this emblem from our ceremonies. The jewel of the Deacons in the 18th century was not a dove, but a figure of Mercury, bearing the Caducus. A number of these old jewels can be seen in the library of Grand Lodge, and there are still a few old Lodges which continue to use them, instead of the modern jewel. Now this jewel is far more appropriate to the Deacons than is a dove. A dove is the emblem of peace, and a carrier pigeon bears messages, but neither of these birds do all the work of the Deacons. Mercury, however, was the messenger of the Gods, and carried the instructions of Jupiter, thus fulfilling one set of the duties of a deacon. He was also the conductor of souls through the underworld; taking the dead by one hand, and uplifting the Caducus in the other, he led the Shade from the grave, through the perils of the underworld, to the Elysian Fields; before his Caducus the powers of evil fled. In mediaeval escatology it is Christ who leads the Souls on a similar journey, uplifting in His Hand the Cross of Salvation. Even to-day the jewels of the Deacons in a Mark Lodge bear the Caducus, a mute but convincing witness to the use of this emblem in Freemasonry.

We can thus see that on the one hand a deliberate effort was made to delete from our ceremonies the Caducus, probably because it was considered to be Pagan, while on the other hand it was clearly quite easy for ignorant masonic furnishers, in the course of years, to make the Caducus approximate more and more to a masonic tool, so as to fit it in with other avowedly masonic implements. As a masonic tool it has very little significance, even to a Speculative, and is of no practical value to an Operative, but the Caducus would be peculiarly appropriate to the third degree. In short, it is an ancient landmark, an emblem of the dead and forgotten mysteries, and symbolical of Him who leads the soul from the darkness of the grave to the light of the resurrection.

Before leaving the M.M. degree let me say to all installed masters that *if* they have received the Pass Word, not the Word of an Installed master, but the pass word leading from the M .M. to that further degree, they will find in it evidence not of a mere hint of the resurrection, but of the Resurrection itself, and a close association with the version of that doctrine set forth in the life of the Perfect Master.

## CHAPTER IX THE CLOSING.

HERE we are reminded that we are working in symbolism, for we come back from the West, *i.e.*, the grave, to this material world. But we have only obtained substitutes, and we offer them as some consolation to the spirit, *i.e.*, the W.M. The advance to the centre of the room is an obvious reference to the other centre. The secrets are communicated by the body to the soul, which passes them on to the spirit. The meaning of these secrets is dealt with in the ceremony, but it is worth noting that the word shows clearly that the secret is to be found only through the death of the body. The actual Hebrew word whose corrupt form we use really means "My son is slain."<sup>1</sup> It is also well to remember that the penal sign and the sign of grief & distress (Scottish form) are old signs which come down from the ancient mysteries, and

<sup>1</sup>[There are many different corrupt forms of the M.M. word, most of which contain the letters M, B, N in that order; hence Waite for instance used "M.:B.:N.:" as a cipher for the word. The Heb. root **בְּנֵה** is connected with the idea of *building* and has many derivatives, including **בְּנֵה**. "Builder" is **בְּנֵה**, *bōneh* (also means "beaver" in modern Hebrew); the vowel sound after the N in some forms of the word is just as likely to represent the terminal of that as the possessive particle (a postfixed *yod*) in "my son." Interpretations involving "slain," "dead," "death" mostly seem to assume that the M is from some cognate of the root **מָוֶה**, "to die," most likely **מָוֶה**, "dying," "dead," which would require the *tau* to have been completely elided in every version. "The death of the builder" and "The builder is smitten" (from **מָוֶה**, to smite or strike) are glosses given in the modern Emulation ritual (where two different corruptions of the word are communicated). A compound of something else with **בְּנֵה**, *eben*, "a stone" is also possible. Glosses like "marrow of the bone" do not deserve to be taken seriously and rely on the similarity of one of the forms to the sound of those English words. — T.S.]

are still found throughout the world. A brief summary of what has already been said may be helpful. The penal sign is often associated with Shiva, the Destroyer, and is also found appropriately used at Burobudor in Java; it refers to that occult centre, the solar plexus. In view of what the lost secret is, this sign is therefore most significant. In other words, it is a hint to those who deserve to know while it conceals from those who do not.

The Scottish sign of grief and distress is found all round the world, and always has the same meaning of an appeal for help. It is used in the most primitive initiatory rites of a boy into manhood, and in Kenya the boy makes this sign to indicate that he is ready for the operation of circumcision to begin. In Nyasaland, among the Yaos, it is associated with a grave, and in Mexico the Preserver is shown making it. He was slain and rose from the dead, and it is constantly found in Mexico in the form of a carving, consisting of a skeleton cut in half at the centre and making this sign, as, for example, at the Temple at Uxmal.

The manner of communicating the secrets and the grip are equally old. Indeed, the lion's grip appears to be the grip of all the Mysteries. It was the Grip of Mithra, and by this grip Osiris was raised. Among the Druids it was also known, as is shown by a carving at Iona. I have, however, gone into the evidence for the antiquity of our signs so fully that I will not take up further space here.

We may as well add, however, that the number "5" no doubt refers to the five senses of man, just as the seven steps remind us of the Egyptian subdivision of every mortal.

Having received the substituted secrets the W.M., or Spirit, confirms their use till the true ones are discovered. This last remark indicates that the quest is not ended or

abandoned, in reality it has just begun; the first stage only has been passed, which stage is death. It also tells every Craft mason that he cannot be a good craftsman till he has at least taken the Royal Arch.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the spirit acknowledges that death is a step forward. It has freed the soul of the trammels imposed on it by the body, and so our life's work on earth, as symbolised in the Lodge, is closed. The knocks indicate that the spirit now dominates the soul and body, and before we leave these heights it is well to point out that almost all the great religious teachers have taught that in some mysterious way this physical body will be transformed, and still be used after death. In short, that matter, as well as spirit, is part of God. Science has shown that matter is indestructable,<sup>3</sup> though its form may be changed completely, and so even after the symbolical death and resurrection, three knocks are still required.

<sup>2</sup>[In English Freemasonry, as a result of the political compromise which enabled the "Ancients" and "Moderns" to patch up their differences and unite in the early 19th century, the Holy Royal Arch is regarded as the completion and perfection of the Master Mason degree rather than a fourth degree in its own right. English R.A. chapters are under the control of a Grand Chapter closely allied with United Grand Lodge. As Ward notes elsewhere, in other systems (such as the US "York Rite") there are further intermediate degrees between M.M. and Royal Arch. The legend of the R.A. has it that the King of Tyre and his vassal felt bound by their agreement between themselves and their murdered builder not to communicate the "genuine secrets" to even those among the workmen who proved themselves worthy, so instead sealed them up in a vault under the temple where they could subsequently be discovered. The motif common to all (well, most) of the various Royal Arch versions (including the Irish one based around the supposed "discovery" of the "Law of Yahveh" during the reign of Josiah, and the Ninth Arch or Royal Arch of Enoch of the Rite of Perfection and Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite), is that of lost knowledge being rediscovered through a descent into the depths of the earth. *Vista interora terræ, rectificando invenies occultum lapidem.* — T.S.]

<sup>3</sup>[In one sense, it has shown the complete opposite.  $E = m \times c^2$ . — T.S.]



## CHAPTER X CONCLUSION.

THIS then concludes the third degree. More than any other degree in Craft Masonry it has embedded in it ancient landmarks, brought down from a long distant past. Under the surface lie hidden, meanings within meanings, which I make no pretence to have exhausted. Already this book has exceeded in length either of the two previous ones, but to do full justice to the sublime degree one would require a volume four times as large as this. I trust, however, that I have given some help, more especially to younger brethren, which will aid them to glimpse the deeper side of Freemasonry. If they too will strive to discover further and alternative meanings, I shall feel this labour of mine has been well repaid.

Let me again warn them that just because Masonry is so old, its rituals, in the course of years, have been again and again revised, and newer meanings have continually been grafted on to the old stock. We are not entitled to say one meaning is right and another wrong. Both may be right. Christianity itself has taken over a vast mass of pre-Christian ceremonies and symbols, and the student is perfectly entitled to consider that both the Christian and the pre-Christian interpretations of these symbols are equally deserving of respect.

There is also another point which should be born in mind. Again and again we find that incidents and phrases which appear to have come from the Bible, on close investigation are found not to correspond exactly with the Biblical narrative. At one time there was a tendency to say that in these cases it was our duty to substitute the

Biblical version for the "inaccurate" traditional form. With all due respect I venture to say that such action is totally unjustifiable. Masonry is not the Bible. It is a traditional ritual into which 18th century revisers inserted fragments from the Bible, because that was the only book dealing with the period of the masonic incidents, which was then available to them. To-day, we know a great deal more about this period than did our 18th century predecessors, and the modern investigator has just cause to lament the well meaning, but misdirected, zeal of these worthy masons, who thereby have probably destroyed for ever valuable landmarks, which would have helped us to discover the historical growth, and the symbolic meaning, of many parts of our ceremonies.

Such apparent contradictions, and even mistakes, as appear to exist, should be carefully retained, for they are sure indications to the conscientious student of a connection with a long distant past, which modern methods of research may enable us finally to trace to its origin. If, however, they are revised out of existence, future generations will have nothing to help them in the task of unravelling the true history and meaning of Freemasonry.

If a sign does not correspond with the explanation of the manner in which it is said to have originated, don't alter the way of giving the sign, for it is an ancient landmark. Rather try and discover if anywhere in the world that sign is still used in some old ceremony which may throw light on its true origin. If H.A.B. was not buried in a coffin, don't eliminate the coffin from the tracing board, but rather bear in mind that his great prototype, Osiris, *was* so buried and that the coffin played a peculiarly important part in the legend which recounts his death: which legend was hoary with antiquity before King Solomon was born.

Finally, let me say that even if a man can never fathom the full meaning of the third degree, yet there is no man worthy of the name who has passed through that third degree but will certainly have learnt one important lesson, namely, how to die, and thereby will be the better man.

