

THE
DISCREPANCIES
OF
FREEMASONRY

REV. G. OLIVER, D.D.





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“The marvel is not, nor should be, that inconsistencies and, I may say, seeming absurdities, have become mixed up with the traditions of Masonry, but that there should be no more of them, when we reflect that these traditions have been handed down orally through so many generations.”—*Bro. Yates, U.S.*

THE
DISCREPANCIES OF FREEMASONRY

EXAMINED DURING

A WEEK'S GOSSIP

WITH THE LATE CELEBRATED

BROTHER GILKES AND OTHER EMINENT MASONS,

*ON SUNDRY OBSCURE AND DIFFICULT PASSAGES IN
THE ORDINARY LODGE LECTURES, WHICH,
ALTHOUGH OPEN QUESTIONS IN
GRAND LODGE,*

Constitute a Source of Doubt and Perplexity to the Craft.

BY THE

REV. G. OLIVER, D.D.

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"HISTORICAL LANDMARKS," ETC. ETC.

"Jucundi acti labores."—CICERO.

With Numerous Diagrams.

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE.



THIS posthumous work by the late Rev. G. OLIVER, D.D., so widely and deservedly known by his numerous Masonic writings, is printed *verbatim et literatim* from his hitherto unpublished MS.

The opinion of several distinguished Freemasons, competent to advise in such a matter, was, that the work should not be revised, added to, nor in any way altered. This opinion has been the more confidently acted upon, as the MS. bears evidence of having been very carefully revised by the Doctor's own hand, and there is his own statement to the effect, that both the plan and treatment of the book had been well matured.

LONDON, *November* 1875.





ADVERTISEMENT.

THE plan of the following work was originated in 1840, and the greater part of it written during the same year; but other occupations of a more pressing nature intervening, it was laid aside in an unfinished state, and forgotten. Having recently been exhumed from amongst the *disjecta membra* of a chest of neglected papers, I felt sufficiently interested to give it a careful examination, and found it, with some trifling emendations and corrections, not unworthy of being made public for the edification of the Craft. In this avowal, it will be seen that I have some confidence in my own judgment; which I should doubtless have prudently withheld, if I had not the authority of a sound and able critic for my guide. Horace directs

“ Si quid tamen olim
Scripseris, . . . nonumque prematur in annum,
Membranis intus positis, delere licebit
Quod non edideris.”

If, therefore, this great poet considered nine

years a sufficient period to enable an author to judge correctly respecting the merits of his own productions, I may surely, without the imputation of vanity, claim the same privilege after a lapse of more than double that period.

The work, however, must speak for itself. It embraces a great variety of subjects, many of which have excited doubts, and some, controversy. The reader will find them discussed fairly and impartially ; and it is hoped that the results will be sufficiently intelligible to secure the approval of all candid and impartial Brethren. Discrepancies in Masonic work are of common occurrence in many of our Lodges, and it will not be esteemed a supererogatory labour to reconcile them with each other by a process that may remove difficulties, and explain apparent contradictions in a reasonable and satisfactory manner.

GEO. OLIVER.

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topography, or boating, or antiquities, or any other kindred metaphysical or practical study, what would become of agriculture, trade, commerce, or the mechanical arts by which our worldly wants are supplied? And, on the other hand, if mechanics or any handicraft employment formed the universal bent of human predilections, the ideas of mankind would be chained to the earth, and have no scope for those intellectual meditations which are afforded by the refinements of science.

We all ride our respective hobbies; and so long as we do not cross and jostle each other, but pursue our course with a steady and sober pace, society will be benefited by the arrangement. The learned chemist must not turn up his nose at the eloquent preacher, nor the political economist despise the more humble Freemason, because each and all are fulfilling their peculiar destination, and working out, by a simultaneous movement, those beneficent purposes which the Author of all good has designed for the universal benefit of His creatures.

“You are an enthusiast in Freemasonry,” said a friend. It is admitted; and what then? Faraday as an enthusiast in chemistry, Tennyson in poetry, Napier in war, and Palmerston in statecraft;—would any one of these censure me for puerility, or would they allow me to ride my hobby in peace? Which of them would cast the first stone? I do not condemn my friend the agriculturist, after he has failed thrice on as many good farms, for becoming a theorist and instruct-

ing others to do what he has signally proved himself incapable of effecting in his own person; because every practical farmer will judge for himself, and will scarcely be prevailed on to follow the directions of such a teacher, if they differ widely from the results of his own experience. I do not condemn the politician for fixing his eye with a steady and undeviating gaze on the sweets of office, because his enthusiasm cannot fail to redound to the good of his country in some shape or other. Let all those, therefore, who consider Freemasonry a trivial and frivolous pursuit, apply the same rule to me, and I ask no more; for I consider it to be a science as well entitled to the application of a leisure hour, as many others which are honoured by the world with a more exalted estimation.

One cogent reason why Freemasonry is so little known amongst mankind, consists in the difficulty of entering on a full and explicit explanation of those portions of the system which expediency requires should be kept secret. It is founded on *leges non scriptæ*, and its most arcane divisions are necessarily transmitted orally. Our brethren of the last century entertained such a nervous dread of any improper exposure, that successive Grand Lodges prohibited, as far as their power would justify, the publication of any works on the subject, and assigned this reason for the policy:—

“That considering the flourishing state of our Lodges, where regular instruction and suitable exercises are ever ready for all brethren who

zealously aspire to improve in Masonical knowledge, new publications are unnecessary on a subject which books cannot teach. Indeed, the temptations to authorship have effected a strange revolution of sentiments since the year 1720, when even ancient manuscripts were destroyed, to prevent their appearance in a printed Book of Constitutions! for the principal materials in this very work, then so much dreaded, have since been retailed in a variety of forms, to give consequence to fanciful productions that might have been safely withheld, without sensible injury either to the fraternity, or to the literary reputation of writers."¹

This prohibition has, however, been wisely removed, and both the late and present Grand Masters have given the high sanction of their names to publications on Masonry which have effected a wonderful reformation in the Order, and conferred upon it a new and more estimable position in the opinion of mankind. Numerous misconceptions have been removed, objections refuted, popular errors exploded; and a gentleman may now avow himself to be a Mason, without being subjected to the sarcastic censure of his enemies, or the ridicule of his friends.

Still, the explanation of Freemasonry, as a perfect science, is difficult of execution, from the bar which is imposed on the conscience of every initiated person. Some things necessarily appear dark and uncertain, because of the *noli me tangere* which is placed upon them. The terms which

¹ Noorth. Const., p. 347, n.

enlighten the Craft are unintelligible to the cowan. The world cannot understand a proposition which may be familiar to the fraternity. And yet, even the latter, unless they have devoted their time and attention to the subject, will frequently find themselves wanting when certain truths are propounded that the accomplished Mason easily comprehends.

It is true there are many intricate passages in the system of Freemasonry that are calculated to embarrass the most zealous and indefatigable student, and to deter a superficial reasoner from pursuing an investigation which abounds with difficulties that appear to be insuperable. Many of these stumbling-blocks, however, are only imaginary, and arise from the common error of mistaking the ideal for the real.

Freemasonry is avowedly a symbolical institution; and it requires a tolerably correct insight into its nature and properties, and an intimate acquaintance with its arcane machinery, to enable any one to determine the true interpretation of its mysterious facts and doctrines, and to distinguish what is simply intended to be an emblem or type of some hidden and sublime mystery, from that which is to be accepted as the literal and grammatical meaning of the words in which the fact or doctrine is clothed.

It will not appear to be a very high recommendation of Masonry, when we admit that the most eminent and learned Brothers differ *toto cælo* on the interpretation of some of our most recondite

propositions. But this does not in reality impugn the integrity of the general system, or detract, in the slightest degree, from its utility or excellence; because, if the validity of such an argument were admitted, the truth of our most holy religion might also, on the same principles, be called in question; for no differences of opinion on Masonic subjects are at all comparable to those which exist respecting the terms and conditions of salvation, although they are all founded on a Gospel that contains the pure and unadulterated fountain of truth.

The exception confirms the rule. Freemasonry, according to the definition promulgated amongst the Craft by the authority and under the sanction of our present Grand Lodge, is "a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols." Now these very terms exemplify the nature of the institution, and rationally account for the diversity of opinions which exist amongst the Craft; serving at the same time to excite the energies and stimulate the curiosity of those brethren who possess sufficient perseverance to trace with patient assiduity effects to their causes; and to investigate truths which are veiled in allegory, by applying the only key which is capable of illustrating them, viz., the interpretation of symbols.

No institution can be essentially damaged by any differences of opinion that may exist amongst its members; because they do not usually originate so much from a defect in the constitution of the society, as from the imperfection of the human

mind. The friends of Job intended to give him consolation under his infirmities and privations, but they failed for this very reason, that they viewed his afflictions through a false medium, and consequently entertained an opinion on the cause of his sufferings which was hostile to the truth. Thus being led astray, their intended words of comfort became a reproach; and they sinned against God while they firmly believed they were magnifying His perfections. So feeble is the mind of man when attempting to grasp the dispensations of the Most High!

The system of Freemasonry undoubtedly contains anomalies, difficulties, and inaccuracies, which appear to be insurmountable; and some of the discrepancies have been repeated and dilated on with such pertinacity for a series of years, that great multitudes of the fraternity believe them to be indubitable facts; and are ready to gird up their loins in their defence, whenever they find a brother bold enough to question their integrity. Some of these antiquated senilities are absurd, and others are not only antagonistic to the truth, but absolutely irreconcilable with it. This argument is not urged for the purpose of extenuating any peculiar imperfection in the Craft, because no human institution is without its defects; but to evince what inconsistencies the mind of man may be induced to embrace by reiterations frequently repeated *ex cathedra*, and never by any chance impugned; as a continual dropping of water will penetrate the hardest marble.

Under these circumstances, it is conceived that an attempt to harmonise the conflicting passages in our Lectures, where it is possible, and to explain them when really irreconcilable, will be an acceptable service to the Order, for which all judicious brethren will doubtless be grateful; for the day has arrived when Freemasonry must either show itself on a par with other scientific communities, or degenerate in the scale of social institutions, and take its place beside the Odd-Fellows, Foresters, and other societies which, in reality, are more effective for the prompt and permanent mitigation of human suffering than our own, because they are differently constituted, and embrace a more accurately defined principle of relief. If Freemasonry be not scientific, it is—what I once heard predicated of it by a learned and wealthy barrister, a M.P. and provincial Grand Master to boot—“nothing better than a gross imposition and a worthless humbug!”

The attentive brother may, it is true, find in the Lectures, as they are periodically delivered in our Lodges, much to admire, and much to engage his attention, to employ his mind, and to interest his feelings; but he ought to obtain something more than this, or the high fee has been paid in vain. He requires some information and advice which will make him a wiser and a better man; and this he will find in many of our most efficient Lodges, if his good fortune shall have directed him right in the selection; although this is only a matter of choice in the metropolis and other large towns;

for in small country places he must perforce take his Lodge as he finds it, because the Constitutions of Masonry leave him little option of initiation elsewhere.

We are continually hearing complaints of anomalies which no one endeavours to reconcile or explain, under the impression that they are absolutely inexplicable, and that all attempts to render them distinctly intelligible would be useless. If I were to insert all the letters I have received on the subject of Masonic difficulties, with my replies, the contents would fill a moderately-sized volume. Still the system goes on without improvement, and men submit to the propagation of error because some are indifferent, and others are not agreed about the correct mode of rectifying it. This was the opinion of Bro. Gilkes; but though he effected some slight revision of the Lectures, he did not possess sufficient moral courage to touch the main points of difficulty, and allowed them to slide on without amendment. He was a modest man—doubtful of his influence, and uncertain whether his attempts at a reform in the system would be taken in good part by the authorities, whom he was nervously fearful of offending; although he might have justly concluded, that any suggestion for the correction of errors or the adjustment of doubts, urged with humility and firmness, would have been met with a spirit of approval by Grand Lodge, and of gratulation by the fraternity at large.

The times in which we live are fortunately distinguished by a general education of the people. Thus the tone of society is raised, a habit of thinking implanted in the mind, which was unknown half a century ago to a vast proportion of our countrymen; and this induces them to hesitate, and inquire, and examine, before they receive doubtful assertions in lieu of actual facts, or permit the substitution of specious arguments for sound and healthy doctrines. The day is rapidly passing away when such delusions can be practised with safety. Nothing short of accurate historical truth will be found to satisfy the coming generation; and if Freemasonry is to survive to the close of the present century, and not to be referred to in the year 1900 as a forgotten tradition, it must be effectually weeded of its errors.

Barruel, at the conclusion of the last century, pronounced it to be "*a war against Christ and His altars; against kings and their thrones; hating Christ and His religion, detesting all sovereignty and power, except that of the people.*" And the edict of the Archbishop of Malta, issued in the year 1843, reiterates the hateful charge. He asserts, that "*Freemasonry is a teacher of impiety, confounding light and darkness, a disturber of all rule and order; whose members have no veneration for religion, no esteem for authority ecclesiastical or civil, and at war with all that can render human society honourable, happy, and tranquil.*" If this vile character is not to be

confirmed—if it is to be proved false and groundless—fact must take the place of fiction, and legend be replaced by historic verity.

Nor would it be amiss to inquire what benefit we derive by retaining faults which ought to have been exploded years ago. How they passed through the ordeal of Dunckerley and Preston it would be difficult to say; but it is evident that they still remain to deform the system, and leave it open to the attacks of the cowan and anti-mason, without furnishing the means of defence;—for, in fact, they cannot be vindicated either by argument or credible testimony. At the revival in 1717, the philosophy of the Order was seldom considered, and our facetious brethren did not think it worth their while to raise any question respecting the validity of our legends; nor did they concern themselves much about the proofs of our traditions. Their principal object was to pass a pleasant hour in company with a select assemblage of brethren; and that purpose being attained, they waived all inquiry into the truth or probability of either the one or the other.

But this passive indifference is not adapted to the present enlightened era. The newly-initiated brother requires full information on all subjects which are brought under his notice, and demands a valid reason for the deductions which are pressed upon him from the Chair as the infallible dictates of truth. And if proofs and evidences be not forthcoming, he turns

away in disgust, and pronounces Freemasonry to be an imposition altogether unworthy of notice. This occurs, it is true, but seldom: yet, as intelligence increases, it will become very prevalent, and the science will undoubtedly suffer from the negligence of its administrators, if they allow ambiguities to exist which might be so easily removed.

By the articles of war, it is an unpardonable offence in a commander to occasion a wilful destruction of life by defending an untenable position. And the principle that dictated this humane law is perfectly just and conservative. In such a dangerous position are those persons placed who strive to maintain what they consider to be the integrity of Freemasonry, with all the errors which a succession of dark and superstitious ages have accumulated on its head—fact and doctrine equally untenable; the former at variance with Scripture, the latter at issue with reason, and both irreconcilable with historic teaching.

The inevitable question again recurs—Shall we rectify or retain them? The old laws of Masonry are averse to any change. Alter not the ancient Landmarks. This decisive sentence has been pronounced *ex cathedra* by our Grand Lodge on every revision of the Constitutions. But what if the ancient Landmarks be erroneous or untenable? The Grand Lodge has virtually, though not officially, pronounced an adverse fiat on the subject, by actually altering several old Landmarks which

appeared to stand in the way of improvement, and the adaptation of ancient Masonry to modern requirements. A precedent, which ought not to be overlooked when the further advancement of the Order to meet the demands of an improved system of education, and a more acute state of the human intellect, is contemplated; and it is greatly to be regretted that the Lodge of Reconciliation omitted, at the same time, to effect a complete reform, by weeding the science of all its anomalies, and reconciling its apparent contradictions.

It will not be an overstrained supposition to predicate, that special pleading may be successfully arrayed against this line of argument. It may be urged that the system of Freemasonry is unalterable—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever—that to change its substance would destroy its essence—that the ancient Landmarks have not been defined with sufficient distinctness—and that any alteration of its constituent parts would defeat its integrity as a whole, and then it would become a new order, and its ancient denomination as a Freemasonic society would be swallowed up and lost.

But such arguments are simply delusive. The same might have been said—and we believe was said—by the old chemists, when the first intimation of the power of steam and gas was made public. The improvements in one department of chemistry formed a basis for the extension of others, and the science, as now known and practised, would excite the astonishment and admiration of Bacon, Avi-

cenna, Geber, Lully, and all the sages who hoped by its assistance to become masters of the philosopher's stone or the elixir of life. But the acquisitions of chemistry were far beyond their reach; and the most famous chemists and alchemists of antiquity would run mad with delight, if they could rise from their graves and witness the scientific experiments of a Liebig or a Faraday.

Again, have the sciences of medicine, electricity, politics, or agriculture, forfeited their distinctive character by modern improvements? Have they degenerated in the estimation of mankind? Or, on the contrary, have they not risen higher in public opinion? Are they not more courted, more praised, more honoured, and more highly regarded by all classes of the community? Undoubtedly they are. And in like manner, if Freemasonry were relieved of the weight that keeps it down—if its fictions were banished and replaced by truth—if its symbolical fables were correctly interpreted, Freemasonry would become a mirror to reflect an honourable and honest man.

Can any brother, under these circumstances, render a valid reason why the Order has been consigned to an inactive existence for the last fifty years? Does any one know why it has stood still for such an extended period? Or, if not actually quiescent, at least why it has been solely indebted to subordinate means for its slow and reluctant advancement in this country? Have the Lodges increased in numbers during the above period? They would have multiplied tenfold if the exten-

sion of the system, and its adaptation to the growing intelligence of the people, had been promoted and encouraged by authority, after the example of the United States. The wonderful increase of mechanics' institutions and reading-rooms is a type of what Freemasonry would have been, if our rulers had given the impulse to its literary augmentation, and accorded a public expression of their disinterested favour to every brother who has contributed to its advancement. But it is to be feared that a monopoly of patronage and honours will continue to be heaped on those who are averse to any improvement either in doctrine, discipline, ceremonies, or detail; and would keep us systematically peddling in the dark and dismal regions of ignorance and routine.

But the day will undoubtedly come, when the fraternity, with a voice not to be resisted, will clamour for a change from worse to better—from words to things—from profession to action; and will succeed in effecting it too. Men will not always remain satisfied with the same dull round, like a blind horse in a mill, confined in trammels which he can neither alter nor destroy. As intelligence increases, the inspiration will illuminate the masses, and the brethren will unite to burst the bonds which at present limit their inquiries, and be indeed FREE. They will enforce their claims to the prerogative of self-judgment, and no longer endure the debasement of being Freemasons only in name. As it has been observed on another occasion, there can be no doubt but we shall have

to wait for the result; and when it comes, it will probably assume a form of grandeur and comprehensiveness which has never been anticipated. All experience has shown that there is no such subdivision in the domains of genius as in the workshops of mechanical art. When the inspiration once comes down, it lights many kindred studies. When the Greek had attained the idea of beauty, he carried it out in everything. His poetry, his philosophy, his temples, his statues, his language, his very dress, could not but be beautiful. We might almost venture to say, that there never was that sudden burst of genius which constitutes what is called an Augustan era, without the light penetrating into every corner of the human mind.

Progress was the sacred dictum of the Creator, when this teeming world was formed out of chaos. The first inhabitants sought out caves and hollow trees to shelter themselves from the inclemency of the weather. As mankind advanced in knowledge and experience, these cheerless dens were exchanged for wattled huts covered with turf; in other words, caves constructed by art; but how many ages of gradual intellectual improvement did it require before the Freemasons were able to bring to perfection the fanes of Greece and Rome, or the more chaste and elaborate productions of Christian architecture with which our ancient brethren have dignified and adorned the European cities? From the creation to the present time, the works of nature and art have exhibited a uniform scene of constant progression.

The life of the vegetable creation is limited to the brightest part of the year. During the whole of that period, it continues in a state of regular transition. From the bud to the leaf; from the leaf to the flower; then the nascent fruit ripening gradually to perfection. And when all the ends of its existence are accomplished, it yields to the universal fiat of nature and expires; to be renewed again with a renovated world. Nor is man exempt from the same gradual regeneration. The newly-born infant possesses no consciousness. It can neither think nor speak. As it advances in years, the intellect becomes developed; but much training is necessary before it attains its utmost limit. Indeed, the life of man is one continued effort to improve his mental powers; and by a series of progressive steps to advance towards that final point which can only be improved by an entrance, through the gates of death, into a state where all his doubts will be resolved, and perfect knowledge crown his laborious exertions with their exalted reward.

Take the creation, in whatever point of view it may present itself to your notice, and the same order of constant and uniform progression will be visible. Everything that breathes or vegetates is in a perpetual state of improvement or decay. It is the universal law of nature; a law so unalterable, that whatever is opposed to it will be overthrown, trodden underfoot, and forgotten. *Nihil est aliud magnum quam multa minuta.* There is only ONE that is the same yesterday, to-day, and

for ever ; and that is JEHOVAH, T.G.A.O.T.U. Can Freemasonry safely claim the attributes of the divinity? Can it say without sin—"The heavens and the earth shall perish, but I shall remain; they shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shall they be folded up and changed; but I AM the universal principle of nature, always the same, and my years shall not fail"? Perish the thought! Freemasonry is of human origin, and consequently not universal, but subject to those laws and ordinances which have been appointed by T.G.A.O.T.U. to regulate the proceedings of humanity. And if it withholds its concurrence with this inevitable dispensation—its lot is determined, and its days are numbered.

But we anticipate a more honourable and satisfactory career for our noble order. An example has been transmitted to us by our brethren of the last century of the necessity and usefulness of improvement in its details; and although progression in the science did not constitute one of the subjects of discussion amongst them, yet they have bequeathed to us several different forms of Lectures, each rising in interest and intelligence above its predecessor. The first of these was a short examination or catechism used at the revival in 1717; and the last was the noble code of Lectures which were promulgated by our intelligent Brother Preston in the year 1772, which remains unimproved at the present day, although a new formula was enjoined by our Grand Lodge in 1813. Hence it appears, that during fifty years in the

last century, in the absence of any hypothesis urging the benefit of progress, seven revisions of the Lectures were made and adopted by our rulers ; while, with all the advantages of education, intelligence, and the example of improvements in all other arts and sciences, we have been contented to plod on for a corresponding fifty years, repeating the same parrot-like formula without alteration or addition, until it becomes a wonder that Freemasonry has not been abandoned, and left to its fate many years ago.

It would be a wise policy to revise the Lectures of Masonry once more, and adapt them to the requirements of an age when education has sharpened the intellect, and reading and reflection have elevated the understanding. There are, it cannot be denied, certain repulsive discrepancies and anomalies in Freemasonry, which are calculated to startle a newly-initiated candidate, in this era of general knowledge ; and it is an axiom of universal application, that when a prospect of reward ceases, zeal subsides, and vanishes away. When any particular subject elicits divers irreconcilable opinions from those who are not only reputed to understand it, but are actually appointed by their *confrères* to explain it to others ; or, when the Master of a Lodge is candid enough to express his ignorance, no other result can be anticipated than the withdrawal of the inquirer from a community that professes an adhesion to certain facts or traditions which can neither be exemplified nor explained. Why then are they retained ? The

soil is not barren, but in a high state of productiveness; it only lacks cultivation. The stumbling-blocks want removing without an invasion of the ancient Landmarks of truth; for it is abundantly evident that the anomalies have been accumulating for a century and a half, and few of them can be traced to the times of pure and primitive Masonry. The Landmarks adopted in early times are comparatively few in number, and might be enumerated in a small space, if such a proceeding were not foreign to my purpose.

But the real question at issue, I am apprehensive, is this, How is such an extensive reform to be accomplished? What machinery will be requisite to carry it out to the general satisfaction of the Craft? As I have pointed out the evil, it may be naturally expected that I shall also furnish the remedy. This, however, may not be quite so easy. I have already described the perfect principle on which I should rejoice to see Freemasonry placed; viz., that the unities should be strictly preserved. But as I fear that such a result is impracticable in the present state of the laws, I am far from recommending it. Under such a process, it would forfeit its attribute of antiquity and become a new system. But much improvement might safely be made in the details.

Every institution, to be perfect, should be consistent with itself; and I am afraid, from the principles just enumerated, that this can scarcely be said of the present arrangement of Freemasonry. And hence, in my zeal for the Order, I have taken

the liberty of pointing out its anomalies, that the attention of the Craft may be fairly attracted to the subject, in the hope that all will unite in a simultaneous endeavour to place Freemasonry on such a foundation, that it may constitute the unmixed pride of its friends and defenders, and defy the malice of its traducers and foes, if any such are still to be found amongst those who are indifferent to its progress.

I am willing to admit that many difficulties are opposed to the satisfactory arrangement of the various matters at issue in this important inquiry. But I am decidedly of opinion, that if a committee were appointed by the Grand Lodge, including delegates invited to act upon it from the sister Grand Lodges of Scotland and Ireland, with ample powers to inquire into all the anachronisms and discrepancies of Freemasonry, and report upon them *seriatim*, much benefit would ensue from their deliberations. And although an attempt at legislation to promote uniformity would appear to involve a suspension of that fundamental law of the Order which prohibits any alteration of the old Landmarks; still, as many of the points of difference were not included in the original system, it would remain an open question, whether by reconciling these heterogeneous materials, the real Landmarks of the Order would be at all involved. I shall decline pronouncing any positive opinion on this point, but leave it entirely to the decision of the Craft.

The experiment is worth trying. But should

the adoption of some such measure be considered expedient, the Grand Lodge would not be expected to pledge itself to the absolute sanction of an incipient report of the committee, which could scarcely be free from errors. It would be competent to receive the report; but I should doubt whether, in a matter of such vital importance to the Craft, that section of it which usually assembles at the quarterly communications in Freemasons' Hall, consisting chiefly of the Masters and Wardens of the metropolitan Lodges, would be willing to decide this great question, without a formal appeal to such members of Grand Lodge as reside in the provinces, comprising a great majority of its body.

At this stage of the proceedings, the report would be naturally transmitted to each province, for the consideration of local committees, consisting of the Masters and Wardens of Lodges under the P.G.M., with any other scientific brethren out of office whom he might think expedient to associate with them. The reports from each of these minor bodies, being transmitted to Grand Lodge, should be subjected to a new committee for collocation and revision, and embodied in a general statement of the entire results. A draft of this being forwarded to all the provincial committees for their approval, the delegates from the two sister Grand Lodges meanwhile taking the necessary steps to secure the concurrence of the different Masonic bodies under their respective constitutions, should be finally submitted to the

Grand Lodge, at a general meeting especially convened for that purpose, who would then proceed to pass the same into a law, which should be for ever binding on the whole fraternity in every part of the globe, under the jurisdiction of the three British Grand Lodges; as it would be the concurrent production of their united wisdom and research.

This object being secured, the subsequent arrangements would be easy. Communications should be forwarded to every Grand Lodge in the United States of America, and those of the continent of Europe, accompanied by a detail of the progressive steps which had been taken for the purification of the Order; recommending the alterations to their notice, and inviting their concurrence. And as there appears to be a universal desire throughout the whole Masonic world for some uniform system of working, an opposition to the arrangement could scarcely be anticipated.

Effectually to prevent such opposition, however, it might be advisable to communicate with the foreign Grand Lodges during the progress of the above proceedings, soliciting their fraternal suggestions; and a draft of the final resolutions might also be submitted to them before they were passed into a law.

Under some well-organised plan of this nature, I am sanguine enough to entertain a certain hope of such results as would be generally satisfactory; and enable Freemasonry to produce a visible and

genial effect on the taste, literature, and morals of the age.

It will be readily believed that I am actuated by no unworthy motives; for the best part of my life has been devoted to the cause of Masonry; springing out of a high veneration for its sublime qualities; a love of its principles not to be subdued by any ordinary influence; and an ardent desire to remove every objectionable impediment, and to see it placed on the elevated pillar of unequivocal greatness, based on Charity, crowned with peace, unity, and plenty, and receiving the universal testimony of human approbation.

My zeal has made me discursive; and it is time I descended to a practical exposition of the work in hand, which, as the late Sir Walter Scott has more than once wittily observed respecting his learned and agreeable publications, "will certainly be my last, if I do not live to write another;" and that is scarcely to be expected at eighty-two years of age.

During the last quarter of a century, I have received numerous and pressing inquiries on the subject of Masonic discrepancies, from learned and eminent brothers, both in and out of office, in every quarter of the globe. The correspondence, including my replies, would fill a bulky tome. Now, as each of these private communications was necessarily confined to a single individual, they were collectively of no benefit whatever to the general cause of Masonry, although they, one and all, related to points which it is of the utmost

importance to the well-being of the Society should be distinctly understood and harmoniously reconciled.

This consideration suggested the idea of arranging those papers into a form adapted for publication. In looking them over for that purpose, I found, in an old diary, jottings of several conversations which had occurred many years ago between Bro. Gilkes, myself, and others, on some of the anomalies and misapprehensions that, by long standing and frequent reiteration, had become established as legitimate and irrefutable realities. In these memoranda, the opinions of Bro. Gilkes, on many of the subjects in question, are so plainly stated that I resolved to adopt and revise the conversations—*prodesse civibus*—as a most intelligible medium of embodying the various shades of opinion which exist amongst the fraternity on all the points of doubt or difficulty that have exercised the ingenuity of inquiring brethren since the union of ancient and modern Masonry in 1813.

I subjoin a few of the questions from amongst the infinite variety that I have at different times received, during the course of a very extensive correspondence, as they will afford the reader a general idea of the discussions that are to follow; and, like a bill of fare, will include the option of choosing or refusing the repast which is set before him.

1. What do you conceive to be the real origin of Speculative Masonry?

2. Applications without end have been received for directions how to acquire a perfect knowledge of the science.

3. Why is Freemasonry in the United States in a more flourishing and prosperous condition than in our own country?

4. There are some evident *fictions* in Freemasonry, such, for instance, as — &c. &c. &c.; how are they to be reconciled?

5. As the Master of a Lodge, I do not approve of the Qualification Questions in common use—can you suggest an improved substitute?

6. Some contend that Speculative Masonry was unknown before the seventeenth century; how is this to be understood?

7. The Lodge Lectures being avowedly imperfect, and ill-adapted to the present state of the science, I shall be thankful, as the Master of a numerous and intelligent Lodge, if you will be kind enough to give me some suggestions for their improvement?

8. Is it possible to harmonise and satisfactorily explain the various references contained in the Lectures to the cardinal points of the compass?

9. How do you reconcile the seeming anomaly of an E.A.P. travelling from the *West* for instruction, when, according to the original and unadulterated Lectures of Masonry, he literally hails from the holy Lodge of St John at Jerusalem, *which is in the East*?

10. I wish you would enlighten me on the

difficult subject of Masonic universality; for I confess it is beyond my comprehension.

11. We hear of a universal language in Masonry—can you explain its real signification?

12. I am desirous of knowing for what special purpose the greater and lesser luminaries of the heavens were introduced into the system of Freemasonry?

13. There are so many *Points* in Masonry, and their application is so various, and in some respects contradictory, that I am bewildered in my attempt to reduce them to any kind of order—will you favour me with your assistance on this intricate subject?

14. What is the arcane meaning of the “Blazing Star”?

15. Explain the “Birth of Light” and its symbol.

16. Is Masonry a Christian, a Jewish, or a deistical institution?

17. It has been confidently asserted, that the system of Freemasonry is essentially antichristian—can the contrary be satisfactorily proved?

18. Is Freemasonry sectarian?

19. Some writers assert that Freemasonry is an offshoot from Rosicrucianism—is this true—and if so, how is it to be understood?

20. I am puzzling myself with the study of Masonic Ciphers, can you assist me?

21. Many correspondents ring innumerable changes on these questions: Who was H.A.B.? what death did he die? and what are the

particulars of his history, real and traditional?
&c. &c. &c.

22. What authority is there for his legend, as it is related in the Third Degree?

23. Will you oblige me by stating your opinion on the connection between the Third Degree and the Royal Arch; the latter being pronounced in the Articles of Union to be included in the former?


24. How does it happen that our Grand Lodge makes the Royal Arch a constituent part of the Third Degree, when all other Grand Lodges esteem it to be the seventh?

25. You will oblige me by explaining, *if you can*, the following discrepancies in the Royal Arch Degree: —, — ?

26. Is it lawful to exhibit the Royal Arch regalia in a Craft Lodge?

27. Do you not think that the names of the three Tyrians—the word of an Installed Master—and that of the Royal Arch—are derived from the same root, נברלים?

28. Can you assign a valid reason why reference is made to the old pantheistic doctrine of the “Soul of the World,” in our present authorised version of the Royal Arch Lectures?

29. I wish you would assist me in solving the puzzle .

30. I shall be obliged if you will take the trouble to furnish me with some explanation of the four supernumerary degrees called Ark, Mark, Link, and Wrestle.

31. What did our brethren of the last century mean by the phrases—"driving piles"—"it rains"—"what o'clock is it?"—"odds and evens"—"Irah"—"bone-bone box"—"the Jerusalem word"—"the universal word," &c. &c.?

32. Can you tell me which of the foreign degrees are genuine and which spurious?

33. You frequently allude to the "Vesica Piscis" in your publications—will you favour me with your opinion on its origin, use, and application to Freemasonry?

34. It will be considered a boon by the Craft here, if you will favour us with an intelligible explanation of the mysterious diagram on page 19 of your "Signs and Symbols," which I confess baffles my ingenuity and research.

The above queries do not contain a tithe of the demands which have been submitted to me during the period already alluded to, but they constitute the principal subjects of inquiry. Others on less important points I purposely omit—such as—

35. What is a Landmark?

36. Explain the "Key" and "Towline."

37. What is the etymology of the word "Gavel," as it is used in Freemasonry?

38. How did the term "Lewis" originate, and when was it applied to —→?

39. What is your opinion on the antiquity and application of the phrase "Free and Accepted"?

40. What is meant by "a travelling Mason"?

41. We frequently hear the "York Lectures" referred to—what are they, and where may they be found?

These questions are not of recent date, but have occurred to reflecting brethren in all ages. Many of them exercised the ingenuity of intelligent Masons during the last century; some have arisen out of the revision of the Lectures in 1814; and all were partially discussed by Bro. Gilkes and myself in 1825; for I was then in the height of my Masonic enthusiasm, and these anomalies distressed me not a little. They have all received due consideration in the following pages, and it is hoped that the discrepancies have been harmoniously explained.

The book before us will be found to contain an abundance of important matter, clothed in familiar colloquy, and embracing many popular errors, which have hitherto cast a shade of doubt on the integrity of the Order. The opinions are truly those of the several speakers, and I cannot undertake to be responsible for any fact or doctrine which does not emanate from myself *in propria persona*; although I am persuaded that few will dissent from the conclusions which each discussion has produced.

I close this Introduction in the words of Dr Brown: "We are not magisterial in opinions, nor have we dictator-like obtruded our conceptions, but in the humility of inquiries, or disquisitions, have only proposed them to more ocular discerners. And therefore opinions are free, and open it is for any to think or declare the contrary.

And we shall so far encourage contradiction, as to promise no disturbance, or re-oppose any pen that fallaciously or captiously refute us ; that shall only lay hold of our lapses, single out digressions, corollaries, or ornamental conceptions, to evidence his own in as indifferent truths. And shall only take notice of such, whose experimental and judicious knowledge shall solemnly look upon it ; not only to destroy of ours, but to establish of his own, not to traduce or extenuate, but to explain and dilucidate, to add and ampliate, according to the laudable custom of the Ancients in their sober promotions of learning." — (Pseudodoxia Epidemica, Preface.)





CHAPTER I.

Monday.

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED.

Spurious Rituals.

Origin of Freemasonry.

*Third Degree and the Royal
Arch.*

The Legend.

The Vesica Piscis.

The Universal Language.

Masonic Ciphers.





CHAPTER I.

THE DISCUSSIONS ON MONDAY EVENING.

“With matters as they were—but now are not—I deal freely as with history.”—*Warren*.

“Prove all things—hold fast that which is good.”—*St Paul*.

“Well, well, gentlemen, pray settle it your own way; for my part, I desire no further light on the subject. May I ever remain in my present profound state of ignorance.”—*Stray Leaves*.

“**M**Y good friend and brother, you are wrong on principle; and I hope you will allow me, by whom you were initiated into Masonry, to set you right.”

“Why, as to that,” the Surgeon replied, “I do not perceive any very material difference between the initiator and the initiated, so far as a judgment between right and wrong extends. Any one man, with a fair share of common sense, may see through a millstone as well as another. I have served a regular apprenticeship to Masonry; I have read Preston’s ‘Illustrations;’ ‘Jachin and Boaz;’ Finch’s Pamphlets, as far as I could decipher them; and sundry other delectable publications; and I have not been able to find any mention of the doctrine you are now propounding.”

“Have you read Hutchinson’s ‘Spirit of Masonry’?”

“No.”

“Have you studied my ‘Star in the East’?”

“I have not.”

“Then you have formed an *ex parte* judgment, and it is not surprising that your conclusion is erroneous. Take the advice of Horace, my dear sir, and hear both sides of a question before you decide on its merits.”

This was the continuation of a conversation at the house of a friend and brother, who was a surgeon by profession, over our wine and dessert after dinner. He was a hospitable man, and as Bro. Gilkes, a well-known teacher of Masonry at the period referred to, was an invited guest at his house, for the purpose of imparting instruction to him as the W. Master of the Apollo Lodge, he had invited a few leading Masons in Grimsby and the neighbourhood to meet him, and enjoy a quiet chat on sundry passages in the Craft which are not included in the routine proceedings of a regular Lodge; who were thus favoured with an opportunity of ascertaining his opinions on Masonic subjects, some of which were matters of doubt even at that period; and it is from notes of these conversations that the ensuing manual has been compiled. The system of Bro. Gilkes was founded on the masterly Lectures of Preston; and the alterations and additions consisted principally of the spiritualisation of passages that were capable of receiving a Christian reference.

In his inquiries after Masonic information, our host left no accessible source of knowledge uninvestigated; but unfortunately, he was rather bigoted in his opinions, and more inclined to embrace extreme notions of doctrine, than to confine himself within the sober limits of legitimate research. In his medical practice, he had an extensive connection, owing to superior talent; but, as Sterne said of the excellent Yorick, "with all this sail he was miserably deficient in ballast." Well-intentioned, indeed, but inconstant in temper, his mind vacillated like an unladen ship under stress of weather; constant to nothing save an obstinate adherence to some untenable opinion, "he was everything by turns, and nothing long."

From his first admission into the Lodge, he displayed a laudable ambition of distinguishing himself, and in a very few years he succeeded to the Chair; but, alas! in this high capacity he signally failed. His constitutional infirmity defeated his good resolutions, and he contrived to alienate the affections of some, and openly to affront others, by sheer mismanagement, although he was *au fait* at all the technical qualifications for the office of W.M. The Lodge gradually decreased in numbers by the secession of many of its most valuable members, in consequence of innovations to which they were unaccustomed, and instances of mismanagement which they could neither approve nor control. Although appearing anxious to carry out the genuine principles of the Craft, he was so unstable in his opinions, and

irregular in his actions, that his good designs were never realised, or rewarded with success. Even his attendance as Master of the Lodge was desultory and uncertain; and no one could undertake to say, within an hour, at what time it would be opened. Though frequently absent altogether, he never gave the brethren notice of his intention, and the consequence was, that on such occasions one after another dropped off, until there was not a sufficient number left to open the Lodge, and the brethren departed without a blessing. And if the Lodge was opened by the Senior Warden in his absence, and he by chance entered and found the brethren at work, he would fly into a violent passion, and a scene ensued which they were afterwards very careful to avoid.

Such was my medical friend. Ardent in profession, but deficient in practice; sanguine in forming schemes of social improvement, without possessing sufficient energy to carry them into effect; desirous of promoting the best interests of the Craft, yet too feeble-minded to execute his good resolutions; obstinate in his preconceived opinions, if erroneous, yet indifferent about their defence, if true; he failed to establish a title to the respect of his fellows; and therefore under his rule the pillars of the Lodge were shaken, and its numbers so much reduced that it never recovered its status; and a few years later its meetings ceased and its warrant was resumed by the Grand Lodge.

The company, besides myself and Bro. Gilkes, consisted of a few select Masons—viz., the Rev. ———, D.P.G.M. for Lincolnshire; the Rev. ———, Rector of ———; the Rev. ———, Vicar of ———, and Head Master of the Grammar School at ———; the Rev. ———, Curate of ———; a young man who was reading for honours at Cambridge, the brother of our host; a lieutenant in the Royal Navy; and Nis Petersen, an intelligent Danish skipper, who spoke the English language correctly with a slight foreign accentuation;—when the conversation took the above turn. Our host and I had frequent arguments on the connection between Freemasonry and Christianity, but I was unable to convert him to my own opinion, and I am sorry to add that he died unconvinced. At present, he was retailing some fancies that he had gathered from a spurious ritual, the orthodoxy of which was questioned by Bro. Gilkes; but he proceeded to say—

“I have been perusing a pamphlet which I purchased some months ago when I was in town, but which I had never attentively considered; for, after reading a page or two of its pretended revelations, I threw it aside as a worthless accumulation of falsehood. A worthy brother who is now present was with me when I picked it up at a book-stall, and he called my attention to it this very morning; and so we read it together from end to end. It professes to reveal our secrets.”

“And you found it,” said Bro. Gilkes, laying down his pipe, “so full of errors and imperfections, that it is rather calculated to mislead than assist

a brother in his Masonic studies. Such impositions on the public were exceedingly numerous during the last century, and many of them still continue to be published in *new and improved editions*, as they are called; but the improvements consist in a reduplication and increase of all the improbabilities that distinguished the original design. But instead of demolishing Freemasonry, which was the avowed object of all these trumpery publications, they have contributed materially to increase its influence."

"They answered the *real* purpose, however," said the Vicar, who was a ripe scholar and an able antiquary, "by proving a very lucrative speculation for the proprietors; and it has been asserted, although I am ignorant of the authority, that the writer of 'Jachin and Boaz' realised the enormous and incredible sum of £2000 by his pamphlet."

"I have heard of that conjecture," the D.P. G.M. replied, "but I can scarcely believe it. True, it passed through numerous editions, and was rapidly bought up in unheard-of numbers by all classes of society who desired to penetrate, at so trifling a price, this all-absorbing mystery. The infatuation extended from the peer at his breakfast-table to the beggar over his dish; and it was perused with great avidity by females in particular, if they were fortunate enough to lay hold of it."

"Still the booksellers would scarcely have allowed the obscure author of a sixpenny pam-

phlet to dip so deeply into their profits,” the Surgeon observed.

“ If it *were* a sixpenny pamphlet,” said the Rector, hesitatingly; “ but can any brother tell me to whose ingenuity this popular compilation is to be ascribed ?”

“ The reputed author,” replied the D.P.G.M., “ was a man of the name of Goodall. He was a tallow-chandler by trade, and the W.M., as he informs his readers, of the old Lodge of St Paul, commonly called the West India and American Lodge, now the Lodge of Antiquity, holden at the Queen’s Arms, in St Paul’s Churchyard. Being at length unfortunate in his business, he committed an act of bankruptcy, by secreting himself from his creditors ; and during his seclusion, he compiled this book in the hope of improving his finances ; and he succeeded to his heart’s content. At its first appearance, it was circulated amongst the Fraternity only at the enormous charge of a guinea a copy, and it appears that the demand for the pamphlet, even at the above price, was so great, that it cleared off his debts and left a considerable balance in his favour. But he became a marked man ; was expelled from the Society as a miserable charlatan, and avoided by the Fraternity, who with one consent repudiated his attempted treachery, although it was powerless either for good or harm. To avoid the reproaches of his former associates, he retired to the Continent, squandered his ill-gotten gains in riotous company, took to evil courses, and died poor and in misery.”

“A divine act of retributive justice,” said the Student, “on a perjured man, who was too much of a knave to allow the public to reap the fruits of his delinquency by the acquirement of any knowledge which they did not previously possess.”

“We had a Lodge in Grimsby some few years ago,” the Lieutenant remarked, “under the Athol system, called the Spurn and Humber Lodge, No. 61, which worked solely by the assistance of this book.”

“Then they were not genuine Masons, I presume,” said Bro. Gilkes.

“They communicated with the Athol Grand Lodge under Harper,” the Lieutenant responded, “for the Lodge was included in his printed list, and my father was a member; but the practice was as I have said. The Master and each of the members—such at least as could read—had a copy of this pamphlet before him, and the questions and answers made directly from the books.”

“A most contemptible system,” Bro. Gilkes exclaimed.

“I have often told my father so,” the Lieutenant continued. “But what could be expected from a Lodge which held its meetings in a hay-loft (although in the list of Lodges it was dignified with the name of Freemasons’ Hall); having the stable below for a Tyler’s room, and the brethren mounting by a common ladder, greatly dilapidated, to the entrance of the Lodge; and which frequently admitted candidates for a fee of half-a-crown?”

“I am afraid,” Bro. Gilkes observed, “that the system of making Masons for base and unworthy considerations was not uncommon amongst the Athol section of the Craft. But there is no excuse for their heterodoxy in the mode of working; for neither ‘Jachin and Boaz,’ nor any other published ritual, is correct, either in doctrine, discipline, or observances.”

“And for this very reason each new candidate for public favours,” the D.P.G.M. continued, “amongst the innumerable charlatans who issued singly forth, like Cacus from his den, to prey upon the public and scramble for a share in the loaves and fishes, denounced all his predecessors as so many impostors who made spurious revelations, printed and issued merely to palm a fiction on a credulous public, and ‘*This is the only true Key to the Secret,*’ was their universal motto.”

“The author of one of these rival catch-pennies,” said the Vicar, “in the introduction to his book, naïvely observes, that ‘although there have been many books writ about Masonry for the last twenty years, *I never saw any Masonry in them.* There is one published,’ he continues, ‘called a *Master Key to Freemasonry,* but it is not the thing, although it is something about the matter, but so very little that it is not worth speaking of; there is not one thing right, only some of the words, and they are not in the proper places. I wonder that any man can pretend to write a book of a thing that he knows nothing of but by picking a bit here and a bit there; for no man is able

to speak or write of this secret without he has visited Lodges some years.' And this was the vain-glorious language of them all."

"A German author," said the Danish Skipper, "observes, that there cannot be a greater error than to suppose that the secrets of Masonry can be published in a book. The charlatan may publish an account of the ceremonies of a Lodge, but the secrets of Masonry are not contained in those observances. But supposing the eleven different rituals which exist in Europe were correctly printed, they would jointly contain but a very small portion of our mysteries, and even that it would be impossible for an uninitiated person to detect."

"The observation is correct," Bro. Gilkes replied; "but I am curious to hear the name of the pamphlet which has this day attracted our host's attention."

"It is called 'An Authentic Key to the Door of Freemasonry,'" said the Surgeon.

"Then," Bro. Gilkes replied, "the author, whoever he may be, displays, in his very title, the most profound and pitiable ignorance of his subject. There is no authentic key to the Masonic doors, for they are not secured by keys—they are tyled, not locked—it is the Masonic Cabinet or ivory Box that alone is to be opened with a key. I know the book, and, as might be expected, the contents do not bear out the professions contained in the title-page."

"I have already discovered that the contents

are not authentic," said the Surgeon, "although the author boasts in his preface that, being a German, he was allowed to visit both the sections of English Freemasonry. 'I went to a modern Lodge, as the Irish call them,' he continues, 'whose Grand Lodge is held at the Devil Tavern, but I don't care to mention the Lodge. They never disputed me when I showed them my certificate, for they were fond of hearing how Masons proceeded in other countries, which is just the same as it is here, only one thing in the Master's Part, and that I shall speak of in the Master's Part. Then I was invited to an Irish Lodge, that called themselves the Most Ancient Masons; and they hold their Grand Lodge at the Five Bells in the Strand, which is the whole subject of this book, for which reason their impudent, blundering Irish Secretary (Lawrence Dermott) has thought fit to use such scurrility, that he might depreciate it in his nonsensical and stupid performance called "Ahiman Rezon."'"

"But yet," the D.P.G.M. observed, "to give the devil his due, he has some judicious observations in his introductory essay which I have often thought it would be expedient to preserve, although I am at issue with him respecting the origin of the Masonic Society. If you would like to hear the passage, I have no doubt but our kind host will favour us by reading it."

"Read, read, by all means," from every part of the room. The Surgeon then read the following passage:—

“The origin of the Society called Freemasons is said by some to have been a certain number of persons who formed a resolution to rebuild the Temple of Solomon. This appears from the Lecture, or rather history, of the Order, at the making or raising of a member to the degree of Master, which is fully described in the following work. But I am inclined to think that the chief design of the establishment is to rectify the heart, inform the mind, and promote the moral and social virtues of humanity, decency, and good order, as much as possible in the world; and some of the emblems of Freemasonry confirm this opinion, such as the compasses, rule, square, &c.”

“There is nothing exceptionable in this,” the Rector interposed; “but read on.”

“In all countries where Masonry is practised or established at this time, there is a Grand Master; but formerly there was only one Grand Master in the world, and he was an Englishman. Lord Petre is the person on whom this dignity is now bestowed, and he governs all the Lodges in Great Britain, with the power of delivering the constitutions and laws of the Society to the Masters who preside over the subordinate assemblies; which constitutions must always be signed by the Grand Secretary of the Order. At the quarterly communications, the Master and Wardens of every regular Lodge are empowered to be present; and the several Lodges send by them different sums of money to be paid into the hands

of the Treasurer-General, and appropriated to such charitable uses as the Grand Lodge think proper; but these charities are chiefly confined to Masons only. Such as have good recommendations as to their behaviour and character will be assisted with five, ten, or twenty pounds; and smaller sums are distributed to indigent brethren in proportion to their wants, and the number of years they have been members. At these quarterly communications, large sums are likewise sent from Lodges in the most remote parts of the world, viz., the East and West Indies, and accounts transmitted of the growth of Masonry there, &c. &c."

"The author of this passage," the Curate remarked, "makes the origin of Masonry co-eval with the building of King Solomon's Temple, and our D.P.G.M., if I understood him correctly, expressed his dissent from the doctrine. Shall I be in order if I request that distinguished brother to enlighten us on this intricate subject?"

"There are so many conflicting opinions afloat on this point," the D.P.G.M. replied, "that it may be difficult to reconcile them. Some say that the Society originated in 1717, when the regeneration of Desaguliers and Anderson was effected; and that there was nothing but operative, or, as they more coarsely expressed it, bricklaying Masonry, before that period; others are willing to allow us a century earlier, but they protest against the existence of Speculative Masonry before the seventeenth century."

"The legendary or traditional history of

Masonry," said Bro. Gilkes, "is accessible to inquiring brethren, because it is preserved in the several degrees. Much of it may be found in blue and red Masonry, and much more in the military and philosophical degrees. The historical Landmarks are open to public investigation; but Freemasonry contains Landmarks of another character on which it is not lawful to expatiate. They are locked up in faithful breasts under the watchful guardianship of Fidelity. The ear hears them in the tyled recesses of the Lodge; the heart retains them; and out of that a silent tongue never violates a Mason's faith."

"I do not agree," I observed, "with either of the above conclusions. It is quite true that in 1717 a resolution was passed that the privileges of Masonry should no longer be restricted to operative Masons, but extend to men of various professions, provided they were regularly approved and initiated into the Order; I have in my possession a unique formula that is said to have been used by Elias Ashmole and his brethren in the seventeenth century, but it contains no reference whatever to a Third Degree. It consists of forty questions and answers; and the O.B. (for Freemasonry at that time had but one) was comprised in four short lines. We have, indeed, satisfactory evidence that Freemasonry, as an operative institution practised in this country, may be traced backward through the reigns of Elizabeth, Henry VI., and Edward III., when it was decreed, amongst other things by the Grand Lodge at York, that

for the future, at the making or admission of a brother, *the ancient Constitutions and Charges shall be read.*”

“There is no difficulty whatever, in my opinion,” the D.P.G.M. added, “in tracing its existence to the time of Athelstan, when the first English Grand Lodge was established under his patronage in the city of York; and there are some, as in the passage just read, who carry us back to the building of King Solomon’s Temple; but, if there be any faith in ancient documents, I should feel inclined to assign the existence of operative Masonry a still more early origin.”

“I am no stickler for the figment of investing Freemasonry with the attribute of a fabulous antiquity,” said the Surgeon, laughing. “I hold to the opinion expressed by Bro. Nicolai of Berlin, who says, ‘I see no reason why we should endeavour to prove that Freemasonry is of a very high antiquity, in order to make it honourable, and respected by the public; which can only be attained by what it is now, and not by what it was an indefinite number of centuries ago. The Guilds or Confraternities which have been so long extinct were not so very respectable themselves, as to convey any additional value to the present Society of Free and Accepted Masons.’”

“Do you believe,” the Vicar inquired, “that Christianity, or the great principle of Faith in the Atonement of a Mediator who should bruise the serpent’s head, is as old as the Fall of man?”

“Undoubtedly,” the Surgeon replied.

“ And you also believe that Obedience, the other predominant feature of Christianity, is as old as the creation of the world ? ”

“ I sincerely believe it.”

“ Then I should be glad to hear how you will get rid of the inference, that the leading principles of Masonry are of the same antiquity, because this very Faith and Obedience were actually practised by Adam and his descendants in the line of Seth ? ”

“ And I also,” the Surgeon replied, “ should be glad to hear in what part of the Pentateuch you find the name of Freemasonry mentioned.”

“ A name ! What’s in a name ? I am not speaking of words, but of things—not of names, but principles. The term Freemason is comparatively modern, and its derivation doubtful. I speak of the institution as a science of LIGHT, founded on the practice of moral virtue, or if you prefer the name bestowed upon it by our Grand Master Solomon, WISDOM, the same quality is implied. And this, I contend, is as old as the creation ; and its divine principles will continue to illuminate mankind with beams of celestial light when time shall be no more.”

“ And these principles are ? ” said the Surgeon inquiringly.

“ Bro. Gilkes will tell you,” the Vicar replied.

“ To rule and govern our passions,” Bro. Gilkes responded ; “ to keep a tongue of good report, to practise secrecy, and to yield obedience to our superiors in command.”

“Anything else?” the Surgeon asked.

“To practise the three Theological and the four Cardinal virtues, with Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth; and conscientiously to discharge our several duties to God, our neighbour, and ourselves.”

“And this includes the whole of our most holy religion,” said the Curate; “for what is the meaning of the Tetragrammaton, but that God performed in Christ the promise that He made to Adam?”

“Showing that Masonry is the legitimate hand-maiden of Christianity,” the Vicar added.

“But the documents,” said the Surgeon impatiently; “I should like to know where these vouchers, on which you appear to lay such stress, are to be found.”

“They consist in MSS. written in the tenth century,” the D.P.G.M. replied, “and are to be seen in the British Museum. And they all agree that the principles of Freemasonry, as it is now called, were practised before the deluge of Noah; and they record particulars thus: ‘In the fourth chapter of Genesis, it is recorded that there was a man named Lamech who had two wives named Adah and Zillah; by the former he begat two sons, Jabal and Jubal; by the latter he had one son called Tubal-cain, and one daughter called Naamah. These children found out the beginning of all the crafts in the world. Jabal invented geometry, and built the first house of timber and stone, for before his time men lived in tents and

were fond of a pastoral life ; Jubal discovered the art of music, and was the father of all those who handle the harp ; Tubal-cain was the instructor of all artificers in iron and brass ; and Naamah invented the craft of weaving cloth. ‘And this,’ says the document, ‘was the first origin of Masonry.’”

“The Continental Masons, however,” said the Skipper, “entertain a uniform opinion that Speculative Masonry is of Scottish extraction. Can you tell me whether that part of the British Islands is really entitled to the honour of having introduced this noble science into the western countries of Europe?”

“It is a question that can only be determined by a brief inquiry into the real antiquity of the Order,” the D.P.G.M. replied ; “and for this purpose it will be but fair to state, *in limine*, that in ancient times Freemasonry was essentially operative ; and the art of building was carried to a perfection which is truly astonishing, as is indicated by the gigantic temples and statues, elaborate ornaments, and classical details, which have been discovered in every part of the world ; not in India, Egypt, and Greece alone, but in the Western nations also—Great Britain, Yucatan, Mexico, and Peru, and various other countries both in the East and West. These were the work of certain fraternities, by whatever name they might have been designated—whether Titans, Telchines, Cyclops, or Corybantes—all of which at length merged into the significant appellation of Dion-

ysiacs, and subsequently Collegiæ Fabrorum and Freemasons."

"All ancient fraternities of builders," the Vicar observed, "are well known to history, and they received that name because their leaders were necessarily Epopts of those august mysteries which contained all the recondite secrets of science, art, and religion, that were then known in the world. And hence the Dionysiacs are reputed to have been the first operative Masons who introduced a secret ceremony at the admission of a candidate amongst them."

"Is that your private opinion?" I asked.

"Certainly not," he replied.

"Nor is it mine," I rejoined.

"But," said the D.P.G.M., "I have heard it so asserted; and there are valid reasons for supposing that they intermingled with their instructions to the novices certain moral maxims, rules, and constitutions, which were prescribed and rigidly enforced for the good government and well-being of the Society; and there is abundant evidence to prove that they used a mysterious legend, referring to the death of Bacchus or Osiris, succeeded by his revivification, dramatised according to a concerted plan which it is needless to explain. Professor Robison adds, 'I have a notion that the Dionysiacs had some scientific secrets, viz., all the knowledge of practical mechanics which was employed by the architects and engineers, and that they were really a Masonic fraternity.'"

“And you believe that the origin of the ceremony to which you refer must be dated from a similar practice by the Dionysiacs?” the Vicar inquired.

“I believe no such fiction,” the D.P.G.M. replied; “on the contrary, I entertain an opinion that the Dionysiacs adopted it from some legend or fact which was in existence amongst the ancient builders prior to their appearance in the world under that name, which was certainly unknown till a long period after the building of the Tabernacle by Moses. The Egyptian pyramids and stupendous temples had been already erected by the Cyclopean masons, whose citadel at Tyrius exhibits lancet arches, according to the opinion of Dr Clarke, almost as ancient as the time of Abraham; and this author thinks that the Celtic builders called Titans were of the same race.”

“The real state of the case, in my judgment,” said the Vicar, “is, that the principles of Speculative Masonry may be recognised in every age and every country of the world. It is the most beautiful and most comprehensive system that ever was invented by man, and we may be excused when we term it divine. The ancient Magi of the East, instructed by Zoroaster, were in possession of its secrets; the Druids of the West were not ignorant of its principles; the signs of the zodiac are said to have been the invention of Masons, and they were certainly the builders of those gorgeous specimens of ancient and modern architecture which dignify and adorn

all the countries under the lofty canopy of heaven.”

“The first recorded instance,” I observed, “of the application of geometrical principles to the practical purpose of building was probably in the majestic edifice on the plains of Shinar. But the intention was impious, and was therefore prematurely frustrated by the divine interposition.”

“The Continental Masons,” said the Skipper, “have constructed an interesting degree out of this event, which they call Le Chevalier Prussien, and pronounce Peleg to have been the grand architect of the Tower of Babel.”

“When the effects of this remarkable judgment,” the D.P.G.M. continued, “were fully developed, and the earth became peopled by the different tribes which moved off towards all the quarters of the compass from this celebrated locality, one signal but unfortunate result of the dispensation was manifested in an almost universal defection from the principles of vital religion which had been inculcated by the great protoplast Noah as a preacher of righteousness.”

“Then you think,” I said, “that in the adoption of a spurious religion, they unwittingly fell into the error of practising an erroneous version of some veritable legend attached to the worship of God, which was perverted to the fable of Osiris or Adonis, including their death and resurrection?”

“That is precisely my opinion,” he replied; “and thus these unfortunate exiles, being left to the exercise of their own fallible reason, appear to have

repudiated the sublime notion of an invisible and immaterial deity as the great Creator of the universe, and observing and admiring the beauty and regularity of the heavenly host, constantly revolving, and never changing their relative positions, and particularly noticing the splendour of the diurnal luminary, they came to the natural conclusion that the universe was God, and the chief subordinate or mediatorial deities were the Sun and Moon, the great rulers of the day and night; and they considered the stars and planets to be the appropriate residence of ministering spirits, through whom intercessions and prayers might be successfully preferred."

"There can be no doubt about the accuracy of this statement," said the Vicar; "but the question is, how do you apply it to Freemasonry?"

"Why, thus," the D.P.G.M. answered. "The spurious Freemasonry was undoubtedly founded on these leading principles, and its legend bore an evident reference to the recurrence of day and night, summer and winter, represented under the apparent diurnal death or disappearance of the solar deity in the west, and his new birth or reappearance in the east. But the solstices were the two grand festival epochs in every year, at which were commemorated with pompous ceremonies the half-yearly departure and return of the great luminary, under the name of aphanism and euresis. The one was a festival of hope and joy, the other of regret and mourning, each being celebrated with appropriate observances."

“And in these observances,” I remarked, “an imperfect memorial of certain truths was preserved; and thus by the overruling providence of the divine Creator, some faint idea of the knowledge of God and His glorious works was perpetuated in every system of false worship that existed in the world.”

“You are right,” the D.P.G.M. replied; “and in all countries these institutions were the repositories of wisdom and the conservators of learning; and Egypt, where they flourished in all their imposing grandeur, was very early celebrated for the scientific acquirements of its chief men. In most cases, this knowledge was applied to the purposes of ecclesiastical architecture, and we accordingly find the temples of Egypt sustaining a character for massive sublimity and attractive majesty that the world has never equalled. Nor did this remarkable people neglect the art of civil architecture, as is intimated in Lucan’s vivid description of the decorations of Cleopatra’s banqueting-hall:—

“Thick golden plates the latent beams infold,
And the high roof was fretted o’er with gold.
Of solid marble all the halls were made,
And onyx ev’n the meaner floor inlay’d;
While porphyry and agate round the court,
In massy columns rose, a proud support.
Of solid ebony each post was wrought:
From swarthy Meroë profusely brought.
With ivory was the entrance crusted o’er,
And polish’d tortoise hid each shining door;
While on the cloudy spots enchased were seen
The lively emerald’s never-failing green.”

PHARSALIA X.

“These magnificent effects,” I observed, “could never have been attained, except by the advan-

tages of association and co-operation, including a union of talent, and a judicious distribution of labour; and accordingly we find established, in the earliest times, an exclusive society of architects and builders, who travelled from country to country, erecting temples and palaces; and finally settling down in Greece and other nations under the general appellation of Dionysiacs, who used the spurious Freemasonry of Bacchus as the sacred depository of their Ineffable Secrets."

"It was for this reason, probably," the Curate suggested, "that our Grand Master Solomon furnished himself from these societies with workmen for his famous Temple at Jerusalem; which, though small in dimensions compared with the religious structures of Egypt, became, from the splendour of its costly decorations, and the taste and genius displayed by the chief architect in their disposal, the most celebrated building for riches and glory that the world ever produced."

"The Continental Masons," Bro. Nis Petersen said, "have a tradition that the names of the three principal architects deputed by Solomon to superintend the felling and squaring of timber in Lebanon, were: 1. Adoniram (Dominus excelsus). 2. Zariais (Oriens Dominus). 3. Joram (Excelsus). And that the names of the nine Masters that were elected by King Solomon after the death of Hiram were: 1. MOABON or MAHABON (A patre). 2. JACHIN or JAKIN (Firmus). 3. BOGAZ or BOOZ (In fortitudine). 4. GANIGAM or ANIGAM (Afflictio populi). 5. GAZARIAH or AZARIAH (Auxilium

Dei). 6. JORAM (Excelsus). 7. ISCH'GI (Salus mea). 8. ACHAL or ACAL (Comedit). 9. GOBED or OBED (Serviens)."

"The arrangement of the workmen into Lodges," the D.P.G.M. observed, "forms a remarkable feature in the construction of this edifice, without which it never could have attained its perfection, and it is historically true that the stone and other materials were fully prepared before they were brought to Jerusalem, that the Temple might not be polluted by the use of either axe, hammer, or any tool of iron. This was the usual practice of the Dionysiacs, and it is frequently found delineated in the sculptures of Egypt. The intended shape and dimensions are accurately measured by the chief architect, and the shape marked with a dark line as a direction to the stone-cutter; and a mark or number was cut on the finished stone to designate at once the name or Lodge of the workman, and its place in the intended building."

"It is extremely probable," Bro. Gilkes remarked, "that the ancient laws, moral maxims, and obligations were not disturbed at the period when the Dionysiacs came into contact with the true worshippers of God; but there are some reasons for believing that a religious rite was now engrafted on operative Masonry, thus converting it into a semi-speculative institution; for without some such precaution it would have been difficult to preserve the requisite order and discipline amongst such a large body of men, who possessed different habits and customs, and were necessarily divided into

several distinct classes. This rite, whatever it might be, underwent certain changes at the hands of the Jews, if it be true, which I feel some difficulty in believing, that they condescended to notice it at all; but it is certain that, whatever it might be, it has undergone considerable modification amongst ourselves."

"However this may be," the D.P.G.M. continued, "we find these societies of architects subsequently flourishing at Rome under the name of *Collegiæ Fabrorum*, by whom, as Dr Anderson well observes, the Roman columns were raised, each being invested with some peculiar mystical signification or historical reference; some being monuments of stability and firmness, some to commemorate noble achievements, and others indicative of captivity, reproach, or overthrow. The Fraternity was regulated after the Christian era by a law or royal edict; dated A.D. 334, which enjoined on the magistrates of all the provinces of the empire to institute architectural schools, to appoint professors, and to confer privileges and rewards of so distinguishing a character as might induce a sufficient number of ingenious youths who had received a liberal education to devote themselves to the study and practice of that noble science. These were succeeded by the bands of ecclesiastical architects, protected and encouraged by papal bulls, who, so early as the eighth century, were employed by Charlemagne *under the distinctive appellation of FREEMASONS*; although the ancient Masonic manuscript which I have just quoted

asserts that the Masons first came into England in the year of Christ 43, and built the Monastery of Glastonbury. These architects, after having erected many wonderful buildings on the Continent, were certainly introduced into this country by Lanfranc and Gundulph, and built our churches and cathedrals and religious houses under the same appellation; and their influence in every age is marked by a series of magnificent works that will transmit the fame of the Society of Freemasons to the latest posterity.

“They were denominated Halyworkfolk,” said the D.P.G.M.; “and, as I have heard my friend Hutchinson explain the matter, the rules prescribed for their observance show clearly that they were both operative and speculative Masons. These rules may be referred to in the Harleian MSS., No. 1942, and they direct the workmen faithfully and truly to serve their employers at reasonable wages; to honour God and His Holy Church; to be true to their sovereign Lord the King; and that no person should be accepted amongst them except in a lawful Lodge of five Freemasons at the least; and that he should be of able body, honest parentage, good reputation, and an observer of the laws of the land; nor should he be made acquainted with the secrets of Freemasonry until he had first taken the prescribed oath.”

“Their buildings,” the Vicar observed, “all possess that rich delicacy of outline which modern architects have failed to copy. This peculiar excellence of ancient Masonry still remains a profound

secret. It may be classed amongst the lost arts ; and I doubt whether the Free and Accepted Masons of the present day are able to explain this enigma, which has puzzled all the practical architects of modern times ; and even the productions of Pugin, Cottingham, and Smirke display a marked deficiency on this important point. The ecclesiastical edifices of our ancient brethren are a credit to the nation, and a never-dying honour to the Society."

"As I have seen it proudly expressed somewhere," said the Rector, "although I do not at this moment recollect the authority. If any one were to inquire, when were these extraordinary specimens of architectural skill, rivalling in their execution and surpassing in sublimity the proudest structures of Athens and Rome, erected? what would be his astonishment on being told in reply, that they were built during the dark ages, when few could read or write their own names, when nobles lay upon straw and monarchs usually travelled on horseback,—then it was that the Freemasons raised buildings almost to the clouds, and invested them, by the aid of science, with the attributes of unquestioned beauty, gorgeous magnificence, and impenetrable durability. Rude men were enabled to apply the principles of arctuation, of thrust, and pressure, to an extent that would have made Wren and Jones tremble. These men, most of whom were ignorant of metaphysical theories, so blended forms and magnitudes, light and shade, as to produce the artificial infinite, and the real sublime."

“They were incorporated into Lodges,” the D.P.G.M. continued, “governed by Masters and Wardens, in the reign of Athelstan, under certain specified regulations, some of which were operative and others speculative, including the practice of moral and religious duties.”

“This is all matter of history,” said the Skipper, “and does not apply to my inquiry whether the French and German Masons are correct in ascribing the origin of the science in Western Europe to our Scottish brethren.”

“I am coming to that question presently,” the D.P.G.M. replied. “The MS. I have just quoted places the introduction of operative Masonry into England only a few years after the crucifixion; but we hear nothing certain of Scottish Masonry before the year of our Lord 1314, when the Royal Order of H.R.D.M. was founded by Bruce after the battle of Bannockburn, although it has been asserted that Freemasonry was planted at Kilwinning so early as 1154, when the first ecclesiastical edifice in Scotland is said to have been erected by a corporation of foreign Masons, who established the science there as a moral and scientific institution; and having fallen into desuetude after their departure, was revived by Bruce. But this is scarcely probable; and it was consequently repudiated by the Scottish Grand Lodge in 1744, when a list of Lodges was promulgated by that body, and the superior antiquity of the Canongate Kilwinning nullified by being placed as No. 2. The order of Bruce, however, was

practised under the name of Templary. It is true, the Kilwinning Masons made a formal appeal against this decision, in which they stated that they were the most ancient body, and were accordingly entitled to the precedence as the Mother Lodge. After a fair hearing, it was decided in Grand Lodge that they had failed to establish their claim; and that the Lodge of St Mary's Chapel having produced undeniable evidence of an existence from 1598, was therefore fairly entitled to the right of standing at the head of the list."

"The origin of Scottish Templar Masonry is thus explained in France," said the Skipper. "At the dissolution of the Templars' order in the fourteenth century, the Grand Master, Peter d'Aumont, followed by two commanders and five knights, disguising themselves as Masons, and assuming the name of M'Beignac, took refuge in the Scottish island of Mull; and finding there George Harris, the G. Commander, with several other brothers, they resolved to reconstitute the Order; and forming themselves into a Chapter, adopted the signs, tokens, and words of the Masonic Order, and assumed the name of Free and Accepted Masons. From thence the Lodge was removed to Aberdeen, and the Order spread itself over the whole continent of Europe."

"There may be some truth in this story," said the D.P.G.M., "although the principal circumstances are evidently fabulous; for I have heard it asserted as an indisputable fact, that in the seventeenth century there was found in the tomb of a

Templar who died in Germany in the fourteenth century, a diagram engraven on stone, exhibiting Masonic emblems—viz., the square and compasses, the pentalfa, a five-pointed star, a globe, &c.”

“A proof that the individual Templar was a Freemason,” the Surgeon observed, “but of nothing more.”

“Unless,” I replied, “it may be accepted as a proof of the existence of Freemasonry in Germany at that period. It is, however, perfectly clear that before the retreat of Charles Edward Stuart in 1745, there were three distinct Orders of Masonry in France, respectively named Templary, Jesuitical and Hermetic; and to these the exiled prince added the Symbolic. Ramsay invented a new degree in 1728, which he called the Royal Arch; the Petit Elu or Kadosh originated at Lyons in 1743; and from these sprang all the degrees of the *ancien et accepté*, some of which are connected with Blue Masonry, and others with Templary.”

“And sometimes,” the Skipper interposed, “the degree which in one place was managed like ordinary Masonry, became a powerful engine in the hands of the Jesuits, and in those of the infidel philosophers a medium for inculcating atheistical principles. This I have learned from themselves. The commencement of the lecture practised by the Jesuits was this:—

“ ‘What is there between you and me?’

“ ‘Religious worship.’

“ ‘What is religious worship?’

“ ‘A secret.’

“ ‘What is that secret?’

“ ‘Freemasonry.’

“In every Chapter that I have visited, there is a mixture of degrees, and so many shades that it is difficult to classify and arrange them. But in general it may be said, that the degrees practised by the Chapitre or College of Clermont, founded in 1754, were Jesuitical, or a Jesuitical edition of Templary; and those prepared by Baron Hunde for his Lodge of Strict Observance were Templary purified from Jesuitism.”

“Unfortunately,” said the Vicar, “these men were not contented with fabricating new degrees, but made innovations in the details of symbolical Masonry to suit their own purposes. They not only changed the symbols, but made serious alterations in the tracing of the Lodge.”

“It is perfectly clear, however,” the D.P.G.M. continued, “that the Continental MAÇONNERIE ECOSSAIS is a pure fiction, and not sustainable on any grounds; and it is highly probable that the appellation was a legacy bequeathed by the Stuart family, who were Grand Masters of Scotland. From these facts and arguments it will be clear, that Freemasonry in both its divisions may be traced backward to a very remote period in every part of the world; and was modelled into a regular system in England by Prince Edwin in the year 926, and by Bruce in Scotland in 1314. We have evidence of the existence of symbolical Lodges in Germany during the fifteenth century, and in Holland in the sixteenth. A regular lecture has

existed from time immemorial in the Royal Order, and the Kilwinning Masons, how truly it is their business to prove, claim an antiquity which approaches very nearly to the time of Athelstan."

"The conclusion of the matter, then," said Bro. Gilkes, "may be thus summed up. If we look for a correct account of the origin of Freemasonry, we must dismiss from our minds all reference to climate or nation, and penetrate into the recesses of an unrecorded antiquity; for there the original traces of our symbolical Order are undoubtedly concealed. And it is for this reason, as the secrets of Freemasonry were orally communicated, that we find an insuperable difficulty in discovering the connecting-links which might enable us to pursue the inquiry backwards to such a remote period of time; but it is some satisfaction to consider that the same disabilities exist respecting many other matters of historical interest, which are nevertheless received on grounds that are equally conjectural and incapable of proof."

"Noorthouck, in the introduction to his edition of 'Anderson's Constitutions,'" the Rector observed, "has a judicious remark on this very subject. He says, that a society formed on *leges non scriptæ* should not be able to produce very ancient records, is perfectly consistent. Whatever old writings the brethren might possess in different places, the revolutions of time, and accidents of various kinds, continually diminish. What losses the Society sustained in the year 1720, when the ignorant zeal of some rash brethren induced them

to burn their manuscripts, from a dislike to have the Constitutions of Masonry printed, cannot now be estimated."

"I think you said," the Surgeon observed, addressing himself to our Masonic instructor, "that the Royal Arch was invented by Ramsay at the beginning of the last century. Have you any authority to bear out your assertion? I have always been led to believe that the degree originated at the reconstruction of the Temple, when the Jews returned from their Babylonish captivity."

"The Royal Arch of Ramsay formed the groundwork on which the English degree was manufactured," Bro. Gilkes replied; "but it differed materially from it both in its nature and application. In the French Royal Arch, which is sometimes denominated Knights of the Ninth Arch, or Royal Arch of Enoch, there is a jewel with the letters I.V.I.O.L., *Inveni verbum in ore Leonis*, of which the following explanation is given in the lecture. Biblical history informs us that the Jews were slaves to the Egyptians until redeemed by Moses to take possession of the Holy Land. We also learn from the annals deposited in the Scottish archives, and only to be examined by Masons, that in a certain battle the Ark of Alliance was lost in a forest, and discovered by the roaring of a lion, which couched down at the approach of the Israelites, although it had previously destroyed a great number of the Egyptians who had attempted to carry the Ark away. But at the approach of the high priest he

dropped the key of the Ark out of his mouth, and protected that sacred utensil till it was removed to a place of safety. There is a similar allusion to a lion which had been wounded by an arrow lying at the mouth of a cave, and amusing itself with mathematical instruments. This emblem is worn as the gorget of a Scottish knight."

"Do you mean to say," the Surgeon rejoined, "that the degree was not connected with an arch at all?"

"By no means. But Bro. Petersen, I have no doubt, from his acquaintance with Continental Masonry, has been dubbed a Knight of Ramsay's Order, and he will explain it much more satisfactorily than I can."

"I will do it with pleasure," the Skipper replied; "for there is very little secrecy about it, except in the multiplicity of signs, tokens, and words; or rather, the numerous ways of pronouncing the same word. The history, in effect, is thus detailed. The patriarch Enoch saw in a vision a mountain that seemed to reach the heavens, and being conveyed to the summit, God showed him a brilliant Triangular Prism, with certain characters on each of its faces, which he saw, but was enjoined never to pronounce. The characters were these אֵל (El) אֱלֹהִים (Eloah) אֱלֹהִים (Elohim). He was then precipitated into the bowels of the earth, and passed through nine perpendicular arches, and in the deepest arch he saw a similar prism with a brilliant light in the centre, which showed the same characters that he

had seen before. In obedience to the divine command, Enoch built an altar on Mount Calvary, where he had seen this celestial vision; and there also he sunk a deep pit, at the bottom of which he placed a prism which he had constructed on the principle of that which he had seen in his dream, upon a pedestal of white porphyry, and fixed the whole on a double cubical stone of marble. He then closed it over with an arch having a square entrance in the upper part; and its privacy was increased and consummated by the construction of eight other similar arched vaults, placed perpendicularly upon it, and each opening with a like trap door; the upper surface was covered with earth, and closed to all but Enoch himself, and he entered it only once a year."

"This forms no part of our present Royal Arch degree," the Surgeon observed.

"It is but the commencement," the Skipper rejoined. "The history is traced down to the building of the Temple by Solomon, when these arches were discovered by the workmen while digging the foundations, and the contents of the several vaults, consisting of vases of gold and silver, urns, marble, porphyry, agate, and precious stones, were said to be disinterred and handed over to the king."

"But," said the Surgeon, "I should like to know how these discoveries were made on Mount Calvary by men who were at work on Mount Moriah."

"I am not responsible for the discrepancy," Bro. Nis Petersen replied, "which has been a stumbling-block to many brethren who have been

admitted to the degree. But, after all, the anomalies do not exceed those of your own Royal Arch."

"Ha! indeed," the Surgeon ejaculated; and he whispered to Bro. Gilkes, "Have we any anomalies in that exalted degree?"

"Many," Bro. Gilkes laconically replied, with a dry sardonic cough.

"Then," said the former aloud, "you will perhaps accommodate me by naming them."

"You are not all Royal Arch Masons," the Skipper replied, "and therefore I cannot distinctly enumerate them; but you will understand my meaning when I say, that the original Scroll of the Law in the handwriting of Moses was found by Hilkiah in the reign of Josiah, and not at the rebuilding of the Temple by Zerubbabel, although our transatlantic brethren feign that towards the close of the reign of Josiah, Huldah the prophetess, foreseeing the wickedness of his son and successor, and also the destruction of the Temple and the deportation of its most sacred contents to Babylon, once more secreted the Law in a place where it remained till the Jews returned from their captivity. Again, the names E. and N. given to the scribes are, I think, erroneous, and for this reason. The foundation of the second temple was laid in the year B.C. 535; but the building was hindered by the Samaritans till B.C. 520, when it was completed by order of Darius, and dedicated B.C. 515. Now Ezra did not come up from Babylon till the reign of Artaxerxes, B.C. 457, being fifty-eight years after the dedication, and seventy-eight after the

foundations were laid; and Nehemiah was not made governor till twelve years after the last date. They could not, then, have been contemporaneous with Zerubbabel at the building."

"I suppose," said the Vicar, "that this decided anachronism arose from the fact of Ezra having recorded in his first six chapters the circumstances which happened from sixty to eighty years before his time; and from the name of Nehemiah appearing in Ezra c. ii. v. 2, as one of those who came with Zerubbabel, although he was, as Dean Prideaux shows, evidently a different person of the same name."

"I have ever been of opinion," said the Curate, "that the arrangement of the three principals is erroneous. Instead of Z.H.J., I have no doubt that it ought to be Z.J.H; not only because J. is recorded in the Scripture account as taking an active part with Z., but also because the office of Priest was acknowledged to be superior to that of Prophet. And if it was intended, as there is every reason to believe, as an illustration of the triple office of Christ, it will be enough to observe, that He entered *first* on the Prophetical office; *next* on the Sacerdotal, viz., at Golgotha; and *lastly*, on the Regal, viz., from Mount Olivet."

"But I am afraid," said the D.P.G.M., "you are losing sight of the original proposition, which was the difference between the Royal Arch of Ramsay and our own degree of the same name, and in what manner they were connected together. Our esteemed friend the Captain was saying:—"

“ That Solomon found the Ineffable Secrets concealed by Enoch, and constructing a safe subterranean depository, he once more buried them out of sight until future ages should discover them; and that they were at length found by three sojourners who had been employed by Zerubbabel to work in the foundations of the Temple. They were rather ancient men, it is true, to travel so far, and to solicit such a laborious employment; for according to the traditions received amongst us, they had been admitted to the degree of Excellent Master *before the captivity*, and hence could not possibly be less than ninety years of age.”

“ If, then,” our host observed, “ the Royal Arch Degree is of such recent construction, which I can scarcely believe, I may, without offence, take the liberty of inquiring what ritual and Word were used in the Third Degree before the invention of the Royal Arch ? ”

“ The latter question is easily answered,” Bro. Gilkes replied. “ The Royal Arch Word was anciently the true Word of the Third Degree.”

“ And we are told by a French writer (A.D. 1745),” the Dane interposed, “ that the Master’s Word was originally ——, but that it was changed after the death of Adoniram.”

“ But the ritual, the ritual,” the Surgeon perseveringly repeated.

“ It will be rather difficult to determine that point,” Bro. Gilkes responded, “ from the paucity of records relating to the subject of Freemasonry; but you are welcome to my opinion, if you attach

any importance to it, and I shall advance nothing that cannot be justified by documentary evidence," and he laid down his pipe.

"We have implicit confidence in your opinion," our host said, speaking in the name of the rest, "and do not doubt but we shall be edified by the expression of it."

"I believe, then," he continued, "that in ancient times there were only two degrees generally known to the Craft, the Third, or *Master's Part*, as it was denominated, being strictly limited to a few leading men. No private Lodge was competent to confer it; and therefore, when the Grand Lodge was in abeyance, which it certainly was for the greater part of the seventeenth century (the figment of Oliver Cromwell's Grand Lodge being unsustainable by any tangible evidence), no person could be admitted to the Third Degree. Nor was it absolutely necessary, because it was distinctly provided by the old Constitutions, that a Fellow Craft was eligible for all offices, including that of Grand Master; and every E.A.P. possessed the privilege of a vote in Grand Lodge on every question that was there introduced."

"An E.A.P. of a certain standing, I presume," the D.P.G.M. suggested.

"Not so," Bro. Gilkes replied; "a brother who was initiated to-night would have a vote in Grand Lodge to-morrow."

"Then, excuse me," the D.P.G.M. interposed, "but do you mean to affirm that the Masters of private Lodges were not Master Masons?"

“Many of them were only Fellow Crafts,” he replied; “and our present Book of Constitutions still retains, in a note under the head of Ancient Charges (iv.), the proviso, that no brother, in ancient times, however skilled in the Craft, was called a Master Mason until he had been elected into the chair of a Lodge. On which you will observe, that as no brother could be raised but in the Grand Lodge, the words have been cautiously selected, because in the abeyance of that governing body no Master Mason could be made; and, therefore, the above proviso does not use the word *raised*, but *called* a Master Mason, although perhaps nothing more than a Fellow Craft.”

“I am afraid your conjecture on this point is somewhat overstrained,” said the Vicar, “for it is altogether new to me.” And the whole company concurred in the observation.

“Well, then,” Bro. Gilkes replied, “we will resort to documentary evidence in support of our hypothesis. In the year 1646, the celebrated philosopher Elias Ashmole, who founded the museum at Oxford, was initiated in a Lodge at Warrington, as he himself has recorded in his diary; and we fairly gather from his account, that it was governed by a Fellow Craft, and that there were no Master Masons present; and I greatly question whether Ashmole himself was ever raised to that sublime degree.”

“That is a singular opinion respecting a man of his celebrity,” said the Rector; “for he must

have been the chief, as he was certainly the most learned Mason of his day"—

“A day,” Bro. Gilkes smilingly interposed, “when there were no regular Grand Lodges.”

“Do any of you know that the Ashmolean Masonry is altogether ignored on the continent of Europe?” the Surgeon inquired.

“Bro. Frederic Nicolai has given it a decided contradiction,” the Skipper replied. “He says that the object of the meeting at Warrington, so far from being Masonic, was simply for the purpose of carrying out a philosophical idea which had been promulgated by Lord Bacon in his ‘New Atlantis’ of the model of a perfect society, instituted for the secret purpose of interpreting nature, and of producing new arts and marvellous inventions for the benefit of mankind, under the name of Solomon’s House, or the College of the Six Days’ Work, which, in plain language, was intended to be an ideal society for the study of natural philosophy. The persons present at these meetings are said by Nicolai to have been Rosicrucians, and we know this to be true of Ashmole himself. He asserts, further, that these men erected, in their Lodge, two Great Pillars, which they called the Pillars of Hermes, in front of Solomon’s House, and that they used a chequered pavement, a ladder of seven staves or rounds, and many other secret symbols. And as they held their subsequent meetings in Mason’s Hall, London, they adopted the tools of working masons; and this, he says conclusively, was the origin of

Symbolical Masonry. And as it was invented about the time of the Restoration, the judicial murder of Charles the First was introduced as an incidental legend."

"This conjecture of Nicolai is entirely without foundation?" said the Vicar, inquiringly.

"Entirely," Bro. Gilkes coincided; "for it is indisputably true, that the three degrees of Masonry had long been in existence at the period in question, although I doubt whether Ashmole ever became a Master Mason."

"Many of the French high-grade Masons, however, notwithstanding the conjecture of Nicolai," the Skipper observed, "entertain an opinion that Ashmole was not only a Master Mason, but that he connected the degree with Templary, and practised it under that name."

"Without any authority, I should conceive," Bro. Gilkes replied. "But let us hear what Ashmole himself says on the subject. In 1682, as he tells us, *having at that time been thirty-six years a Mason*, he attended a Lodge in Mason's Hall, London, at which he was the Senior Fellow; but no Master Mason is mentioned, except the Master of the Mason's Guild, and he was not the Master of the Lodge, the chair being occupied by Ashmole himself in the above character."

"I believe the gloss of Bro. Gilkes is correct," I observed, "for I have in my possession a copy of the examination or lecture which was used by the Craft at that period; the original of which, in the veritable handwriting of Ashmole himself,

was given to Dr Anderson when he made his collections by command of the Grand Lodge for a comprehensive history of Masoury; and it does not contain a single reference to the Third Degree, and only these three questions to the Second: 'Whence is an arch derived? From architecture. How many orders in architecture? Five; the Tuscan, the Dóric, the Ionic, the Corinthian, and the Composite. What do they answer? They answer to the base, perpendicular, diameter, circumference, and square.' "

"This, however," the Vicar observed, "affords no proof that these degrees were altogether unknown; for, if I recollect right, the O.B., in the Royal Order of H.R.D.M., established by Bruce in the fourteenth century, enumerates them all in the same order as they now exist. It is in dog-grel rhyme, viz. :—

" 'That you will always keep, guard, and conceal,
And from this time you will never reveal
Either to Master Mason, Fellow Craft, or Apprentice,
Of St John's Order, what our grand intent is.' "

"I admit that it does not constitute an unquestionable proof of the fact," I proceeded; "but at any rate it is a fair presumption that the Master's Degree was conferred on very few. Dermott, indeed, in 1748, pronounced dogmatically that all the members of Lodges acting under warrants from our Grand Lodge (his own Lodge at the Ben Jonson's Head included, for its warrant was derived from the same source) were ignorant of the Master's Part; and that it was not known

to any of the revivalists, Desaguliers, Anderson, Gofton, King, Calvert, Lumley, Sayer, and others, —*the geniuses*, as he terms them, to whom the world is indebted for the memorable invention of modern Masonry; and therefore, as they were ignorant of it themselves, they could not communicate it to others. These are his words, on page xxiii. of the last edition of the 'Ahiman Rezon' (1813): 'About the year 1717, some joyous companions, *who had passed the degree of a Craft*, referring to the brethren just named, though very rusty, resolved to form a Lodge for themselves, in order, by conversation, to recollect what had been formerly dictated to them; or if that should be found impracticable, *to substitute something new*, which might for the future pass for Masonry amongst themselves. At this meeting, the question was asked, whether any person in the assembly knew the Master's Part; *and being answered in the negative*, it was resolved that *the deficiency should be made up with a new composition*, and what fragments of the old Order could be found among them should be immediately reformed and made more pliable to the humours of the people. It was thought expedient to abolish the old custom of studying geometry in the Lodge, and some of the young brethren made it appear, that a good knife and fork in the hands of a dexterous brother, over proper materials, would give greater satisfaction, and add more to the conviviality of the Lodge, than the best scale and compass in Europe.' "

"This cannot be true," said Bro. Gilkes, "for

the above revivalists were contemporary with the Grand Master Sir Christopher Wren, and were all members of the old Lodge of St Paul's, now the Lodge of Antiquity, of which that great and good man was R. W. M., and the sole dispenser of the degree in question ; and, therefore, it may be fairly presumed that, as he was living when the revival was projected—and probably suggested it himself—he would not suffer them to remain ignorant of that important part of Craft Masonry, which would, indeed, have disqualified them for the efficient discharge of such an onerous responsibility as the renovation of our ancient and honourable institution."

"It is absolutely certain," I remarked, "that Desaguliers and his companions were intimately acquainted with all the particulars of the Third Degree ; for Dr Anderson wrote a defence of it in 1730, in which all the allusions are categorically enumerated and triumphantly vindicated from the aspersions of Prichard and others, who were engaged in the common design of bringing Freemasonry into disrepute. I possess a transcript of the ceremony which Desaguliers used, and it pretty nearly resembles our own. There are, indeed, a few slight variations. For instance, instead of twelve — Fellow Crafts, it states that 'fifteen loving brothers, by order of King Solomon, were sent, &c., and found the body decently buried in a mossy bed,' &c. &c." [The explanations which followed cannot be committed to print.]

"Our brethren of the United States," said the

Skipper, "teach their candidates that the burial-place of a Master Mason is under the S.S., with the following legend delineated on the tomb. A virgin weeping over a broken column with an open book before her; in her right hand is a sprig of cassia, and in her left an urn. Time stands behind her with his hands enfolded in the ringlets of her hair. The unfinished state of the Temple at the death of its chief architect is denoted by the virgin weeping; the broken column is a symbol of himself; the open book implies that his memory is recorded in every Mason's heart; the sprig of cassia refers to the discovery of his remains; the urn shows that his ashes have been carefully collected; and the figure of Time implies that all things are subdued by time, patience, and perseverance. There is a similar tradition about many other great buildings in different parts of the world. When I was at Leith two years ago, I went to see the famous Chapel of Rosslyn, the seat of the St Clairs, hereditary Grand Masters of Scotland; and I was told, that at the time of its erection, the Master Mason meeting with some difficulties in working out the plans, found it necessary to go to Rome for information, and that during his absence his apprentice conquered the difficulty and finished the work. On his return, the master was so exasperated at having been foiled by his apprentice, that he slew him with a blow of his hammer."

"A similar legend exists at Lincoln," the Rector observed.

“Do you think the Third Degree, as we understand it, is really coeval with the building of Solomon’s Temple?” the Surgeon inquired, reverting to the former subject.

“My private opinion is—no,” Bro. Gilkes replied. “It is, indeed, quite uncertain when the Third Degree was invented or remodelled with the addition of the disappearance of H. A. B.; but there are reasons for believing that it originally consisted of two parts, viz., (1) The loss of the Word by death; and (2) the finding it again by a resurrection; for it was certainly recovered in those times in the Third Degree. These two divisions were not given consecutively on the same evening, but at two distinct periods, viz., at a distance of fifteen days from each other, for a reason which I need not explain; and — was communicated as the Master’s Word in the latter portion of the degree. In some of the old Kilwinning Lodges of Scotland, the same practice, I believe, still continues to prevail.

“You are right,” said the Skipper; “I attended the Kilwinning Lodge at Glasgow last year, and witnessed the ceremony, which was in substance as follows. The candidate is introduced—light—the O.B. is administered—the penal sign, password, and grip delivered—and he is dismissed with an appropriate exhortation. He is then brought in a second time—dark—and told that he represents,” &c. [More cannot be made public.]

“Our learned brother Dr Anderson, in his

celebrated Defence," the Vicar observed, "which every brother ought to study carefully, gives a classical explanation of this event; his words are these: 'The accident by which the body of Master Hiram was found after his death, seems to allude in some of its circumstances to a beautiful passage in the Sixth of Virgil's Eneid. Anchises had been dead for some time, and Eneas his son professed so much duty to his departed father, that he consulted with the Cumæan Sibyl, whether it were possible for him to descend *into the shades below* in order to speak with him. The prophetess encouraged him to go; but told him he could not succeed unless he went to a certain place and plucked a *bough or shrub*, which would easily separate from the parent tree, and by carrying that in his hand he would obtain directions where to find his father. Thus it appears, that the body of Anchises could not have been discovered but by the help of a bough plucked with great ease from the tree; nor, it seems, could Hiram, the Grand Master of Masonry, have been found but by the direction of a shrub which the dissector tells us came easily up. The principal cause of the descent of Eneas into the shades, was to inquire of his father *the secrets of the Fates*, which should sometime be fulfilled among his posterity. And, in like manner, the occasion of the brethren searching so diligently for their Master was, it seems, to receive from him the secret word of Masonry. This remarkable verse follows:—

“Præterea jacet exanimus libi corptus amici,
Heu necis!”

This was Micenus that was murdered and buried under a high hill; as, says the dissector, Master Hiram was.”

“And in a book entitled ‘Remarkable Ruins and Romantic Prospects of North Britain, by Charles Cordenier,’” the Rector added, “I remember the following singular passage: ‘Hiram (the Light) coming forth in hallowed dignity of character from within the veil of the sanctuary; violated, in the open temple of the world by the ignorant and profane; concealed for a time in awful secrecy; the want of his presence pathetically deplored; the ardent solemnity wherewith he is sought for; the acclamations of joy on finding him again, and *the consequent discovery of the Word*, almost of itself develops the secret which the personification had involved.’”

“These coincidences deserve a serious consideration,” said the D.P.G.M. “But we were speaking of Scottish Masonry; and on this subject I wish to ask our intelligent Danish friend a question, which perhaps he may be able to answer. I have been told that the Jewels used by the officers of their Lodges are different from ours—is this correct, and if so, can you explain the reason?”

“The Jewels are certainly different,” the Skipper replied. “In Scotland every Master of a Lodge is regarded as the representative of King Solomon; and therefore entitled to wear the same

emblem as the Grand Master. They are usually composed of the Square and Compasses, 24-inch gauge, an arc of a circle, and the two great luminaries, with a stone in the middle to denote the All-seeing Eye, or Blazing Star. The Lodges vary in the arrangement of the details, but they consider the square and compasses combined to be the *sine qua non* of the Master of a Lodge; and these in conjunction with the Bible constitute the Furniture of the Lodge. The Scottish Grand Lodge instituted in 1736 an officer called Substitute Master, which is not used in any other country. The reason I am told was that the Grand Mastership was intended to be biennial;—the first year there was to be no Depute G. M.; but the year following a Depute is elected who is the Grand Master elect; the real working man being in fact the Substitute G. M., who is frequently continued in office for years. I am further informed that when this office was created there was some demur in Grand Lodge respecting an appropriate Jewel; and after mature deliberation they gave him, very improperly I think, the Level, and assigned the Square to the Senior Warden. But there is scarcely a single Lodge out of Edinburgh which follows this system, and the Grand Lodge is too prudent to compel it.”

“I am sure we are under very great obligations to our intelligent brother for his lucid explanations,” said the Vicar; “and I would now ask Bro. Gilkes whether the disappearance of H. A. B. is to be esteemed an actual occurrence, or a myth or

fiction assumed for the purpose of establishing the legend of the Third Degree as a type of the death and resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ?"

"And I would answer," Bro. Gilkes replied, "that it is evidently a figurative and not a literal death; but I do not make this assertion for the purpose of establishing any favourite hypothesis of my own. The death of H. A. B. at the time indicated by the legend is positively contradicted in holy writ; for Scripture history states most conclusively that he lived to finish the temple. The words are (2 Chron. iv. 11), *And Hiram finished the work that he was to make for the house of God.* And after an enumeration of particulars, the passage concludes—*Thus all the work of Solomon made for the house of God was finished.* And Josephus mentions him under the name of AB-DOMEN, as living in Tyre long afterwards. There are other reasons which prove conclusively that the legend of Hiram is but a vehicle for the embodiment of some great and fundamental truth, such as, perhaps—Death in Adam and Life in Christ—and these are"—— [they are not communicable.]

"It is a sound canon in logic," said the Student, "that a fact is distinct from any construction which may be put upon it. And if this fact be confirmed by the Scriptures, it will not be affected by any use which Freemasonry has made of it."

"This, then, is the reason," the Skipper observed, "why Dr Dalcho, whose book I have got on board my good ship, said in an oration which he delivered

in 1803, as Grand Master of South Carolina :
' I candidly confess that I feel a very great degree of embarrassment while I am relating to ministers of God's Holy Word, or to any other gentlemen, a story founded on the grossest errors of accumulated ages ; errors which they can prove to be such from the sacred pages of holy writ, and from profane history, written by men of integrity and talents, and that, too, in a minute after I have solemnly pronounced them to be undeniable truths, even by that very Bible on which I have received their obligation.'

"To confess the truth," said the Surgeon, "I never had any faith in the details of this absurd legend, knowing that H. A. B. made all the internal decorations of the Temple—the pillars, and the brazen sea, the lavers, and the vessels of every kind—*after the edifice was finished.* And in enumerating these works, the Scripture account concludes : '*So Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he made King Solomon for the house of the Lord.*' Nay, the probability is not destitute of good grounds, that he erected Solomon's palaces, which took many years in building, after the Temple was completed ; because when stating some details of Solomon's palace, the house of Lebanon, and the palace of Pharaoh's daughter, the account adds, 'Thus Hiram wrought ALL King Solomon's work.'

"This conversation," said the D.P.G.M., "has thrown a new light on the subject ; and the only doubtful point that remains, and of which I look

to Bro. Gilkes for the solution, is,—the real reference of the legend.”

“I am unable to resolve that difficult question dogmatically,” Bro. Gilkes replied, “but I can tell you the conjectures of others. Some assert that the legend refers truly to the absolute and *bonâ fide* death of Hiram the architect; others trace it to the legend of Osiris or Ihammuz; and refer its hidden meaning to that curious opinion of the ancient heathens respecting the two mysterious predicaments to which all mankind are subject, viz., Sleep and Death. The former by producing dreams and visions which are unfathomable to the clearest intellect, and a mystery to the wisest of men, were termed the Lesser or exoteric Mysteries; and the latter being the precursor of an after-state of existence, which, in the absence of revelation, was still more abstruse, they denominated the Greater or esoteric Mysteries. Others believe that the legend was added after the Christian era, and that H. A. B. was intended to be a type of the death and resurrection of Christ. Some refer its origin to Oliver Cromwell and his Independents; and those who adopt the Ashmolean origin of Masonry refer it to the murder of King Charles. Others assign to it an astronomical signification, and think that the death and restoration of H. A. B. refer to the sun sinking at the autumnal equinox into the depth of winter darkness, and emerging into summer light at the vernal equinox; at which latter period they contend that the foundations of the Temple were laid.”

“Who’s to decide when doctors disagree?” said the Vicar, laughing. “But leaving this problem for casuists to solve, I come now to a practical question of discipline. Whether the Royal Arch Degree, as it is asserted, be full of inconsistencies, anachronisms, and contradictions, or not; and I wish to be informed by our visiting brother, Gilkes, if the Lodges of the metropolis, like many of ours in the provinces, allow a Royal Arch Warrant to be suspended on their walls during the working of Craft Masonry? I hold the custom to be inaccurate; and have known it to produce great confusion amongst the brethren, ending in serious disputes, particularly in a Lodge in the western province of Lancashire, of which I was a member, arising out of a diversity of opinion on this prolific source of dissension.”

“Strictly speaking,” Bro. Gilkes replied, “I do not consider a diversity of opinion to be at all detrimental to the prosperity of a Lodge, provided the debates be conducted in a friendly and gentlemanly spirit, and free from any admixture of acerbity or party feeling. Differences of opinion will exist; and even the highest law authorities in the land—the judges—frequently differ in the construction of some abstruse legal point which has been referred to their united wisdom for decision; but this, as in the Houses of Parliament, does not produce the slightest effect on the private feelings of esteem and friendship for each other.”

“Still a dispute on such a trifling and unim-

portant subject as the suspension of a Royal Arch Warrant in a Craft Lodge is, at the least, disreputable," the Vicar continued; "because that degree is in reality only the completion of the third."

"You are quite correct," Bro. Gilkes responded, "in your concluding observation, for the Articles of Union declare authoritatively, that Craft Masonry has but three degrees, including the Royal Arch, although many brethren are incapable of understanding the connection between them. And they are also of opinion that while the Royal Arch Degree cannot be conferred in a Craft Lodge—while its members meet and work under a different Grand East and a distinct warrant;—while it has not only separate officers endowed with names, qualities, and attributes unknown to blue Masonry, but exacts new fees, prescribes a distinctive clothing and jewels by a detached code of laws, and changes the endearing name of Brother for that of Companion;—while the degree itself refers to a different period, and embraces a series of historical events which have no connection with the preceding degrees, and retains nothing that ever did appertain to them except the Master's Word—it becomes, both in theory and in practice, to all intents and purposes, a detached institution; which it specifically proclaims by the adoption of a new and more appropriate colour—symbolical Masonry being *blue*, and Royal Arch Masonry *red*. And it is actually considered a separate degree by all the Grand Lodges

in the world except our own, to be approached only by six preliminary steps or degrees, which in Ireland are the first three, the Past Master, the Excellent, and Superexcellent; while our transatlantic brethren in the United States proceed by somewhat different gradations; but the category is, the three first degrees, the Mark Master, Past Master, and Most Excellent Master."

"That is quite true," said the Skipper, "and they keep every separate degree distinct from all the rest."

"Then I should conceive that under these circumstances," our host observed, "the Royal Arch Warrant ought to be banished from the walls of a Lodge; and as Master of the Apollo, I will take care to see it done."

"There are some cogent reasons," Bro. Gilkes continued, "which lend a sanction to your view of the subject, and particularly the following passage in the Book of Constitutions, under the head of Private Lodges: 'The jewels and furniture of every Lodge belong to and are the property of the Master Wardens, and Brethren of such Lodge. But the Royal Arch Warrant belongs to a different body of persons, and therefore cannot be classed along with the Craft property, amongst which it is evidently out of place; because, being found there, in case of a distraint for the debts of the Lodge, it would doubtless be considered *prima facie* as part and parcel of the Lodge furniture.'"

"There may be some weight in this argument," said the Curate, "but such events as seizures in

a Lodge are happily, like angels' visits, few and far between ; and I for one cannot see the impropriety of hanging up the Royal Arch Warrant, which occupies no more space than a common picture, on the walls of a roomy Lodge, where it serves at all events, as far as it goes, to prevent the disfiguring effect of overmuch blank wall."

"How does this opinion agree," I asked, "with that provision in the general laws of Masonry which makes it imperative that no jewel or emblem, clothing *or insignia*, shall be worn *or used* in a Lodge, other than those specified for the officers, except such honorary or other jewel as shall appertain to, or be consistent with, those degrees which are recognised or acknowledged by, *and under the control of, the Grand Lodge?* Now as the Royal Arch, although acknowledged by the Grand Lodge, is not under its control, but is managed by a different governing body, I should conceive that everything appertaining to it is forbidden to be used in a Craft Lodge ; and the warrant must evidently rank as a part of the insignia. And it will be important to observe that in this prohibitory clause, the copulative conjunction is used, which shows clearly that it is the intention of our rulers to exclude from a Craft Lodge every species of insignia belonging to any degree which is not only unsanctioned by, but also exempt from the control of, the Grand Lodge."

"This reasoning," Bro. Gilkes observed, "I believe to be a faithful exposition of our Constitu-

tions on this particular point. But supposing it to be fallacious and unsound, and I do not claim infallibility in the interpretation of Masonic Law, I know that many of our town Lodges admit the practice, and you will frequently find there the Royal Arch Warrant exposed on the walls of a Craft Lodge. I admit, with our friend the Vicar, that it frequently proves a fertile source of dissension amongst the brethren. Those who pooh-pooh the Royal Arch, and have no intention to be exalted, generally protest against such an exhibition, and the custom being warmly defended by the Companions, two parties are produced, which are pretty sure to be opposed to each other on every subject that comes before the Lodge; and I am acquainted with Lodges which have lost many valuable members from the interminable disputes that arose out of this simple circumstance alone."

"The question therefore resolves itself into this plain proposition," said the Surgeon, "whether it be expedient to incur the risk of perpetuating disputes which may ultimately deprive the Lodge of some of its best members, for the sake of a document in a gilt frame which is neither useful nor ornamental in that place, and the legality of which, to say the least of it, is more than doubtful. My opinion, after the discussion I have heard, is decidedly against the practice. For it cannot be reasonable or expedient to exhibit the insignia of a degree which the Lodge is incompetent to confer, while its existence continues to be a stumbling-block that forms a perpetual source of

annoyance to even a single member of the Lodge."

There being no demur to the above conclusion, a pause ensued, which the Student interrupted by asking our Masonic instructor whether, as a young Mason and desirous of instruction, he might venture to propose a question which, he confessed, had puzzled him not a little in pursuing his mathematical studies, and he had found many brethren as ignorant of its origin and application as himself.

"I shall have much pleasure," Bro. Gilkes replied, "in furnishing any information in my power; but I can make no absolute promise till you have named your subject."

"I allude," said the Student, "to the Masonic application of the Vesica Piscis, which, we are told, is a universal exponent of architecture or Masonry, and the original source and fountain from which its signs and symbols are derived."

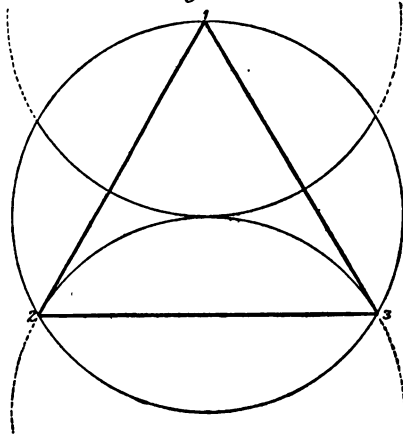
"I am glad you have mentioned it," our host observed, "for to say the truth, I also have some misgivings on the legitimacy of its application to our science."

"It is a very curious and interesting subject," Bro. Gilkes replied, "and well worthy the attention of all good Masons. Its modifications are of infinite variety; but assisted by the scientific brethren now present, I doubt not but I shall be able to make you understand it."

"It may be unnecessary to observe," I remarked, "that the Vesica Piscis contains the

imperfect outline of a FISH; and was so called from the Greek word *Ἰχθυος*, which is an acrostic of the Redeemer, *Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Ὁ Σωτὴρ*; whence it became an emblem of Christ, although it had been used geometrically long before His personal advent into the world. It appertained to the Platonic system, and constituted the sign of recognition amongst the Eopots, by the open hands united with the ends of the fingers, and wrists touching each other. Vesica Piscis often occurs in the Egyptian

Fig. 1.



temples, and particularly about the throne of Osiris, in reference to the divine triads; and geometrically represents the birth of Light, Horns, or the Sun, from the wedding of Osiris and Isis."

“But the question is,” the Surgeon asked, somewhat impatiently, “how do you apply it Masonically?”

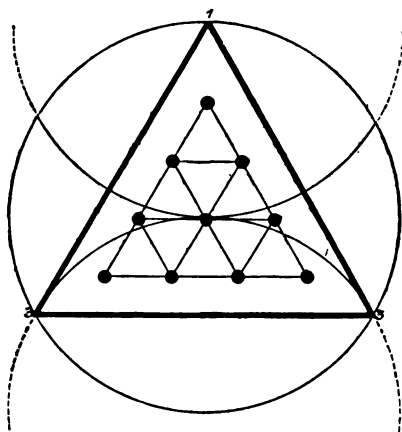
“We apply it thus,” Bro. Gilkes answered. “Our lectures inform us that the three most perfect of all geometrical diagrams are, the equilateral triangle (fig. 1), the square, and the equal hexagon; the latter being a figure produced by carrying the radius of a circle six times round the circumference. And thus the hexagon, being composed of six equilateral triangles, is equal in all its relations, and retains the quality of being infinitely divisible into similar triangles, according to the geometrical projection observed in the divisions of that trilateral figure, and may therefore be considered as the most perfect of all multilateral forms. Of trilateral and quadrilateral figures it is to be observed that none are admissible into symbolical geometry but those which, in their respective lines and angles, bear the relation of equality, or such integral proportions as may be adequately expressed by some of the numerical terms of the Tetractys, *i.e.*, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4.”

“I admit the correctness of your quotation from the Union Lectures,” said the Surgeon, “and shall be glad to learn how you apply the doctrine to the Vesica Piscis.”

“You shall hear,” said Bro. Gilkes. “The Vesica Piscis constitutes the origin and foundation of all these figures, and enters into the composition of almost every Masonic symbol.

For instance, the number three refers to the Trinity in Unity, which is represented by a figure that Hemming and Shadbolt have denominated *the Pythagorean Triangle*, and illustrated thus (fig. 2). This emblem powerfully elucidates the mystic relation between numerical and geometrical symbols. It is composed of

Fig. 2.



ten points so arranged as to form one great equilateral triangle, and at the same time to divide it into nine similar triangles of smaller dimensions. The first of these is called a *Monad*, and represents unity, answering to the geometrical *point*. The next two points are called *Duad*, answering to the geometrical *line*, which consists of length without breadth, and is bounded by two extreme points. The three succeeding points

are called a *Triad*, which embodies the idea of length and breadth as abstracted from thickness. The four points at the base of the figure are denominated *Tetrad* or Tetractys. They bear a similar relation to a *solid*, which combines the three principles of length, breadth, and thickness, inasmuch as no solid can have less than four extreme points of boundary.”¹

“The followers of Pythagoras,” I interposed, “interpreted this figure rather differently, by assigning to it a mythological as well as a moral character. They held that the Monad was the point within a circle, representing the central fire or God, because it is Λ and Ω , the beginning and the end, the first and the last; and in morals it signified love, concord, and peace. The Duad represents fortitude, harmony, and justice. The Triad was consecrated to friendship, prudence, and temperance. The Tetrad or Tetractys was considered by them as the root, principle, cause, and maker of all things. Amongst the Jews it

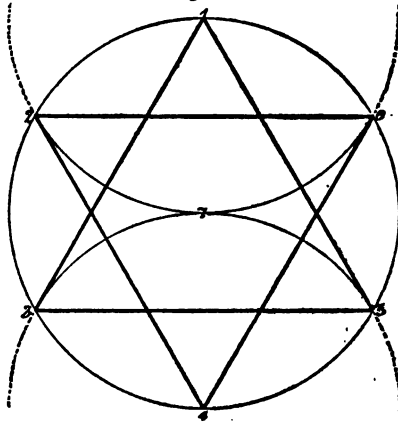
¹ In reference to this subject, I must inform my readers that Bro. Scott, an American Mason, who wrote “The Analogy of Masonry with Religion,” publishes the following observation in an introductory letter written by a friend, and addressed to himself: “Some years since, I was struck with the originality of your views concerning the number Three, and can never forget the thrilling discourse you pronounced upon it in Brown Lodge. You could justly claim those views as your own, before Dr Oliver’s Treatise had passed over from London.” I have nothing to offer against this representation, except to express my regret that our worthy brother should have brought my name into question; for I do not claim any originality in the illustration of a number which was copiously explained by Pythagoras more than 2000 years ago. My dissertation on the number Three in Lect. IX. of the “Historical Landmarks” is a mere collection of facts without any pretensions to originality.

was called Tetragrammaton, and by ourselves, T.G.A.O.T.U., who is symbolised by the Vesica Piscis, or sacred fish."

"I question the orthodoxy of this explanation," said the Surgeon, "and shall be glad to hear what our Masonic instructor thinks of it."

"It is novel," Bro. Gilkes replied, "but ingenious; and, without doubt, consonant with the

Fig. 3.



numerical system of Pythagoras, except in the reference to the Redeemer."

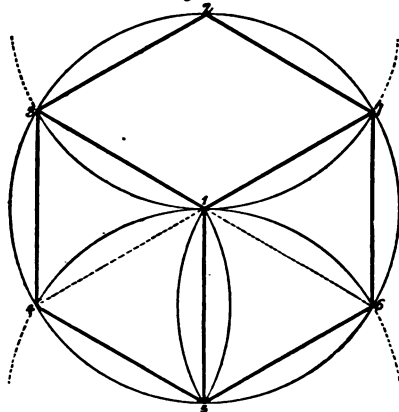
"Which ought to have been omitted," our host hastily added.

"I think not," said the Vicar; "for not only has the Vesica Piscis been esteemed an emblem of Christ from the second century downwards, having been thus applied by Tertullian in his famous 'Apology,' but throughout that entire

period the Freemasons, who erected the religious edifices of all Christian countries, have used it as an emblem of the divine founder of their religion ; and there does not exist a single church of any pretensions without some marked illustration of its principles."

"It is said to have been first applied to Christ," the Student observed, "by the author of the pseudo Sibylline Oracles; but it appears to have been known and esteemed as one of the arcane secrets of architectural science long before the period when he flourished. But this is a digression, and I entreat our gifted brother to proceed."

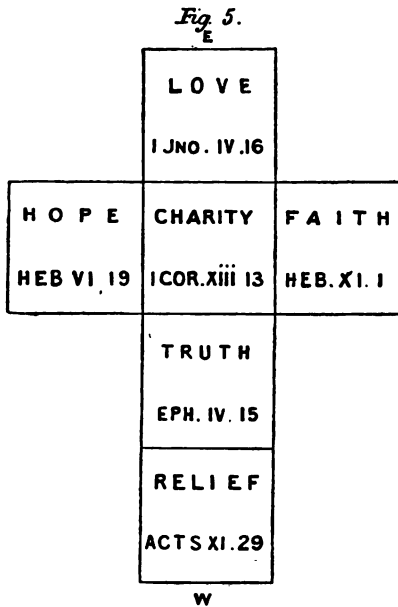
Fig. 4.



"Having disposed of the four primary digits," Bro. Gilkes continued, "we come to the number seven, which is the sum of the two last-mentioned numbers, and has evidently more than one reference, from the various ways in which it may be

depicted. Thus, for instance, if it be exemplified by *triangles* (fig. 3), it produces the monogram of God-Man, Jesus Christ; the apex pointing upwards denotes His divinity, and that pointing downwards, His humanity. If represented by *squares* (fig. 4), it produces the polished cubical stone, an emblem of perfection."

"The brethren of the body in Lancashire, where



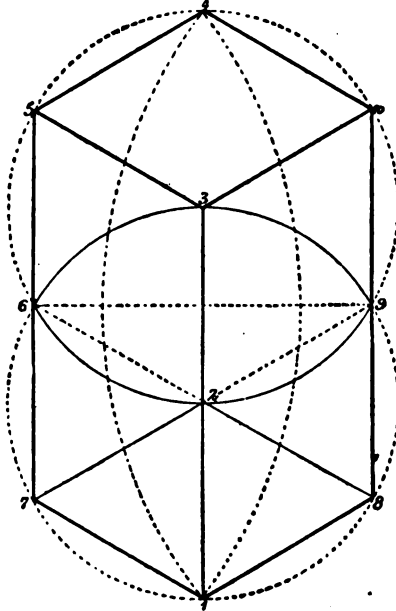
I was initiated," said the Vicar, "had a very pleasing illustration of the cube in connection with Freemasonry. It was painted on a stiff floorcloth, and folded up by joints. When

closed, it formed a regular solid body or Hexaedron ; and was explained as an emblem of Innocence and Purity;—Faith, Hope, and Charity, Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth ; but when expanded (fig. 5), it assumed the form of a Christian church with transepts, in each division of which one of these virtues was proclaimed by an appropriate passage from the New Testament, thus.” And taking out his pencil, the Vicar delineated the figure on a sheet of paper which lay on the table. “Here you will observe,” he continued, “that in the progress of a Christian from this world to a better, he first enters as a catechumen at the *narthex* or antetemple in the West, under the assurance of RELIEF from worldly trouble ; presses forward into the *naos* or Church militant, where dwelleth TRUTH ; and having at length advanced by the practice of Christian CHARITY through the gates of FAITH and HOPE, he enters by the *portæ sanctæ* into the *bema*, chancel or choir, the Church triumphant, where brotherly love and peace shall for ever reign.”

“Our three Pillars and Degrees,” said the Rector, “may be illustrated by the same imagery. Thus, Wisdom is the object of the First Degree, which may be denominated in Christian phraseology, the Catechumens or Church expectant ; Strength and Stability of the Second, or Church militant ; and Death and Resurrection, the reward of practical Faith, Hope, and Charity—called by us Beauty—of the Third, which is correlative with the Church triumphant.”

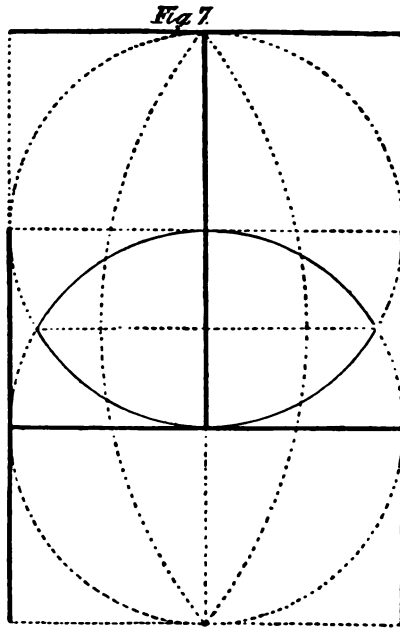
“We are greatly obliged to our reverend friends for their interesting illustrations,” said the Student, “which tally so ingeniously with the usages of ecclesiastical antiquity; and I am sure that the brethren would derive considerable benefit from their instructions if they fortunately resided

Fig. 6



amongst us. Perhaps Bro. Gilkes will now favour us by proceeding with his explanation of the identity between the Vesica Piscis and the Pythagorean science of numbers, as it is enunciated in our present system of Freemasonry.”

“ We were speaking of the cube as a perfect figure in the abstract,” Bro. Gilkes continued, “ but you will observe, that if it be extended to the extreme circumference of both the circles

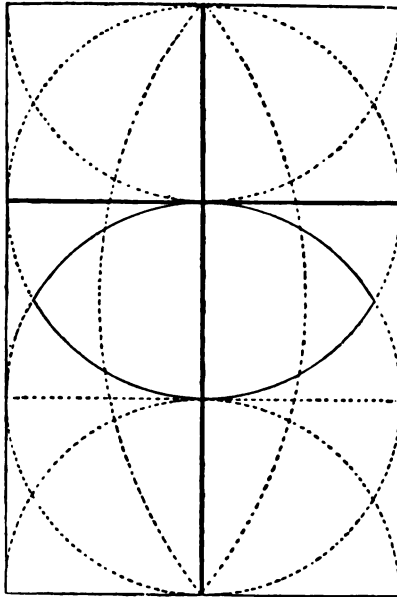


whose segments form the Vesica, it will produce the double cube, or altar of incense, and include ten points, the sum total of the Pythagorean Triangle ; being the sacred number, and denominated amongst Masons the Perfect Ashlar. The Triple Tau, and the Jerusalem Cross (figs. 6, 7, 8), include, in like manner, the two circles and Vesica ;

and contain the dimensions of the Tabernacle and Temple, with the Most Holy naturally and scientifically separated from the Holy Place."

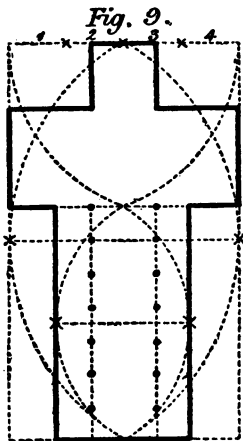
"Many of our Christian churches," the Vicar observed, "are built in the form of a cross, as an illustration of the double cube or Hexaedron; and

Fig. 8.



it constitutes a legitimate figure flowing from a simple and easy application of the principles of the Vesica Piscis combined with the Decad (fig. 9), which was the great number of the Pythagoreans, because it comprehends all arithmetical and harmonical proportions. They deemed it to proceed

from the diffusive nature of the triad, and its multiplying properties. Thus, in numbers which increase by arithmetical progression by threes, the sum of the first and last terms is equal to the second and last but one, or the two middle ones. Thus, for example, in 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, the notation will stand thus, $1+16=17$; $4+13=17$; $7+10=17$. And by extending it to another place, we have 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19; whence $1+19=20$; $4+16=20$; $7+13=20$; and twice $10=20$. In the last series the number of terms is 7, and the difference 3; the seventh term is consequently equal to the first with the addition of 6 times $3+1=19$. Again, if unity and duality be multiplied in this form, once 2 will make the sacred Tetractys; whence $1+2+3+4=10$. Now



the half of 10 being 5, the middle number, if we take the next superior and the next inferior numbers, viz., 6 and 4, the sum will be 10; the next two in a similar progression, $7+3$ will also make 10; and so on throughout all the integers, i.e., $8+2$, and $9+1$, produce the same result; and hence the Pythagoreans called the number 10 the fountain of eternal nature, or God; His body being

Light, and His soul Truth. Numbers, they

say, all fall under the monad: thus one monad is a monad, one duad a duad, &c.; but the decad is the summary and sum of all number, which cannot be increased without returning to the monad."

"Supposing I admit your reasoning to be conclusive, as it is certainly ingenious," our host asked, "still I repeat the question, how do you apply your theory to the science of Freemasonry?"

"It is allowed on all hands," Bro. Gilkes replied, "that this mysterious figure, the Vesica Piscis, possessed an unbounded influence on the details of sacred architecture; *and it constituted the great and enduring secret of our ancient brethren.* The plans of religious buildings were determined by its use; and the proportions of length, breadth, and height were dependent on it alone."

"I should like to see a proof of this broad assertion," the Surgeon observed.

"It may be proved," said the Vicar, coming to the rescue, "from an examination of all the religious structures of Christian antiquity, tracing the sequence from the churches of St John Lateran and old St Peter's at Rome, to the Abbey Church at Bath, which is one of our latest Gothic buildings. To explain this assertion you will observe that the simplest form of the Vesica Piscis is, when the centre of each of the two circles that compose it is taken in the circumference of the other, which exhibits the principles of the oblong

Fig. 11.

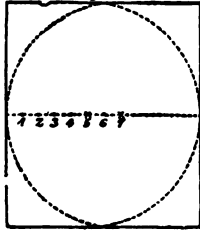


Fig. 12.

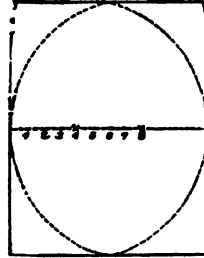


Fig. 13.

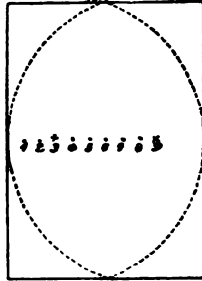


Fig. 14.

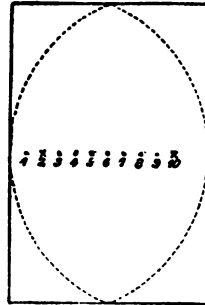


Fig. 15.

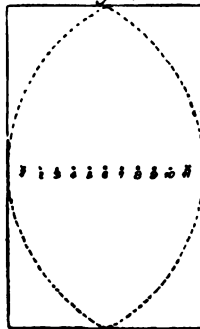
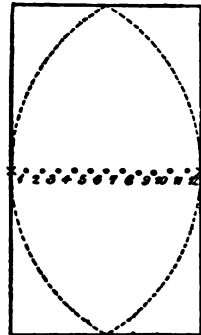
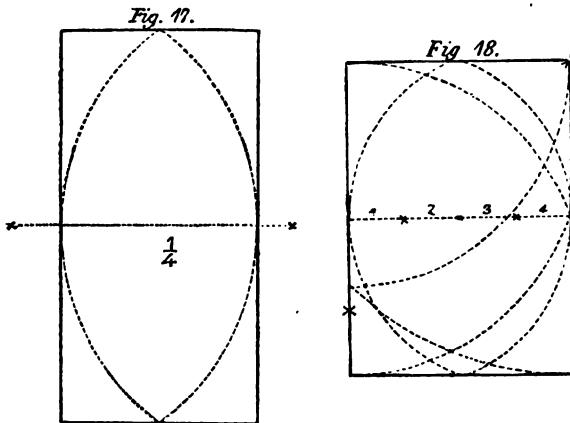


Fig. 16.



cisely similar to one another, but each also precisely similar to the whole."

"This is quite true," said the Vicar; "and our author, in illustration of the complex combinations of the Vesica Piscis, in illustrating the properties of the oblong square, informs us that when pro-



duced by the length and breadth of the mysterious figure in its simplest form, it possesses many properties which are singular and very striking (fig. 19). First, it may be cut by right lines drawn parallel to its shorter sides into three equal parts, all precisely and mathematically similar to each other and to the whole; and we may repeat the operation for ever with the same result. By thus trisecting this rectangle we effect no change; we cause no alteration; we get nothing but the same figure again. And it is evident that no other rectangle can have this property—it is absol-

utely impossible that it should. Secondly, if one-third part be cut off by a right line parallel to the shorter side, the remaining two-thirds will be precisely similar to one-half the figure cut off by a right line parallel to the same sides. Thirdly, if

Fig. 19.

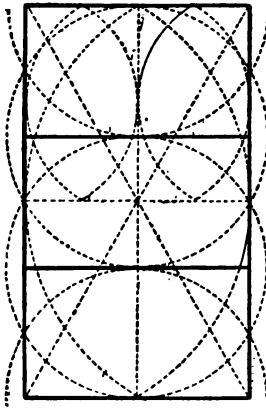
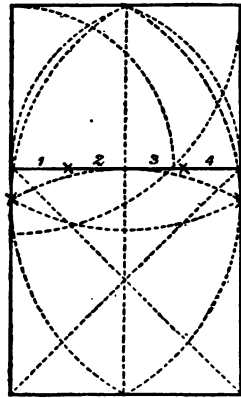


Fig. 20.



a square be cut off from it (fig. 20) by a right line parallel to its shorter sides, the remaining rectangle will be similar to the fig. 17, although not in a mathematical sense, but so nearly, that the Master Masons might, for every practical purpose, consider it the same. Fourthly, the diagonal of the figure is exactly double one of its shortest sides."

"This is extremely curious," said the Student and Curate together, "and, as it appears to me, quite a novel view of the subject."

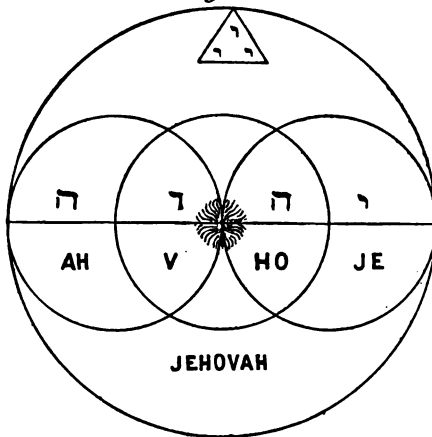
"No," Bro. Gilkes replied, "not new to science,

but of recent introduction into the disquisitions of Speculative Masonry."

"And yet," said our host, "although I have studied the lectures diligently, I declare I never heard it mentioned before as forming any part of Freemasonry."

"Probably not," Bro. Gilkes rejoined; "and yet we talk of these things sometimes in town;

Fig. 21.



and a few of our W. Masters, who are of a scientific turn, introduce them into the lectures."

"I remember observing something of this in a Lodge at Frankfort on the Maine," said Bro. Nis Petersen. "A diagram, beautifully illuminated, was suspended over the Master's chair. It consisted of four circles, two of them concentric, and the other two forming Vesicas by cutting each other at the circumference thus;" and he traced

fig. 21 on paper with a pencil. "By placing a letter of the Tetragrammaton," he continued, "within each of these spaces, the following result is produced. By the junction of the two first letters, יה , you will have God the Father, the Creator of the world; the next two, יהו , produce the only-begotten Son, the Redeemer; and the two final letters, יהי , give a third name, viz., the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier, proceeding from the other two. The three small central circles included in the interior of the large one, are a striking symbol of *Tria juncta in Uno*; and to express this idea more perfectly, they place three yods in the form of a triangle above the three small circles. And they further say that the letter *He*, ה , being repeated, indicates the two natures of Christ. A Blazing Star occupies the centre."

"It has been observed in the course of this discussion that the Vesica Piscis was connected with the universal language of Masonry," said the Curate, "of which may be predicated what Bishop Horne says of the language of the heavens, that although it is appointed as the instructor of mankind, it is not by articulate sounds. True, the stars are not endowed, like man, with the faculty of speech, but they address themselves to the mind of the intelligent beholder in another way—the way of picture or representation. The instruction which the heavens spread abroad is as universal as their substance, which extends itself in lines or rays. By this means their words, or rather their significant actions or operations, are every-

where present; and thereby they preach to all nations the power and wisdom, the mercy and loving-kindness, of the Lord. Now, I am sure we should all feel ourselves highly gratified if Bro. Gilkes would favour us with an explanation of this language as applied to Freemasonry, which I should conceive to be an exemplification of these remarks."

"I shall have much pleasure in complying with your request," said Bro. Gilkes, "if it be agreeable to all the brethren present."

"Hear, hear, hear," from all parts of the table.

"The language of Masonry, comprised in its signs and symbols," he said, "though of a more comprehensive nature than is generally imagined, is not, *in practice*, absolutely universal, because it never can become of general application and utility; but *in principle* it is undoubtedly a universal language, so far at least as it relates to the science of Freemasonry. These conventional signs are a species of picture-writing, or tropical hieroglyphic, and convey to the understanding simple ideas by the agency of visible objects, thus distinguishing Freemasonry from all other kindred institutions."

"For instance," the Curate interposed, "you would represent Craft Masonry"—

"By the *Square and Compasses*," Bro. Gilkes answered.

"And Royal Arch Masonry"—

"By the *Triple Tau*; the Lodge by an *oblong square*; a just Lodge by the *open Bible*; a perfect

Lodge by *seven stars* ; a regular Lodge by the *Warrant* ; the ground of the Lodge by a *mosaic pavement* ; the covering of the Lodge by a *canopy of clouds* ; while the *Blazing Star* in the centre points to the nativity of Christ ; the east is represented by a *half sun rising* ; the west by the same *setting* ; and the south by a *full sun at its meridian* ; the O.B. by the *three great lights* ; a brother by the *double triangle* ; Solomon's Temple by a *circle inscribed in an oblong square* ; renunciation by a *shoe* ; a candidate by a *cable tow* ; wisdom by a *Doric pillar* ; strength by an *Ionic pillar* ; beauty by a *Corinthian pillar* ; morality by *the square* ; equality by *the level* ; integrity by *the plumb* ; brotherly love by *the trowel* ; relief by a *purse* ; truth by a *mirror* ; the theological virtues by a *three-stave ladder* ; faith by a *cross* ; hope by an *anchor* ; charity by a *heart* ; fidelity by *the right hands joined* ; innocence by *the badge* ; temperance by *the open compasses* ; fortitude by a *shield* ; prudence by a *serpent* ; justice by *the balance* ; justice and mercy by *the circle and parallel lines* ; creation by *the trowel* ; eternity by a *butterfly and circle* ; imperfection by *the rough ashlar* ; perfection by *the perfect ashlar* ; power and safety by a *key* ; labour by *the shovel, crow, and pickaxe* ; refreshment by a *cup* ; discipline by *the chisel* ; reason by *the mallet* ; omnipresence by *the eye* ; liberality by *an open hand* ; selfishness by *the hand closed* ; an E.A.P. by *the twenty-four-inch rule* ; the F.C. by *the letter G in a circle* ; the M.M. by a *coffin* ; peace by a *lily* ; unity by a *net* ;

plenty by a *pomegranate*; human life by an *hour-glass*; industry by a *beehive*; a pure heart by a *pot of incense burning*; resurrection by a *sprig of cassia*; time by a *scythe*; watchfulness by a *sword placed upon the Book of Constitutions*; and the universe by an *armillary sphere*. I have here given you a simple outline of our universal language, but the system of Freemasonry contains numerous other symbols which might be exemplified by a similar process."

"Thus," I interposed, "wherever brethren meet, although diversified by climate, colour, education, or religion, and perfectly ignorant of each other's language, still they possess a medium of communication, which may not only be applied universally, but is sure to be understood. Even the blind, the deaf, and the dumb would have no difficulty in recognising and conversing with a brother. And amidst the blackest darkness, where no sign or gesture can be seen, the mutual recognition of brethren is practicable and easy of accomplishment."

"Connected with this subject," said the D.P.G.M., "is, I presume, that assertion of Lawrence Dermott in the 'Ahiman Rezon,' that he could convey his thoughts to an *ancient* Mason in the presence of a *modern*, without the latter being able to know anything about the subject of conversation; and that with a few Masonic implements, viz., two squares and a common gavel, he would convey a sentence to any intelligent brother of his own Order without speaking, writing, or noise; and that at any distance where

the parties can see each other, and be able to distinguish squares from circles. Are you acquainted with the process by which this was accomplished?"

"I am. This was effected by the agency of the ancient Masonic cipher, consisting of simple squares and angles, but I cannot think that two squares would furnish sufficient machinery for the purpose, unless one of them had a joint at the angle to reduce the two limbs to one when necessary. A square, two 24-inch gauges, and the gavel, appear to be the most efficient implements. But although Dermott boasts that the secret was known only to a few intelligent members of his own schism, yet it is quite evident that he himself learnt it on the Continent, where it was used by the Craft long before the time when he flourished; and it had been promulgated a hundred years earlier by the Marquis of Worcester in the following words: 'A method by which, at a window, as far as the eye can discover black from white, a man may hold intercourse with his correspondent, without noise made or notice taken; being according to occasion given, or means afforded *ex re nata*, and no need of provision beforehand; though much better if foreseen and course taken by mutual consent of parties, and may be carried on by night as well as by day, though as dark as pitch is black.'"

"It was, in fact, a telegraph," said the D.P.G.M.

"You are right," Bro. Gilkes replied; "it was a telegraph, and in existence before that wonderful invention was known to the public. It

Original English.

f g.	a. i.	o. u.
q p.	r s.	d h.
e n.	t. v.	w. x.
	c. l.	b m.
	α.	j.

Improved English.

a b.	o d.	e f.
g h.	i j.	k l.
m n.	o p.	q r.

~~k r~~
~~z γ~~

~~s t~~
~~u v~~
~~w x~~

Another variety—English.

c e.	f g.	n l.
y z.	b d.	p q.
u x.	t v.	k s.

~~i~~
~~a. r~~
~~m~~

Original Continental.

a. l.	b m.	c n.
u.	v.	x.
d o.	e p.	f q.
g r.	h s.	i t.

~~k j~~
~~z γ~~

Improved Continental.

a. b.	c d.	e f.
g h.	i l.	m n.
o p.	q r.	s t.

~~u~~
~~z x~~
~~γ~~

United States.

a n.	b o.	c p.
d q.	e r.	f s.
g v.	h u.	i r.

~~j w~~
~~k x~~
~~m z.~~

appears to substantiate the claim made for Freemasonry in the reign of Henry VI., that it is a discoverer of new arts." And he produced from his pocket a sheet of ciphers, which was handed round. (*See preceding page.*)

"These tables will explain the process by which Dermott would be able to effect his purpose; and he considered the mystery so perfectly impenetrable, that he publicly challenged any modern Mason to give a solution of it. Now, if you will furnish me with a square, however small, a common sector for instance, and two cedar pencils, I will show you the practical working of his system, according to the Improved English cipher. I will place myself at one end of the room and you at the other, that the telegraph may be more easily comprehended. First, I elevate the square with the angle downwards and pointing to your right hand (\square), and you will tell me, on reference to the figure, what letter it represents."

"The letter A," said our host.

"Very true, and you will do well to note it down. I now turn the square with the angle towards the ceiling of the room (\square)."

"That stands for M," the Surgeon remarked.

"The former of these positions again recurring (\square) is of course A, which you will add to the two first letters. I now point the two limbs of the square upwards, with the angle parallel to the plane of the horizon, thus (V)."

"Which is the tabular character for S."

“Put it down. I now join a pencil to the square and elevate them with the points downwards, ($\begin{array}{|c|} \hline \square \\ \hline \end{array}$) which represents”——

“O,” said the Surgeon, making the necessary memorandum.

“And lastly, the character just described for M with the end of a cedar pencil in the centre ($\begin{array}{|c|} \hline \cdot \\ \hline \end{array}$) is”——

“N,” he replied.

“Very well. Now, tell the company what words I have telegraphed.”

“The words are, A MASON.”

“All this is new to me,” said the Vicar, “and however easy to comprehend when furnished with the key, it would doubtless be considered an inscrutable mystery in an age when telegraphs were unknown; for it should appear, that the first public attempt at reducing this comprehensive system of communication to practice for the general benefit of society was erected on the Louvre at Paris, A.D. 1793, by M. Chappe; and was constructed on the principle which, as I now learn, has been long before used by the French Masons. It consisted of an upright post or beam, at the summit of which was a cross-beam with two arms, movable with any required rapidity by machinery. The different positions of the arms stood as signs for letters of the alphabet, and these were so distinct as easily to be understood. And, to the best of my remembrance, the alphabetical changes were delineated thus.” And he traced them on a sheet of paper.

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CHAPTER II.

Tuesday.

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED.

<i>Modern Progress of the Order.</i>		<i>The Lewis.</i>
<i>Revision of the Lodge Lectures.</i>		<i>Masonic Aphorisms.</i>
<i>Triads in the Three Degrees.</i>		<i>Masonic Periodicals.</i>





CHAPTER II.

THE DISCUSSIONS ON TUESDAY EVENING.

“All intelligent readers may learn the objects of Masonry from books and from discourses, delivered in public, or in Masonic halls. They may learn how it displays itself at the present time,—hiding its venerable head in the mist of ages, and ever appearing more youthful;—they may learn that it has been the messenger to the idea of progression, at the different steps of man’s education; to the idea of brotherly love for all mankind, as well for their spiritual as moral exaltation.”—*From the German.*

“**I**T appears, then,” the D.P.G.M. observed inquiringly, in continuance of the conversation which was broken off yesterday, “your town system is not more strictly uniform than ours in the provinces?”

“Very little, I am afraid,” Bro. Gilkes responded, “for in fact every Master works pretty much as he pleases; and the Masonic councils exhibit considerable variations. Some use the formula of Dunckerley, others that of Preston or Hemming; and many, like myself, combine them all, selecting such parts of each as appear, in their judgment, to be best accommodated to the comprehension or private opinions of the members.”

“This is rather an anomaly in an institution like Freemasonry, I should think,” said the Student, “and ought to be carefully avoided.”

“If such a thing were possible,” Bro. Gilkes replied; “but there are many experienced Masons, at the present day, who are of opinion that it is evil for any country or society of men who, with improved ideas fortified and confirmed by experience, allow themselves to be governed by old and obsolete laws which were made in times of ignorance; and, entertaining this belief, they are the consistent advocates for progress and improvement.”

“Nor is it surprising that such sentiments should prevail,” said the Curate; “for nature and art being in a regular and constant state of transition towards the perfectibility of another and a better stage of existence, Freemasonry should not be excluded from the category of a gradual advancement. The past, when present, was considered to be perfection; but we, the future, find that it was only elementary; and we consider something more to be necessary to our comfort and happiness than that which satisfied our remote ancestors.”

“You are right,” said the D.P.G.M. “The greatest lights that ever adorned the science of Speculative Masonry in the olden time, would be but children in leading-strings amongst the bright Masons of the present day. Desaguliers, for instance, was an eminent practical philosopher, and in his day, a star of the first magnitude, as

well in general science as in Masonry; but both have made such giant strides since the time when he flourished, that if he were to rise from the dead, he would be utterly unable to comprehend the systems of Masonic philosophy which are now becoming familiar to every tyro; and if we were to commit the destinies of the Order to his guidance, the goodly ship would be scuttled and go down by the head. No man can govern even a private club profitably unless he is, to a certain extent, superior to his associates."

"I am decidedly of opinion," I observed, "that Freemasonry must either assume a progressive movement, or be thrown out of the course by the external pressure of public opinion, and sink into comparative insignificance. It is a universal complaint amongst the Craft, that the instruction ordinarily communicated from the chair is imperfect and unsatisfactory; and it will scarcely admit of dispute, that amidst the rapid progression of human learning which distinguishes the nineteenth century, if any isolated institution exhibits a disinclination to advance in conformity with this pregnant example—that institution, be it what it may, will inevitably, sooner or later, incur and suffer the penalty of public contempt, and in due time be abandoned and left to perish without sympathy or regret."

"And how is this result to be prevented in the case of our matchless Craft?" the D.P.G.M. asked.

"By progress," Bro. Gilkes replied; "the first

indication of which should be a revision of the Lectures by authority, and under the direct sanction of the Grand Lodge. Such, at least, is the opinion of intelligent brethren both in town and country."

"It appears to be a reasonable judgment," said the Vicar. "In the eighteenth century, every ten or a dozen years produced its man, who, like the Marquis of Worcester, the illustrious Bacon, and others, was, in genius and intelligence, superior to his contemporaries, and contributed his valuable aid to accelerate the progressive march of the Order. Even at the revival in 1717, Desaguliers and Anderson were dissatisfied with the meagre outline of Masonic philosophy displayed in the few brief questions and answers which had descended from time immemorial, and which constituted the whole amount of knowledge imparted to the perfect Mason of that period; and they accordingly extended the Lodge Lecture into a sort of brief catechism for each of the three degrees, consisting of eighty-seven questions in the first, twenty-five in the second, and seven in the third, exclusive of the examinations, and they retained the single existing O.B. for them all. This course was termed by Dermott, in the spirit of envy and exclusiveness, '*inventing something for themselves.*'"

"It was, however, a move in the right direction," the D.P.G.M. observed, "and gave the impulse to further improvements at no very distant period, in accordance with the advances

which literature and science were beginning to make, and the revolutions which they have already produced in the minds of men. And hence Freemasonry was favoured with as many as seven or eight new rituals in the course of eighty years; each being an improvement on its predecessor, with a few exceptions, and each receiving the sanction of the Grand Lodge; and the names of their authors, Desaguliers and Anderson, Clare and Manningham, Calcott and Hutchinson, Dunckerley and Preston, will descend to posterity covered with immortal honour, as the distinguished men of their day, because they were in advance of the times in which they lived."

"But I am anxious to consider," said the Surgeon, "what progress we ourselves are making to elevate the Order to a literary eminence, which it ought to occupy in conformity with the progress of other kindred sciences; for it is clear from your representations, that amongst the London Craft, by whom our opinions ought to be regulated, there is a general call for a new ritual. Now, if we ask, what has been done for the last half century to improve the Lectures, I am afraid that in strict truth the answer must be—NOTHING; for although the alterations and additions of Hemming and Shadbolt may, in some few respects, be pronounced improvements, yet in others they have disfigured the ritual by striking out many important Landmarks; and taken as a whole, this course of Lectures is, in my judgment, decidedly inferior to those of Dunckerley and Preston."

“I cordially agree with you,” the Student replied; “for we hear nothing in the Lodge but a repetition night after night of the same dull and tiresome platitudes, till the members are surfeited; and in which, after all, an ignorant man, with a retentive memory, will often surpass the soundest and the ripest scholar. And we have no remedy, but either to sit quietly and listen to these commonplaces or absent ourselves from the Lodge; and I am sorry to say that many worthy brethren have adopted the latter alternative, and have relinquished the Order in disgust when they found their attendance to be so unprofitably rewarded.”

“We have an abundance of materials at hand,” the Vicar added, “for an entire reconstruction of the ritual without any derangement of the ancient Landmarks; and there is nothing to prevent our rulers from appointing a committee of learned and intelligent brethren to digest the Lectures into a more scientific and intelligible form; and if they withhold their sanction to such a project, which appears highly probable, it will be clear that the Grand Lodge has fallen into the fatal error of allowing itself to be ruled entirely by a reference to the past.”

“Our brethren in the United States,” said the Skipper, “who are enterprising and progressive people—I know them well—appear to entertain a correct idea of their responsibilities in this respect; which is owing, as I imagine, to the genial operation of their local Grand Lodges. As their system

is arranged, every brother may entertain the hope of becoming a Ruler of the Craft, and a Master in Israel, by his own meritorious exertions. The Grand Master and his officers are changed annually; and thus these important posts become accessible to a succession of industrious and worthy brothers, who have given proof of their excellence in the art; and this facility of promotion excites a spirit of friendly emulation, which operates favourably for the Society at large."

"This is as it should be," the D.P.G.M. observed; "and hence it is rumoured that the workings of Masonry in their Lodges are conducted on a principle greatly superior to our own. If Bro. Petersen would favour us with some brief description of their system, we should be highly gratified."

"I shall have much pleasure in contributing any information I possess respecting the labours of American Freemasonry," the Skipper replied. "Their system is to improve the work, and not to thirst for fees. There are no sinecures in the United States. All drones are excluded from the hive by an unmistakable

"Procul, ô procul este profani,
Conclamat vates, totoque abasistite luco."

The several Grand Lodges are engaged in an amicable contest which shall carry out with the most beneficial effect the best interests of the Order; and hence we find nothing in Masonry, as it is practised there, to condemn, but much to commend. They do not waste their time in talk-

ing ; the debates upon all speculative questions being left to the several committees—what you call Boards ; each of which has its own peculiar department. To one is intrusted the supervision of credentials : to another the settlement of grievances : to others the management of ways and means ; of accounts, charters, and dispensations ; charity ; pay roll ; accounts of delegates ; foreign correspondence ; unfinished business ; and private details. The Grand Lodges have merely to determine on their reports, which are usually found to be drawn up with so much judgment and discrimination as not to be susceptible of any hostile opinion ; and hence the members of Grand Lodge are seldom in collision with each other.”

“ I should like to know how it happens,” said the D.P.G.M., “ that the brethren in the United States work better than ourselves ? ”

“ The reason is this,” Bro. Nis Petersen replied ; “ the Grand Lodges emulate the glory of rendering the practice of Masonry worthy the patronage of serious and scientific men. The establishment of a correct method of lecturing occupies much of their time. Rituals are drawn up, examined by special committees, and published under sanction ; and lecturers are nominated to visit the several private Lodges under each jurisdiction for the purpose of preserving the strictest uniformity of rites, ceremonies, and mode of working.”

“ This practice is highly to be commended,” said the Surgeon, “ and too much cannot be said in praise of such judicious regulations.”

“Again,” the Skipper continued, “their Grand Lodges encourage the dissemination from the press of the general philosophy of the Craft, provided the recondite secrets be not profaned. Innovations cannot be made in the ancient Landmarks, because the Grand Lodges of so many States form a salutary check upon each other; and by this arrangement, your rejected St Johns have maintained full possession of their ancient immunities, and will never be dethroned by our worthy brethren of the United States in favour of either Jew or Gentile. Formal treatises, periodical works, and prize essays, abound in every State, in which the genuine principles of Masonry are embodied and unfolded; and thus it becomes an accessible pursuit, and, in common with all other sciences, sustains a rank commensurate with its real value, even amongst those who have not been initiated, or who, by sex or age, are excluded from a participation in its mysteries.”

“This will rationally account for the spread of Masonry there,” I observed, “and the rapid increase of their Lodges; which, compared with the population, are more abundant than in any other nation on the face of the earth. For instance, in a single State—take Ohio as an example, where the population is about a million of souls, or 200,000 male adults, there are, as I have been told, 100 Lodges, and more than 2000 Masons, or one in every 100 males. While in the city of London, which boasts of a greater population, with ten times the ordinary incentives that can possibly

exist in a rural district, there are only about half the number of Lodges, which contain under 1500 brethren.”¹

“If the English Masons were to follow the example of our Transatlantic brethren,” said the Vicar, “the result would not only double the number of Masons in a quarter of a century, but raise the character of the Order by the adhesion of men whose talents have already distinguished them in the walks of learning and science, and who would thus be induced to make Freemasonry their study for the pleasure which such a pursuit is certain to convey to their minds.”

“It would be difficult,” Bró. Gilkes observed, “to describe the state in which English Masonry would have been at this moment placed, in an age when time has been abridged, and distance annihilated, by practical improvements in the arts and sciences, in the absence of a band of brothers who have voluntarily undertaken the gratuitous task of explaining its general principles, and elucidating those peculiar practices which excite public notice, and in some instances provoke public disapprobation. Mankind now entertain a more favourable opinion of our pursuits, because the general principles of the Order are no longer a sealed book, but have been explained over and over again on scientific principles. If this course had not been pursued, it is doubtful whether Freemasonry would have been able to maintain its

¹ This conversation took place many years ago. — *Publishers' Note.*

position. We hear no more of '*the devil dancing in a circle*' during our celebrations, nor of the '*red-hot poker*,' or any other of the absurdities bequeathed to us by the cowans of the last century; and the ridicule formerly attached to the character of a Freemason is now entirely forgotten."

"This change in public opinion may be attributed, in a great measure, to the absence of exclusiveness," said the Vicar; "by the removal of which the prejudices of mankind have been shaken, and numerous initiations have taken place amongst a class of men who would otherwise have been our most obstinate reprovers. And I sincerely hope that its writers and illustrators may increase and multiply; its numerous Lodges flourish in augmented prosperity; and its works of benevolence and charity continue to supply the orphan's wants, and make the widow's heart to sing for joy."

"I recommend a reconstruction of our Lodge Lectures," Bro. Gilkes continued, "from an innate regard for the Order, that it may assume the high ground in public opinion to which it is entitled, as a valuable addition to those sciences which have received such gigantic improvements in our own times, whereby the boundaries of knowledge are extended, and the errors of former ages rectified and amended. Freemasonry, as a legitimate vehicle for engaging the stray speculations of learned men, is capable of being so applied as to produce the amelioration of public morals; and it would be a more worthy employment of their time, if our rulers would take the matter

into their serious consideration, and devise some means of raising its character so as to neutralise the sneers of the learned, and the more gross and open ridicule of the profane."

"The Qualification Questions of Dr Hemming," said the Surgeon, "are exceedingly appropriate, but I think too limited to answer the purpose for which they were designed. They ought to have been sufficiently numerous to furnish a brief introduction to every subject discussed in the Lectures."

"These questions are not generally adopted," Bro. Gilkes replied, "almost every Lodge having a form of its own. But still, although I agree with you that if more diversified they would have been more useful, yet to embrace every subject of which the Lectures treat would have made them too voluminous for the avowed purpose; and I am afraid few candidates would be found with sufficient resolution to grapple with them."

"What do you think of my Triads," I asked, "as an improvement on, or a substitute for, Dr Hemming's Questions?"

"They are concise enough," the Surgeon answered, "but rather too diversified for the acquisition of many of our candidates for Masonry."

"What are these Triads?" Bro. Gilkes inquired.

"They consist of a series of Qualification Questions," I replied, "arranged in a trinal form for the convenience of candidates, as affording a

facility of acquisition unaccompanied by a difficulty of retaining them in memory for any length of time."

"I should suppose them valuable if they comprise these most essential qualities," said Bro. Gilkes.

"You shall judge for yourself," I answered, "for as they are short I will repeat them:—

FIRST DEGREE.—INITIATED.

SECTION I.

Triad 1.

1. Bro. Lewis, advance to me as an E.A.P.
2. Whence come you ?
3. Whither do you direct your course ?

Triad 2.

4. Then I presume you are a Mason ?
5. How do you know yourself to be a Mason ?
6. But how will you communicate that fact to me ?

Triad 3.

7. Where were you made a Mason ?
8. When were you made a Mason ?
9. By whom were you made a Mason ?

SECTION II.

Triad 1.

1. From whence do you hail ?
2. What recommendation do you bring ?
3. Any other recommendation ?

Triad 2.

4. What is your business here ?
5. Communicate the points of entrance.
6. What are the ten requisites which constitute a regular Lodge of Masons ?

Triad 3.

7. What are its interior contents ?
8. How many original signs have we—what are their names—and to what do they refer ?
9. Who is T.G.A.O.T.U. ?

SECTION III.

Triad 1.

1. Have Masons any secrets ?
2. Where do they keep them ?
3. Do they ever reveal them—to whom—and how ?

Triad 2.

4. How many Lights are there in Masonry ?
5. What is their symbol ?
6. To what do they refer ?

Triad 3.

7. Explain the point within a circle.
8. Whom do these perpendicular parallel lines represent ?
9. What are they symbolical of ?

SECOND DEGREE.—PASSED.

SECTION I.

Triad 1.

1. Are you a Fellowcraft ?
2. What will you be tried by ?
3. Of what does it consist ?

Triad 2.

4. Where were you passed to the degree of a Fellowcraft ?
5. Why did you receive this degree ?
6. What does that denote ?

Triad 3.

7. How did you gain admission ?
8. What is the literal meaning of that word ?
9. Tell me its origin.

SECTION II.

Triad 1.

1. Bro., you have said that you became a Fellowcraft for the study of geometry—what is geometry ?
2. Where was it first founded ?
3. Why there, and on what occasion ?

Triad 2.

4. Did you ever travel ?
5. Where did they travel, and for what purpose ?
6. Did you ever work as a Mason ?

Triad 3.

7. Where did they work ?
8. How long did they work ?
9. Why not on the seventh ?

SECTION III.

Triad 1.

1. What wages did they receive for their work ?
2. Where did they receive them ?
3. How did they receive them ?

Triad 2.

4. How did it happen that the Fellowcrafts alone were admitted there ?
5. By what approaches ?
6. Consisting of how many steps ?

Triad 3.

7. How did you gain admission into a Lodge of Fellowcrafts ?
8. Why were you passed to that degree ?
9. In what form were you admitted ?

THIRD DEGREE.—RAISED.

SECTION I.

Triad 1.

1. Are you a Master Mason ?
2. By what instrument of architecture will you be proved ?
3. How were you prepared for this sublime degree ?

Triad 2.

4. Where were you raised to that degree ?
5. Why were you thus raised ?
6. How were these secrets lost ?

Triad 3.

7. Where do you hope to find them ?
8. What is a centre ?
9. Why a centre ?

SECTION II.

Triad 1.

1. Have you seen a Master Mason to-day ?
2. How was he clothed ?
3. What are those colours ?

Triad 2.

4. How many degrees are there in Symbolical Masonry ?
5. Why confined to three degrees ?
6. How will you make me understand this ?

Triad 3.

7. With what were you intrusted when you became a Master Mason ?

8. Why are they termed Landmarks ?
9. In the ancient system of Masonry how many days elapsed between the raising and instruction of a Master Mason, and why ?

SECTION III.

Triad 1.

1. What are the ornaments of a Master Mason's Lodge ?
2. Their uses ?
3. What are the peculiar hieroglyphics of a Master Mason's Lodge ? and to what do they allude ?

Triad 2.

4. Explain the points on which you were raised.
5. How came you in possession of all these secrets ?
6. Name the seven originals.

Triad 3.

7. What were delineated on the doors and walls of King Solomon's Temple ?
8. Describe the contents of the Sanctum Sanctorum.
9. What is the all-absorbing object of this degree ?

“ You will observe that I have given each Lecture a triad of sections, and each section a triad of clauses ; so that there are three sections, each containing nine questions (no great matter), to each degree, twenty-seven in all, and so linked and connected together, that, although every triad stands independently by itself, yet it forms a one or leading idea to its successor, so as to afford a mutual chain by which they are all combined.”

“ Well, sir, from such a cursory view as I have been able to take,” said Bro. Gilkes, “ I must say that they appear highly judicious and peculiarly adapted to display the industry and perseverance of a candidate for Masonry ; and no species of Qualification Questions can effect more, because it is these qualities only that can be

tested by the simple ordeal of committing to memory twenty-seven answers in each degree."

"You have addressed these questions to a Lewis," said the Vicar. "Now, I have often endeavoured to trace the etymology of that name as applicable to the son of a Master Mason, but without success. Perhaps Bro. Gilkes may be able to assist me."

"The word 'Lewis' denotes strength, and is depicted by certain pieces of metal which, being dovetailed in a stone, form a cramp that enables the operative Mason to raise great weights to certain heights with little encumbrance, and to fix them on their proper basis. For this reason, the word is applied to the son of a Master Mason, whose duty is to bear the burden and heat of the day, from which his aged parents ought to be exempt; to help them in time of need, and thereby render the close of their days happy and comfortable. His privilege for so doing is to be made a Mason before any other person, however dignified."

"All this," said the Surgeon hastily—"all this is familiar to us, but the question is, how did the appellation originate?"

"It is said," Bro. Gilkes responded, "but I am unacquainted with the authority, that this instrument was named after a certain Lewis, King of France, who is supposed to have been its inventor; for it formed no part of the symbols of Masonry as delineated on the Tracing Board before 1734; and it is still a question with some

of our brethren whether its introduction into a degree which is supposed to have been unvaried from the time of Solomon's Temple was either judicious or prudent."

"The French Masons, however," the Skipper remarked, "disclaim all knowledge of this derivation, and under the name of Louveteau or Loufton they assert that its etymology is lost in the darkness of an unknown antiquity. They suppose it to have been used in the Egyptian mysteries, where the son of an Epopot was called a young wolf, Louveteau;—and the wolf was considered equivalent to the chief deity Osiris or the Sun."

"There is something novel in this," the Vicar observed doubtfully, "although I am inclined to question the prudence of deducing any of the customs and ordinances of Freemasonry from the ancient mysteries. I have heard that the French Masons have some ceremony of adoption or application of a Lewis, which must be curious if we knew what it was."

"I can tell you," said the Skipper, "for I have witnessed it more than once. On the birth of a male child, if the father, being a Master Mason, is desirous that it should be formally adopted by the Lodge, and received as a Lewis, he makes his request to the Venerable—what you call W. Master—by petition; and an especial Lodge is convened for the purpose of carrying the wishes of a worthy brother into effect. The Lodge-room is profusely decorated with garlands of flowers, and the censers are

replenished with fresh incense. At the time appointed, the infant is brought by its nurse into the anteroom, and the Lodge is opened. After some preliminary ceremonies, the Wardens, who act as sponsors for the child, are deputed with the father and some others to introduce it, and when the procession arrives in the east it halts under an arch of flowers, and the W.M. demands their business. The S.W. replies, that they have ventured to introduce to his notice the newly-born son of a brother who is a Master Mason, and pray that it may be adopted by the Lodge as a Lewis, which includes the privilege of initiation at the age of eighteen years, of which, indeed, this is the first stage. The Venerable then asks the child's name, and what Masonic appellation is intended to be conferred upon him; to which inquiry the S.W., in the character of godfather, replies by stating the surname preceded by a Christian name, which expresses some Masonic virtue, as Wisdom, Fortitude, Justice, &c., in the hope that it may influence the infant's future life and character. Descending the steps of the pedestal, he puts up a prayer for the welfare of the child—the incense is kindled—the O.B. of an E.A.P. is tendered to the S.W. on behalf of the Lewis, and his Masonic name is publicly proclaimed amidst the acclamations of the brethren. A minute is made of the proceedings, and a circumstantial report, drawn up and signed in open Lodge by all the brethren, is presented to the father of the Lewis, as a certificate of the child's inauguration.

And the novice, thus purified, is bound in after-life to bear the burden and heat of the day when his parent, borne down by age and infirmity, is incapable of providing for himself."

"A very imposing ceremony," the D.P.G.M. observed, "but scarcely in accordance with the provisions of ancient Masonry."

"It receives no countenance from the Masons of this country," said Bro. Gilkes, "which merely prescribes the duty of a Lewis towards his aged parents."

"How much to be preferred is the teaching of Freemasonry in this respect to the doctrines and practices of the Jews in the time of our Saviour," the Vicar remarked, "who substituted the law of Corban for the duty of sustaining their aged parents."

"I never could thoroughly understand that law," said the Surgeon.

"Then I can enlighten you," the Curate responded; "for it is explained by Dr Lightfoot, that by the traditions of the Jews, if a son made a formal devotion to *sacred purposes* of those goods which he could afford for the relief of a parent, he was exempted from the duty of succouring his father and mother, even though the property was not actually given up."

"The plain meaning of the law of Corban is, I conceive, this," the Rector observed. "A father, being in want, requires assistance from his son; the son answers, It is Corban; I am disabled by the law, because I have vowed such and such pro-

perty to God; you cannot therefore receive any relief from me."

"This was, indeed, as our Saviour well observed, making the command of God of no effect," said the Vicar. "Revealed religion was intended to improve and not to overthrow natural religion, one of the fundamental laws of which is this of honouring our parents; and if they had known what that saying meant, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice,' they would not have sought to renounce this great duty of their religion."

"Hence, then, we may fairly infer," I observed, "the vast superiority of Freemasonry over Judaism, and the impossibility of classing them as kindred institutions."

"I demur to your conclusion," said the Surgeon; "because it is well known that by the Jewish law, if a man renounced, or even spoke reproachfully to, his parents, he was to be sentenced to death."

"But this sentence was avoided and even neutralised," the Vicar interposed, "if he said Corban; and it was to correct this perversion of the law that our blessed Saviour condemned the Jewish traditions. He told them that they not only preferred the impositions of men before the commandments of God, but they even directly transgressed the plainest precepts of religion, if they could wrest any vague tradition to justify their conduct."

"Well," replied the Surgeon in despair, "I cannot cap verses with you professional men; but

that is no reason why I should not retain my own opinion."

After a pause, during which our host circulated the bottle in silence, and nothing was heard but the puff, puff, puff, of Bro. Gilkes' favourite amusement, I observed, that amongst other subjects of improvement, Masonic Aphorisms, if judiciously introduced by the W.M. on particular occasions, might be profitable to the student in Masonry, because they would contribute to lighten his labours.

"A Masonic student," Bro. Gilkes replied, "must expect to find some difficulties to contend with at the outset of his inquiries. It would be useless to assert that the path is strewn with roses. As he advances onward, however, if his heart be sound and his resolution fervid, it will become every moment smoother, and the object in view less difficult of attainment, until he finally enters the shady groves of Masonry, where aromatic trees and fragrant shrubs are interspersed with grottoes of mosaic, borders tessellated and bespangled with perfumed flowers of every hue, which emulate the rainbow in its brightness, and outvie in luxury and magnificence the gorgeous works of art, even though produced by a 'Solomon in all his glory.'"

"A beautiful metaphor," the Vicar observed, "and not injudiciously applied, for a well-conducted Lodge is in truth a fruitful oasis amidst the scorching wilderness of the world."

"The elements of the Craft are indeed," said

the Curate, "somewhat rugged and uninviting, because they appear to promise no very useful or agreeable results, and few enter upon their study without reluctance. But after the elements are attained—I speak from experience—a new light bursts upon the student, indifference is exchanged for interest, and he will continue his course with a better hope of success."

"Although no very bright Mason myself," the Rector observed, with equal truth and candour, "I can easily understand your proposition. When the fruit is ripening, it naturally becomes more delicious, and soon attains its utmost perfection."

"In like manner," Bro. Gilkes continued, "when the Masonic student has become a master in the art, and Wisdom encircles his brow, like the radiant crown of glory which surrounded the face of Moses when he descended from the mount, he will then discover that he has opened a mine of mystical lore, which will shed its riches on his understanding, will enliven his path with gems of knowledge, until he takes his ease amidst the flowery retreats of learning, science, and morals."

"It is for the purpose of producing this effect," I continued, "and for stimulating the junior members of a Lodge to exertion, that I have ventured to recommend the use of Masonic Aphorisms for the regulation of their conduct while in the pursuit of this glorious vision of light; and to say the truth, I have drawn up a century of these useful maxims for that especial purpose, in the hope that some certain practical guides in every

phasis of a Masonic life may be found among them, whether as a common member, an officer, or Master of the Lodge ; leaving the application to the un-biassed judgment of the brethren, which they may easily adapt to the circumstances in which they may be placed, and to the particular restrictions and requirements of the Society, as enunciated in its general constitutions, and prescribed in the by-laws of the Lodge ; and if it be agreeable, I will read a few of them, that I may have the benefit of your joint opinion on their merit—if they possess any.”

“Let us hear them,” said the D.P.G.M., which was reiterated by the whole company.

“I shall select specimens at random, and choose the shortest, lest I should be thought tedious.”

“No. 6. If you intend to pursue the study of Masonry to any beneficial result, it is indispensable that you attend the Lodge regularly. This is your apprenticeship, and without it you will never become a bright Mason. There is no royal road to science.”

“A very truthful maxim,” Bro. Gilkes observed ; “industry and regularity are alike indispensable, and sure to meet with their reward.”

“No. 11. Be always obedient to the Chair. Obedience is a virtue of the greatest importance to your own character as a Mason, and to the general welfare of the Lodge. Without obedience Wisdom would be inoperative, Strength would lose its power, and Beauty its grace ; and confusion

and discord would soon banish the occupants of the holy ground."

"Excellent!" the Vicar exclaimed. "Obedience is indeed the life and soul of the Order, and cannot be too strongly recommended."

"No. 26. What is the reason Bro. — makes so little progress in Masonry?—Indolence. Why did Bro. — fail to establish a good character as the Master of his Lodge?—Because he was not an industrious person. Do you inquire why Bro. — never passed to the Second Degree?—I answer, because he was constitutionally idle. Indolence is the prolific parent of numerous other vices. Bad habits may be subdued, selfishness may be reformed, and passion held in check, but indolence is rarely, if ever, conquered."

"You have hit the nail on the head," said the D.P.G.M., laughing; "*rem acu tetigit*. I am glad you have touched on that point, for half the evils of life, as well as of Masonry, are owing to the same odious quality."

"No. 30. Silence, secrecy, and calmness of temper, are the unmistakable marks of a genuine Mason. If you hear any one make an incessant boast of his knowledge, you may set him down as an empty chatterer. Noise is not wisdom. Those who ostentatiously proclaim their own merits may for a time enjoy the satisfaction of deceit, yet in the end their pretensions are sure to be unmasked."

"And again to the same purpose. No. 32. Do you hear a man boast of his abilities, his attain-

ments, his dignity, or his position in life? Intrust him not with your secrets."

"No. 34. When in the Lodge, beware of contentious brethren. Truth is as little an object with them as brotherly love. They will wrangle against truth as freely as against error, and whether defeated or victorious, they will still argue and quarrel, question and dispute, until they have banished every right-minded brother from the Lodge."

"I have known many a worthy man," said Bro. Gilkes, "who has withdrawn himself from the Lodge in disgust from this cause alone. No well-intentioned brother could endure to sit in a Lodge night after night under the infliction of a contentious chatterer, who, on one pretence or another, monopolises the time and attention of the brethren by worthless trifles."

"Amphora cœpit institui; currente rotâ cur urcens exit?" said the D.P.G.M.

"Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus," the Vicar repeated.

"Both," the Curate added, "being equally applicable to a noisy and boastful brother."

"I have been thinking," said the D.P.G.M., "that these Aphorisms would make an excellent article for a magazine devoted to Masonry."

"And I have often wondered," said the Rector, "why Freemasonry has no authorised periodical as an organ of the Craft, and a medium of communication for the brethren. While every other class into which society is divided has its maga-

zine, whether literary, scientific, peaceful, or warlike, how does it happen that Freemasonry should be without some such useful vehicle for the record of Masonic intelligence?"¹

"How does it happen, indeed," the Vicar observed, "for such a process would incur no danger of violating Masonic secrets? The general principles of the Craft are no mystery, and it would be an advantage to the Society if they were more openly avowed, and better understood. And it does appear singular that such a numerous and powerful body should be without an accredited organ of communication. In the present state of the Craft, there can be no doubt but it would pay the publisher, and at the same time be of incalculable service to the Fraternity by enabling distant Lodges to correspond with each other, and to carry on an official intercourse which could not fail to prove universally advantageous. Why, then, have we not a periodical, recognised and supported by the Grand Lodge?"

¹ In 1839, we find the following editorial announcement in the *Freemason's Quarterly Review*, which had been established only five years: "This publication will continue to issue in its quarterly form *provided its circulation be doubled*. The manner in which this can be done is not difficult. Let every subscriber take two copies, and find a friend to take one off his hands; let every Lodge take one copy. This, however, we must know beforehand. We therefore suggest that a note should be addressed to us, or to our publishers, stating additional subscribers, and this will finally determine our course. Should we unfortunately be deceived in this matter, the Number for December, 1840, may issue if we live, but our editorial labours will then close; and even this extension of time is only permitted in justice to our brethren in the East and West Indies, who might otherwise justly complain of a want of courtesy."

“ I can enlighten you on this subject,” the D.P.G.M. replied, “ for I am the oldest Mason present, and have seen the experiment tried. In 1793, a Freemason’s Magazine was established in London, to which I was an occasional contributor. It lingered on for three years, and was at last abandoned as a hopeless speculation.”

“ And what was the reason of its failure ? ” the Surgeon asked.

“ I can tell you that,” Bro. Gilkes answered, “ for I know the work well, having been made a Mason during the period of its circulation, and receiving my information from the talented author of the ‘ Illustrations of Masonry,’ who was one of the proprietors. The reason why it did not succeed was attributed in a great measure to the dearth of Masonic articles. *A Freemason’s Magazine should contain nothing but Masonry.*”

“ Your observation is just,” said the D.P.G.M. “ No article ought to have been admitted that did not embrace some interesting subject relating either to doctrine, discipline, or ceremonies ;— anecdotes, *notitia*, queries on practical subjects, such as the working of Lodges, doubtful points in Masonic law or government, critiques on different methods of working Lodges, ancient practices and rituals, operative, speculative, symbolical, and spurious Freemasonry, legends, Landmarks, and constitutions, reports of meetings, biographies, obituaries, recollections, sketches of lectures and sermons, answers to objections, reproofs to cowans, together with a faithful record of the proceedings

of Grand and Provincial Grand Lodges; for as every brother pays an annual tax towards their support, he ought to be furnished with a correct account of the debates. These subjects would yield a sufficiently broad and extensive margin to fill any monthly or quarterly miscellany, to the total and absolute exclusion of all other subjects; and if there be any lack of matter under such a copious regimen, it clearly develops two self-evident truths, viz., that there is a lamentable want of talent in its editor, and that consequently the book will not sell."

"I am able to testify from my own experience," said Bro. Gilkes, "that the metropolitan Craft has long been desirous of some medium of communication, in the columns of which they might record doubts, suggestions, and improvements, as well as to institute inquiries respecting the legality of any circumstances which may arise to produce a diversity of opinion. Now I have no doubt but you are all acquainted with the virulent attack which was made by De Quincey in the *London Magazine*, and which he calls an Historico-Critical Inquiry into the Origin of the Rosicrucians and the Freemasons."

"He questions our existence before the seventeenth century," said the Vicar.

"He states that the fundamental maxim of the Order is, an entire equality of personal rights amongst the members in relation to their final objects," the D.P.G.M. added.

"He asserts that we exclude Jews, anti-

Christians, and Roman Catholics," said the Student.

"He contends that we make a pretension to mysteries that we do not possess," the Surgeon observed.

"And he boldly classes Masonry and Rosicrucianism under one and the same category," the Curate joined in; "and states that they have the same characteristics and the same end."

"His paper being thus full of errors, though arranged with consummate judgment," said the D.P.G.M., "it becomes a real calamity on the Craft that they do not possess some organ in which these gratuitous assertions might be grappled with and exposed; for a magazine article is of too shadowy and fleeting a nature to merit a reply through any other medium."

"I have no doubt," the Surgeon observed, "but the Fraternity would hail the appearance of such a periodical with joy and pleasure, and furnish a sufficiency of subscribers to make it a profitable speculation."

"If it be conducted on the above principles," the D.P.G.M. interposed; "for the magazine of the last century failed to interest the Craft, because of the paucity of Masonic articles, and the meagre information it conveyed on that interesting subject. Bro. Wellins Calcott told the brethren of his Lodge in Hereford, A.D. 1767, that if ever it should happen that our establishment should be held in little esteem by its members, it must be owing to the want of a due sense of the

excellence of its principles, and the salutary laws and social duties on which it is founded. And it ought to be the object of a magazine to impress those principles, laws, and duties, on the Fraternity at large."

"I know," said the Vicar, "that Masons will not, in the language of the sacred writings, spend their money for that which is not bread; or, in other words, if they pay for Masonry, they expect to have the value of their subscriptions in return. They have no taste for commonplace essays on indifferent subjects, or namby-pamby tales, in which Masonry has no concern. A magazine of this description is expected to contain a faithful record of passing events, together with instructive disquisitions on topics purely Masonic, as our R. W. Chief has so lucidly explained."

"Instead of which," the D.P.G.M. replied, "what is the fact? I'll tell you. The result of a calculation which I made some time ago, showed that the proportion of Masonic articles to those ordinary subjects during the first half year of the magazine's existence, was only ten per cent. ; and during the same period before it was discontinued, they had dwindled away to the insignificant proportion of five per cent. And what were the articles thus attempted to be crammed down the throats of the Craft to the exclusion of Masonry? While they consisted of accounts of Chelsea pensioners, universal fluids, Arabian horses, top-dressing turnips, improvement of grass-lands, effects of expansion, iron mask, epitaphs on dogs

and cats, courtship, the evil practices of millers, paper credit, and a thousand other subjects about which a majority of the subscribers felt no interest whatever; and the few who might entertain a predilection for general literature, would not think of referring to a Masonic magazine for dissertations on subjects which were treated more scientifically in the *London*, the *Universal*, the *Gentleman's*, and other periodicals, which had attained a much more extensive circulation."

"And even," I added, "the article headed 'The Freemason,' which was continued in several successive numbers, scarcely contained a single reference to any Masonic subject, but consisted of literary criticisms on the general topics of the day."

"It may therefore be justly concluded," said the Vicar, "that the editor of a Masonic magazine will never be able to create a successful speculation unless he have a competent staff of able Masonic writers; for selected, or even original, articles on indifferent and uninteresting subjects will sink any periodical that professes to be specifically devoted to some isolated section of society. A clerical journal confines itself to subjects relating to the Church; a medical serial to anatomy, physiology, and *materia medica*; and a law periodical to juridical subjects. In like manner, a Masonic monthly must be restricted to matters relating to the Lodge, or the chances are a hundred to one that it will never remunerate its proprietors."

"I think," said the Surgeon, addressing him-

self to Bro. Gilkes, "that you profess to give instruction in the military degrees."

"I do," Bro. Gilkes answered.

"Then will you be kind enough to explain," our host added, "what is the connecting-link between Freemasonry and Templary?"

"I cannot pretend to give a dogmatic decision on this subject," Bro. Gilkes replied, "because the Continental innovators, Ramsay, Hunde, and others, founded their system on the postulate that Freemasonry is a branch of Templary."

"The French Masons," the Skipper interposed, "have preserved or invented, in verification of this belief, that after the massacre of Molay, the Grand Master of the Templars, his nephew, the Count Beaujoy, erected a monument to his memory with the following inscription:—

J. B—M. B.
A.—DO.—N—I—J—C.
M. CCC XIV.
XI MARTIS;

which they interpret thus, as a decisive evidence of the connection between Freemasonry and Templary.

J	E.A.P. Word	Jacobus
B	F.C. Word	Burgundus
M }		Molai
B }	M.M. Word	Bustus
A }		Anno
DO }	Adonai	Domini
N—I }		Nostri
J }	Jehovah	Jesu
C }	Croisade	Christi
M }	One thousand	1314. Battle of Bannockburn
CCC }	Three hundred	won by the assistance of the
XIV }	Fourteen	Templars and the Masonic
XI }	Eleven	Order of H.R.D.M., estabd.
Martis }	March	11 March.

And they further say, that the Count [] with a few other brethren, afterwards escaped to Scotland and established Templary there under the designation of Rose Croix."

"However that may be," the Curate says, "Barruel was very positive on this point, then it must be remembered that he was a man of a credulous believer in all the calumnies which were circulated to the prejudice of the unfortunate Templars; who, he asserts, are the men whom the Masons glory in being descended from. Yes, he continues enthusiastically, 'and their descent is real. Their pretensions are not chimerical. Were they to deny it, we should compel them to recognise, as their progenitors, the whole of the Order, but that part only which ancient corruption produced an obstinate resistance against the altar and the throne.'"

"A similar idea," said the D.P.G.M., "has been taken up and promulgated by the author of the 'History of Freemasonry in Scotland,' published by Laurie; who favours his readers with the following detailed account: It may be interesting to some readers, and necessary for the satisfaction of others, to show in what manner the Knights Templars became depositories of the Mysteries. We have already seen that all the secret associations of the ancients flourished or originated in Syria and the adjacent countries. It was here that the Dionysian Mysteries and the Essenes arose. From this country came several branches of the trading associ-

of Masons which appeared in Europe during the dark ages; and we are assured, that notwithstanding the unfavourable condition of that province, there exists at this day, on Mount Libanus, one of these Syriac fraternities. As the Order of the Templars, therefore, was originally formed in Syria, and existed there for a considerable time, it would be no improbable supposition that they received their Masonic knowledge from the Lodges in that quarter. But we are fortunately in this case not left to conjecture; for we are expressly informed by a foreign author, who was well acquainted with the history and customs of Syria, that the Knights Templars were actually members of the Syriac fraternities."

"But instead of making Freemasonry a scion of Templary with Barruel," the Vicar observed, "the Knights are here said to derive their information from existing Masonic Lodges, and the same opinion has been promulgated in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.'"

"The general belief is, that the above theory is unsupported by any conclusive evidence," the Skipper interposed. "A French writer on the Temple says that after the death of Jacques Molay, the Scotch Templars were induced by the king, Robert Bruce, to apostatise and range themselves under his banners as members of a new Order instituted by that monarch, and based on the Order of the Temple; and he deduces the origin and spread of Masonry in Scotland from the above event."

"This," said the Vicar, "involves a difficult but very interesting question, as to the co-existence or consociality of Freemasonry and Templary."

"I have bestowed great attention to the presumed union between the old Templars and the ancient Freemasons," Bro. Gilkes continued, "and I feel convinced that there was no more connection between them than there is now between the Knights of the Garter and Freemasonry. The account we have of the 27,000 Masons in the Crusades is pure fiction. It originated in some of Ramsay's degrees, and he tried to deduce all Masonry from the Crusades; in fact, the degree of Kadosh was modelled on Ramsay's 'Chevalier Templier.'"

"The degree of Kadosh," said the Skipper, "has received considerable alteration within the present century; the Lecture has been modified, and the story of the 27,000 Masons fighting under the banner of the Cross is given up as untenable."

"The historical facts appear to be these," the Vicar observed. "When the Templars were put down by Philip, King of France, and Pope Clement, they were nearly extirpated throughout the greater part of the continent of Europe. Denys, King of Portugal, however, saved those in that country on the condition that he and his successors on the throne should be acknowledged their perpetual Grand Master; that the Order should cease to be a secret society; and that it should change its name to the modified title of

Knights of Christ. The truth is, that Denys admitted all the Templars in his kingdom to a new Order, differently constituted, that the ancient name of Templar might be wholly abrogated. In England and Ireland, as the *Consilia Magnæ Britannicæ* show, the Templars were put down, and compelled to enter the preceptories of their enemies, the Knights of St John, as paupers or dependants. In Scotland, King Edward, who had overrun the country at the time, attempted to dispose of the Knights in the same manner; but on summoning them to appear, only two of them came forward, and these were the Grand Preceptor, Walter de Clifton, and one of his officers; but as Bruce was advancing with his army to meet the English, no further proceedings were taken. And as the other Templars could neither go abroad nor take refuge in England, it is easy to conjecture that they joined the army of Bruce and supported his cause; and this is the more probable, because of the well-attested fact, that after the battle of Bannockburn Bruce granted a charter of lands to Walter de Clifton under the designation of Grand Master of the Templars."

The brethren then adjourned till the following day.





CHAPTER III.

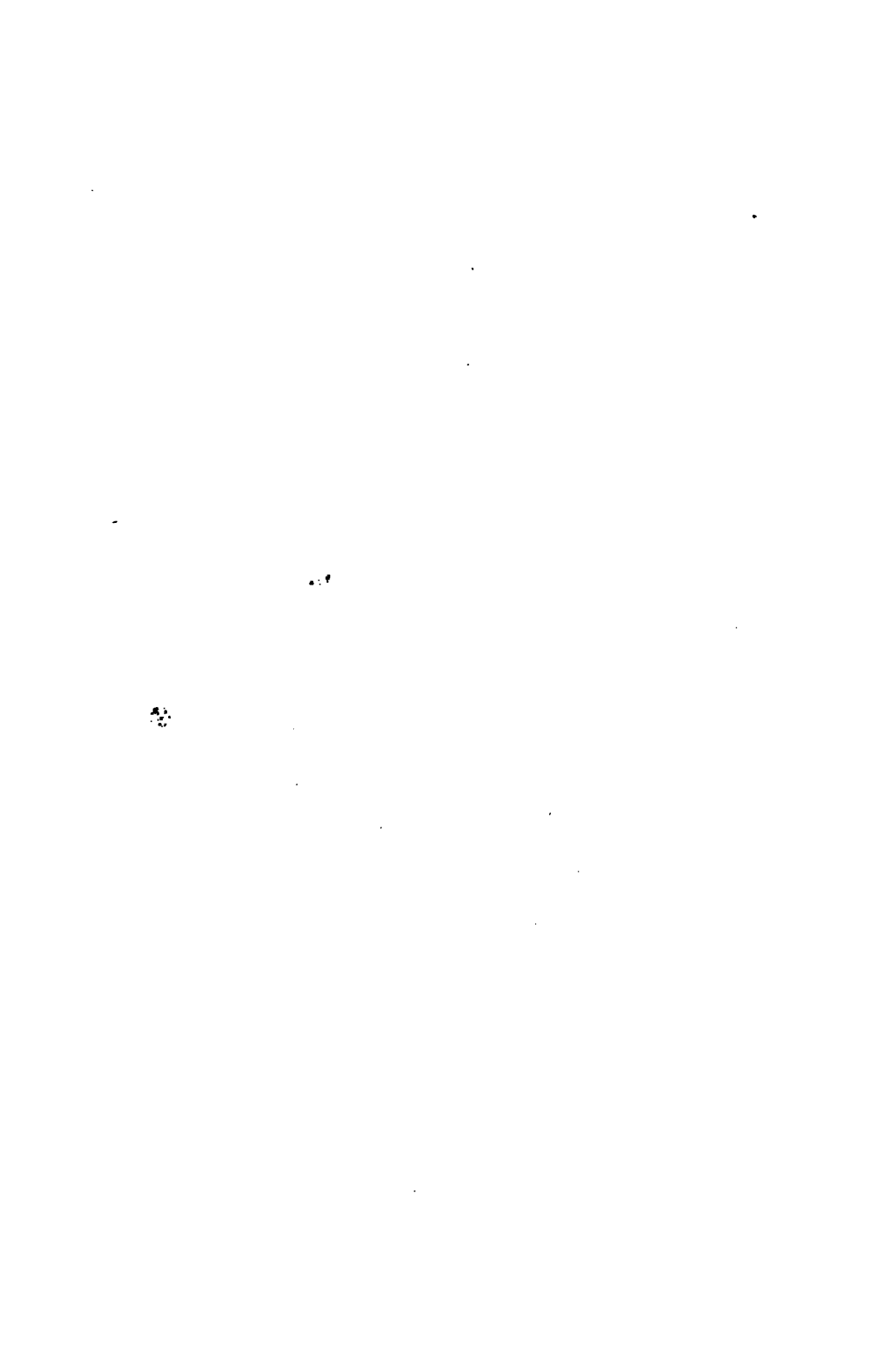
Wednesday.

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED.

The Cardinal Points.
The North.
Support of the Lodge.

Charge of Sun-Worship.
Birth of Light.
Free and Accepted.







CHAPTER III.

THE DISCUSSIONS ON WEDNESDAY EVENING.

“Religion is the only tie which can bind men; and where there is no religion, there can be no Masonry.”—*Locke.*

“Whate’er the order or the plan,
The parts will with the whole agree;
For, by a geometric man,
The work is done in symmetry.
From East to West, from North to South,
Far as the foaming billows roll;
Faith, Hope, and silver-braided Truth,
Shall stamp with worth the Mason’s soul.”
Bro. Richardson.

THE Surgeon began the conversation by observing, that “in the course of our disquisitions on the subject of Freemasonry, it has been treated as a Christian institution,—now I shall be glad to learn how an institution which confessedly originated with the Jews at the building of the Temple can be assimilated with Christianity, which was not promulgated till a thousand years after that event.”

“Why, the truth is,” Bro. Gilkes replied, suspending his fumigatory process, for he was deliberately smoking his pipe, as was his wont—“the truth is, I am much more conversant with the practice than with the theory of Masonry; and

therefore I cannot materially assist your inquiries on this point, except when you may have occasion to refer to the Lectures, either past or present."

"As, then, Bro. Gilkes declines giving an answer to your question," I said, "I will endeavour to do it myself. The reason why we esteem Freemasonry to be a Christian institution is this, because, in the first place, the Jewish religion was the type and forerunner of the Christian dispensation; and in the next, because the Lectures of Masonry are so full of Christian references, that if they were withdrawn, the blood, muscles, and vitality would be gone, and nothing would remain but a skeleton of dead, dry bones."

"You appeal to the Lectures," said the Surgeon, "to the Lectures then I will refer. And I will ask you, what idea does their description of the form and situation of the Lodge convey, but that it is a faithful transcript of the Tabernacle and Temple? And how is the ground made holy, except it derives its sanctity from Abraham, David, and Solomon, all of Hebrew race? In a word, wherever the Cardinal Points of the compass occur, they teach the same doctrine, and inculcate the same truth, viz., that Freemasonry is a Jewish institution."

"There we are at issue," I replied, "for I deny the inference. If the Cardinal Points, as they are referred to in the Lectures of Masonry, do not unequivocally and unmistakably enunciate the doctrines of Christianity, then I am willing to abandon the position and confess it to be untenable. And

though I do not rest my proofs solely on this ground, yet I will cheerfully undertake its defence on the strict interpretation of the Cardinal Points, and stand or fall by the result."

"I am contented to abide by the proposal," our host rejoined.

"Very well. In that case I shall proceed at once to state the premises, and leave the decision in the hands of the brethren now present. You will admit, I presume, that the Cardinal Points of the compass constitute an important Landmark, which, by its influence, pervades the whole system of Freemasonry."

"I admit the fact," said the Surgeon, without hesitation.

"And you will admit also, that the situation, support, form, and extent of the Lodge; the place of its chief officers, and of its lesser lights; are so thoroughly identified with these points, that the most trifling innovation might be attended with consequences which every good and worthy brother would deplore."

"I will not deny any of these data," replied the other; "because, although convinced that many ancient Landmarks of great importance have been already tampered with (not to say removed), yet I feel assured that a reference to the Cardinal Points could not be safely withdrawn."

"I am sorry to be under the necessity of testifying," Bro. Gilkes observed, "that our brother is in the main correct in his conjecture about the Landmarks. There existed in the old Lectures

many references to Christianity which are omitted in our present ritual. The penalty of the O.B., which is an undoubted Landmark, has been altered; the reference to the Senses omitted; the two St Johns banished; the Word reputed to be lost in the Third Degree is yet retained in the Craft Grand Lodge Certificate; and some other matters have undergone organic changes which it may be needless here to specify; but sure I am that a renunciation of the Cardinal Points, if such a process were possible, would be suicidal—not affecting a mere solitary item, but so many essential bearings of the institution which contain allusions to them either symbolical or direct, that the stability and well-being of the system would be endangered, if not destroyed.”

“Thus far, then, we are agreed,” I continued. “Now, you will not refuse to concede, that these references are more particularly addressed to the east, west, and south, as the points where the sun rises, sets, and gains its meridian; for as that luminary darts no rays from the northern hemisphere, our ancient brethren took little notice of the north in their disquisitions.”

“I shall readily grant this,” the Surgeon replied, “because I am not ignorant that in old times the north was esteemed a place of darkness, and called Cimmerian, from a country on the western coast of Italy, which was reputed to be so gloomy as to become a proverb expressive of extraordinary obscurity. It is thus alluded to by Homer:—

“ There in a lonely land and gloomy cells,
The dusky nation of Cimmeria dwells;
By light unvisited, or when displays
The sun his rising or his setting rays.
Unhappy race! whom endless night invades,
Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in shades.”

And therefore the poet, with great judgment, selected this region for the descent of his hero into hell.”

“ The French Masons,” said the Skipper, “ thus moralise on the sun: ‘ Le soleil est le père de la nature, il vivifie tout, rien ne fructifie qu’à la chaleur de ses rayons bienfaisans; la maçonnerie est la mère de toutes les vertus; le zèle qu’elle inspire vivifie toutes nos actions; nos sentimens qu’elle echauffe produisent les fruits de bienfaisance et de cordialité, dont chacun de nous s’applaudit. Le soleil éclaire à-la-fois tout l’orbe qu’il parcourt; rien n’échappe à l’éclat du jour que son flambeau répand sur tout ce qui existe: songeons donc à ne rien faire qui ne puisse soutenir cet éclat, qui ne puisse paroître au grand jour, nous serons hommes, maçons et vertueux. Which means ”——

“ Well, well, never mind,” the Surgeon exclaimed, with some degree of impatience; “ we all know what it means. I am anxious to hear in what manner our reverend brother will apply his premises.”

“ In the first place, then,” I replied, “ I shall offer for your consideration a few remarks on the form and situation of the Lodge. Its legitimate form is superficially a parallelogram or oblong square; but taken as a solid, it is described as a double

cube like the Jewish altar of incense, the length being equal to the sum of the breadth and height. Its situation is evinced by the following passage from a ritual that was used about the middle of the last century, and is still retained: 'A Lodge ought to be situated due east and west, because all churches, chapels, and places of divine worship are so placed.'

"Ay," said the Surgeon, "according to the definition you used to give before the Union; but I doubt whether it be orthodox according to the authority of the revised Lectures. And you will further observe, in contravention of the theory, that our churches do not stand due east and west, and many of them diverge so much from these quarters, that the four corners instead of the four sides face the Cardinal Points of the compass."

"This is quite true," the Vicar observed; "but the admitted fact cannot be used to vitiate the Masonic definition, because the reason of this deviation is to be attributed to a particular custom which was prevalent at the time our churches were built, of laying the foundation-stone at the north-east angle, and placing the chancel towards the rising sun."

"The angular position of some of our oldest churches," I remarked, "is evidently owing to the precession of the equinoxes."

"The reasons assigned in the Prestonian Lectures," said Bro. Gilkes, "for this disposition are, 1st, because the sun rises in the east, and spreads its divine influence to the west; 2d, because the

Gospel was first preached, and evangelical and moral knowledge disseminated, in the East, and propagated to the West; and 3d, because Moses was commanded by the Most High to erect a Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and place it due east and west, as a direction to the future situation of a more permanent House of God, which should hereafter be constructed by King Solomon in the Promised Land, and exceed all the buildings in the world for riches and glory."

"Does not this passage," our host inquired, "supposing it to be correct, defeat the hypothesis of a Christian interpretation?"

"By no means," I replied; "for it was this very disposition of the Lodge that drew from Mr Locke the following sound and appropriate observation: 'It may here suggest itself that Masons believe there were men in the world before Adam, which is indeed a mere conjecture. This opinion may be countenanced by some learned authors, but Masons comprehend the true meaning of the Order taking rise in the East and spreading to the West, without having recourse to the pre-Adamites. East and West are terms peculiar to the Society, and when masonically adopted are very intelligible, as they refer to certain forms and established customs among themselves. From the East it is well known that learning extended to the Western world, and gradually advanced into Europe. And the prophet Ezekiel says, "Behold the glory of the *God of Israel* came from the way of the East."'"

"Here, then, we are again at issue," said the

Surgeon, "for the reference is not to Christianity but to Judaism."

"Have you considered," I replied, "what is meant by the God of Israel? I appeal to the clergy now present to testify, whether the prophets, evangelists, and apostles, are not agreed, that the God of Israel, Jehovah, or the Lord of Hosts, is no other than the Messiah or Christ. This interpretation is confirmed by Clement of Rome, who was contemporary with the apostles; by Ambrose and Athanasius in the fourth century; in the Te Deum, the Nicene and Apostolic Creeds, the Articles and Liturgy of our Church, and by all our soundest commentators."

"Matthew Henry concurs in this interpretation," said the Student. "He says: This glory (*i.e.*, the glory of the God of Israel) came from the way of the East, and therefore he was brought to the gate that leads towards the East, to expect the appearance and approach of it. Christ's Star was seen in the East, and he is that other angel that ascends out of the East, for he is the Morning Star, he is the Sun of Righteousness. By which Star, according to Ignatius, God wrought three mysteries—viz., the Virginitv of Mary, the Birth and the Death of Christ. From the testimony of the Jewish prophet, we learn that Christ is emphatically *the man whose name is THE EAST*; for though the Hebrew word is translated in our version of the Bible, the Branch, yet, it signifies also the East. And Adam Clarke adds his testimony to the same effect. In his commentary on this pas-

sage he says: The glory of the God of Israel was the chariot of cherubim which he saw at the river Chebar. And this glory, coming from the East, is going to enter into the eastern gate of the Temple, and thence to shine out upon the whole earth. Is there not a mystery here? All knowledge, all religion, all arts and sciences, have travelled according to the course of the sun, from east to west. From that quarter the divine glory at first came; and thence the rays of divine light continue to diffuse themselves over the face of the earth. From thence came the Bible, and, through that, the New Covenant. From thence came the prophets, apostles, and the first missionaries that brought the knowledge of God to Europe, to the isles of the sea, and afterwards to these northern regions, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

"I thank you, Bro. —, for your illustration," I continued. "From these facts and statements we may fairly conclude—on the joint authority of the Primitive Fathers; the Bishops of our Church; the Rev. M. Henry, a Presbyterian divine; Dr A. Clarke, the Scriptural expositor of the Wesleyan Methodists; and Mr Locke, a learned and philosophical layman, who wrote, not only on the Human Understanding, but also on the Evidences of Christianity—that Speculative Masonry embodies within itself the genuine principles of Christianity."

"But what do our brethren of the United States say?" the Surgeon asked; and answering his own question, he continued, "Why, in a book which

fell into my hands only the other day, I find the following resolution passed unanimously by the Committee of an Anti-Masonic Convention holden in the city of Albany." (The Surgeon reads.) "Resolved that Freemasonry, instead of being the boasted handmaiden of religion, is its most dangerous foe; and that we view the impious personification of the Deity, and the irreverent introduction of the name of the blessed Saviour and the Holy Trinity in Masonic meetings and ceremonies with pain and abhorrence, and that we regard the unhallowed substitution of the profane orgies of Freemasonry for the Christian religion, as fraught with more danger to the peace of society and the truth of revelation, than open deism or avowed infidelity. Now, what do you say to that?"

"Why, I say, that although written and recorded by a knot of apostate Masons, it contains abundant evidence that the faith of Christ was embodied in the institution by the true and faithful brethren of the United States; for it shows that Freemasonry was considered to be the handmaiden of religion; that the name of Christ was used in the prayers, and the blessing of God solemnly and reverently invoked, as indeed it ought to be in every society of Christian men. For what is a Christian? Eusebius will tell you. A Christian is a man who, through the knowledge and doctrine of Christ, excelleth in modesty and righteousness, in patience of life and virtuous fortitude, and in a profession of sincere piety

towards God. In this the patriarchs were no less studious than we are. Now, I need not add that this definition of a Christian will also apply to the free and accepted Mason; for he is one who puts his trust in God as a firm foundation, on which he fears no danger"—

“Good!” interjected Bro. Gilkes, laying down his half-smoked pipe.

“He practises morality by the three theological and the four cardinal virtues, which naturally produce brotherly love, relief, and truth; and feels himself under the strongest obligation to pay that rational homage to the Deity which at once constitutes his duty and his happiness; for Freemasonry leads the contemplative brother to view with reverence and admiration the glorious works of the creation, and inspires him with the most exalted ideas of the perfections of the Divine Creator.”

“Excellent!” exclaimed Bro. Gilkes; “they are the very words of Preston.”

“You have omitted,” said the Vicar, “the strongest part of your proof from Eusebius; for he concludes, if I translate the passage correctly, that ‘the Noachidæ, who were the first-recorded Masons of antiquity, were well acquainted with the person and office of Jesus Christ.’ Now, as we of the Church of England believe, the Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind through Jesus Christ; and that by faith in whose coming as a propitiation for sin, Abra-

ham, Moses, David, Solomon, Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and all other holy men among the Jews, were, in reality, genuine Christians."

"This, then, is the result of an examination of the form and situation of the Lodge; and if we proceed to its supporters, the testimony will be equally strong"—

"But not convincing," the Surgeon interposed, "so far as I am concerned. Let us, however, hear what you have to say on this subject."

"The supporters of a Lodge," said Bro. Gilkes, "are figuratively said to be three Pillars, which are denominated Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty, and are thus described in our present Lectures. Wisdom to contrive, Strength to support, and Beauty to adorn. Wisdom to regulate our course in all lawful undertakings; Strength to support us under all our difficulties; and Beauty to adorn the inward man."

"Excuse me one moment," the Skipper said, "and I will give you an extract on this subject from one of the Continental catechisms.

"What does the word *Wisdom* which is written underneath the moon signify?

"It denotes the White matter which is a sign of purification.

"Explain the meaning of the word *Strength* which is written beneath the Blazing Star.

"The Black matter that indicates putrefaction.

"Explain the meaning of the word *Beauty* which is written under the Sun.

“ ‘The Red matter which is the source of all good.’

“ Here you will observe that White, Black, and Red are the three hermetic colours, and dedicated to the Moon, Saturn, and Mars.”

“ In English Masonry, however, these Pillars represent the Master and his Wardens,” Bro. Gilkes continued, “ and are hence placed in the east, west, and south. The W.M. represents the rising Sun, and, of course, occupies a place in the east, to set the men to work. The J.W. represents the Sun at its meridian; and he stands in the south to call the men to refreshment, and to see that they resume their labours in due time, that pleasure and profit may be the mutual result; and the S.W. occupies a position in the west, to mark the setting Sun, to dismiss the workmen, to pay their wages, and to close the Lodge.”

“ A very judicious regulation,” the Student observed; “ for it was the universal belief of all nations, from the earliest times, that the east was a prosperous and a fortunate quarter. The original seat of man's happiness was in the east; and when he forfeited his claim to it by disobedience, he was expelled through the western gate, and driven into a world of woe and bitterness. The Redeemer of mankind, who was promised to Adam at that trying period, ascended to heaven, after His crucifixion without the western gate of Jerusalem, towards the east, and at the last day He will undoubtedly appear amidst the clouds in the same quarter, to judge the quick and dead.”

Bro. Gilkes proceeded to say—and he was listened to with attention—“The supporters of the Lodge are more distinctly explained in a catechism which was used by some of our London Lodges before the Union; and with your permission I will repeat the extract verbatim.”

“By all means,” the Surgeon replied; “let all your evidence be produced, although I have no faith in the result.”

Bro. Gilkes went on with the extract thus:—

“At your entrance into the Lodge, what was the first grand object that met your view?”

“The glorious Sun emerging from darkness, rising in the east to open the day, and diffusing light, life, and sustenance to all mankind.

“Through what medium did you perceive this glorious luminary?”

“Through the medium of the R. W. Master, when placed in the east to open the Lodge, and diffusing light, knowledge, and instruction to the brethren.

“What is the next principal object that struck your attention?”

“The Sun in its meridian splendour at high twelve, when its vertical rays are most powerful and the cool south the most pleasant.

“Through what medium did you see this manifestation?”

“Through the medium of the Junior Warden placed in the south, inviting the brethren at high twelve to rest and regale themselves, returning in

due time to their labours, that profit as well as pleasure may be the result.

“And what was the third and last object of your view ?

“The Sun setting in the west, and inviting all nature to repose.

“Through what medium did this manifestation display itself ?

“Through the medium of the Senior Warden in the west, who closes the Lodge by command of the R. W. Master, and renders to every brother the just reward of his merit. And from hence we draw this demonstrative conclusion, that from the eye of a contemplative Mason the beauties of the starry firmament of heaven are never obscured.”

“I am old enough to remember,” said the Vicar, smiling, “an observation of the notorious Tom Paine, the author of the ‘Rights of Man,’ in which he treats the Masonic references to the Sun thus—‘The argument in regard to the Druidical character of Freemasonry,’ he says, ‘is founded chiefly on the fact that the sun is a Masonic emblem ; that frequent references are made to it in the rites and ceremonies of the Lodge ; that Masonic edifices are always erected due east and west ; and that the words of the formularies—as the sun rises in the east to open and adorn the day, so does the Master stand in the east to open and adorn his Lodge, &c.—convey the same allusion.’”

“It is an extraordinary coincidence,” the Curate observed, “but Plutarch asserts it as an undoubted

fact, that Numa built a temple in an orbicular form for the preservation of the sacred fire, intending by the fashion of the edifice to shadow out, not so much the earth, or in other words *Vesta*, as the whole universe, in the centre of which the Pythagoreans placed fire, which they called *Vesta* and *Unity*. The Persians worshipped the circumference, referring, I suppose, to the apparent course of the sun, for the real circumference is far beyond the human comprehension. And, he adds, that the sun, under the symbol of a point within a circle, was the great object of worship amongst the Dionysian artificers who built the Temple of Solomon."

"I can see nothing extraordinary in the building of a circular temple at Rome," said the Surgeon; "but if the same thing had happened at Jerusalem, we might have been surprised; although it is evident to me that the mysteries of Masonry were unknown at Jerusalem till the Dionysiacs introduced them there; and it is the opinion of those who have given their undivided attention to the subject, that the ceremonies which they used were astronomical, mixed with the solar worship. It cannot be doubted but Solomon divested them of their evil tendency, and created a new legend, but the main object was astronomical. As the Jewish religion was minutely prescribed by God himself, Freemasonry, amongst the Jews, could not then be instituted for any religious purpose, although the ceremonial may have been so adapted as to suit both the Jewish and Gentile workmen;

and hence the Dionysian artists would thenceforth consider the sun merely as a stupendous work of the one uncreated God."

"A similar charge of Sun-worship," the Skipper remarked, "has been made against Freemasonry by an American brother, who resolves it into an adoration of the solar deity. Even our days of solemn festival, in his opinion, have the same reference. 'The birthdays of the two St Johns,' he says, 'were fixed by the framers of the Church ritual at the periods of the solstices. These of course were observed as festival days by the Druidical Masons; and as they were celebrated openly, with pompous processions, &c., it became necessary for them to use every precaution to prevent a discovery of the real cause of these demonstrations of joy. With this view, they appropriated the names of the feasts or festivals that had been assumed for them by the Roman Catholic Church. But while they ostensibly honoured the two St Johns, they were mentally paying homage to their favourite divinity—the Sun.'"

"I have seen the book; but the author is profoundly ignorant of the fact that the Sun of Righteousness is the luminary that Masonry delighteth to honour."

"That desperate infidel, Carlile," said the Rector, "has eagerly taken advantage of the sentiments of those brethren who, along with you, my dear sir, would exclude Christianity from the Order, because it affords him an opportunity of assimilating Masonry with the solar worship. He

says that Hutchinson in his 'Spirit of Masonry' has made some slight allusions to sun-worship as a part of the ancient mysteries ; but he did not rightly understand it, nor has he made any application of the fact to Masonry. That the Masons are ignorant of the symbolical meaning of the sun in their Lodges is proved by their own publications. The Scottish Masons swore to admit no Jews, Turks, infidels, madmen, or women ; and at one time there was an exception to Papists. Much of the same spirit existed in the English Lodges during the last century, but it has gradually worn away, and well-known deists and atheists are now members of different Lodges. In an old Irish book called the 'Pocket Companion' for the Irish Masons, he continues, who were chiefly, if not entirely, Roman Catholics, I find the following liberal sentiment: 'Religious disputes are never suffered in the Lodge ; for, as Masons, we only pursue the universal religion or the religion of nature. This is the cement which unites men of the most different principles in one sacred band, and brings together those who were the most distant from one another.' This, he concludes, indicates Sun-worship or atheism."

"Our Transatlantic brethren," the Skipper observed, "refer to the Sun of Righteousness thus: 'The sprig of cassia is emblematical of that immortal part of man which never dies ; and when the cold winter of death shall have passed away, and the bright summer's morn of the resurrection appear, the Sun of Righteousness

shall descend, and commission His angels to collect our ransomed dust; then, if we are found worthy, we shall enter, by means of His Password, into His celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the universe presides, where we shall see the King in the beauty of holiness, and enter with Him into a boundless eternity.' ”

“All this amounts to nothing,” our host observed triumphantly; “so come, charge your glasses, for the bottles linger, and we'll drink success to our worthy brother, who, I think, has undertaken a task that is above his strength. I cannot divine how he will apply the passages which Bro. Gilkes has recited in support of his hypothesis, for I am ignorant of any authorities which lend the slightest sanction to it.”

“Then I will try to enlighten you. A Mason's Lodge, situated and supported as we have just seen, is a microcosm or picture of the universe upheld by an Omnipresent Deity. This has never been denied. And it is equally clear that Jehovah, or Christ, or the Name or Word of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, is denominated in various places of Scripture, the Sun, the Rising Sun, the Sun of Righteousness, the Day Spring or East, the Star, Light, the Everlasting Light, the great source and fountain of Light, and other glorious appellations which convey a similar meaning.”

“The Christian Church,” said the Rector, “is represented by our Grand Patron St John as a woman clothed with the sun, or, in other words,

as Bishop Newton explains the passage, invested with the rays of Jesus Christ the Sun of Righteousness, having the moon, *i.e.*, the Jewish religion, under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, an emblem of her being under the light and guidance of the twelve apostles. Here the Jewish religion is aptly compared to the moon, because its light is not its own, but furnished by the Christian religion, to which it relates, and wherein its types are accomplished.”

“All this is too evident to be denied,” the Vicar remarked; “and hence the period of Christ’s birth was anciently denominated the Festival of Lights, because the Redeemer, the Light of all lights, the true and only Light, then came into the world to work out human redemption. And hence we still burn a Christmas-candle, and throw on the fire a Yule-log, as types of the great Light, Jesus Christ, who is represented by St Paul as the brightness of His Father’s glory, or the Shekinah; and by our Grand Master, Solomon, as the splendour of the Eternal Light. St John the Evangelist terms Him the Light that shineth in darkness, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world; and in another place, the Birth of Light, which is symbolised in Masonry by a darkened equilateral triangle within a circle, with flames issuing from the centre, and penetrating the three sides of the triangle through and beyond the circumference of the circle.”

“This was certainly the belief of our ancient brethren,” said the D.P.G.M.; “and I have heard

my friend Hutchinson say more than once, and he has repeated it in his book, that the East was an expression used by the old Masons to imply the Redeemer of mankind; and it is therefore with great propriety that we commence our progress in that quarter, if we profess, as Masons, that we are a society of the servants of that Divinity (Christ) whose abode is with the Father co-eternal in the centre of the heavens."

"There are some of our brethren," the Vicar observed, "who entertain a belief that Freemasonry is *exclusively* a Christian institution, and that the story of Hiram was fabricated about the fifth or sixth century as a representation of the death of Christ; and there are several circumstances which appear to favour the hypothesis, although I myself have no faith in it. At all events, Freemasonry has undergone so many alterations for the purpose of adapting it to the Christian religion, that the original sacred history has probably been long buried in oblivion. If this conjecture, however, be tenable, there cannot be a doubt but the death of H. A. B. was specifically intended to commemorate the crucifixion of Christ, and that THE BUILDER WHO WAS SMITTEN was Jesus. And the hypothesis receives further confirmation from the singular construction of the words and passwords of the three degrees. Thus,"—(and he placed them on paper.)

"These words," he continued, "being written in Hebrew, must be read from right to left; and then the explanation will stand thus, premising that

E. A. F. WORD. and in Strength.	F. C. PASSWORD. in plenty	F. C. WORD. he shall establish it in the Lord	M. M. PASSWORD. shall retrieve the possession ;	M. M. WORD. The Son of the Widow (Virgin) who is smitten
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the *Smitten Son of the Widow* evidently refers to T.G.A.O.T.U. :—

“The Son of the Widow (Virgin) who is smitten shall retrieve the possession ; and establish it in the Lord in plenty and in Strength.”

“The theory is erroneous,” Bro. Gilkes replied ; “for whatever reference the legend may have, it is of a date anterior to the crucifixion of Christ.”

“Did you ever remark the extraordinary and cabalistical reference of the Hebrew names of the supporters of the Lodge when used acrostically ?” the Vicar inquired.

“I have never heard the subject even alluded to,” Bro. Gilkes answered.

“Then listen,” the Vicar continued. “The Hebrew word for the first is דבר, DABAR, λογος, or Divine Wisdom ; for the second, עז, Az, Strength ; and for the third, גמר, GOMER, Beauty or Perfection ; the initials

being נָעַר, God. I scarcely know whether this coincidence be accidental, or whether it was intended by those who first introduced Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty as supporters of the Lodge."

"Under these circumstances, then," I ventured to remark, "it will not be unreasonable to conclude, that those worthy brethren who drew up our ancient ritual, being undoubtedly Christian men, intended to perpetuate in the minds of the Craft throughout all time a lively recollection in the ordinances of Freemasonry of the Advent of Christ, heralded by a blazing star and the *vox clamantis* of John the Baptist, as a Light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as the glory of His people Israel."

"There is great ingenuity in this conclusion," the D.P.G.M. rejoined; "for I happen to know that when the reigning Emperors of China and Hindostan sent messengers, who travelled from east to west for the purpose of inquiring into the birth of the expected Deliverer, they saw the star while they were yet in the east, and followed its direction till it rested over the city of David."

"And for this, the ancient Christians," said the Rector, "who were generally spread over the western parts of the world, turned towards the east during prayer, thus lifting up their minds to the source and Creator of Light; for as the sun rises in the east, so did Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. And I am inclined to adopt our worthy brother's opinion, that Freemasonry has a decided tendency towards the Christian religion."

“ I tell you it has *not*,” the Surgeon snappishly replied ; for his temper was rather uncertain, and a contradiction of his opinions nettled him exceedingly.—“ I tell you it has *not*. It was instituted by Jews, and must therefore be a Jewish institution.”

“ Then how does it happen,” I asked, “ if it has always been considered anti-Christian, that



we find it laid down as an axiom at the very outset of the most ancient Gothic Charges with which we are acquainted, that Masonry is of that religion in which all men will ultimately agree, and why it has been thus delineated in a well-known Masonic Symbol? ”

“I doubt,” said our host, “your authority for such an appropriation of this symbol.”

“You have no valid reason for your doubts; for it is a veritable symbol of the Trinity in Unity.”

“There can be no doubt of that,” the Surgeon returned; “but what can there be in common with Freemasonry and the Trinity in Unity?”

“A great deal, if you place any reliance on the testimony of our brethren three hundred years ago; for in a ritual or Examination which we know was used in the Lodges during the sixteenth century, the following passage occurs:—

“‘How many Lights are there in Masonry?”

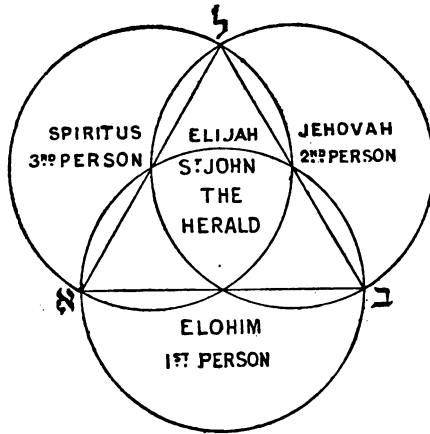
“‘Three; a right east, west, and south.

“‘What do they represent?”

“‘THE THREE PERSONS, FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST.’”

“How remarkable is the agreement,” said the Vicar, “in this respect, between the inhabitants of the East and West, although practising different religions, and governed by customs and habits of thinking wide as the poles asunder! Baldæus says that the most ancient inhabitants of Hindostan described the ascent to heaven to be accessible by *seven ladders* leading to a spacious plain, in the middle of which is placed a square table, and on it a silver bell surrounded with nine precious stones, and the rose called *Tamara Pua*, in the centre of which is *the Triangle* of Quivelinga, which they say is the residence of the Deity. The seven ladders are commensurate with the seven

days of the Masonic and Christian week ; and the Lectures particularly specify that our ancient brethren worked six days and rested on the seventh ; and also to the seven liberal sciences of Masonry. The mystic Triangle refers to the sacred triad of the Hindoos, which they worshipped in the character of the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer of the universe. And if the Royal Arch be, as it is authoritatively declared in our Articles of Union, a completion of the Third Degree, then its



signature (the double triangle) plainly indicates a full acquiescence in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and the divine and human natures of Jesus Christ."

"I am old enough to remember," said the D.P.G.M., "that Captain George Smith, P.G.M. for Kent, and J. Grand Warden, adopted this figure (*see above*) as the signature of his book on

the 'Use and Abuse of Freemasonry,' which has long been out of print, and inserted it in the title-page."

"The explanation of the third step of the Winding Staircase," Bro. Gilkes observed, "was, in one of the rituals of the last century, the three Persons in the Holy Trinity."

"Are you quite sure," our host asked, doubtfully, "that such was the doctrine taught in the Lectures at the period referred to? I know that our ancient brethren were charged with an addiction to the faculty of *Abzac*, a belief in the supreme virtues of the philosopher's stone, and other puerilities of the like nature,—but I did not think they introduced the Trinity into their system."

"You call them puerilities," I said; "perhaps you would find another name for them if you were acquainted with the abstruse signification which they were intended to convey."

"I know little about them," the Surgeon replied; "they are too contemptible for me to waste a moment on their consideration. I am not indeed ignorant that the Rosicrucian extravagances of Valentine Andrea, who claimed for his system a heavenly origin, a magic influence, a wonderful secret, and unbounded excellence, prevailed amongst our ancient brethren. The universal medicine, and the philosopher's stone, were gravely held forth as being attainable, and the Lodges rang with dissertations on these subjects. Many learned brethren were favourers of this opinion; amongst the rest, the name of Elias Ashmole must not be

forgotten, for Thory asserts that Elias Ashmole, 'qui en était membre, et les autres frères de la Rose-Croix, rectifient les formules de réception de ces ouvriers, qui ne consistaient qu'en quelques cérémonies à peu près semblables à celles usitées parmi tous les gens de metier, et leur substituent un mode d'initiation qu'ils calquent, en partie, sur les anciens mystères de l'Egypte et de la Grèce.' I know this, and it is the extent of my information on such an unprofitable subject."

"Then I'll enlighten you, my dear sir, as you profess to be perfectly ignorant of the grounds of their belief; and you must not forget, that the wisest and best men of those times, princes, peers, and prelates, were addicted to the practices you condemn."

"And you might have added," said the D.P.G.M., "that, from the influence of these superstitious feelings, every crowned head in Europe had an astrologer in his pay as a confidential officer of his court."

"We find it expressed in an old formula used by the Theosophic Masons of the Continent," I continued, "bearing date 1650, 'that the only noble and spiritual philosopher's stone possessed by all the holy men from Adam downwards, whereby they both were good and did good, was Jesus Christ.'"

"Do you mean to say, then, that, in the opinion of our ancient brethren, the true philosopher's stone was no other than the Redeemer of mankind?"

"You have heard an extract from a genuine lec-

ture of the seventeenth century, and on its authority I do make the above assertion, and in this interpretation both the prophets and apostles concur. The word used by Zechariah, which is translated the Branch, is *Tsemach*, and both St Luke and St Paul use its Greek equivalent, *Ανατολε*, *Oriens*, for the same Divine Being in His glorious mantle of everlasting light."

"My dear sir," said our host triumphantly, "you are steering wide of the mark when you endeavour to prove Masonic Christianity from the gospel."

"Well, then, we will adduce our proofs from Masonry itself. The following passages, extracted from a manuscript on Freemasonry written about the time of its re-establishment in this country by Athelstan during the tenth century, will serve to confirm these grave and solemn facts. Speaking of Euclid, the writer says, '*Through high grace of Christ, he taught the seven sciences, declaring that the Mason who uses them rightly shall win his way to heaven.*' And again, '*Every brother is recommended to attend his Lodge, Church, and Sacrament; and when engaged in the latter ordinance, to hold up both his hands and pray in these words—Jesus Lord, welcome to us in the form of bread; shield us by Thy power and grace from sin and shame, and grant us endless bliss. Amen, amen, so mote it be.*' In another Masonic manuscript of the fifteenth century, we find a similar passage, viz., '*The might of the Father of kings, with the wisdom of His glorious Son, through the grace and goodness of the Holy Ghost, these be three persons*

in one Godhead,' &c. Again, in a paper of Charges written in the seventeenth century, and preserved in the archives of the Lodge of Antiquity, it is directed, first, that 'Masons shall be true men to God and *the Holy Church*, and use no error or heresy by their understanding or by men's teaching.' I may now fairly ask whether these testimonies are satisfactory in the solution of your inquiry?"

"I think," the Vicar replied, "that if our friend and brother be not satisfied with these unquestionable proofs that our ancient brethren identified the Order with Christianity, he is scarcely open to conviction."

The Surgeon hesitated. He was not convinced, and being determined to continue the argument, he expressed some doubts respecting the authenticity of the vouchers.

"The manuscripts are in the British Museum," I said, "and contain internal evidence, not merely in the dates assigned to each of them, but in the character of the writing, about which we cannot easily commit an error, that they are of the period specified."

"It may be so," our host replied, "but one swallow does not make a summer; nor will one solitary document in half-a-dozen centuries suffice to establish a doubtful and controverted fact. You must adduce a corresponding evidence running consecutively from Athelstan to our own times, before I can yield absolute credence to the doctrine."

"Nay," said the Student; "now you are exceeding the limits of fair argument. I myself enter-

tain some doubts on this subject, which I should not be sorry to have removed, although they may be based on grounds differing from your own; but I do not expect impossibilities."

"The dearth of Masonic documents in the middle ages," the D.P.G.M. observed, "is unfavourable to the inquiry, and therefore the demand of our host cannot be literally complied with; but the building of churches and cathedrals by the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, under the supervision of the bishops and dignitaries of the Church, in which the most holy place, the choir, or, as it was then termed, the Church Triumphant, stands in the east; the portico, or narthex for the penitents, in the west; and the nave, or Church Militant, in the centre, as the medium of communication between the one and the other; at least shows that the tendency of the Order was, at that period, exclusively Christian, for none, I believe, were concerned in these works but Christian Masons."

"You have used the words 'free and accepted,'" said the Surgeon; "can you tell me the origin of the phrase?"

"I will endeavour to do so," the D.P.G.M. replied, "although the opinions on this subject are conflicting, but fortunately they are not very difficult to reconcile. The building of Solomon's Temple has been named by some as the period of its origin,—others date its establishment at its restoration by Zerubbabel,—at the Crusades,—in the mediæval ages, when the operative Masons travelled through Christian countries under the Papal pro-

tection to build churches and monasteries. Some affirm that Freemasonry was a secondary order of chivalry, and derive its origin from the mysterious practices of the Knights Templars, although I cannot find any resemblance between them. If there be a similarity, it is quite clear that the parent institution was Freemasonry, and not Templary."

"If I recollect rightly," said the Curate, "Chambers describes Freemasonry as 'a very ancient society or body of men, which were so named from some extraordinary knowledge of masonry or building. They were very considerable for numbers and character, consisting principally of persons of merit and consideration. Some,' he continues, 'have traced its origin to the year 676, when the manufacture of glass was introduced. It is certain that after this time many of the public buildings in England in the Gothic style were erected by companies of men who called themselves Free and Accepted Masons, because they were at liberty to work and be accepted in any part of the kingdom.'"

"Thory in his *Acta Latomorum*," the Skipper added, "maintains the opinion that the first degree of Masonry was invented in the year 1646, and that, to distinguish it from the society of working or operative Masons, it was then called for the first time FREE Masonry. And in a German publication it is asserted, that the title of Free and Accepted Masons was conferred upon the Order in the seventeenth century. Thory agrees with this view, and has therefore published

Beyerle's translation in the second volume of the *Acta Latomorum*. The passage referred to is thus expressed: 'Ils entrèrent tous dans la confrérie, et se firent appeler *Free and Accepted Masons*, prenant d'ailleurs toutes ses marques extérieures. *Free*, en français, libre, franc, est le titre que prend en Angleterre tout membre d'un de ces corps; le droit en lui-même s'appelle *Freedom*, Franchise; les confrères s'appellent *Freemen*: *accepted*, accepté, signifie ici que cette société particulière avait été incorporée aux Maçons et c'est ainsi que le hasard fit naître cette dénomination de Franc-Maçon qui, dans la suite, devint si fameuse; il est cependant possible qu'on ait fait quelque allusion à l'édification de la maison de Salomon; allégorie favorite à laquelle on était accoutumé.'

"None of these opinions," the Vicar replied, "are sustainable, for they are all capable of an easy refutation. A simple passage in the Lectures which were used before the union freely and gracefully decides the question. Bro. Gilkes will save me the trouble of repeating it."

"With all my heart," Bro. Gilkes responded. "The Masons who were chosen by King Solomon to build the Temple were declared FREE, and exempted from the payment of all imposts, duties, and taxes, for them and their descendants. They were also invested with the high privilege of bearing arms. And after the destruction of this Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, the posterity of these Masons were carried into captivity, where

they remained for seventy years, until at length Cyrus graciously permitted them to rebuild the Temple, and liberated the captives for that especial purpose. It is from this epoch that we bear the name of Free and Accepted Masons.' ”

“ This assertion is doubtless correct,” said the D.P.G.M., “ because it is consonant with our sacred writings, which avouch it as an indisputable and historical fact, that the Masons who built the latter edifice were declared *Free*, and exempted from taxation.”

After this explanation, I renewed the former subject by a reference to the Charter of Colne, when the Surgeon interrupted me by saying, with a sneer, “ Ah! the Charter of Colne! If such be your authorities, the argument may be profitably suspended, for I have heard you confess that you thought it a spurious document. So fill your glasses, brethren dear, and we will wish our friend a better subject of discussion when next we meet.”

“ Do not be over-hasty,” said the Vicar; “ I surmise that our worthy brother’s arguments are not exhausted, even if we reject the Charter of Colne.”

“ So far from it,” I replied, “ that the evidences strengthen as we approach a more amply-recorded period. But you will first allow me to remark, that it was not my intention to impose the Charter of Colne upon you as an authentic document of the period indicated by its date, viz., A.D. 1535, because I esteem it to

be a forgery of nearly two centuries later, or about the time of the revival of Masonry in the eighteenth century. I merely wished to show that Masonry was esteemed by the authors of this document, who were very likely some of the revivalists themselves, as a Christian institution. Passing that over, I may thank you for wishing me another subject of discussion, but a better one I cannot have, and I am so anxious to make a convert of you, that I hope and trust the friends around us will allow me to proceed."

"Oh," said the Surgeon, "proceed, proceed, by all means, if you think you can make anything of it, which I very greatly doubt."

"I *do* think so," I replied, "and will therefore pass on to a period when the records are numerous and indisputable, and do not admit of question. From these authentic sources, including every Masonic formula that has ever been used in this or any other country, at any period of time, I shall be able, with the kind assistance of Bro. Gilkes, to produce a series of extracts explanatory of our frequent references to the Cardinal Points of the compass, which will prove, I trust, to the satisfaction of every candid inquirer, that they all unite their testimony to evince that Freemasonry is a pure Christian institution, and has been applied in all ages, down to a very recent period, to Christian purposes only. I am anxious to effect this, because I think that if Freemasonry be not pre-eminently Christian, it is a disgrace to the country, and

ought to be abandoned, and its elements scattered to the four winds of heaven."

"Such an investigation," said the Rector, "will be peculiarly interesting in many points of view, particularly to gentlemen of our profession; for, to say the truth, I sometimes entertain serious doubts respecting the propriety of clergymen practising Freemasonry."

"The impropriety is imaginary," our host observed, "even though it be a Jewish, and not a Christian institution; and I defy any person whatever to produce a menstruum which shall be effectual to transmute the former into the latter."

"We shall see," I replied. "The first extract I shall use, for I will take them in chronological order, is from the commencement of an old Masonic manuscript written before the Reformation, as follows: 'There be three Persons in one Godhead, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; may they be with us at our beginning, and give us grace so to govern us here in this mortal life, that we may come to His kingdom that never shall have an end.' And the manuscript concludes with these expressive words, 'These charges that we have now rehearsed to you, and all other that belong to Masons, ye shall keep, so help you God and your *Halidom*, and by this Book unto your power. Amen.' Now I need not tell you, that the *Halidom* means the Mother of Jesus Christ, who, under the Roman Catholic system of religion which then prevailed, was considered to be as holy, if not holier, than the Son; and, there-

fore, the adjuration runs in the name of God and the Blessed Virgin."

"May I be allowed to inquire," said the Surgeon, "where you have found this precious manuscript?"

"It is deposited in the British Museum, but a copy of it was inserted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June 1815, where you may find it."

The Surgeon filled his glass, drank it off, and passed the decanter, but answered not a word; and I proceeded to say that the third ancient Charge, "*concerning Lodges*," was originally expressed in these words, and altered, by what authority I know not, at the union in 1813: "A Lodge is a place where Masons meet to work in. Hence a duly-organised body of Masons is called a Lodge, *just as the word 'Church' is expressive both of the congregation and the place of worship.*"

"And what does this extract prove?" our host inquired, confidently. "It mentions a Church indeed, without deciding whether it be Jewish, Christian, or heathen; and probably indicating either or all of them."

"The fair presumption, however, is," the D.P.G.M. observed, "that the Christian Church is here alluded to, as the Charges were drawn up by Christians; and if any other Church were intended, the adjective would doubtless have been used."

"After all," our host hastily returned, "it is but a presumption, and presumptions are not

proofs. You have referred to the Cardinal Points, and I am sure they are destructive of your theory. They imply universality, and by Christianising Freemasonry, you destroy its universality, and make it sectarian. The explanation which our Lectures give of the extent of the Lodge is decidedly adverse to your favourite hypothesis, and I hold it to be morally impossible to reconcile the one with the other."

"Nay," I replied, "if you intend to open the question of universality, it will be necessary to adjourn the discussion to our next meeting, as that subject is too intricate and extensive to be examined at this late hour; for it will occupy some considerable time to go through the proposed rituals in order, and they will suffer no diminution by being deferred till to-morrow. I will therefore take the liberty of asking, what time is it?"

"Time enough to be honest," said the Vicar, "as we used to say in the Lodge of Fortitude, many years ago."

"High twelve," said the D.P.G.M.

"Rather say, Low twelve," Bro. Gilkes added.

"Indeed! then it is time for all honest Masons to be in their beds; and if you will all consent to dine with me to-morrow, we will resume the subject."

This proposal being accepted, we exchanged the right point of a Mason, and took our leave.



CHAPTER IV.

Thursday.

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED.

Universality.

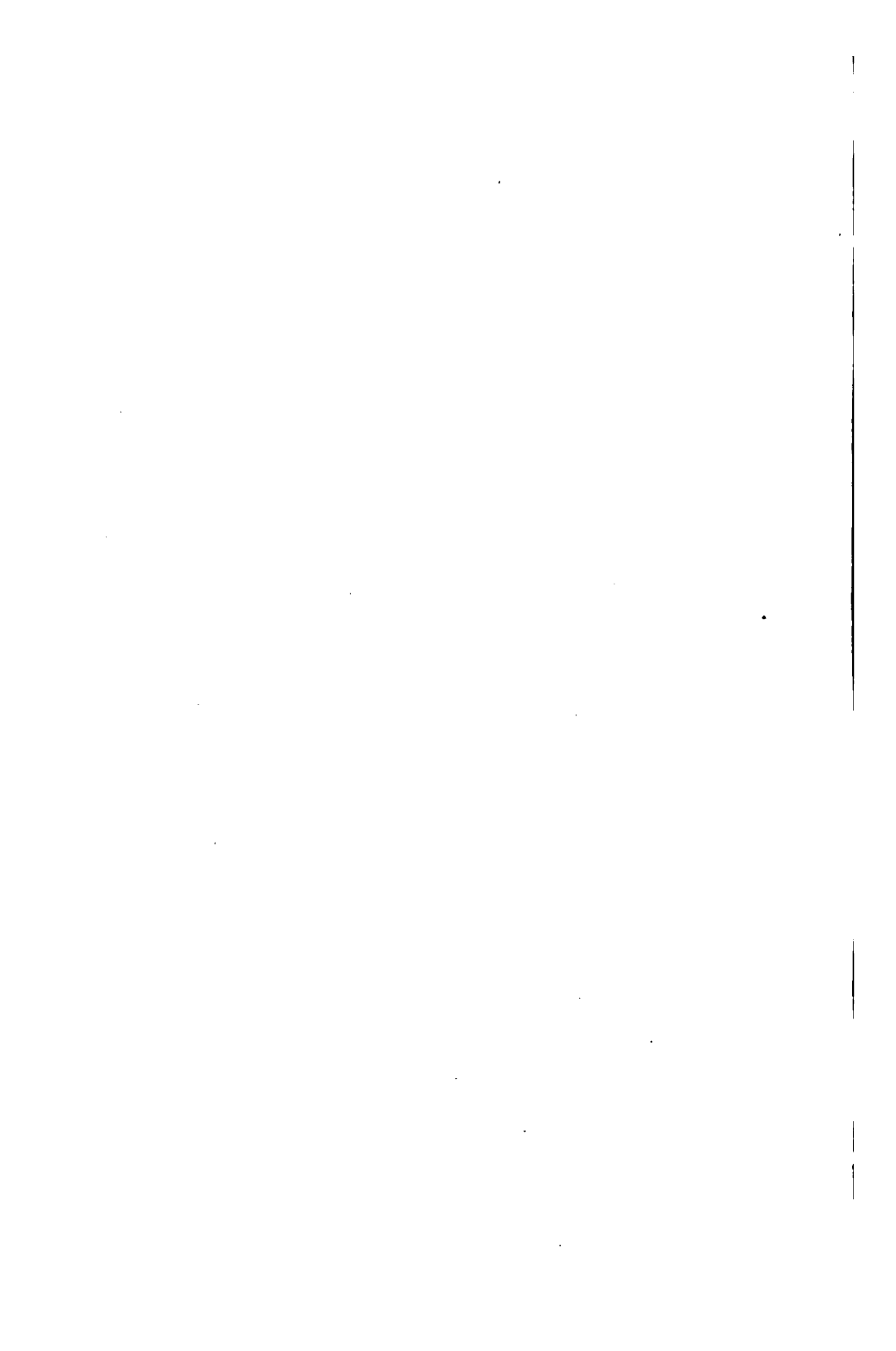
Extent of the Lodge.

Freemasonry an open Institution.

Whether it be Sectarian.

*Ground and Covering of the
Lodge.*







CHAPTER IV.

THE DISCUSSIONS ON THURSDAY EVENING.

“Behold the novice! ask him—In whom he puts his trust? Ah, this is a solemn and searching interrogation! It is a moment when the thoughts of man glance through the universe. His mind, it may be, wanders from star to star, and from world to world. ‘In whom do I put my trust?’ Neither the sun, nor the moon—the starry canopy of heaven, nor the blooming vales of the green earth—neither sea nor land—men nor angels—claim his adoration; but his eye rests upon the great White Throne, and, with the faith of ages clustering round his soul, the exclamation goes forth, *IN GOD.*”—*Bro. Lawson, U.S.*

“In the early part of the thirteenth century, certain immunities were conceded to the Colleges of Masons by the Holy See, such as forming themselves into small and migratory societies under the government of a Master of the Craft, with the privilege of taking apprentices; who, after a due initiation, became Free and Accepted Masons.”—*Sir Christopher Wren.*

THE dinner in Banter Gate, at my residence, being ended, the wine and dessert placed on the table, and the servants having withdrawn, Bro. Gilkes filled his pipe, and after a few preliminary puffs to ascertain that it was effectually lighted, he said, “I have considered the subject proposed for this evening’s discussion in all its bearings, and I think the universality of Masonry is incontrovertible. I am indeed certain that such is the opinion of the most learned and eminent of our brethren in town, and I

cannot call to my recollection that I ever heard a doubt expressed respecting the infallibility of the doctrine."

"I am an old Mason," said the D.P.G.M., "and have had some experience in the practical working of Craft Masonry, and I agree with Bro. Gilkes, that I never heard that its universality had been called in question."

The Vicar added, that he was not sufficiently versed in the scientific principles of the Order to disentangle the various and intricate points that are involved in the inquiry, and that he felt no little curiosity to see in what manner the difficulty could be obviated. And the company agreed that it would be an arduous task.

"The sole difficulty," I replied, "lies in the arrangement—the result, in my mind, is clear and unquestionable. But first fill your glasses to the King and the Craft, and, under such auspices, I may perhaps find courage to proceed. I take my stand on this proposition: Freemasonry, as an isolated society, is not universal; and can only acquire that attribute by being intimately connected or blended with some other institution which is undeniably universal. And, to establish the hypothesis, we will endeavour to ascertain what assistance we can derive from a consideration of the extent, ground, and covering of the Lodge."

"You will find them all against you," said the Surgeon. "They will dismember your theory, whatever it may be, and scatter the fragments to the four winds of heaven."

“I think so too,” Bro. Gilkes added, shaking his head. “The universality of Masonry cannot be doubted, and it is too firmly established in the minds of men to be easily rooted up.”

“We shall see. The first mention that I find of the extent of the Lodge is in the Examination of Desaguliers, where it is explained in this simple manner; and the formula is pretty nearly the same in all succeeding rituals, although at present, as Bro. Gilkes will tell you, it is more extensively applied:—

“ ‘What is the form of the Lodge?

“ ‘A long square.

“ ‘How long?

“ ‘From east to west.

“ ‘How broad?

“ ‘Between the north and the south.

“ ‘How high?

“ ‘Inches, feet, and yards innumerable, as high as the heavens.

“ ‘How deep?

“ ‘To the centre of the earth.’

“But it assigns no reason why it is said to be of this immeasurable extent. In a succeeding formula, it is thus stated:—

“ ‘Of what form?

“ ‘Parallelogram.

“ ‘How long?

“ ‘From east to west.

“ ‘How broad?

“ ‘Between north and south.

“ ‘How deep?

“ ‘ From the surface of the earth to the centre.

“ ‘ How high ?

“ ‘ Even as high as the heavens.’

“ And then comes the reason. ‘ Why is it said that a Mason’s Lodge is of this vast extent ?

“ ‘ Not only to show the universality of the science, but that a Mason’s charity should know no bounds but those of prudence.’ ”

“ Is not this evidence decidedly against you ? ” the Vicar asked, aside.

“ Give me time,” I replied. “ Bro. Gilkes will tell you better than I can what the Prestonian Lectures say.”

“ They are rather more explicit,” said Bro. Gilkes ; “ for Bro. Preston briefly, but clearly, explains the above references to the Cardinal Points by saying that they demonstrate, ‘ not only the universality of Masonry, but also the unbounded influence of its excellent rules and regulations.’ But it will only be fair to add, that this definition was rejected by Hemming and his associates, who preferred retaining the form prescribed by Bro. Dunckerley.”

“ I am afraid,” said the Vicar, “ our host is engaging in an attempt that is utterly hopeless.”

“ Oh ! ” exclaimed the Student, “ he is undertaking an impossibility.”

“ I believe,” the D.P.G.M. added, addressing himself to me, “ you had better give it up, my dear sir ; you will make nothing of it. I do not understand how you can invalidate the evidence of the Lectures, and they assert the universality of

Masonry so very explicitly, that you cannot overturn it, without endangering the whole system."

"Let me only have fair play," I replied, "and I will try to convert you to my opinion. At the worst, I can but fail. I will state my reasons calmly and without offence, and when my arguments are exhausted, I will leave the decision to your own judgment, although I perceive that it will not be altogether unbiassed; and if you are not convinced, why, happy man be his dole!"

"It will be a waste of time," said one and all.

"Well," I replied, "I am not disconcerted by your pre-judgment, because I have an unshaken faith in the strength and validity of my proposition; and, it appears to me, that you have taken the universality of Masonry for granted, without any consideration of the grounds on which your opinions ought to have been formed. But you will recollect that it is a point of justice as well as wisdom to hear both sides of a question before you decide on its merits."

The D.P.G.M. interrupted me by ejaculating, "Both sides! Why, I have been a Mason forty years, and I never heard that there were two sides to this question."

"Nor I! nor I!" they all echoed.

"Then you hear it now for the first time. Not that I entertain any doubts about the actual universality, but I demur to the manner in which it is usually applied. And, therefore, I trust you will not deny me the privilege of stating my convictions on a subject which you have pronounced

to be of paramount importance to the very existence of the Order."

"Let him go on; let him go on," said the Surgeon. "Our visitor, by his superior knowledge of the Lectures, will demolish such an absurd proposition without the slightest difficulty."

"Well, then, *vogue le galère*," I exclaimed; "we will rush at once *in medias res*, by returning to the definitions just given of the extent of the Lodge."

"I believe these definitions have been correctly quoted," the Surgeon admitted; "but I confess I do not understand how you can possibly apply them in support of a sectarian theory; for not only is the universality roundly proclaimed, but it is further corroborated and strengthened by a plain affirmation of unbounded influence. You have defeated yourself, my good friend."

"I think not; for I can scarcely believe that the terms in which the extent of the Lodge is described do actually convey the idea of universality, which is an attribute that can only be ascribed to absolute perfection. Now, to answer this condition, the Lodge ought to be in the form of a circle, square, or equilateral triangle, which are the only perfect figures we are acquainted with, as is explicitly asserted in our Fellowcraft's Lecture; and it is in none of these forms. And you will further observe, that the description is not *from* east to west, and *from* north to south, but from east to west, and *between* the north and south—which constitutes an essential difference. I admit

that, to a certain extent, the Lodge is a microcosm ; but an oblong or rectangular figure cannot, by any possibility, include all the localities or dwellings of man which are spread over the face of the whole earth. Its depth and height, from the centre to the atmospheric heavens, contribute nothing to the idea of universality ; and the space on the surface is circumscribed by our definition within certain limits, and that which is limited is not universal."

"This is a novel method of explaining the extent of the Lodge," the Surgeon demurred, "and will scarcely be allowed to pass unquestioned by our best authorities. At least, I for one repudiate it, and pronounce it to be heterodox."

"Well, then," I resumed, "if we change the argument from a physical to a moral universality, it will be clear that such an attribute cannot exist unless it be modelled on a reference to Christianity, which is admittedly a universal religion, extending throughout all ages from the fall of man to the end of time ; spreading, and to spread over the whole face of the globe, and unaffected by the infinite diversities of creeds and points of faith which have divided and subdivided it into sects and parties in all ages of the Church."

"Here, then," the Surgeon objected, "you admit the validity of the charge so frequently urged against the Order, that as we acknowledge no existing Christian creed or profession as the moving principle of our organisation, we cannot be a society of Christians."

"I admit that the accusation is popular with

cowans and anti-Masons," I answered, "but deny that it has any foundation in fact. Supposing Freemasonry be not, as you are inclined to believe, a Christian institution, does it necessarily follow that its members are not Christians?"

"The consequence is an absurdity," said the D.P.G.M.; "you might as well contend, that because the bar, the stage, or the senate, are not, strictly speaking, religious institutions, the members thereof are not Christians."

"It is true," I added, "that, as a society, we adopt the creed of no particular Church, although during the last century the Book of Common Prayer formed an indispensable appendage to the furniture of our Lodges; yet no one who is acquainted with our forms and disquisitions can doubt our attachment to the great leading principles of Christianity. If, as a body, we professed a predilection for the creeds or tenets of the Greek or Latin Church, or the Churches of England or Geneva, or any particular class of dissenters from them all, we might, by a trifling stretch of credulity, be pronounced *sectarian*; although even in this case the term would be misapplied, for the Church of Christ being represented in different countries by different establishments suited to the genius and disposition of the people, can no more affect the universality of Christianity than the unity of our noble Order can be affected or neutralised by the number of independent Grand Lodges that are distributed throughout the world. Freemasonry, however, professes an adherence to

the Church of the first-born, or the universal Christians, whose names are written in heaven as denizens of a better country."

"There is much ingenuity and truth in this argument," said the Vicar, "and I wonder it never occurred to me before. For it is evident that every individual Mason in existence belongs to some particular branch Church; and in this country a vast majority of the brethren are members of the Church of England, although our lists include Roman Catholics, Dissenters, and some few Jews; for there is no valid reason for closing the doors of a Lodge against an Israelite whose moral character is irreproachable, while those of a Christian Church are open to him, if he chooses to enter. Every Hebrew Mason is a Christian in his heart, otherwise he would never be seen either in the one or the other. For these reasons, it may be probable that Freemasonry was originally pronounced universal, as typified in the extent of the Lodge."

"I do not agree with you," the D.P.G.M. hastened to reply. "Your concession strikes at the very root of Masonic universality, and makes it dependent on collateral circumstances, when it ought to stand simply on its own individual merits."

"I humbly conceive," I replied, "that Freemasonry cannot maintain the attribute of universality on its own unaided merits; nor is it necessary that it should do so, because it is not a quality essential to its construction."

“ I think it is,” the Surgeon explained.

“ So do I,” Bro. Gilkes rejoined.

“ I have never heard the subject discussed in any of our Lodges,” said the Skipper.

“ I am aware that there is much misapprehension on the subject,” I continued, “ and particularly amongst the English Craft; and I will therefore, with your permission, examine the grounds on which it rests. And first, you will observe that our ancient brethren never dreamt of claiming universality for an institution which cannot attain such a distinction without extraneous aid.”

“ How will you prove your assertion?” the Student asked.

“ By the fact that no reference to it is to be found in the ancient Charges, or in any of the Examinations which were in use at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Charges assert the *antiquity* of Freemasonry *from the beginning of time*, but are silent respecting its *universality*. It was a figment introduced into the Lectures by Bro. Dunckerley, and from the prodigious influence that he had established in the Craft by his talents and position as a near relative of the reigning family, it became incorporated into the system, and was adopted by his cotemporaries without question or inquiry.”

“ Are you quite certain of the accuracy of this statement?” the Rector inquired.

“ Nonsense!” the Surgeon exclaimed at the same time; “ the claim is as old as the days of Solomon!”

"You are mistaken," I said, "for it is not a century old. It is true, there may be a difference of opinion whether I shall be able to substantiate my views, but the principle itself is sound, and cannot be vitiated."

"Well, prove it, prove it," he replied; "in an argument like this, assertions must not be admitted unless they are supported by positive and unquestionable proofs."

"I am fully prepared to prove it. The doctrine, as we have already had occasion to remark, is based on a misinterpretation of the extent of the Lodge, which is generally, but improperly, supposed to fill all space and extend through all extent; whereas, the real truth is, that although its length is described as boundless, being from east to west, its breadth is circumscribed within some undefined limits *between* the north and south, and its height bounded by the atmospheric heavens."¹

Here Bro. Gilkes laid down his pipe; and the brethren, seeing him about to speak, listened with attention. "In the Prestonian Lectures," he said, "the universality of Masonry is reasserted in the

¹ "Our translators, adopting the version of the LXX. and the Latin Vulgate, render the original Hebrew in Gen. i. 6, by the word *Firmament*. But in point of ideality, the Hebrew word has no relation to Firmness or Solidity. Its proper import is *Expanse*; and on physical principles, it is most accurately employed to designate the air or the atmosphere. Hence, when God is said to bestow upon it the name of *Heavens*, we must obviously, by the word *Heavens*, in connection, either expressed or implied, with the physically descriptive term *Expanse*, understand not the *Universal Material Heavens* mentioned in the first verse of the above chapter, but only the *Air* or the *Atmospheric Heavens*."—(Faber, *Many Mansions*, p. 154.)

words, 'unbounded influence of its rules and regulations.' I admit that this form of expression is more modestly stated in our present Lectures, for Hemming and Shadbolt, in some few instances, found it expedient to reject the definitions of Preston, and revert to those of Dunckerley. It is here said that the reason why a Freemason's Lodge is represented to be of such a vast extent is to indicate the universality of the science, and that a Mason's charity should know no bounds but those of prudence."

"You have stated this matter correctly," I replied; "and therefore, in order to facilitate the discussion, we will examine the leading principles of the inquiry, and endeavour to ascertain the accurate signification of the words *universal* and *universality*. On this point Dr Johnson will be our best authority. Let us, then, hear how he defines the word." Reaching down his dictionary, I read the explanation: "UNIVERSAL, general, extending to all. UNIVERSALITY, not particularity; generality; extension to the whole.' And he illustrates the definition thus: 'Divine laws are universal.—*White*. No (human) subject can be of universal concern.—*Reynolds*. An universality of sin.—*South*. The universality of the Deluge.—*Woodward*.'¹ Here, then, we have sufficient data for our argument. Sin is avowedly

¹ It gives me great pleasure to find that a learned brother, under the *nom de plume* of "Sit Lux," has taken a similar view of this intricate subject in the London *Freemason's Magazine* for 1858, p. 545. As these papers, however, were written some years previously, I shall not suppress any portion of the arguments, although by a coincidence which is by no means improbable, they may have been adduced in proof of the same fact by another writer.

universal, because it is recorded in the Word of God that all mankind are sinners. The Deluge was universal, because the whole globe was submerged. Divine laws are of unbounded influence, because they apply to all mankind, whether they believe in their efficacy or not. But no other subject of mere human institution or invention can be of universal concern, because human ingenuity is incapable of constructing any species of moral machinery which will be universal in its operation and suitable to all ranks and descriptions of men. It is as impracticable as the discovery of a menstruum for the transmutation of metals or the perpetual motion. These are axioms which can neither be controverted nor denied."

"And what use do you propose to make of them?" the Surgeon inquired.

"Wait with patience," the D.P.G.M. replied, "and I think you will receive a satisfactory answer; for a new light is springing up in my mind, which convinces me that our host has some tenable grounds for his opinion."

"The case is certainly assuming a new aspect," said the Rector.

"If we refer to existing institutions," I continued, "the same result will be apparent. Was the patriarchal Church universal? It was not, for it was extinguished by the Mosaic dispensation. Was the Jewish Church universal? Certainly not, for it ceased when the sceptre departed from Judah. Is the Roman Catholic Church universal? By no means, for it had no existence before the

third century. Are the Lutheran or Calvinistic Churches universal? They only date from the sixteenth century. Is the Church of England universal? That cannot be, for it dates only from the same recent period. And the dissenting Protestant Churches are of still more recent establishment; and they each embrace but a certain portion of Christian believers. And as to Buddhism, Mohammedanism, &c., though they may be of more ancient date, yet they include only a limited part of the human race, and will be totally annihilated at the general development of Christianity, when the knowledge of Christ shall cover the earth as the waters cover the seas. All these institutions, like a Lodge of Masons, are open to the admission of proselytes; but that will not confer on any one of them the character of universality, unless there existed an absolute certainty that all mankind, without exception, would ultimately embrace that one. But we are quite sure that no individual Church will be so highly favoured. And therefore it follows, that they cannot have any separate and distinct claim to universality."

"This is an *argumentum ad absurdum*," said the Surgeon, "for how in the name of heaven can you apply it to Freemasonry?"

"Why, by including it in the same category."

"You will, however, admit, I should suppose, that Freemasonry is universal in principle, if not in fact."

“ I will make no such admission ; because, as an isolated institution, unconnected with a universal religion, it is neither. The Church of England, I grant you, is universal in principle, though not in fact ; for it is open to receive all mankind into its communion, if they be so disposed ; but we know that they are not, and never will be. And in like manner Freemasonry never did—it never will—it never can—embrace all mankind ; and, therefore, it fails to establish a separate and individual claim to universality ; and, indeed, our ancient brethren would have considered such a doctrine as a stumbling-block to the prosperity of the Craft.”

“ You forget or overlook the fact,” said the Surgeon, “ that our Lodges are open to all mankind, whether they be Christians, Jews, Turks, or infidels, without any distinction.”

“ It is undoubtedly true,” I replied, “ that our Lodges are open to all worthy and educated men—although, as you assert, not to all mankind without distinction ; but will they all enter and place themselves under the influence of its laws ? It is not to be expected. And further, the English Constitutions of Masonry have themselves raised an insurmountable barrier to its universality, either in principle or fact.”

“ Indeed,” said the Surgeon, incredulously, “ I was not aware of that ; and I should like to hear your authority for such a broad assertion.”

“ My authority is in the Constitutions themselves, which exclude atheists and irreligious men,

private soldiers, females, and every person who has not been taught to write."

"Rather a strong argument," the D.P.G.M. observed; "and it appears insuperable."

"Not at all, not at all," the Surgeon replied. "It does not affect the universality of Masonry in the slightest degree. Bro. Dunckerley was a perfect Mason; and even admitting that the Landmark was introduced by him, he had, doubtless, ample reasons for so doing; and those reasons, whatever they might be, are entitled to our respect. We are bound to receive the doctrine implicitly, as having been propounded by competent authority, and the result of an accurate knowledge of the true principles on which the Order is founded."

"I entertain the highest veneration for the memory of Bro. Dunckerley," I resumed, "yet I cannot but esteem the introduction of this novel claim an error in judgment, although it is probable he did not anticipate that it would ever attract the popularity and influence that it possesses at the present day."

"There is another consideration," said the D.P.G.M., "which ought not to be overlooked in this inquiry, and that is—while Christianity receives and courts the membership of all mankind, and every sex and age, Masonry courts none—proselytising is absolutely forbidden—and she rejects women and children, and all under the age of manhood, as well as the base-born; so that, in fact, she excludes at the least two-thirds of the

population of the world, while Christianity extends her arms to all, without money and without price."

"I have often been puzzled," said the Vicar, "to account for this claim of universality; because in all the Masonic works which I have read, the origin of the term *universal*, as applicable to Freemasonry, has not been satisfactorily traced. And the only authentic document which mentions it is the Ancient Charges, where it was originally stated that 'we, as Masons, are of the oldest Catholic religion above mentioned,'—the word *catholic* having been expunged at the union, on what authority I will not attempt to conjecture; but it is certain that the word *universal* was then, for the first time, substituted; which alteration has been the means of perplexing many of the brethren of modern days. I am ignorant of the motive for altering the verbiage of this clause, as well as for obliterating the following words, by which the paragraph was closed: 'This charge has been always strictly enjoined and observed, but especially ever since the Reformation in Britain, as the dissent or secession of these nations from the communion of Rome.'"

"It appears to me," said the Curate, "that at the period when these Charges were framed, the only points of religious difference intended to be reconciled by the principles of Masonry, and forbidden to be made the subjects of discussion and controversy in the Lodge, were *those which existed between the Roman and Protestant Churches*. Both are members of the Holy Catholic Church, which

acknowledges the Godhead to consist of the Father, of an infinite majesty; the honourable, true, and only Son; also the Holy Ghost the Comforter. And I further believe, that before the Reformation the Fraternity consisted solely of members of the Romish Church; and from very remote periods, they were the designers and builders of all the churches and monasteries, and other edifices of a sacred character, every one of which breathed a beautiful and expressive language of symbolism, illustrating the mysteries of the Divine Trinity and of our holy religion, veiled indeed from vulgar eyes, and intelligible only to the initiated. Can it be reasonably supposed that any other than the professors of Christianity could be united for carrying out such sublime objects?"

"But it must be remembered," the Rector observed, "that Masonry enjoins both a civil and a religious duty—the latter of which had for its test that Catholic religion in which all men agree, or, in other words, the religion of the Bible; and consequently those who rejected the Holy Scriptures were esteemed inadmissible within its pale, along with the atheist or irreligious libertine. The civil test is unreserved loyalty to the throne and constitution; and, without recognising either Whig or Tory, Conservative or Liberal, closes its doors against the agitating demagogue; and not only enjoins due allegiance to the sovereign of our native land, but also obedience to the laws of any state which may become the place of our temporary residence, and afford us its protection."

“ I have been reading,” said the Vicar, “ Dean Vincent’s Sermons on the Creed, and he has an observation which appears to be applicable to the present subject. He says, that ‘ whenever we go contrary to a stream which has run in one channel for seventeen centuries, we ought to doubt our own opinions, and at least treat the general and concurring testimony of mankind with respect.’ ”

“ It is a sound axiom,” I replied, “ and condemnatory of the attempt to confer on Freemasonry in the nineteenth century the attribute of universality, as distinct—I particularly press this proviso on your notice—as distinct from a profession of Christianity ; for it was unknown, not merely for seventeen, but for upwards of seven-and-twenty centuries, supposing, as our medical friend and brother seems to think, that it dates its origin no higher than the building of Solomon’s Temple ; and hence it becomes an assertion of private opinion, uncalled for, and without any legitimate authority.”

“ I am inclined to believe you are right, my dear sir,” said the D.P.G.M., “ for the Order possesses so many real excellencies, which require no proof, that it is rather injured than improved by any doubtful auxiliary assistance. Nor does it appear to me creditable to claim an attribute which admits of any doubt ; and as our ancient brethren are uniformly silent on the subject, it will be difficult to substantiate its truth ;—not silent, I believe, in blending Masonry with Chris-

tianity, for that is done in every old record which reached our times; but in clothing the Order with the raiment of universality, to which I am now somewhat inclined to suspect it possesses no legitimate pretensions, unless it derives them from being linked with a universal religion. Let Freemasonry be placed on its own independent basis, and assume no quality that it is not fairly entitled to, and it will secure for itself a greater degree of respect than it now possesses; because, in these enlightened days, no extravagant or unauthorised demands, whether in Masonry or any other science, will be suffered to pass unquestioned."

"You are right," I replied; "and you will further observe, that if universality be a genuine Landmark of the Order, it would certainly be found in some of our ancient records. But at the revival in 1717, Dr Anderson collected all the Charges, Regulations, Constitutions, and other documents, '*from the beginning of time,*' for his History of Masonry, and he has not dropped a single word or given a stray hint about its universality."

"I do not esteem this argument of the slightest importance," the Surgeon hastily observed. "Let us strike out into the most remote antiquity, even to the origin of Masonry, in the reign of him who built the Temple at Jerusalem, and examine what the architects of that celebrated edifice thought of it."

"That is easily done," I replied; "and the investigation will show that Freemasonry was not

considered universal in the time of Solomon, *because* it was restricted to those who were concerned in the undertaking. And in the days of St John the Evangelist, it was far from being universal, for our own Lectures distinctly pronounce it to be then in abeyance, and in danger of extinction. It was not universal at the re-establishment of Masonry in the city of York by Athelstan, because the English Masons had ceased to meet for many years, and most of their records were destroyed during the Danish ravages. The universality of Masonry is not mentioned in the Constitutions which were made during the several reigns of Edward III., Henry VI., and Charles II. When the House of Hanover succeeded to the throne of these realms, only four Lodges were found in the south of England—a miserable display of universality; and after they had formed themselves into a Grand Lodge, so far from claiming universality for the Order, they found it necessary to make a law that the privileges of Masonry *should no longer be* RESTRICTED to operative masons, but extend to men of various professions, provided they were regularly approved and initiated into the Order.”

“ It is rather remarkable,” said Bro. Gilkes, “ if such a striking and distinguished attribute as universality was really claimed and asserted at the revival of Masonry, that no reference whatever should have been made to it by Desaguliers and Anderson, and the laws of the Grand Lodge, on the one hand; or by Dean Swift, or Prichard, or Bentley, or Warren, or any of the host of char-

latans, on the other, who, between that period and 1770, when Dunckerley's version came into use, opposed, and pretended to publish, the secrets of Masonry. But, as it appears from our host's authorities, there is not a word about universality mentioned before the latter date."

"But is there not," said the Student—"I ask for information—is there not some notice in the old manuscript of Henry VI.'s time, of a universal language?"

"There is," I replied, "but it constitutes no proof that the brethren of that day believed in the absolute universality of Masonry. It refers, in fact, to the language of signs. Now a Masonic sign is known to Masons only, and consequently its operation is restricted to the few who have been initiated, while the bulk of mankind are ignorant of its meaning."

"I think," said the Surgeon, with that triumphant smile which every person who knew him will remember, "that there is a paragraph in Hutchinson's 'Spirit of Masonry,' in which he traces its progress through several nations of the earth in the most ancient times; and Preston refers to it in the following expressive words: 'Whoever acknowledges this *universality of Masonry* to be its highest glory, must admit,' &c. Now here we have the very proof you require."

"The proof!" I replied. "What proof? The objection is altogether inapplicable to the question at issue between us. Hutchinson refers it to the spurious Freemasonry, and that was confined

strictly to priests and hierophants, and distinguished men, and consequently not universally prevalent ; and besides—the observation is of no authority, because it was written after the time when Dunckerley had interpolated his views of Masonic universality into the Lectures ; and Hutchinson evidently concurred with that brother (for they were cotemporary) in propagating the doctrine ; but you will at the same time observe that *he uniformly links it with Christianity*, in the absence of which its claims to universality are nugatory and absurd.”

“ But,” said the Surgeon, eagerly, and with a little display of petulance, “ if your argument be sound, how can the influence of its laws and regulations be unbounded and without limits, as is plainly asserted in the Prestonian Lectures ? What do you say to that ? ”

“ Why, I say, that it is an evident misapplication of terms. For instance, if we take the Constitutions of any individual Grand Lodge, we shall find their influence bounded by the jurisdiction of the governing body, and of no authority beyond its limits. Even if, taken in its widest sense, we apply the meaning of the above expression to the ancient Charges, which are acknowledged by every Grand Lodge on the face of the earth, we are still unable to discover their unbounded influence over *all mankind*. In Great Britain, France, Germany, Sweden, and the United States, Freemasons’ Lodges are numerous ; and there are a few in the East and West Indies, and other detached colo-

nies ; but the aggregate number of Masons is little more than a unit in comparison with the adult population of the world ; and it may be safely assumed that 999 out of every 1000 of whom remain uninfluenced by the Charges and Constitutions of Masonry, whether local or general. Ergo, they do not possess an unbounded influence ; for universality is described by Vincent and other learned writers as *quod semper, quod ubique, et ab omnibus.*"

The company appearing satisfied with this conclusion, our excitable friend the Surgeon lost his temper, and boldly asserted that there are two qualities in Masonry which possess his hearty concurrence : the one, that Masonry is universal, and that the influence of its laws is unbounded ; and the other, that there is not a vestige of Christianity in the whole system. And he added, with considerable warmth, " You shall never persuade me into a contrary belief. So let us charge our glasses and change the subject."

" My dear brother," said the Student, " I grieve to hear you make such a humiliating confession. You cannot be ignorant of that well-known mathematical axiom, that the whole is greater than a part, but by your unbelief the maxim is reversed ; for, if I understand you rightly, you would make a part greater than the whole. The population of Masoury constitutes only a part, and never can, by any species of ratiocination, become equal to the whole. The conclusion, therefore, which has been drawn from these premises is inevitable."

The Rector concurred in this observation, and added, "Come, come, my friend, you are rather too hard upon our worthy host. You are committing a *reductio ad absurdum*. I have derived both entertainment and instruction from the discussion, and cannot believe but it must have had some influence in removing your preconceived objections, although you may be unwilling to confess it."

"If Freemasonry possessed the inherent qualities of poetry and music," said the Vicar, "it might claim some approximation to an unbounded influence; because these arts have actually existed in every age and amongst every people from the creation to our own times; and there is no nation, however savage and intractable, which does not possess an inherent taste for poetry and music. But to these natural influences over the minds of men, Freemasonry has not the most remote shadow of a claim. To a few of the initiated it possesses indescribable charms, but it is entirely void of influence over the cowan, the stranger, and the profane."

"It is perfectly true," the Curate observed, "that we live and act *in conspectu omnium*, but this does not constitute universality."

"Certainly not," the D.P.G.M. added; "for it can scarcely be denied that there are myriads of human beings who are ignorant of the existence of Freemasonry, and never heard its name; and amongst those to whom the designation is familiar, how few there are who court its acquaintance, or

trouble themselves about an investigation of its principles! The Charges and Constitutions doubtless possess an unbounded influence over the members of the Craft, but to the rest of the world they are a dead letter. This is undeniable. The profane know little and care less about the pretensions and pursuits of Freemasonry. It cannot, therefore, I am ready to admit, be, single-handed, a universal institution. What is your opinion *now*, Bro. Gilkes?"

The person appealed to knocked the ashes out of his pipe and refilled it, and when he had deliberately applied a flame to the bowl, he answered the question. "The argument is new to me, but it appears plausible; the question is, whether Masonry will be deprived of any of its enduring excellencies by raising a doubt respecting its universality."

"No, no," said the Vicar, "it is more likely to be injured by investing it with attributes which cannot be substantiated, and claiming qualities which will not bear the test of critical examination."

"I have long been satisfied," Bro. Gilkes added, "that Freemasonry can only secure the respect of the cowan and profane by taking its stand on its own inherent merits, which include innumerable graces and virtues that are alike unquestioned and unquestionable." And Bro. Gilkes threw himself back in his chair, and blew from his mouth a dense cloud of smoke.

"Surely," I continued, "if there be no mention of it in any Masonic document before the middle

of the eighteenth century; if it be omitted in all the Charges, Regulations, and Constitutions of the Order; if the old Examinations and Lectures are uniformly silent on the subject; if it be not an attribute essential to its construction; if the Craft be limited in its operation, and restricted to a comparatively small portion of mankind; if the established laws of Masonry actually exclude certain specified classes of persons from any share in its privileges; if its influence be bounded within the confines of its own narrow jurisdiction; and if Masonry counts only one in a thousand out of the general population of the world,—I think it will require no further proof to establish the hypothesis that, as an isolated institution, *it is not universal.*”

“The universality of Masonry,” the Rector observed, “as I gather from the discussion, applies rather to its extent than to its creed, and to its beneficence, which is freely extended to all mankind, after the necessities of its own members have been supplied; and in this respect it assimilates with Christianity, which enjoins us to do good unto all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. In the ancient Charge which has been already referred to, declaring that, as Masons, we are of the Catholic religion, it is also stated that Masonry embraces all nations, tongues, and languages; but not a word is said about creeds, and therefore it evidently applies to territorial extent. The principle of universality is exclusively Christian, and no other system that

ever existed in the world can justly claim the same distinguishing attribute."

"Your conclusion," I replied, "is perfectly obvious and correct. Nothing can be truly pronounced universal but our most holy religion. I need not say, in such a company as this, that the doctrine of salvation by the sufferings and death of Christ was preached to Adam at the Fall by God himself, or that it runs in a full and clear stream throughout the entire Scripture history, confirmed by the actual completion of the Atonement, which is of universal efficacy, and bequeathed as an everlasting legacy to all the sons and daughters of Adam. And at the time appointed, the universal spiritual reign of the Saviour will actually commence, and spread to the very ends of the earth; the house of Israel will be converted and restored; all nations will become Christian; and the Redeemer will then be in reality a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of God's chosen people."

"Supposing your argument to be sound," said the Surgeon, "have you ever considered the humiliating situation to which it would reduce our noble Order? The hypothesis, if it be correct, which you will give me leave to doubt, is not very complimentary to the Craft; for an adherence to Christianity would reduce it to a narrow-minded and sectarian institution, which every good Mason ought to discountenance and abjure."

"Sectarian!" I replied. "Why, compared with Christianity, not only Freemasonry, but

every other institution, whether embracing arts, sciences, laws, or religion, is sectarian. Divorced from Christianity, Freemasonry would be circumscribed within very narrow limits indeed. If it be desirous of substantiating a claim to universality, it can only be effected by an alliance with our holy religion. CHRISTIANITY ALONE IS UNIVERSAL. Before its powerful and unbounded influence all created things must ultimately succumb. Nations will be weighed in the balances; societies will be dissolved; institutions rent asunder; bodies politic reduced to individuals; and nothing will run parallel with Christianity but that one great Christian and Masonic virtue CHARITY or BROTHERLY LOVE. This will accompany its dignified progress through time, and dwell with it for ever in eternity, when the angel shall declare that time shall be no more."

"I think, brethren, it may be fairly conceded," said the Vicar, "that our host, to my utter astonishment, I confess, has fully established his proposition that Masonry can have no pretensions to universality but what it derives from the Christian religion, which alone is of universal application."

"Indeed," the Surgeon replied with a sneer. "And you think this may be added to the obligations which Freemasonry owes to our host's specious reasoning. Are you aware that he entertains doubts respecting the authenticity of some of our most cherished traditions? He questions the truth of our legend of the Third Degree; he

would modernise the Royal Arch; convert Masonry into a Christian institution; and, to crown all, he would nullify its claims to universality. But I would not have you to be too hasty in your conclusion. The connection between **Masonry** and Christianity requires more proof than has been hitherto adduced; and unless that point be satisfactorily substantiated, the conclusion predicated by our reverend brother the Vicar is not legitimate, and I demur to it."

"As you have addressed your last observation personally to me," said the Vicar, "I will furnish you with a sufficient answer to your demand in the definitions of the holy ground and covering of the Lodge. The former is consecrated by the offering of Isaac on Mount Moriah, which is an acknowledged type of the Atonement of Christ on the Cross; and was thus prominently introduced into Freemasonry to express the opinion which our reformers of the eighteenth century entertained of its ultimate object and end. Even Dr Hemming, in his version of the Lectures, has retained the passage; I suppose because it is expressive of the view which Christian Masons ought to take of the true design of the institution. And it is scarcely credible that any professing Masons of the present day should hold opinions which are so much at variance with the orthodox application of this striking and distinguished type. The reference of the covering of the Lodge to Christianity is indisputable. The old Examinations describe it as a cloudy canopy, or the clouds of heaven; and

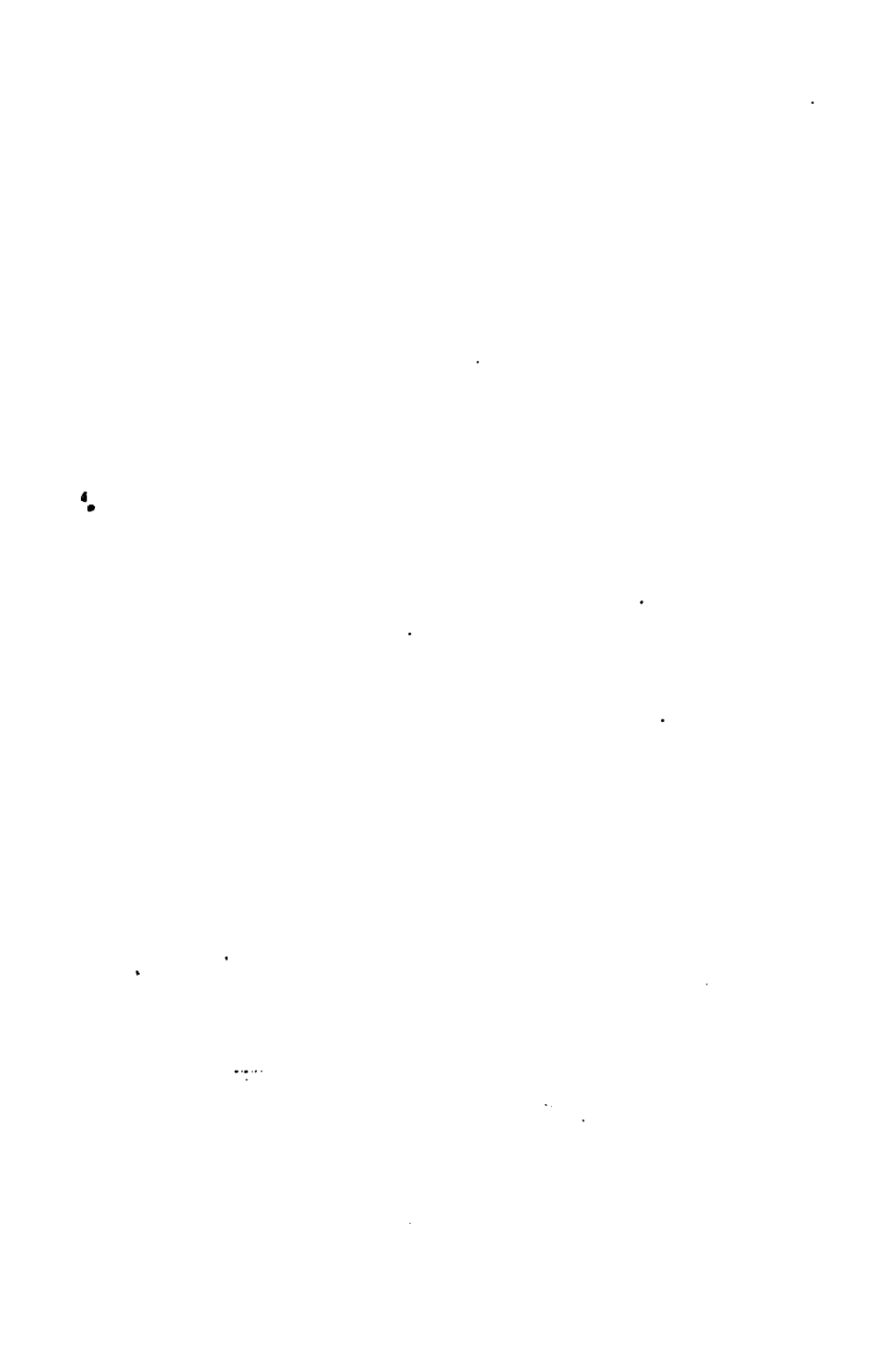
it alludes to that emphatic passage of Scripture which describes the awful day of retribution when the Son of man shall come in the clouds and gather together all mankind in the valley of Jehoshaphat. In a succeeding ritual, it is mentioned as a celestial canopy sprinkled with golden stars. Subsequently, it was altered to the beautiful cloud and spangled canopy of heaven, and that the Deity (Jehovah or Christ) stretched forth the heavens as a canopy, and crowned His holy temple with stars as with a diadem."

"I once heard it given," said the Skipper, "in a Lodge at New York in this form. The Lodge has a cloudy canopy, a starry-decked heaven, where all good Masons hope at last to arrive by the aid of the Theological Ladder which Jacob in his vision saw reaching from earth to heaven."

"I thank my reverend friend for his appropriate definitions," I replied, "for they are apposite and incontrovertible; and we will now proceed to a reconsideration of the Cardinal Points as they apply to the progress of a travelling Mason; for it strikes me that the discussion will conduct us to the same result, and afford an additional proof of the connection between Freemasonry and Christianity."

"It is too late in the evening," said the D.P.G.M., "to commence a fresh subject, and it would be better to defer it to another day."

"Be it so," the Rector replied. "You dine with me to-morrow."





CHAPTER V.

Friday.

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED.

The Travelling Mason.

The Sacred Name.

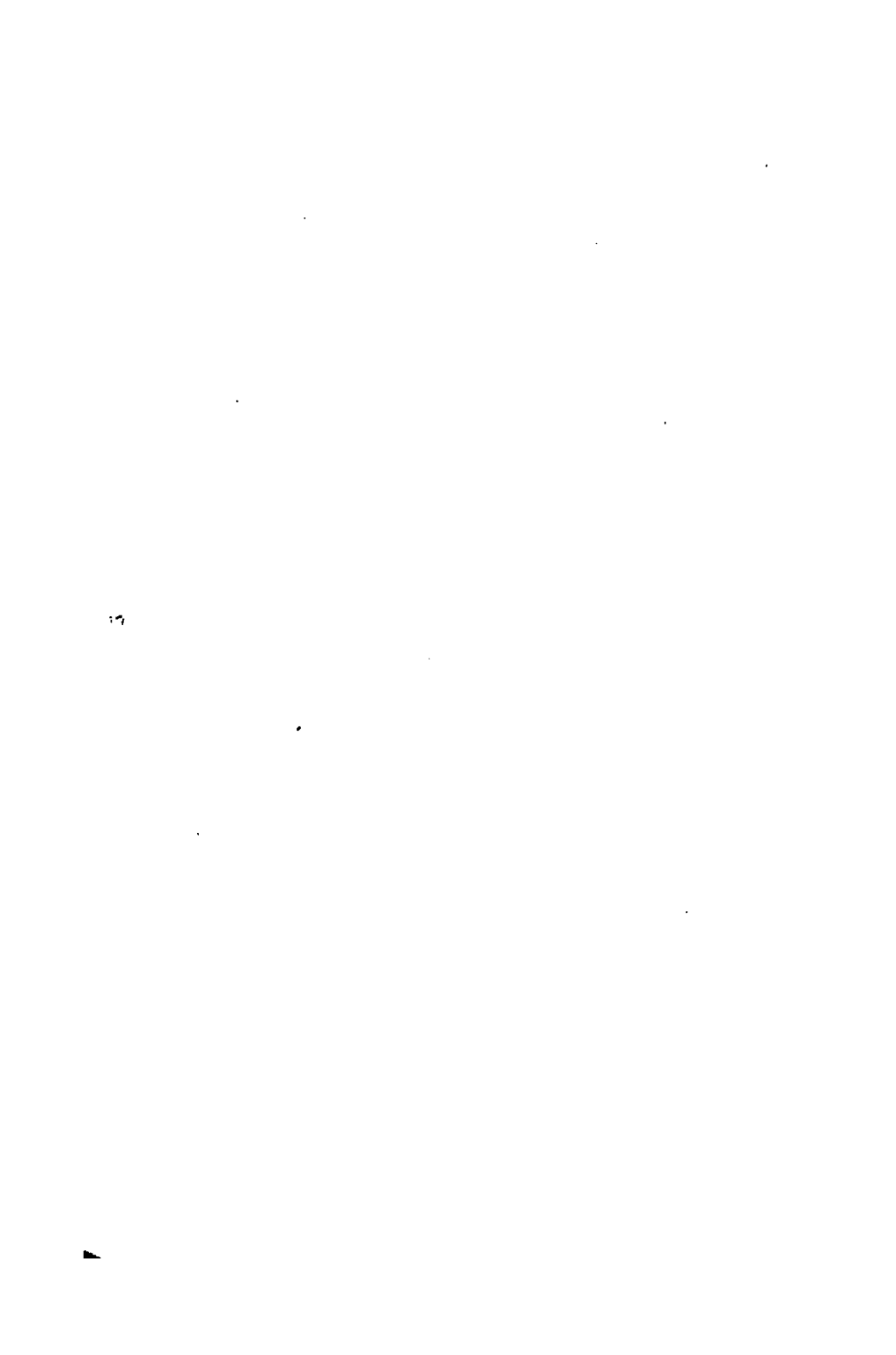
Discrepancies in the Work.

Removal of Landmarks.

East and West.

Types of Christianity.







CHAPTER V.

THE DISCUSSIONS ON FRIDAY EVENING.

“Though all the earth were carved over and inscribed with the letters of diviner knowledge, the characters would be valueless to him who does not pause to inquire the language, and meditate the truth.”—*Bulwer Lytton.*

“Far beyond the pregnant sky,
There the hopes of Masons lie ;
Masons’ happy choice above,
Masons every blessing prove,
Friendship, harmony, and love.”—*Bro. Brown.*

DINNER being over at the Rectory of —, and the servants having left the room, I commenced the conversation by saying, “The Cardinal Points of the compass, which we proposed to resume the consideration of this day, have formed an important Landmark in every age of Masonry ; and the progresses of a brother from west to east, and from east to west, are thus noticed in the Lectures :—

- “ ‘Bro. Senior Warden, from whence come you ?
“ ‘From the west.
“ ‘Whither are you directing your course ?
“ ‘To the east.
“ ‘What is your object ?
“ ‘To seek a Master,’ &c.

“Now you will observe that there is an evident discrepancy in this passage, because the relative stands ungrammatically without an antecedent. The Senior Warden communicates in general terms the quarter from whence he comes, but leaves the inquirer in the dark respecting the locality. The passage might be supposed *in limine* to refer to the introduction of the candidate, who actually does travel from west to east for instruction.”

“I have always understood it to be so,” said the Vicar.

“And I,” added Bro. Gilkes.

“And I,” said the D.P.G.M.

“And I consider the Lodge to be only a representation of the world,” the Surgeon observed, “in which the east is denoted by the W. Master, and the west by the S. Warden. Hence, if an initiate is seeking for a Master, and of him to gain instruction, he will always find him in the east, and must approach him from the west.”

“I was reading the other day,” said the Skipper, “a French ritual which had been placed in my hands by a friend just before I left Stockholm, and I find that the Masons of that country, in the year 1740, entertained some such notion. The question they asked was, ‘How do the apprentices and Fellowcrafts travel?’ and the reply was, ‘From west to east;’ by which they signified, that the candidate entered by the west door, and advanced three times towards the east; or, in other words, towards the Master of the Lodge; the first time being to the square, the second from the square

to the letter G, and the third time from thence to the compasses; and then the catechism went on thus: 'Why so?—To seek the light. How do Master Masons travel?—From the east to the west. Why so?—To disseminate light to the others.'"

"And yet the notion is incorrect," I observed, "and a little consideration will show its improbability. Bro. Gilkes will tell you what the doctrine really was before Dr Hemming received authority to revise the Lectures."

"In the formula which was used before the union," Bro. Gilkes replied, "the antecedent is thus supplied in the subsequent clause: 'You said you came from the west—from what particular Lodge came you?—From the holy Lodge of St John at Jerusalem. What recommendation have you brought thence?—A recommendation from the R. W. Master, W. Wardens, and worthy officers and brethren of that right worshipful and holy Lodge, who greet you thrice heartily.'"

"There are no Lodges at Jerusalem," said the Surgeon, hastily; "and therefore the passage must be an interpolation."

"It is not an interpolation," I answered, "but a delicate allusion to an imaginary Lodge at Jerusalem, the place where Christianity was first preached, and was used by our ancient brethren from time immemorial. It was probably situated on Mount Moriah, which had been invested with a sacred character long before

David purchased it of Araunah the Jebusite, by the offering of Isaac as a type of the crucifixion of Christ; a sublime reference, by which the floor of our Lodges is consecrated, and its ground made holy. And hence, as all Lodges have the common name of St John, so the floor of every Lodge is denominated Moriah."

"And this mountain is further supposed to have been set apart as a holy place by Melchisedek," said the Vicar; "and some authorities pronounce that its peculiar sanctity was acknowledged before the Flood."

"I should be glad to know," the Surgeon asked, "admitting all this to be true, which I greatly doubt, what conclusion you would draw in support of your hypothesis from these presumed facts?"

"The use I propose to make of them," I answered, "is to show that the reference to the east and west in the passage here indicated, so far from appertaining to a candidate, applies in reality to an actual and advanced member of this supposititious Lodge, who is really travelling from east to west, and not from west to east; for he represents himself to be delegated by the R. W. Master and Wardens of the Lodge of St John as the accredited bearer of a friendly greeting to other communities; and therefore as the Senior Warden, and not a mere candidate for a preliminary degree, he would be accepted as the *giver* instead of the *receiver* of instruction. And accordingly, in the methodical digest of Preston, the subject is again recurred to in the second

lecture thus: 'Our ancient brethren travelled, some east, and others west; the former were seeking for instruction, and the latter propagated the same to other brethren in various parts of the world.'

"If my memory be not at fault," the Vicar said, "Dr Anderson, the historian of Masonry, has a passage relative to the progress of our more remote brethren after the general deluge, somewhat in this form: Noah and his three sons having preserved a knowledge of the arts and sciences, communicated it to their growing offspring, who were all of one language and of one speech. And as they journeyed from the east towards the west, they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and dwelt there together as Noachidæ, &c. This, Anderson informs us, was the first name of Freemasons according to the old traditions."

"The York Masons," Bro. Gilkes observed, "carried the allusion still further back. To wit—

"What is Masonry?

"The study of science and the practice of virtue.

"What is its object?

"To rectify our conduct by its sublime morality, and to make us happy in ourselves, and useful to society.

"What is the ground-plan of Masonry?

"Instruction.

"Why do you consider it to be such?

"Because men ought never to be too wise to learn.

"What will a wise man do to obtain it?

"He will industriously search for it.

"What will a wise Mason do?

"He will never rest till he find it.

“‘ Where will he try to find it ?

“‘ In the east.

“‘ Why is instruction to be derived from the east ?

“‘ Because man was there created in the image of his Maker ; there the gospel was first preached ; knowledge and learning originated ; and arts and sciences flourished.’”

Here was a pause, broken only by the cracking of nuts. The Student, who was peeling an orange, at length observed, addressing himself to me :—

“ I think, my dear sir, that the illustrations of our Third Degree are rather unfavourable to your argument. We are there told, that in the arrangement of the camp in the wilderness, the east quarter was always assigned to the noblest tribe—viz., the tribe of Judah—by the divine command. Now, in their journeyings towards every quarter of the compass, as Judah was always the leading tribe, it was impossible that he could pitch towards the east in every case ; and Tremelius therefore expounds the east to mean the front, and the west the rear. *Castra habentium ab anteriore parte Orientem versus, vexillum esto castrorum Judæ.*”

“ I do not consider this objection to be at all unfavourable to my interpretation, because it is absolutely exemplified in our Lodges at the present day ; for few of them are placed according to the Cardinal Points, and yet the situation of the Master, like that of the tribe of Judah, is always in the east, or foremost part of the Lodge. Besides, was not Judah the root of the tree from whence the Branch, Messiah, Christ, or of the East, was to spring ? And a comparison of the different

versions of our catechisms, which I have already referred to, will show how the above Landmarks were treated by the accredited revisers of our ritual at various periods since the revival in 1717."

"It will be very agreeable to us all, I am sure," said the Rector, "to hear some of these primitive versions, which are altogether new to me."

"The most ancient formula that has met my eye," I continued, "is a succinct Examination of unknown antiquity. It is supposed to have been used in the time of Archbishop Chichely, who was Grand Master of Masons in the reign of Henry VI., but certainly known to Elias Ashmole and Sir Christopher Wren in the seventeenth century. In this ritual, the questions, Whence come you? and Where going? do not occur; but the following extract is to our purpose:—

"What Lodge are you of?

"The Lodge of St John at Jerusalem.

"How many angles in St John's Lodge?

"Four, bordering on squares.

"How many steps belong to a right Mason?

"Three.

"Give me the solution.

"I will. * * * The R. W. Master and W. Fellows of the R. W. Lodge from whence I came greet you well.

"Give me the Jerusalem word.

"*—*."

"This ritual has escaped my researches," said Bro. Gilkes, "and I have not had the pleasure of hearing it."

"The extract just quoted," the Vicar added, "is both novel and interesting to me; and I

shall be glad to hear more of this ancient formula.”

“ I shall produce further extracts as I proceed,” I replied ; “ for this primitive ritual furnishes abundant proofs to establish my hypothesis. In another old and time-stained manuscript in my possession, the above passage is thus given *in extenso* :—

“ ‘ *Square*. The Junior Warden says—May God’s good greeting be to this our happy meeting, from the right worthy and worshipful brothers and fellows of the holy Lodge of St John, I greet you well, craving your name.

“ ‘ *Upright Level*. The Senior Warden—May God’s good greeting be to this and our next happy meeting, from the right worthy and worshipful brothers and fellows of the holy Lodge of St John, I greet you, greet you twice heartily welcome, craving your name.

“ ‘ *Equal Plumb-Rule*. The R. W. Master—May God’s good greeting be to this and all our future happy meetings, from the right worthy and worshipful brothers and fellows of the holy Lodge of St John, I also come to greet you, greet you, greet you thrice heartily welcome, craving your name.

“ ‘ My name is *——*. And, brethren, by the grace of God I greet you all well.’

“ It is evident from these extracts, that long anterior to the seventeenth century Masonic Lodges were dedicated to St John. And that the brethren hailed from Jerusalem is equally clear, otherwise the R. W. Master would scarcely have demanded the Jerusalem word.”

“ And what was the Jerusalem word ? ” the Surgeon asked.

“ *——*,” I replied.

“ Indeed ! ” the Surgeon eagerly exclaimed.

“Then you have defeated your own argument, by passing over the establishment of Christianity, and reverting once more to the building of the Temple. How is this to be reconciled?”

“You shall hear. In the first place, Christianity was not promulgated, as you suppose, at the Advent of the Redeemer, but at the Fall of Man. It commenced with the patriarchal dispensation; was more fully developed to the Jews; and perfected by the divine mission of Jesus Christ. With this important fact in view, our learned brothers Desaguliers and Anderson, at the revival of Masonry, when they improved the Lectures by introducing a separate formula for each degree, which the previous examination did not possess, thus placed on permanent record the doctrine we are now discussing. In the First Degree, the Senior Warden hails from the holy Lodge of St John at Jerusalem as before, and informs the brethren that the recommendation which he brings from the R. W. brothers and fellows of that right worshipful and holy Lodge is a greeting, thrice heartily and well. And the reason he assigns for hailing from this Lodge is, because St John was the forerunner of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and laid the first parallel of the gospel.”

“This is all perfectly correct,” said Bro. Gilkes; “and to display his knowledge, the Senior Warden, who personates the visitor, adds — ‘Good Masonry I understand, for the keys of all Lodges are at my command.’ The examiner then puts the simple question, ‘From whence come you?’ to which

the respondent immediately replies, 'From the east.' In another formula, of somewhat later date, the same passage was thus propounded in doggerel rhyme. The examiner asks, 'If you are a Master Mason, as I suppose you be, you cannot fail to understand the rule of three.' To which the respondent replies, 'The rule of three I understand, for the key of this Lodge is at my command.' The examiner then pronounced, 'The NAME shall make you free, and what you want in Masonry shall be made known to thee.' On this the respondent repeats, 'Good Masonry I understand, for the keys of all Lodges are at my command.' The examiner then says, 'You speak boldly. From whence come you?' The respondent answers, '*From the east.*'"

"You will find it difficult to evade the force of these extracts," I observed, "for they all speak the same language, and alike refer to the Cardinal Points of the compass; for as the respondent comes from the east, he must of necessity be travelling towards the west."

"I would beg leave, before you proceed," said the Vicar, "to make a single observation on the passage just quoted, as it proves that our ancient brethren acknowledged the universality and eternity of the Messiahship of Christ. '*The NAME shall make you free.*' Now it is certain that there is not, nor ever was, any NAME under heaven whereby true freedom or salvation can be attained but only the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is styled in Masonry the TETRAGRAMMATON. Now this great

truth having been communicated to the first man, and frequently repeated to the sages of his posterity, that in the fulness of time the Messiah should suffer and die for human redemption, and that his appearance should be heralded by a blazing star, a faith in that revelation must have been as efficacious before His incarnation as it is now, and so it was believed by all the holy men of old. Faith in a specific revelation of things to come is precisely the same as in a divine attestation of things past. The cabalists termed the sacred name SCHEMHAMPHORASCH, and the Greeks, EBDOMEKONTADYOGRAMMATON, and they refer it to the seventy-two names and attributes of the Deity."

"Which names and attributes," said the Skipper, "the Continental Masons tell us, with the terminations *Jah* and *El* subjoined, compose the names of the seventy-two angels who are perpetually ascending and descending on the same number of staves or rounds of the mystical ladder of Jacob. And this reminds me of a passage in one of the French rituals, to the following purport:—

"What is the most powerful name of God which was enclosed in the seal of Solomon?"

"ADONAI.

"How may this word be used?"

"To put the universe in motion. And he who can attain the correct pronunciation, will not only have power over the four elements, but also possess all human virtues."

"You have here seventy-two staves to your ladder," said the Vicar; "the Jesuits of the last

century were satisfied with seven, and they interpreted them thus, making them correspond with the seven degrees of their Order:—

1st Step of the Ladder	E. A. P. Word.	I nitiatio.
2d " "	E. A. P. Pass.	T emporalis.
3d " "	F. C. Word.	B eneplacitus.
4th " "	F. C. Pass.	S cholasticus.
5th " "	M. M. Word.	M agister.
6th " "	P. M. Word.	G eneralis.
7th " "	K. D. S. H. Word.	N oster."

"There are many allegorical fictions in Masonry," Bro. Gilkes observed, "and this may be one of them."

"Fictions!" the Surgeon echoed in astonishment. "Do you mean to assert, that Freemasonry can possibly give any countenance to a distortion or perversion of facts?"

"Undoubtedly," Bro. Gilkes replied; "as, for example, the Jewish origin of Masonry is a fiction, as is also the death of H. A. B.; the loss of the Master's word, which *never was lost* till about the year 1715, when Ramsay transferred it to his spurious degree; the doctrine of Masonic universality; the antiquity of the Royal Arch; and the finding of the Ark and Scroll, are all fictions; and, if it were necessary, I could increase the list almost indefinitely."

During a pause, in which the decanters were circulated in silence, Bro. Gilkes filled his pipe, and appeared absorbed in the enjoyment of his weed. At length I resumed the subject by saying, "In another ritual, which was used towards the latter end of the eighteenth century, we find the following passage, which also occurs, somewhat

differently worded, in our present authorised version of the Lectures :—

“ ‘ How are the three lights situated ?

“ ‘ Due east, west, and south.

“ ‘ To what purpose ?

“ ‘ Not only to show the due course of the sun, which rises in the east, gains its meridian in the south, and declension in the west, but also to light the men *to, at,* and *from* their labour.’ ”

“ ‘ Excuse me for interrupting you,” said the D.P.G.M. ; “ but I have some recollection of a formula that was in existence when I was first initiated, and used in some Lodges, though not in all, which questioned the accuracy of this disposition of the lights. I will repeat the passage, although I dissent from the doctrine :—

“ ‘ In what position ought the three lights of the Lodge to be placed ?

“ ‘ East, *north,* and south.

“ ‘ Why so ?

“ ‘ For a reason that is universal, which dates its origin in the Masonic sense from the building of King Solomon’s Temple, and in a natural sense is coeval with the creation of the world.

“ ‘ I’ll thank you to explain yourself more clearly.

“ ‘ To prevent the Jews from practising the idolatrous rites of heathen nations, King Solomon wisely placed the chief entrances into the Temple in the east, north, and south, for as the west side had no aperture, the rays of the sun could not penetrate that quarter ; and therefore, as the Jews worshipped with their faces towards the west, they

could not pay their vows to that luminary, because it was hidden from their view by the dark side of the Temple.'

"Having said this," the D.P.G.M. continued, "I hope you will proceed with your disquisition."

"The ritual to which I have just referred then asks this question, 'Why was there no light in the north?' And the reply was, 'Because, as the sun sinks below our horizon in that quarter, it appears to us in a state of darkness, and casts no rays from thence to this our hemisphere.'"

"I can readily understand this," said the Vicar, "for it is well known that the inhabitants of the eastern part of the globe believed in ancient times that the north was a void and empty space, dark, desolate, and uninhabitable. Thus Job says (xxvi. 7)—'God stretches out the north over the empty place.' And the present Persians of the Shiah sect believe that there is a perpetual warfare between darkness and light, the former being the representative of folly, and the latter of intellect. And further, the Thule of the ancients, viz., the Orcades or Zetland, was considered to be the northern extremity of the world, and so denominated because Thule, or Tule, in the Phœnician language, denotes darkness. In the *Odyssey*, *προς ζοφον* (to darkness) is used for *προς Αρκτου* (to the north). And Statius calls Thule by the name of Nigra or Nigras. When the Phœnician navigators traded to Britain, they persuaded the Greeks that their tin was collected by a descent into hell, meaning the dark and dismal mines of

Cornwall ; and as Thule signifies night or obscurity, Britain acquired the name of the northern kingdom of darkness."

"That is an indisputable fact," said the D.P.G.M., "communicated by Polybius, a cotemporary historian, who is entitled to credit. In Scot's 'Discovery of Witchcraft' we find that the king of the north was called Zimimar, or darkness ; and he is reputed to have held his court in the icy sea, and from thence promulgated his edicts through his peers and other ministers."

"There still exists among the people of England," the Rector observed, "a strong prejudice against burials on the north side of a church, which they consider unhallowed ground, and only fit for suicides and unbaptized children."

"It appears also," the Curate interposed, "that to place a corpse in the ground in any other direction than due east and west is unpropitious and dishonourable ; for as the Sun of Righteousness will come to judgment in the east, how can the Christian believer be prepared to meet Him if his feet be not placed towards that quarter?"

"These preliminary points," I continued, "being admitted, will clear the way for a more satisfactory discussion of the question at issue. In the Second Degree, the Senior Warden states that his travels were east and west in search of employment ; and in the Third Degree, that he proceeds from east to west to seek for that which was lost, *but is now found*, viz., the Master Mason's word."

“There appears to be good and substantial reasons for this appropriation,” said the Vicar; “for it was an ancient and widely disseminated opinion, that the eternal residence of the Redeemed was in certain islands situated in the far distant west, which could only be reached by a long journey from the east, and hence to seek these happy islands, men were constrained to travel from east to west. Whether this ancient belief had, or had not, anything to do with the peculiar construction of our Lectures with regard to the Cardinal Points, I leave to more able Masonic antiquaries to determine. It is certain, however, that, according to the legend, the above word was neither lost nor found till after the death of its possessor; and it is not altogether improbable, but those who were supposed to be in search of it might be figuratively said to proceed to those blessed abodes to consult the spirit of the departed, in compliance with a very prevalent custom in those early times.”

“However this may be,” I replied, “and it certainly appears plausible enough, it is quite true that in the Third Degree, where the brother is represented as travelling from east to west, the allusion to these cardinal points possesses a significant reference which could not be noticed in either of the preceding degrees; and further, shows that at the revival of Masonry in 1717, the Master’s word was actually restored, or, to speak more plainly, was never divorced from the degree; which does not tally with our present system.”

“The French ritual which I have already mentioned,” our Danish brother observed, “and which was used before the middle of the century, was, in almost every respect, similar to this, as is shown by extracts which, with your permission, I will repeat. In answer to a question, the respondent declares that he was made a Mason in a Lodge regular and perfect, called the Lodge of St John. And the Venerable explained it by saying, that a Mason should always hail from the Lodge of St John, because it is in reality a name common to all Lodges; and if there be more Lodges than one in any particular town, each is locally distinguished by the name of its Master, although still retaining its generic appellation of a St John’s Lodge. Again, in another part of the same Lecture, it is assumed that the Apprentices and Fellowcrafts travel from the west to the east; and it is explained to refer to the candidate, who enters at the west door and advances by three steps towards the Master in the east; the first step being from the west door to the Square, the second from the Square to the letter G, and the third from thence to the Compasses. The Lecture then proceeds to explain, that as the first progress was from west to east in search of light, so the Master Mason travels from east to west to disseminate the light to all parts of the earth.”

“In every ritual of that date,” I continued, “the same doctrine prevails. But the Lectures of Bro. Dunckerley subjoin a reason which it is important to notice, because it shows what our

brethren of the last century understood by the LIGHT. Here the Senior Warden is represented as travelling from west to east in search of a Lodge of Masons, because *the Light of the Gospel* was first shown in the east. In Preston's Digest, we find it expressed rather differently, while Dr Hemming omits it altogether."

"Do you esteem the doctrine to be a Landmark?" the Vicar asked.

"Undoubtedly," I replied.

"Then," he returned, "I should like to be informed by what authority Dr Hemming removed it."

"The authority is no secret," Bro. Gilkes replied; "yet though it gave much umbrage at first, it is now partially forgotten, and nobody seems willing to revive it. The Lectures of Preston contain the largest portion of genuine Masonry, and as they may be relied on with the greatest confidence, I have made them the basis of my own system. In the First Degree, he says that the E.A.P. comes from the west, and directs his course to the east in search of a Master from whom he might receive instruction and gain additional knowledge. In the Second Degree, the subject is again introduced. The F.C. informs the brethren that his forefathers travelled east and west; those that travelled eastward were in search of instruction, and when they had received it in that quarter, they retraced their steps and proceeded westerly to communicate their knowledge to others. And in the Third Degree, the M.M. is taught to

say, that he hails from the east, and is going to the west in search of that which has been lost, and which, by the Divine assistance, and his own endeavours, *he hopes to find.*"

"There is something tangible in these definitions," the Vicar observed, "for they contain a smack of ancient Masonry."

"With regard to the two great parallels," Bro. Gilkes continued, "who have been so unceremoniously dethroned by our friend Dr Hemming, Preston observes in his first lecture that Freemasons dedicate their Lodges to St John the Baptist, because he was the harbinger or forerunner of our Blessed Saviour, and preached repentance in the Wilderness of Judea; and by so doing, he drew the first line of the Gospel through Christ; that he had only one equal, St John the Evangelist, who, coming after the former, finished by his learning what the other began by his zeal, and drew a line parallel, &c."

"And he might have added," said the Rector, "what has been placed on record by Prochorus in his Life of St John, viz., that he never offered up his prayers to God but with his face turned towards the east."

Here it was objected by the Surgeon, that "if Lodges were really dedicated to God and Holy St John by all antiquity, as I understand you to assert, and if the O.B. was really administered in the same style, what necessity is there for the inquiry 'Whence come you?' when it must have been well known to all the brethren present that

he came from a Lodge of St John, although not *the* Lodge which is traditionally placed at Jerusalem?"

"You might with equally propriety," the D.P.G.M. answered, "pronounce the leading question in our Church Catechism unnecessary, because you are acquainted with the child's designation before you ask, What is your name?"

"The whole matter," said Bro. Gilkes, "is explained in the Prestonian Lectures thus: From the building of the Temple at Jerusalem to the Babylonish captivity, Freemasons' Lodges were dedicated to King Solomon; from thence to the coming of the Messiah, to Zerubbabel"——

"Begging Bro. Preston's pardon," the Surgeon hastily interposed, "I have very serious doubts whether Zerubbabel was ever connected with Craft Masonry at all, except in a subordinate capacity; and, consequently, whether he ever ranked as one of its legitimate patrons. I esteem the addition of his name to the list as an interpolation of that worthy and eminent brother, because in the old records of Masonry he and Nehemiah are mentioned only as being in succession Provincial Grand Masters of Judea."

"Your doubts are not altogether destitute of proof," Bro. Gilkes replied; "but let us proceed with Bro. Preston's definition. From the advent of Christ to the destruction of the Temple by Titus, the Lodges were dedicated to St John the Baptist; but owing to the many massacres and disorders attending that memorable event, Freemasonry sunk into great decay; many Lodges

“Your question is rather difficult to answer,” I replied; “for instead of coming from the east, where the Lodge of St John at Jerusalem is undoubtedly situated with respect to ourselves, the respondent is supposed to travel from the west.”

“To this point, then, I fasten you,” the Surgeon hastened to say, following up his advantage. “As a Jerusalem Mason, in what part of the east does he expect to meet with the desired instruction? In Mesopotamia, India, Persia, or China? Why, there were no Lodges in any one of those countries at the period here referred to; and it is historically true, that the ancient Hindoos and Chinese had a current tradition that the Holy One, viz., the Deliverer, Jehovah, Messiah, or Christ, must be sought in the west. Here, then, is your dilemma. The question is rather evaded than solved by the practice of sundry Lodges, who have boldly cut the knot by transposing the answers, and give the clause in this manner: ‘Whence come you?—From the east. Whither going?—To the west.’”

“The practice is incorrect,” said Bro. Gilkes.

“Never mind that,” the Surgeon eagerly replied. “Let our friend and brother answer my question, if he can.”

To this demand I answered, although conscious of an almost insuperable difficulty, “that no human system could be perfect, and that, as Bro. Gilkes had already observed, there are many allegorical fictions in Masonry. Now it is a Masonic maxim, that the east is a place of light,

wisdom, and perfection; and, therefore, the most likely quarter for the anxious and industrious brother to find the instruction which he is desirous of obtaining; and it refers, in local position, to the same country in which the Hindoos and Chinese were directed by their oracles to search for the expected Deliverer. And it is a recorded and incontrovertible fact, that the Magi did actually travel from east to west in search of the Messiah (who is represented by St John the Evangelist as the LIGHT), under the guidance of a blazing star"——

"Which, according to the doctrine of our brethren in the United States," said the Vicar, "is the Blazing Star of Masonry, that manifested the Advent of Christ to the Gentiles; and hence the Epiphany, or the day on which the early Christians commemorated His baptism, was called *the day of the HOLY LIGHTS*, because He came in the double character of a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory, splendour, or Shekinah of the people of Israel. And hence, I presume, as Jerusalem lies eastward with regard to Europe and America, our Grand Lodges and Chapters, where all authority resides, and from whence proceed all orders and commands to the subordinate Lodges, are denominated the GRAND ORIENT, or EAST."

"But we must not suffer ourselves to be misled," the Surgeon persisted, as he passed the decanters, "by any confusion of terms; for, strictly speaking, as Dr Brown avers, there is no

east or west in nature; nor are these points absolute and invariable, but respective and mutable, according to different longitudes or distant points of habitation, whereby they suffer many and considerable variations. Unto some, the same point will be east or west in respect of one another—*i.e.*, unto such as inhabit the same parallel, or differently dwell from east to west; and unto other habitations the same point will be both east and west.”

“Still,” I replied, “although the city of Jerusalem is east to us and west to China and Persia, it was always considered as a place where the inhabitants of any other part of the globe might profitably resort in search of wisdom; and hence it was said, that Solomon’s wisdom excelled that of all the children of the east, the fame whereof induced the Queen of Sheba to leave her own country for the purpose of profiting by his knowledge. The free and accepted Mason, therefore, is directed to hail from the Lodge of St John in that city, because it was the traditional seat of wisdom.”

“That I should conceive to be the true solution of our friend’s inquiry,” Bro. Gilkes observed.

“It was an ancient Masonic custom,” I continued, “to hail from the Lodge of St John, *minus* the Cardinal Points, which were disposed of by our elder brethren in a very different manner.”

“Explain yourself,” said the Surgeon.

“I will endeavour to do so,” I replied. “The Cardinal Points referred principally to the situation of the governing officers. For instance, the R. W. Master was placed in the east, the Wardens

in the west, the Senior E.A.P. in the south, and the Junior E.A.P. in the north; while the three Fixed Lights, or imaginary windows of the Lodge, occupied the east, west, and south, as we learn from the old Examination already referred to, which runs thus:—

“What Lodge are you of?

“The Lodge of St John, *whose badge is the Cross and Triangle*, the former alluding to the Crucifixion and the latter to the Holy Trinity.

“How does your Lodge stand?

“Perfect east and west, as all churches and chapels ought to do.

“Where is the Master’s point?

“At the east window, waiting for the rising of the sun to set his men to work.

“Where is the Warden’s point?

“At the west window, waiting the setting of the sun to dismiss the entered apprentices.

“How is the meridian found?

“When the sun leaves the south, and breaks in at the west window of the Lodge.

“Where stands the Senior entered apprentice?

“In the south.

“What is his business there?

“To hear and receive instructions, and to welcome strange brethren.

“Where stands the Junior entered apprentice?

“In the north.

“What is his business there?

“To keep off all cowans and eavesdroppers.”

“Now, although, in this primitive ritual, there is no direct reference to the eastward or westward course of a travelling brother, yet it is perfectly clear, that in these ancient times the hailing-point was a (not *the*) Christian Lodge of St John.”

“Under this view of the case,” said Bro. Gilkes, “the subject has been much obscured in the version put forth by the Lodge of Reconciliation at the union, and adopted by the Grand Lodge, in the substitution of Moses and Solomon for our two anciently-established patrons and parallels, in utter disregard of the old Landmarks, and the uniform practice of all ages and countries down to the present time. By this injudicious interpolation, the Order, instead of progressing along with all other arts and sciences, has actually retrograded; and we are thrown back into the dark ages of ignorance and superstition, which heralded the advent of a Redeemer to present to the erring sons of men a gospel of peace, harmony, and brotherly love.”

“This is a very lamentable state of things,” the D.P.G.M. observed; “and if such a downward course should continue, it will not be surprising if another generation should degenerate still further, and resume the old and obsolete practice of the *Facultie of Abrac*, the delusions of alchymy, and the superstitions of charms, periapts, and incantations for the cure of agues, fever, cramp, and rheumatism; in the studies to which the Rosicrucians devoted so much precious time, and have bequeathed to posterity a doubtful and visionary reputation.”

“It is believed in Germany,” the Skipper interposed, “that Freemasonry originated from this sect. The Baron de Gleichen says, that the Masons were united with the Rose Croix in England under King Arthur. I suppose he considers the

Knights of the Round Table to have been Masons. The Baron de Westerode offers an opinion, that the Rose Croix was first instituted in the eastern parts of Europe about the twelfth century, for the more ready propagation of Christianity; that it was imported into Scotland under the appellation of the Royal Order of Masons of the East, and contained all the secrets of the occult sciences which were practised at that period; that it found its way into England before the latter end of the same century, and consisted of three degrees, its emblems being a pair of golden compasses suspended from a white ribbon, as a united symbol of purity and wisdom; the sun, the moon, a double triangle enclosing the letter \aleph ; and that each brother wore a gold ring with the initials I.A.A.T. (Ignis, Aer, Aqua, Terra.)”

“ This has nothing to do with our present argument,” said the Surgeon, impatiently; “ which simply applies to the exclusion, in our present Lectures, of the two St Johns from their ancient and well-merited station. Some Masters of Lodges endeavour to avoid the discrepancy by substituting the words, which are not included in the original formula of Dr Hemming—*masonically speaking*—as thus, ‘Masonically speaking, from whence come you?’ and the answer is, ‘From a worthy and worshipful Lodge of brothers and fellows.’”

“ And what are the consequences of this emendation?” Bro. Gilkes replied by asking. “ Why, it contains two capital errors. First, the words *masonically speaking* are not only unneces-

tian interpretation most undeniably. The W. Master demanded of his Warden—‘From whence do you come?’ who answered—‘I come from the Lodge of St John.’ And when requested to communicate what he had seen there, he says, ‘I saw three Great Lights, a Mosaic pavement with its tessellated border, a Blazing Star denominated Beauty,’ &c. ; and he further specifies, that the Master of that Lodge greets the brethren with three times three.”

“Added to this,” Bro. Nis Petersen observed, “the Continental Masons still continue to use a ritual which distinctly proclaims the same doctrine. The Venerable asks—‘From whence come you?—From the just and perfect Lodge of St John, the Blazing Star of the East.’ And they explain the passage thus : ‘The Order of St John is recognised as the most ancient system of Freemasonry ever known, and for that reason ought to be esteemed as the only true and primitive rite. And the Blazing Star is commemorative of that bright and luminous appearance in the heavens, which directed the wise men of the east to Bethlehem in Judea to inquire for the newly-born Deliverer of mankind.’ They then proceed thus :—

“ ‘What brought you here?

“ ‘A greeting from the Master, Brothers, and Fellows.

“ ‘What do you seek?

“ ‘To govern my passions, and to make due progress in the study of Masonry.

“‘ At your preparation what questions were you asked ?

“‘ They were three in number, viz., my age, my position in life, and *my religion.*’

“‘ And this introduces the Masonic text containing the advice of Jesus Christ to His disciples, ‘ Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you : for every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh is sure to find ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.’ This was followed up by the questions—

“‘ Where did you travel ?

“‘ I travelled three times from west to east by the north, and from east to west by the south.

“‘ For what purpose ?

“‘ To seek the Light.’ ”

“‘ This custom of travelling from east to west by the south,” said the Vicar, “ is of an unknown antiquity ; and prevails, not only in Masonry, but amongst the general population of most parts of the world. In some districts of Scotland, there are certain wells famous for the cure of diseases, if the afflicted person comply with the condition of walking round them three times from east to west by the south before using the water. It is called Deiseal. The same ceremony is also considered efficacious on other important occasions ; for instance, if you would preserve your houses, stackyards, or other property, from harm, it will be necessary to make a fiery circle round them, proceeding from east to west by the south. The

same ceremony is used about women before they are churched, and about children before they are christened, to preserve both the mothers and their offspring from the power of evil spirits."

"All this may be true," the Skipper continued; "but we are now speaking about foreign Freemasonry. In the Third Degree of the French ritual, a formula is introduced where *the Holy Gospel occupies the first place* in a triad of precious jewels, which are said to be three in number, viz., the Holy Gospel, the Compasses, and the Mallet. The Holy Gospel is TRUTH, the Compasses JUSTICE, and the Mallet a proper appendage to WISDOM. In German Masonry," he added, "with which I am most familiar, the references to the two St Johns are thus stated: 'The Gospel of St John is especially important to Freemasons, because it contains the fundamental principles of the Order of which he was the Grand Master and patron saint. And every brother ought always to remember that he has laid his hand on that Gospel, and is thence bound never to withdraw his love from his Masonic brothers and fellows, in compliance with the doctrine contained in that sacred book.'"

"Thank you, Bro. Petersen," I said, "for you have strengthened my argument by an evidence of whose existence I was totally ignorant. But to render our view of the case perfect, it will be necessary to adduce the corresponding passages from the Lectures now used in the United States of America, that we may be enabled to form a reasonable opinion of what the original doctrines

of Masonry were, and consequently of what they ought to be. And perhaps our worthy brother may be able to assist us."

"Oh, yes," he said; "I have traded to New York for many years, and know the Grand Secretary intimately; nor am I altogether ignorant of the Lectures used in that city. The first section commences thus, 'From whence come you as an E. A. P. Mason?—From the holy Lodge of St John at Jerusalem. What recommendation do you bring?' &c. A little after, mention is made of a worshipful Lodge dedicated to God, and held forth to the Holy Order of St John; the passage from St Matthew, already mentioned, is alluded to; and the Ladder of Jacob is explained to represent *the way of life and salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ—the rounds of the Ladder typifying the several steps that He took in accomplishing the great work of our redemption.* The angels of God are sent forth through this medium to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation; and Faith, Hope, and Charity are graces wrought in the heart of a Christian by the Holy Spirit. Then the Blazing Star of Masonry is described to represent the star in the east which directed the wise men to Bethlehem. And they proceed in this fashion:—

"How is your Lodge situated?"

"Due east and west.

"Why so?"

"Because the sun rises in the east and sets in the west.

“ ‘ A second reason ?

“ ‘ The Gospel was first preached in the east, and afterwards spread to the west.

“ ‘ A third reason ?

“ ‘ The liberal arts and sciences began in the east and are extending to the west.

“ ‘ A fourth reason ?

“ ‘ Because all churches and chapels are, or ought to be, so situated.

“ ‘ Why are the Lodges dedicated to the two St Johns ?

“ ‘ Because they are perfect parallels both in Masonry and Christianity, *and symbolised accordingly in a Masons' Lodge by perfect figures—the point, circle, and parallel lines.*’ ”

After the pause which succeeded Bro. Petersen's communication, I remarked—“ From this accumulation of authorities, it will appear that in every part of the world where Masonry flourishes the references to the Cardinal Points of the compass, in common with every other important Landmark, were used *to perpetuate a remembrance of the Advent of Christ to atone for the sins of men.*”

“ There can be no doubt,” the Vicar observed, “ that Christianity, in accordance with the unequivocal voice of prophecy, being a universal religion, which will ultimately spread itself over the whole earth as the waters cover the sea, must necessarily be assimilated with Freemasonry, if we would establish for the institution a valid claim to a corresponding universality ; for I agree with Bishop Van Mildert, that the Gospel is to

be regarded as one entire system, carried on *from the fall of Adam to the end of the world*, yet comprising a variety of dispensations adapted to the particular exigencies of mankind."

"It is quite clear to me," said Bro. Gilkes, "that the real principles of genuine Masonry must be sought for at the time of the revival in 1717. The amplifications which our Lectures have undergone since that period include many innovations which are alien to primitive Masonry, because they have swallowed up and destroyed some of our most ancient Landmarks. Even the old Gothic Charges have not escaped, but at the union in 1813 sustained several verbal alterations which have materially changed their character. The oldest Constitutions we are acquainted with, which were directed to be read to every candidate at his initiation, announce that, at a certain period in the annals of Masonry, '*God's Messiah, the Great Architect of the Christian Church, came into the world.*' Again, in the same book, it is recorded, that '*the footstone of the new temple was levelled just forty-six years before the first passover of Christ's personal ministry.*' Again, '*At this time there was a general peace over all the world, and so continued for twelve years together, which was a very proper prelude for ushering in His coming who was the Prince of Peace; for at this period, Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, the Great Architect of the Christian Church, was born at Bethlehem in Judea.*' Once more, '*The Lord Jesus Christ was crucified under Tiberius,*

without the walls of Jerusalem, by Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea, and rose again the third day, for the justification of all those that believe in Him. Tiberius afterwards banished Pilate for his injustice to Christ.’”

“Can you inform me in what Masonic publication these important passages are to be found?” the Vicar inquired.

“In the Freemason’s Pocket Companion, published in the year 1736, with new editions in 1754, 1764, and 1771; in the latter of which the above passages stand, if my memory does not deceive me, on pages 36 and 37.”

“I presume then, brethren, you will admit,” I observed, “that ancient Masonry recognised and taught that Jesus Christ was God’s Messiah, and the Prince of Peace predicted by the Jewish prophets, and if so, that *it is a Christian institution*; for none but Christians would have embodied these striking facts in its history and Constitutions. In truth, this is the only pillar on which Freemasonry can hope to be permanently supported. Remove this prop, and, like the Temple of Dagon when Samson tore away its columns, Freemasonry would soon crumble into ruin. The Order is defined as ‘a beautiful system of morality,’ but if it be not based on the Christian religion, it will be no better than the flimsy morality of the heathen philosophers, who, amidst all their florid declamations about the beauty of virtue, canonised vice, offered incense to licentiousness and revenge, and rejecting the One God, the Creator of

heaven and earth, admitted into their teeming Pantheon 30,000 personifications of every brutal passion and affection of a reprobate mind. *Utrum horum* — let the Christian Freemason take his choice.”

“I should be glad to hear,” said the Surgeon, as if he had reserved his most potent objection until the last—“I should be glad to hear how you can reconcile this interpretation with the undisputed fact that the Redeemer himself was a Jew and practised the Jewish religion.”

“Jesus Christ was undoubtedly a Jew by birth and parentage,” I replied; “and two of the Evangelists bestowed considerable pains to prove his descent from the house and lineage of David. But this admission does not advance your argument a single step, but is rather adverse to it; for the purpose of His divine mission was avowedly to supersede the Jewish religion, or rather to engraft a universal and eternal dispensation upon one that was only partial and temporary—partial, because circumscribed within the narrow limits of a minute portion of the globe, and temporary, because it commenced with Moses and ended with Christ.”

“But, my good sir,” said the Surgeon, petulantly, “you are mistaken in your facts. The Jewish religion is neither ended nor superseded, but flourishes at the present moment in almost every country on the face of the earth.”

“I admit that a shadow and caricature of Judaism is still in existence, but it can scarcely

be called a religion. It is not the magnificent system which was enjoined on the Hebrew nation by the Most High, under the sanction of which King Solomon sacrificed 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep at the dedication of the Temple. The miserable remnant of the tribes of Israel have now neither Tabernacle nor Temple; they have no lawful priest, for the tribe of Levi is unknown; they have neither altar nor sacrifice; neither king nor ruler; neither ephod nor teraphim; and they are deserted by the glorious Shekinah; all of which are essential to the legitimate practice of their religion in its primitive purity. It follows, therefore, that Freemasonry cannot be an appendage to a system which is not really in existence."

"Have you forgotten," the Rector casually observed, "the remark of Suetonius in his *Life of Vespasian*, that there existed throughout the whole East an expectation that a king should arise in Judea who should obtain the universal sovereignty of the world?—a belief which is proclaimed by all the Jewish prophets, and in fact throughout the entire range of Scripture history. Now, as Jesus Christ was the person here referred to, is it not evident, from the express declarations of our own sacred writings, that His religion will ultimately triumph over paganism, nullify and absorb the systems of Mahomet and the Jews, and utterly destroy the professions of infidelity and atheism, however they may be displayed, or by whomsoever supported, and pure Christianity become universal under this universal

sovereign, to the extinction of every other system; and that if Freemasonry be not associated with it, it will also sink into forgetfulness and contempt?"

"It was not only known amongst the Eastern nations," said the Student, "that this universal Saviour was to appear in Palestine at the period indicated, but they were also in possession of a sign which was to denote His Advent."

"And what was that sign?" the Surgeon asked.

"It was the Blazing Star already mentioned. And when the Brahmins of India and the Magi of Persia beheld this remarkable appearance in the east, moving gradually towards the west, they concluded that the appointed time had arrived; and a priest from each of the three great nations of India, China, and Persia was deputed to follow the star until the newly-born Sovereign was discovered; and they knew that their journey was ended when the migratory asteroid became stationary; and there they found the future Saviour of mankind wrapped in swaddling-clothes and lying in a manger."

"I cordially thank you, brethren, for your apposite illustrations; and am glad to find that your opinions on this entertaining subject correspond with my own."

"The truth is," the Curate answered, "I do not see how a clergyman can conscientiously attach himself to Freemasonry, unless he believes that it embodies the general principles of the Gospel which he professes to preach."

“ You may congratulate your reverend brethren as you please,” said the Surgeon, addressing himself to me, as his good temper appeared about to forsake him, “ and their learning may be either properly or improperly applied—of that I am not prepared to offer an opinion ; but I am pretty sure you cannot confirm your theory by any practical illustrations from the ordinary Lectures of Masonry.”

“ Bro. Gilkes shall answer you,” I replied ; and I requested that brother to tell the company the Masonic reason why the materials for building the Temple of Solomon were prepared at such a distance from Jerusalem ; when Bro. Gilkes immediately replied—

“ Because we Freemasons were hewed and squared in the distant quarry of nature, until we were fitted and prepared for the new and heavenly Jerusalem, and made perfect ashlar for the holy place by the preaching of the Gospel. Our Saviour, the chief corner-stone, hath sent forth hewers in rough garments, like St John the Baptist, to prepare us by joining the stones of that spiritual building together with the cement of everlasting love ; thus squaring our hearts by His divine hewings, and fitting us for that holy temple which far surpasses the splendour of its ancient type, although it was the wonder and glory of the whole earth.”

“ Why did the Lord appear to the Hebrews in the pillar of a cloud ? ”

“ It was to show that their laws and ceremonies were but temporary types of darkness, to continue

only till the true Light should come out of the heavenly Zion, viz., Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to remove the veil from our darkened minds, that the night of ceremonies might be superseded and the true light shine in our hearts."

"What is the true meaning of the blossoming and bearing fruit of Aaron's rod?"

"It shows how quickly those who are called by grace should blossom and bear heavenly fruit, and become faithful seers and watchmen of the night."

"To whom does the fruit of that rod point?"

"It points to Christ our Saviour, of whom Moses was a type, He being the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, leading His children like tender *buds* growing up in spiritual and divine knowledge, as sweet *blossoms* of that memorable rod, opening with fragrant graces, and producing, as its holy *fruit*, able ministers of the Gospel to withstand gainsayers, whose shells, though hard, contain sweet kernels of sound doctrine, which is a delicious and heavenly food for the soul, inducing us to bring forth fruits of righteousness."

"Are you satisfied?" I asked the Surgeon.

He merely shook his head, with an incredulous look. "Well, then, we'll proceed a little further. Bro. Gilkes, will you be kind enough to say why it is esteemed necessary that a Mason should be born of a free woman?"

Bro. Gilkes gave the well-known answer; adding, "St Paul terms it an allegory."

"Can you explain the mystical interpretation of that allegory?"

“ I will endeavour to do so. Isaac and Ishmael, the bond and the free, refer to the two covenants, or two religions, the one being a state of bondage to rites and ceremonies, the other a state of liberty, to which all true believers are brought by the dispensation of Christ. Or, in other words, they denote the Law and the Gospel. Hagar signifies the temporal, and Sarah the spiritual Jerusalem, or the Christian Church, which is not, as the temporary dispensation was, confined to one nation, but extends universally to all mankind. Ishmael was born in a state of slavery, as the Jews were before the coming of the Messiah, but Isaac was born free, or, in plain language—a Christian.”

“ What are the three great moral duties of a Mason ? ”

“ The three great moral duties which Masons are enjoined strictly to observe are, our duties to God, our neighbour, and ourselves. To God, by holding His name in awe and veneration, viewing Him as the chief good, imploring His aid in laudable pursuits, and supplicating His protection on well-meant endeavours ; to our neighbour, by acting on the square with him, by considering him entitled to share in the blessings of Providence, and by rendering him those favours which in a similar situation we should hope to receive ; and to ourselves, by using the blessings of Providence without abusing them, and without either impairing our faculties by irregularity, or debasing our profession by intemperance.”

“ Very well ; and what is this but an exemplifi-

cation of the advice given to the Christian converts, that they should 'live *soberly, righteously, and godly* in this present world;' where by the word *soberly*, we understand our duty to ourselves; by the word *righteously*, our duty to our neighbour; and by the word *godly*, our duty to God?"

"Are you sure, Bro. Gilkes, that the Lectures of Masonry teach these doctrines?" the Surgeon inquired.

"As sure as I am that you are one of my Masonic pupils.¹ It is true, that some of our brethren, from laudable although mistaken principles, would exclude from our Lectures all allusions to Christianity, under the idea that it militates against the doctrine of universality, and might perchance disturb the harmony of our proceedings. But they should recollect that such exclusion is a moral impossibility; for the Lodge can neither be opened nor closed without the presence of that sacred volume which from beginning to end teaches the mysterious doctrine of human redemption, veiled indeed in allegory throughout the *first* Testament, but illustrated and revealed in all its fulness of beauty in the *second*; nor can any man gain admission into a Lodge without those preliminary ceremonies already alluded to, which are enjoined by the Saviour of mankind, viz., 'Ask, and you shall have; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.'"

¹ Lest any one should charge me with putting words into Bro. Gilkes' mouth which he never uttered, I think it necessary to say, that I have in my possession a ritual, in *his own handwriting*, where the above passages occur *verbatim et literatim*.

“I remember a passage in the old *Freemason's Magazine*,” said the D.P.G.M., “which gave great satisfaction to the brethren of that period, and was ascribed to the pen of Bro. Dunckerley. It contained a sentiment confirmatory of the present subject of discussion. The words are these, as nearly as I can recollect:—

“‘The Freemasons are the only corporation, whether under the name of a Church, a nation, or a society, who have melted the knowledge of God the Creator, possessed by the ancients, into the same fire with the knowledge of a Redeemer given to the Christians. May they shine with invigorated glories.’”

“If you wish to distinguish yourself in Masonry, my good friend,” Bro. Gilkes continued, “you must believe that it is a *quasi*-religious Order; and although I deprecate, equally with yourself, the introduction into a Lodge of debates respecting abstruse points of Christian doctrine, yet it is quite certain that our ancient brethren never intended to exclude Christianity, the very soul of all revealed religion, from our Lodges as a sectarian principle; and it was to secure the harmony of our social meetings that they found it expedient to prohibit all discussion on the peculiar tenets or usages maintained by the several sects or monastic orders of the Roman Catholic Church; a prohibition which was subsequently extended to the various shades of opinion which distinguish the respective creeds of Dissenters from its Protestant sister.”



CHAPTER VI.

Saturday.

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED.

Admission of Candidates.
Behaviour out of the Lodge.
Duties of a Member.

Masonic Convivialities.
The Points explained.
Obedience to the Laws.







CHAPTER VI.

THE DISCUSSIONS ON SATURDAY EVENING.

“Get wisdom, get understanding ; forget it not.”—*Solomon.*

“By obedience we are made a society and republic, and distinguished from herds of beasts and heaps of flies, who do what they list, and are incapable of laws, and obey none, and therefore are killed and destroyed, though never punished, and they never can have a reward.”—*Jeremy Taylor.*

THE next day, a snug party of Masonic friends met at the Surgeon's house to enjoy a quiet conversation with our London brother, who had made arrangements to return to town on Monday. Our visitors, the D.P.G.M., together with the Rector, the Vicar, and the Curate, were not present, but their places were supplied by a Captain in the royal navy, and a Merchant of Grimsby, who was desirous of being initiated into Masonry ; and he was included in the invitation at his own request, in the hope that he might derive some tangible information which would be serviceable to him in his progress through the degrees.

Our brother the Captain was in reality a lieutenant on half-pay, and the superior title was

accorded to him by courtesy. He resided in a neighbouring village, and occupied his leisure time in the honourable and useful employment of superintending the national school there, and leading the church psalmody with nasal correctness on the Sabbath-day. He was passionately fond of his glass, if obtainable at the expense of a friend; and when favoured with an opportunity, he seldom failed to improve it to his own satisfaction, if not to the gratification of the company present, to whom, after a certain period of his potations, he became rather annoying; for he would sneeze, and snort, and stamp, and perform a number of other antics more extraordinary than pleasing, and kept up a continual fire of nautical phrases and snatches from an old song, which in the early part of the evening he would persist in singing from end to end; but, fortunately, after a few glasses he became stupefied, his memory deserted him, and he generally stopped short after a single stanza. He had an inveterate habit of quoting passages, whether applicable to the subject in hand or not, from the Church Catechism which he taught the children of his school. This was often extremely offensive, although he was perfectly unconscious of it, and altogether indifferent to the convenience or comfort of any one except himself. He had a favourite dog called Toby, an ugly, pug-nosed, vicious brute, which at such times he was in the habit of summoning, though not present.

As a Mason, the Captain was not of much account, and merely served as a supernumerary when an

odd brother was wanted to enable the W. Master to open the Lodge; and I have introduced his impertinences here, not merely because they actually occurred on this occasion, and constitute the type of a character from which, it is to be feared, few of our Lodges are exempt, but also as a lesson to others who may be addicted to the practice of disturbing the serious proceedings of Masonry by absurd buffoonery, wretched attempts at wit, and unmeaning exclamations, which, as Shakespeare judiciously observes, may cause the unskilful to laugh, but cannot fail to make the judicious grieve. And as it is a patent fact, that if a drunken man could himself see the ridiculous and scandalous figure which he displays in the eyes of all beholders he would hesitate to repeat the experiment, so, by showing this eccentric Freemason in his full proportions, a pregnant lesson may be conveyed to all who inherit similar propensities, to confine their eccentricities to a more acceptable place, and not introduce them into a Masons' Lodge, or mix them up with the serious disquisitions of the Fraternity.

Those who knew the Captain will bear me witness that I have not exaggerated, but rather under-drawn his character, for he was a noisy and devil-may-care person, who had not the slightest objection to exposing himself in any company, however select or grave it might be, so long as he could indulge his appetite for self-enjoyment. Yet, with all his faults, he was not absolutely disliked; for his uniform good temper and *insouciance* were

accepted as an apology for his social transgressions.

In his estimation, the Merchant was a perfect personification of all moral and social virtues. Believing it impossible for this man to err, he was always ready to lend a sanction to everything he said or did. On the present occasion, the Captain was self-invited—an occurrence not unusual with him. His nose was seldom deceived; and he generally followed its suggestions when it indicated a good dinner at the house of an acquaintance, however slender his knowledge of the party might be. And he observed to our host, on entering the room, that he had beat up his quarters by accident, but did not expect to find the ship so well manned. He had left his wife, he said, at friend D——'s, with orders to wait there till he called for her.

The conversation was necessarily guarded in the presence of a *profane*; but the Candidate was so anxious to exchange that offensive appellation for the more honourable character of an initiated brother, and for that purpose to acquire some knowledge of the preliminary steps, that he was too impatient to wait till information was volunteered, and boldly launched out into a series of inquiries, which Bro. Gilkes seemed to have great pleasure in answering. The Surgeon and myself had been discussing some abstruse point on which we entertained adverse opinions, when the Candidate, being weary of a discussion that he did not understand, abruptly demanded—

“Come, come, my good friends, break off your

senseless disputes, and let us have a bowl of bishop to restore harmony."

"And overhaul a song," the Captain added; and without further notice he struck up to some ancient psalm tune—

"Tobacco is an Indian weed,
Green in the morn, cut down at eve,
Shows thy decay;
All flesh is hay,
Think of this when you smoke tobacco.
And when the smoke ascends on high,
Then thou beholds't the vanity
Of worldly stuff.
Gone with a puff,
Think of this when you smoke tobacco."
 &c. &c. &c.

And he performed his musical voluntary with all the solemnity and nasal effect which he would have used in leading the sacred psalmody of the church. And he would have gone through the entire ten verses of the song, if he had not been interrupted at this point by the Merchant, who exclaimed—"Have done, have done, Captain."

"Belay, belay!" the Captain muttered, parenthetically.

"Let us hear how it happens, that while these learned Thebans cannot agree among themselves about the character of Masonic mysteries, they can conscientiously recommend them to others?"

"Stop there, my friend," I replied, hastily. "Before you proceed to make your wishes known, it will be necessary to set you right respecting the observation you have just let fall, for it is of some importance, although, I daresay, you do not intend to attach any specific meaning to it. You

reproach us with having recommended Masonry to you, when, in fact, *we have not done so—we cannot do so*; for we are expressly forbidden by our Constitutions to invite any one to become a Mason. A candidate who wishes to be favourably received must come to us voluntarily—of his own free-will and accord; unbiassed by the solicitations of friends, and uninfluenced by mercenary or other unworthy motives.”

“It is quite true,” Bro. Gilkes added; “and, my dear sir, you must ever remember that Masonry is free, and requires a perfect freedom of inclination in every candidate for its mysteries. It is founded on the purest principles of piety and virtue, and possesses great and valuable privileges to worthy men, and, I trust, to the worthy alone. Vows of fidelity will be required of you, but they contain nothing incompatible with your civil, moral, or religious duties.”

Our friend the Merchant was a singular character. Rather impatient of contradiction, he was a physical-force advocate and a successful electioneering agent; and he returned his candidate to Parliament, at two several elections, on the principles of the old Pitt Tories, and at an enormous expense. He would not allow any one to be right who differed from himself in opinion. He *must* lead, and would not follow. Hence his anxiety to become acquainted with the usages of Freemasonry, that he might be prepared to direct the movements of the brethren, as he did those of the Red party in the borough. All his efforts,

however, failed to establish a Masonic reputation, and he never, I believe, held any responsible office in the Lodge. With such a purpose in view, he was eager in his inquiries, and, in reply to the preceding observations, he announced that he *had* been invited to join the Lodge.

“I can positively affirm,” he said, “that I have been solicited, and urgently solicited too, by Bro. —; and it is at his intercession alone that I have consented to become a Mason.”

“Then Bro. —, whoever he may be,” said Bro. Gilkes, as he filled his second pipe—for after so intimate an acquaintance with him it will be unnecessary to say that he was an inveterate smoker, and used to boast that he frequently executed thirty pipes a day, when entirely disengaged from Masonic pursuits; and he had no other business, for Freemasonry constituted the sole employment and pleasure of his life—“Bro. — has committed an error; but you are still in time to retract, if such be your desire, and no one will censure you for acting upon second thoughts; for Masonry courts no proselytes, but merely receives them on the earnest recommendation of tried and worthy brothers and fellows.”

“Thank you for your option,” the Candidate replied, rather haughtily; “but I have no intention of receding from a course that I have once made up my mind to pursue. There will, however, be no breach of propriety, I presume, in asking for some certain information on the necessary steps to be taken for gaining admission into

the Lodge, and in successfully prosecuting the study of Masonry after initiation; for I assure you, I shall not be contented with a mere superficial knowledge of the externals of the Order."

"Order yourself lowly and reverently to all your betters," said the Captain. "A court-martial—hem—think of this when you smoke tobacco."

"I have not the slightest objection," was the answer of Bro. Gilkes, after he had stared at the Captain, wondering what his senseless interruption could mean; "I have no objection to enlighten you on any portion of the subject that you may consider interesting."

"My first inquiry then naturally is, how you would advise me to proceed to ensure my acceptance as a Mason and member of the Lodge?"

"Your first move will be," said Bro. Gilkes, "to communicate your wishes to some Masonic friend, and it will be his duty to examine minutely into your character and conduct as a member of society, and to be perfectly satisfied that they are free from reproach, before he ventures to propose you in open Lodge; for the laws of Masonry are particularly stringent on this point, and every good Mason will firmly resist the admission of any person whatever, irrespective of his position in society, whose moral character does not correspond with the requisitions contained in the ancient Charges and Constitutions of Masonry."

"And there is a further consideration for the members of a Lodge," I observed, "which ought not to be lost sight of. A candidate should never be introduced into a Lodge on the mere considera-

tion of paying the initiation fee ; which, independently of its being the lowest and basest of all stimulating motives, may be attended with consequences more injurious to the welfare of the Lodge than the fee ten times told will be able to repair. No amount of money can balance the evils arising from a turbulent and mischief-making brother. A modern writer well observes :—

“ Although money is a useful article in all societies, yet it would be inexpedient to solicit any individuals, not otherwise qualified, to become members, chiefly with a view of contributing to the pecuniary interests of the association. Such persons would not only be a dead weight on the Society, but, by the undue influence they would have, might tend to impede its progress, and prevent its chief design from being accomplished.’

“ Besides their literary acquirements, the moral qualifications of those who desire admission ought not to be overlooked. Knowledge is chiefly desirable in proportion as it is useful. If it does not lead its possessor to propriety of moral conduct, its utility, at least to him, may be justly questioned. In all rational institutions, the melioration of the moral characters and dispositions of mankind ought to form as prominent an object as the illumination of their understandings.”

“ But how are you to discriminate ? ” the Candidate asked.

“ Ay, ay ! ” said the Captain, who had been engaged, during the above conversation, in paying his respects to the bowl—“ Ay, ay ! that’s what *I* say—how are you to discriminate ? Think of this—that your days may be long in the land. Boat ahoy ! hem ! ” and he stamped his foot on

the floor, sneezed, hiccoughed, and swallowed a glass of bishop.

Bro. Gilkes again paused. He didn't understand it. And he deliberated with himself whether it would be right for him, as a visitor, to interfere. He went on, however, and answered the Candidate's question.

"There will be no difficulty in discriminating, if you consider it, as you ought to do, an established and inviolable axiom, that candidates for Masonry ought to be good and true men, of mature and discreet age and sound judgment, no bondmen, not immoral or scandalous in life and conversation; for it is a standing rule of ancient Masonry, that all preferment is to be founded on real worth and personal merit. This is considered of such paramount importance amongst us, that the Grand Lodge has thought proper to issue a penal injunction on the subject, because great discredit and injury are frequently brought upon an ancient and honourable institution from admitting members and receiving candidates without due notice being given, or inquiry made into their characters and qualifications; and also from the passing and raising of Masons without due instruction in the respective degrees. It is therefore ruled, that in future a violation or neglect of these laws shall subject the offending Lodge to erasure."

"And it is also provided," said our host, "in the by-laws of every Lodge, that, to prevent the introduction of improper persons, no one can be eligible for initiation unless he be full twenty-

one years of age, except by dispensation from the Grand or P. G. Master. Every candidate must be a free man, and have the entire command of his own actions, and, at the time of his initiation, be known to be in reputable circumstances. He should be a lover of the liberal arts and sciences, and have made some progress in one or other of them; and, before his initiation, he will be required to sign his name to a declaration which embodies the facts I have just stated."

"Our precautions are of a more stringent nature still," Bro. Gilkes added, addressing himself to the Merchant; "for after your subscription, you will have to pass through the ordeal of a regular proposition and ballot in open Lodge, after your name and profession shall have been forwarded to every member in the summons. And if, on the ballot, three black balls shall appear against you, an eternal exclusion from the Lodge is the inevitable consequence."

"Supposing all these preliminaries to have been complied with, and the ballot favourable, what follows?" the Candidate asked.

"Having been thus approved," Bro. Gilkes continued, "you will be introduced on the first Lodge night after the ballot, or the same night if agreeable to yourself, into the ante-room, by the friend who proposed you; and you should be informed by him of the purpose and design of the institution, and the nature of certain solemn engagements into which you will be called on to enter. After this, you will be passed through the

ceremonies of the First Degree, which are very imposing, if they be gracefully performed by a Master who is thoroughly acquainted with the duties of his station; but if they be hurried through in a careless and irreverent manner, and without some decent attention to propriety, the entire effect of the rite will be deteriorated and lost."

"And," said the Captain, "he should be true and just in all his dealings, and bear no malice nor hatred in his heart, according to the advice of Moses, when he said to Judas in the whale's belly, 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.'"

"I have been told," said the Surgeon, heedless of these frequent interruptions, for he knew the man—"I have been told, but on what authority I know not, that amongst the York Masons, who were very cautious and circumspect about the admission of candidates, that the first appearance of a novice on the floor of a Lodge was a *sham*. He was introduced—dark—and conducted to the pedestal, where a few preliminary questions were proposed, and if they were answered satisfactorily, he was returned to the ante-room, and formally prepared for the actual ceremony."

"I suppose this was done," I observed, "lest, if the candidate should decline to proceed with the initiation, he should become acquainted with our method of preparation, and other particulars which a profane ought never to know."

Bro. Gilkes then proceeded with his explanations, which were listened to by all the company

present, except perhaps one, on account of his great experience in the Chair of several metropolitan Lodges. "Every good Lodge," he said, "should be careful to provide itself with a W. Master and officers who are not only capable of performing their respective duties well, but who will make a point of executing every part of the ceremony of initiation with promptitude and precision; because the impression on the candidate's mind will take its permanent stamp in accordance with the solemnity and decorum by which his first introduction into a Lodge is accompanied. If it be performed gracefully and well, the impression will be salutary, and the effect lasting; and if otherwise, disgust and dissatisfaction will probably be excited, and the candidate will shrink from any further commerce with an institution which he will be thus injudiciously led to believe is unworthy of his serious notice."

"Haul up your courses!" the Captain exclaimed, with a hiccough, "and do not covet or desire other men's goods!—hem!" and he tried to look solemn and wise, as if he had said a good thing, and for that purpose frowned hideously—a look which kept his school-children in excellent order.

"Be quiet, Captain, and drink your wine in peace," the Merchant cried out; and then observed, as he filled his glass from the bowl, "Your observations are both judicious and interesting, and I should think, from your great experience, practically true; which increases my desire to be more intimately acquainted with the peculiar

mysteries of a Society that requires so much care and precaution in working its details. If, therefore, it be consistent with your vows of secrecy, I entreat you to proceed with your communications."

"There will be no indiscretion," Bro. Gilkes replied, "in endeavouring to satisfy such a laudable curiosity;" and he drank off his glass of bishop with a zest that bespoke an unusual beverage, and refilled his pipe. Having lighted it, he continued—"After you have been obligated, invested, and intrusted with the signs, tokens, and words, your charitable disposition tested, &c., the particulars of which you must excuse me from detailing, you ought to be sensibly impressed by the Master with the essential difference that exists between a Lodge of Masons and a convivial assembly of common clubbists."

"In the execution of my duty, when I was Master of this Lodge," I observed, "I generally added to the usual charge the eulogium of Preston, and it seldom failed to produce a striking effect on the candidate."

"The plan is good, when it does not render the ceremony too long," said Bro. Gilkes; and turning to the candidate, he added—"After your initiation, you ought to meditate carefully on the instructions which have been faithfully imparted, when you return to your usual occupations; and by this means fix them permanently in your memory, as the elements of Masonic knowledge, and, as we may say, LANDMARKS, to serve as

subjects for mental deliberation and instructive remark. If you be really desirous of improving yourself in Masonry (and if not, you had much better continue as you are), you will do well to consult some intelligent brother privately on any particular subject which may have escaped your recollection, or which you do not clearly comprehend, that your doubts may be allayed or your anticipations confirmed."

"This recommendation is very judicious," I observed; "and I may add from my own experience, that, without some such course of mental discipline, your companions of the same standing will pass before you, and you will be distanced in the intellectual race."

"There will be some difficulty in such a course, I am afraid," said the Merchant; "and few men of business will be able to find leisure for it."

"Yes; a good deal of difficulty, I should say," the Captain broke in by observing. "Think of this when you smoke tobacco."

"Difficulty!" Bro. Gilkes exclaimed. "Of course there will be some difficulty, for no excellence can be attained without labour; but science contains no difficulties which application and perseverance may not surmount, if rightly applied and the proper course adopted. In the present instance, you ought never to show your face in a Lodge after your initiation till you have mastered the qualification questions of the First Degree."

"And how am I to come at them?" the Candidate abruptly asked.

"Oh," our host replied, "I or any other brother will teach them to you in half an hour; for they are easily acquired, not difficult to remember, and a knowledge of them is absolutely essential to the establishment of any reputation in Masonry. A brother who is ignorant of these unequivocal tokens of his application, is little better than a cowan, and will never attain any status in the Order, or be qualified for the lowest and most insignificant offices; and though he may covet the superior ones ever so ardently, they will be for ever beyond his reach."

"I should be glad to know, under such circumstances," the Merchant inquired, "as I am really desirous of becoming a master in the art, how, supposing the half-hour's exercise you have mentioned to be successfully accomplished, I ought to proceed for the purpose of acquiring further information?"

"I should like to know it too," shouted the Captain. "Here, Toby, Toby! where is that — dog?"

Bro Gilkes was thunderstruck. He had not been in the habit of hearing such nautical impressions. After a pause, in which he found that no notice was taken by the brethren present, he said not a word to diminish the delirium. He was the object of attention, but proceeded to answer the Candidate's inquiry. "As a first step, you should be in possession of the necessary qualifications which are required of a Master. You should

“Oh,” our host replied, “I or any other brother will teach them to you in half an hour; for they are easily acquired, not difficult to remember, and a knowledge of them is absolutely essential to the establishment of any reputation in Masonry. A brother who is ignorant of these unequivocal tokens of his application, is little better than a cowan, and will never attain any status in the Order, or be qualified for the lowest and most insignificant offices; and though he may covet the superior ones ever so ardently, they will be for ever beyond his reach.”

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Bro. Gilkes was thunderstruck. He had not been in the habit of hearing such nautical imprecations. After a pause, in which he found that no notice was taken by the brethren present, he did not stop to admonish the delinquent, as was his original intention, but proceeded to answer the Candidate’s inquiry. “As a first and indispensable recommendation, you should bear in mind the importance of that prudent quality which is symbolised in Masonry by a KEY. You should

cultivate a listening ear, a silent tongue, and keep the cabinet or box of ivory closely locked. The key of knowledge should hang, and not lie."

"You are speaking parables," said the Candidate. "What am I to understand by the key hanging?"

"*Arcanum neque tu scrutaveris ullius unquam,
Commissumve teges et vino tortus et ira,*"

the Student replied; "or, in other words, never babble about the secrets of Freemasonry."

"In plain language," Bro. Gilkes continued, "you should practise those useful and amiable qualities which our Transatlantic brethren enforce on their candidates as so many articles of duty; thus: *A listening ear*, teaches you to attend to the instructions of the Master, and also to the cries and prayers of a worthy brother in his distress. *A silent tongue*, teaches you to be silent in the Lodge, that peace and harmony may be preserved, and not to tattle in the presence of a cowan. *A faithful heart*, that you should follow the instructions of the Master on all occasions; but more especially that your fidelity should extend to concealing the general secrets of Masonry, as well as those of a brother delivered to your safe-keeping, that they may remain as secure and inviolable in your breast as they were in his own before he communicated them to you. By such an unexceptionable line of conduct, you will secure a good report amongst your brethren, reap invaluable rewards in your Masonic progress, and ulti-

mately become a polished pillar in the Holy Temple of God."

"This is intelligible enough, I admit," said the Candidate; "and I should be glad to know how a private member of the Lodge, ought to proceed so as to acquire this high degree of esteem."

"I'll tell you that also," Bro. Gilkes replied. "On entering a Lodge, as a private member who holds no office, you should salute the chair respectfully, and take your seat in a quiet and orderly manner, without any noise, or even whispering to your adjacent brethren, that the business of the Lodge be not interrupted or disturbed; because your principal object there is to improve yourself in Masonry, and to learn obedience as a fit preparation for command. At the stroke of the Master's gavel, when he shall call to order, even if the Lodge is at refreshment, there must be an instant and a general silence; and all the members must be seated, except the Deacons, who are engaged in discharging the duties of their respective offices. In a word, the duty of a private member is so simple and easy to be practised, that during the hours of serious business he has no right to speak, except in reply to a question from the chair."

"In the Lodge," I observed, "the prevailing principle is peace and quietness, silence and secrecy. The instruction which issues from the east, like the dew of heaven, is imparted in a subdued tone of voice, and listened to by the brethren with equal anxiety and interest. The labours of

the Lodge are conducted with solemnity and decorum, and the members do not depart without their share of moral edification."

"Do you wish me to understand," the Merchant asked, "that a private member has not the privilege of offering his opinion on any subject which may come before the Lodge?"

"He is gagged!" the Captain shouted. "Toby, Toby! speak up, boy!" And he helped himself to a glass of bishop, with a sonorous snort and half-a-dozen hiccoughs, crooning out the old tune, "Tobacco is an Indian weed," &c. But Bro. Gilkes replied to the question without noticing him.

"By no means. When the routine business of the Lodge is ended, and the Master announces his will and pleasure to be that motions for the benefit of Masonry in general, or of that Lodge in particular, may be made or discussed, then you will be at liberty to offer your opinion freely upon any subject which may be introduced. But this liberty is restricted by certain prescribed rules, which confine the debate within the limits of moderation and fraternal courtesy, lest it should degenerate, during the heat of argument, into licentiousness, and disturb the harmony of the Lodge."

"On this subject," I added, "my own experience as W. Master of a Lodge for eleven years enables me to give you a caution, which you will do well not to despise. There is an unfortunate propensity in some thoughtless brethren to originate motions on the most trivial subjects for the pur-

pose of displaying their eloquence; and if they possess an influence over never so small a minority of the brethren, they will divide the Lodge on every insignificant question. I cannot be too urgent in cautioning you to avoid this practice; for if the W. Master be weak enough to allow the indulgence of such a prurient propensity, he will find abundant cause for repentance. When a Lodge is divided, some of the minority are sure to consider themselves aggrieved by every decision—the sore runs and ceases not in the night season—the elements of disunion will spread, and soon terminate in some unhappy explosion, which will compromise the unanimity of the Lodge, and disturb the peace, harmony, and brotherly love in which all our proceedings ought to be conducted.”

“In lieu of these unprofitable disputes,” said Bro. Gilkes, “how much better it would be to devote the unemployed hours of a Lodge to discussions on abstruse points in the symbolical, technical, or ceremonial divisions of the science. Let the W. Master propose a subject for the consideration of the brethren, and let it be regularly debated at the succeeding Lodge. The time will thus be pleasantly occupied, the members gratified by the friendly discussion, and the knowledge of Masonry more effectually disseminated than by any other method that can be pursued.”

“I should be glad to know,” the Student asked, “what course you would recommend in the case of an ungovernable brother, whom no discipline is able to control?”

“If your Lodge,” Bro. Gilkes replied, “should be so unfortunate as to possess an unruly member who periodically disturbs its harmony, the shortest and best method of relieving yourselves from such a disastrous source of annoyance” (here he looked at the Captain, who was happily unconscious of being observed), “is to deal with him under the provisions of the Constitutions of Masonry—*Private Lodges, art. 23*, and quietly get rid of him.”

“Supposing, then, that the extreme penalty of exclusion be inflicted,” the Merchant observed, “which I presume you allude to, this is the utmost you can do. But what will be the consequences to him? Will he be denounced by the Grand Lodge?”

“He will!” the Captain boldly replied. “Think of this when you smoke tobacco;” the latter words being sung; “and walk in the same all the days of your life.”

“No, no,” Bro. Gilkes answered; “you are quite mistaken, Captain—*he will not*. I admit that it has been more than once suggested that the names of such excluded brethren should be published in the Quarterly Circular of the Grand Lodge, and the subject has undergone much serious discussion; the result of which has been a conviction that the proceeding would not altogether meet the object in view, and in many cases would be harsh.”

“Breakers ahead, boys!” the Captain shouted. “Think of that—hem!—the outward and visible sign.”

“Harsh!” said the Surgeon; “how can it possibly be harsh to post a person convicted of moral delinquency?”

“For this reason,” Bro. Gilkes returned. “The most frequent causes of exclusion from private Lodges are the non-payment of quarterages and arrears. Now there can be no doubt but it sometimes falls to the lot of an individual brother to be really unable, from unexplained causes, to satisfy these demands upon his purse; and not possessing sufficient moral courage to acknowledge his inability, he suffers himself to be excluded. Now I am sure, that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, if the Lodge had been apprised of his difficulties, they would have rendered him assistance, rather than have inflicted upon him the extreme penalty of the law; and under such circumstances, every good Mason would regret if such an unfortunate person were to be proclaimed throughout the whole Fraternity as an unworthy member.”

“It would indeed be a very harsh proceeding,” said the Student.

“The most effectual method of preserving the purity of a Lodge,” Bro. Gilkes added, “is to prevent the admission of improper persons, and the Constitutions provide you with effectual means of doing it. They direct that no Lodge shall admit any brother as a member without producing a statement from his former Lodge of the circumstances under which he left it; and any Lodge neglecting to require such certificate subjects itself to erasure.”

"This regulation," I observed, "if strictly adhered to, which it unfortunately is not, would be infinitely more efficacious towards the maintenance of its respectability and permanence than publishing the names of excluded brethren; and such publication has therefore been confined to cases where the offenders have been expelled from the Society at large by a vote of the Grand Lodge."

"There are many ways," our host observed, "in which an evil-disposed brother may disturb the harmony of a Lodge without any actual breach of its by-laws. But if there be one thing more offensive than another, and more discreditable for a brother to be concerned in, it is that of engaging in private intrigues to disturb the W. Master and his officers in the discharge of their duty, for the purpose of rendering their position more onerous, and themselves unpopular in the Lodge. Such an unnatural conspiracy is a fatal bar to all improvement in Masonic knowledge, and detrimental to the general welfare of the community. It destroys that mutual confidence which ought to form the cement of our Society; and not only interrupts the proceedings of the chair, but produces distrust and dissatisfaction amongst the members; and finally, as the certain result, breaks out into disobedience and open hostility, which is sure to end in the exclusion of some, the resignation of others, and the disgust of all; and well it will be if the dissolution of the Lodge does not inevitably follow."

“Our worthy host is perfectly correct,” Bro. Gilkes resumed, addressing himself to the Candidate; “and I would earnestly advise you, my dear sir, carefully to absolve yourself from committing this grievous fault; and never lend an ear to those who insidiously endeavour to dissuade you from your duty, but rather reprove them. I have known a good Lodge, numbering fifty members, destroyed by the admission of a mischief-making candidate. In three years, he had succeeded in fomenting so many disputes, and creating so much dissatisfaction, that its oldest and best members gradually dropped off in disgust, until the numbers were so much reduced that a Lodge could not be opened; and at length the furniture and jewels were sold, and the Warrant resumed by the Grand Lodge.”

“I can readily believe that such effects would naturally result from such causes,” the Merchant observed; “but there must be some fatal imperfection in a discipline which is powerless to defeat all irregular attempts to produce insubordination, or to create an infraction of the laws.”

“Imperfection!” exclaimed Bro. Gilkes, puffing away at his pipe with increased energy—“Imperfection! True, true! all voluntary associations are necessarily imperfect. Nothing is without fault but the Divinity. Freemasonry has many good laws, but they are not always judiciously administered. Our W. Masters vary considerably in talent, capacity, and firmness; and when a brother, whose principles are doubtful, discovers that the reins of government are held with a feeble and

unsteady hand, he seizes the favourable moment for agitation, and follows it up with such perseverance and success, that before the year expires, he seldom fails to produce discomfiture to the chair, and confusion in the Lodge."

"There are many other rocks and quicksands," I observed, "which your own discrimination will suggest as you proceed, for it will be impossible to furnish rules and directions to meet every case that is likely to occur. I will, however, add one brief caution to the instructions you have received from Bro. Gilkes. It is universally admitted that the convivialities of Masonry possess a secret charm unknown in any other institution, and from this seductive excellence many of our brethren unfortunately entertain a predilection for Refreshment rather than Labour, when, in fact, both ought to claim their legitimate share of attention—one must be done, and the other not left undone. But you must never forget, that the former is subordinate to the latter, and of minor importance. Refreshment might be entirely dispensed with, and Masonry would suffer little by its absence; but if Labour were discontinued, the Order would be worthless, and its practice would be a loss of time without any commensurate equivalent in the improvement of the mind and morals. It would degenerate into a mere convivial club."

"I remember very well," Bro. Gilkes ejaculated, "that our brethren of the last century were fond of the amusement of driving piles, and many a time have I assisted at the ceremony; but Free-

masonry had not then assumed the scientific position which it has now acquired, nor was its philosophy so well understood; and more than this, it was a period when an addiction to conviviality, and even hard drinking, was fashionable in the upper classes of society; and nothing contributed to raise the character of a man so highly in the estimation of his compeers, as to be able to walk steadily home after a debauch with three bottles of wine under his belt. To show the taste of the Fraternity at that period, I will repeat a verse of an old song which was an especial favourite amongst them in my younger days."

"Hear! hear! hear!" from the Captain.

"Ye good fellows all,
 Who love to be told where there's claret good store,
 Attend to the call
 Of one that's ne'er frightened,
 But highly delighted
 With six bottles more.
 Learn Bacchus to follow,
 And quit your Apollo,
 Forsake all the Muses, those senseless old drones;
 Our jingling of glasses
 All music surpasses,
 When crowned with good claret and bumpers, Squire Jones."

"Avast there!" the Captain roared out. "That's better than all your snivelling Masonry. It is a good song, and very well sung, jolly companions—it deserves an extra glass." And he lightened the bowl of its contents by filling the glasses round. "We'll drink to the man that sung the last song. We only mee-eet, life to enjoy!"

“Don't make yourself ridiculous, Captain,” said the Merchant; and the Student observed, without noticing his extravagances, “Happily, however, we live in a more abstemious age; and it therefore becomes the members of our noble Order, while they partake with moderation of the amusements of their forefathers, to labour diligently that they may share in the superior benefits which are placed within their reach, instead of devoting themselves solely to purposes which, though they may *elevate*, can never dignify their moral or social position, or increase their self-respect.”

Here a pause ensued, which our host filled up by a toast; and while the Merchant replenished the glasses, the Captain, with a furious sneeze, cried out, “'Bout ship!” Bro. Gilkes then observed, still addressing himself to the Candidate, “Having now cautioned you on what it is expedient to avoid, I shall proceed to recommend the course which it will be most profitable for you to follow, if you should continue to be desirous of participating in the honours of Masonry, and of proceeding in a regular course through the intermediate steps to the chair of the Lodge. I have already observed, that your first care should be to make yourself acquainted with the qualification questions attached to each of the degrees; because this trifling amount of knowledge has been made indispensable by the Constitutions of Masonry. The next essential will be to attend your Lodge regularly for a year or two at the least; and when there, to listen attentively to the instructions of

wisdom—to mark, learn, and inwardly digest”——

“We may embrace and ever hold fast,” the Captain murmured, parenthetically.

“——the disquisitions which emanate from the place of Light, and fix them in your memory by meditating on them at convenient intervals while employed in your daily avocations; for without this preliminary course of discipline, you will never distinguish yourself as a bright and learned Mason.”

“It appears simple enough,” the Candidate replied, “and contains nothing difficult of execution. But if I have been rightly informed, the disquisitions which are periodically rehearsed in your Lodges contain only a simple outline of the system of Masonry. Where, then, is it to be found in its full perfection?”

“Ay!” the Captain echoed, “where is it to be found? I should like to know that. Square the yards—clear away for action!” and he rose from his seat, stamped across the room with his hands in his coat-pockets; returned, snapped his fingers, and looked daggers at poor Bro. Gilkes, who appeared perfectly at a loss to comprehend the meaning of these hostile demonstrations. After a short pause, and an admonition from the Merchant, the Captain took his seat with a frown and half-a-dozen sneezes, and Bro. Gilkes quietly replied to the Candidate’s inquiry.

“My dear sir, you have been truly informed that the Lodge Lectures contain nothing more

than the elements of the science. But when you have mastered them, you will possess a series of orthodox texts as a foundation for further inquiry. We call them **LANDMARKS**. Masonic knowledge is not attained intuitively. Like all other sciences, it requires a due proportion of labour, zeal, application, and talent, accompanied by a firm determination to excel. The light of some distant fixed stars, though it is said to travel at the rate of 200,000 miles in a second of time, has not reached our planet during an interval of nearly 6000 years; neither have the liberal sciences, in the same protracted period, attained their utmost perfection. Can the free and accepted Mason, then, so far delude himself as to imagine that the secrets of the Order may be acquired without intense study, sound reasoning, constant reflection, and a long and steady application of principles, to produce a corresponding series of practical results?"

"It is an arduous undertaking," the Candidate replied, "and enough to deter any man who has business of his own to attend to."

"You may safely say that," said the Lieutenant. "I have been a Mason these ten or a dozen years, and I confess that I do not thoroughly understand it, although I am seldom absent from our regular Lodge meetings; and the further I advance, the more satisfied I feel that the real secret is still unattained. A celebrated Mason once told me, that a man may have occupied the chair of a Lodge for half a century, and still remain pro-

foundly ignorant of the true secret of Masonry. Without implicitly subscribing to the accuracy of this assertion, I may remark, that those who do not look beyond the signs, tokens, words, and ceremonies for the secret, are in a serious error, and will most probably remain as ignorant of the subject as if they had never been initiated."

"Right!" the Captain shouted; for he had been carrying on a private flirtation with the bishop while the brethren were in earnest conversation, which had seriously affected his intellect, and he hiccupped out, "Now you're on the right tack! Toby, boy! Think of this, when you smo-o-o-ke tob-(at-tish)-bacco!"

"It was asserted by Bro. Noorthouck in the last century," said Bro. Gilkes, "that Masonry is a science which books cannot teach. But the Fraternity of the present time entertain a very different opinion. And if you wish to become acquainted with the philosophy of the Order, or even with the recondite interpretation of its numerous symbols, you must acquire your knowledge in a great measure from books, for you will scarcely be able to learn it in the Lodge. The ordinary Lectures, I repeat, are elementary—the knowledge of a bright Mason ought to be profound. And it is my firm opinion, that whoever is possessed of time for study and reflection on the working, the destination, and the end of Freemasonry, will find himself in a position that will yield an ample fund of satisfaction and delight."

"Perhaps, then, you will be kind enough to

inform me," the Candidate inquired, "what course it will be expedient to pursue in the study of those principles you so strongly recommend, and where a tyro may profitably commence his researches; for I presume you will scarcely approve of a course of desultory reading."

"Reading be hanged!" the Captain shouted, with a gratuitous sneeze. "Who the —— would read when he has got such stuff as this before him? Fill your glasses!" And he suited the action to the word by filling his own. "Toby, Toby! Here, boy!" And he drained his glass, and with a supplementary snort he sank back in his chair. Bro. Gilkes seemed disconcerted. He tried reproof.

"Have you read," he said, addressing himself to me, "have you ever read the address of Bro. C. Bathurst, J.G.W. of the York Grand Lodge, which he delivered before an assembly of the Society on St John's Day, 1726, at Merchant's Hall in that city?"

"I have," I replied.

"You remember, then, his philippic on drunkenness, where he says that the different humours that drink produces in English society proceed from the different mixtures of foreign blood that circulates in us. We sit down all friends, acquaintances, and neighbours; but after two bottles, you see a Dane start up and claim the kingdom as his own; a Saxon drinks up the whole quart, and swears he will dispute that with him; a Norman tells them both he will assert his liberty;

and a Welshman cries out that they are all foreigners and intruders of yesterday, and beats them out of the room. I wish I could not say that I have sometimes observed the same thing in our own most amicable Society of Freemasons."

Having said this, he looked hard at the Captain; but alas! he was fast asleep. Seeing, therefore, that reproof was useless, he replied at once to the Candidate's question. "Certainly not; for although much general information may undoubtedly be derived from such a course, you cannot acquire a complete idea of the system of Masonry without pursuing some regular plan. You might as well attempt to read Horace or Juvenal before you had mastered the accidence."

"And that plan you are willing to communicate?" said the Candidate, inquiringly.

"To be sure I am. What did I come here for, but to instruct and improve the brethren in Masonry. In consequence of the loose and doubtful manner in which our traditional knowledge has been handed down to us through countless ages, the Masons of the present day differ widely on the interpretation of our symbols and Landmarks; but this admission must not be considered as constituting any imperfection in the system, because the very same argument may be advanced against our holy religion; for our best and most learned divines are not agreed on the abstruse doctrines of predestination and free-will, the operation of grace, the regenerating efficacy of baptism"——

“Wherein I was made,” the Captain muttered in his sleep, “a member of Christ”——

“——and other matters, which have in all ages divided the Christian Church against itself. The only direction given by our Grand Lodge is, that the Masters of Lodges shall adhere to the ancient Landmarks of the Order. In other respects, a full latitude is allowed to private interpretation; and the Grand Master, in 1819, pronounced *ex cathedra*, as his deliberate opinion, that every Master of a Lodge is at liberty to deliver his Lectures in any language which may be suited to the character of the Lodge over which he presides; and this decision was communicated to the Craft in the Quarterly Circular of the Grand Lodge, dated December 1, 1819.”

“A most liberal concession,” the Merchant observed, “but destructive, I should think, of uniformity.”

“Yet notwithstanding this extensive privilege,” I hastened to say, lest the Candidate should imbibe an erroneous idea of the utility of a prescribed form of working, “a perfect knowledge of the current Lectures of the Lodge, in the study of Masonry, is indispensable as a primary consideration, for without this preliminary preparation no satisfactory progress can be made.”

“Our brother’s observation is correct,” said Bro. Gilkes, “for it is on these Lectures that all your future researches must be based; and after they are perfectly attained, your next step should be to compare them with former rituals, par-

ticularly that of Preston, which I prefer to the formula now used in our Lodges and authorised by the Grand Lodge. When you have tested the respective merits of all the Examinations and Lectures at your command, then you would derive a considerable increase to your Masonic knowledge by pursuing the course I shall now recommend."

"I am all attention," the Candidate interposed; and the Captain, awaking from his nap, ejaculated, "Bother!" and refreshed himself from the bowl, crooning out as he did so, "Tobacco is an Indian weed;" and he would have finished the song, if his friend the Merchant had not stopped him by placing his hand before his mouth, and saying, "Now, Captain, if you will not be quiet, I shall remove the bowl to the other end of the table."

"Belay! belay!" the Captain exclaimed. "Out of the house of bondage."

But the threat was potent, and obeyed without demur, and Bro. Gilkes proceeded with his illustration.

"Examine the Lodge Lectures *seriatim*, and carefully note the particular subjects that require explanation; and after referring to other rituals, search the legitimate publications on Masonry, and in some or other of them you will be sure to find the information you are in need of."

"Example is better than precept," said the Candidate. "Will you favour us by instancing a particular case?"

“With all my heart. In the first clause and section of the first lecture, mention is made of certain POINTS. Now on this subject your preliminary inquiry will be—What is a point? The answer to this question appears simple enough; but, in the science of Freemasonry, the point involves so many different considerations, that it becomes complicated, and, it may be, somewhat difficult of solution.”

“How so?” the Candidate inquired.

“Why, thus. What is a point? If you turn to the lecture of the Second Degree, you will find that a point or dot, as connected with a line, a superficies, and a solid, forms the first principle of the Pythagorean Triangle, and by the multiplication of which all combinations of form or number are generated; and of all geometrical points, the centre, from which the circle proceeds, is the most perfect, as bearing an equal relation to every part of the circumference.”

“This is clear enough,” said the Student, “and may be understood without the aid of Freemasonry. But I wish to be informed what it is that can render such a simple proposition abstruse?”

“The complexity of the details which the point embraces in the system of Freemasonry,” Bro. Gilkes replied. “In addition to the geometrical point, we have a great variety of other *points*; as, for instance, the first *point*, the cardinal *points*, the *points* of entrance, the *points*, parts, and secrets of the Order, the Master’s *point*, the Warden’s *point*, the chief *point*, the principal

point, the particular *point*, the right *point*, the original and standing *points*, the traditional *point*, the proper *points*, the *points* of fellowship, the *point* within a circle, &c., all of which are of great importance, and require to be distinctly understood by every brother who emulates the character of a bright Mason."

"Which we all do," our host observed; "and yet we should doubtless cut but a sorry figure if we were to undergo a critical examination on this intricate subject, unless we have the advantage of being enlightened by so gifted a brother as yourself."

Bro. Gilkes smiled, and said—"I admit that the subject is to me an interesting one, and I shall therefore have much pleasure in complying with your request. In the Lectures of Dunckerley, a leading question is—What is the first point in Masonry? which is answered thus—T. l. k. b. a. b. This illustration will be understood by every initiated brother."

"The cardinal points of Masonry," the Lieutenant suggested.

"Oh," said the Student, "everybody understands them."

"If they can box the compass," the Captain added.

"The cardinal points have been already copiously discussed," said Bro. Gilkes; "but I may further explain, that they are simply the four intersections of the horizon with the meridian and the prime vertical circle; and therefore coincide with the four cardinal regions of the heavens, and are ninety degrees distant from each other."

“You are mystifying me, I confess,” said the Candidate, “with all these complex notions about a simple point. It verifies the title of one of Shakespeare’s plays, and appears to be *much ado about nothing*. If you confine your illustrations to an isolated part of the subject, I shall be better able to understand you.”

“I will endeavour to do so. The first mention of points in our present Lectures are those of *entrance*, which are three in number, and reputed to include the whole ceremony of initiation; the first being the preparation, the second admission, and the third O.B. But if you turn to a preceding ritual, you will find that this triad of points is but an imperfect condensation of four triads, or twelve points, which were contained in the old York Lectures, as symbolical of the same ceremony, and they were referred to the twelve tribes of Israel.”

“But,” the Surgeon interposed, “you will excuse me if I venture to assert, that our triad of points *does* include all the ceremony of initiation.”

“The essentials,” Bro. Gilkes quietly added, “but not the details. In the ritual to which I have referred, the first point was called Reuben, and was expressive of the *opening* of the Lodge, because he was the first-born of the twelve tribes of Israel; the second was called Simeon, symbolical of the *preparation* of the candidate; the third, Levi, referred to the *reporting* at the entrance of the Lodge; the fourth, Judah, to the *entering* or introduction of the candidate upon the holy ground; the fifth, Zebulun, to the *prayer*; the

sixth, Issachar, to the *circumambulation*; the seventh, Dan, to the *advance* of the candidate from west to east; the eighth, Gad, to the *O.B.*; the ninth, Asshur, to *intrusting* him with the signs, words, and tokens; the tenth, Naphthali, to his *investiture*; the eleventh, Joseph, to his being *placed* at the north-east angle of the Lodge; and the twelfth, Benjamin, to the *closing* of the Lodge, because he closed up the womb of his mother, being the last and youngest of the sons of Jacob. Here we have all the details in the working of a Lodge."

"If your illustrations are all as interesting as this," the Candidate observed, "I anticipate a fund both of instruction and amusement from my initiation. You have sufficient authority for this interpretation, I presume."

"Our authority is from the old Masons of the city of York, where the science has flourished ever since the tenth century of Christianity; and they gave them the distinctive appellation of *original and standing points*, because they were reputed to constitute the basis of the entire system, and without which no person can be legally initiated or received into the Order. Hence it appears indispensable, notwithstanding the veto of Dr. Hemming and his coadjutors, that every person must go through all these twelve forms, not only in the first, but in all succeeding degrees, or his initiation, passing, and raising will be imperfect, and he will be a Mason only in name. And I may further add, that the Lectures of all the three degrees were arranged according to the terms of these original and standing points."

“ In the Examination used by Sir C. Wren,” I subjoined, “ the points of entrance are thus illustrated :—

“ ‘ Ex. Give me the points of your entrance.

“ ‘ RES. Give me the first and I’ll give you the second.

“ ‘ Ex. I hele it.

“ ‘ RES. I conceal it.

“ ‘ Ex. What do you conceal ?

“ ‘ RES. All secrets and secrecy of Masons and Masonry, unless to a true and lawful brother, after due examination, or in a just and worshipful Lodge of brothers and fellows well met.’

“ The points of entrance retained this form amongst the adherents of the Southern Grand Lodge till the union in 1813.”

We were interrupted by a sudden exclamation of the unsocial word, “ Zounds ! ” and after a pause—“ What’s that for ? ” from the Lieutenant.

“ All right ! ” the Captain replied ; “ luff, boys, luff ! ” while the Lieutenant was observed to be industriously chafing his leg with his right hand. At length it appeared, on explanation, that the Captain, being *in nubibus*, and half asleep, dreamt of an imaginary Toby stealing a visionary piece of bullock’s liver, and was at that very moment enjoying his clandestine banquet under the table ; and in attempting to dislodge him, his master had given the Lieutenant a violent kick on the shin-bone. He was sorry for it, he said, but flesh and blood couldn’t stand the abstraction of that delicious frizzle which he had set apart for his own private delectation. After being admonished, with some appearance of irritation, by our excitable host, the Captain filled his glass, drank the Lieutenant’s

good health, and quietly resumed his nap, while I proceeded in my explanation.

“In the same Examination, other points are noticed in this form :—

“‘ Ex. Where is the Master’s point ?

“‘ Res. At the east window, waiting the rising of the sun to set his men to work.

“‘ Ex. Where is the Warden’s point ?

“‘ Res. At the west window, waiting the setting of the sun to dismiss the entered apprentices.

“‘ Ex. How many particular points appertain to a free and accepted Mason ?

“‘ Res. Three.

“‘ Ex. Their names ?

“‘ Res. Fraternity, Fidelity, and Taciturnity.

“‘ Ex. What do they represent ?

“‘ Res. Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth among all right Masons.’”

“These latter,” Bro. Gilkes added, “in the Prestonian Lectures, are included in the triad of (1) Chief point; (2) Principal point; and (3) Point within a circle; and refer (1) to the duty of a Mason to secure his own happiness by promoting that of others; (2) to brotherly love, relief, and truth; (3) to an individual Mason circumscribed within the circle of duty under the direction of the two parallel virtues of Justice and Mercy. This latter symbol has been variously interpreted in different rituals. In the formula at present authorised by the English Grand Lodge, the two parallel lines are referred to Moses and Solomon, and in every other code of Lectures that exists in any other country at the present day, they represent the two St Johns.”

“In Hemming’s Lectures,” our host observed,

“the principal points are explained to be four, which refer to the ceremony of initiation, and are denominated, from so many parts of the human body, the Guttural, Pectoral, Manual, and Pedal. They allude to the four cardinal virtues, Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice.”

“In Dunckerley’s Lectures,” I said, “they were not termed principal points, but original signs.”

“The proper points named in ancient times,” Bro. Gilkes continued, “were five in number, viz., Foot pointed to foot, knee to knee, hand to hand, heart to heart, and ear to ear. These, although they have undergone essential alterations in modern times, are now called the five points of fellowship.”

“An old formula in my possession,” I interposed, “speaks of two other triads of points, the one called *traditional* and the other *remarkable*, in these words: What are the three traditional points? The first comprehends *oral communication*, together with a competent knowledge of our forms and ceremonies; the second includes the *secrets and Landmarks*; and the third, *types, symbols, and allegories*; all of which every good Mason ought perfectly to understand himself, and be able to explain to others when advanced to the chair of the Lodge. The *remarkable* points are thus explained in the same ritual:—

“‘At your initiation how were you apprised of your solemn engagements as a Mason?

“‘By three *remarkable* points.

“‘Give me the first.

“‘That Masonry being free, requires a freedom of inclination from every candidate for its mysteries.

“ ‘ Explain the second.

“ ‘ That Freemasonry is founded on the purest principles of virtue and philanthropy.

“ ‘ Will you favour me with the third ?

“ ‘ With pleasure, R. W. Sir. I was told, that, in order to confine its privileges to worthy men, and to them only, vows of fidelity were required, guarded by a proviso that they be not inconsistent with any law, human or divine.’ ”

“ And to conclude this copious dissertation on the Masonic points,” said Bro. Gilkes, “ I would observe, that in a higher degree (MASTER IN ISRAEL), we find five points of felicity—(1) To walk ; (2) to pray ; (3) to intercede ; (4) to love ; and (5) to assist your brethren so as to be united with them heart and hand. In the same degree are five points of exactness, which refer to the five steps in advancing to the throne of Solomon to receive the O.B.”

“ Proceeding with the Lectures on this plan,” our gifted brother continued, “ you will find some mention of a KEY, which is said to be equally singular in its construction and its operation, and it is further said to be suspended by the thread of life within an arch of bone. Now, in investigating the nature and destination of this key, the ancient rituals describe it as being placed in a safe depository, which is sometimes described as a bone bone box, that neither opens nor shuts without ivory keys ; at others, a box of ivory, or cabinet of knowledge, &c.”

“ In the formula used by Sir Christopher Wren,” I observed, “ it is thus described :—

“ ‘ Have you the key of the Lodge ?

“ ‘ Yes, I have.

“ ‘ What is its virtue ?

“ To open and shut—to shut and open.

“ Where do you keep it ?

“ In an ivory box between my tongue and my teeth, or within my heart, where all my secrets are kept.

“ Have you a chain to the key ?

“ Yes, I have.

“ How long is it ?

“ As long as from my tongue to my heart.’ ”

“ Keep your tongue from picking and stealing,” said the Captain, awaking from his sleep, “ and your hands from evil-speaking. It’s a difficult navigation, Toby, boy ! ”

“ Desaguliers explains it thus,” Bro. Gilkes continued :—

“ Where do you keep your secrets ?

“ Under my left breast.

“ Have you any key to those secrets ?

“ I have.

“ Where do you keep it ?

“ In a bone bone box, that neither opens nor shuts without ivory keys.

“ Does it hang or does it lie ?

“ It hangs.

“ What does it hang by ?

“ A tow-line, nine inches or a span.

“ What metal is it made of ? ”

“ Excuse my interruption for a moment,” Bro. Gilkes interposed; “ but Dr Anderson, in his Defence, has given such an admirable illustration of this passage, that I cannot forbear presenting it to your notice. ‘ A part of the Mason’s Catechism,’ he says, ‘ has given occasion to a great deal of idle mirth and ridicule, as the most trifling and despicable sort of jargon that men of common sense ever submitted to. The bone box and the tow-line have given wonderful diversion. I

think there are some verses in the last chapter of the Book of Ecclesiastes which in some manner resemble this form of expression. I shall transcribe them, with the opinion of the learned upon them, without making any particular application. The passage is as follows: *'In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut up in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.'* The expositors upon these verses are almost unanimous in their opinion that they ought to be thus explained: The keepers of the house are the shoulders, arms, and hands of the human body; the grinders are the teeth; those that look out at the windows are the two eyes; the doors are the lips; the streets are the mouth; the sound of the grinding is the noise of the voice; the voice of the bird is the crowing of the cock; the daughters of music are the two ears; the silver cord is the string of the tongue; the golden bowl is the pia mater; the pitcher at the fountain is the heart, the fountain of life; the wheel is the great artery; and the cistern is the left ventricle of the heart."

"I think," said the Student, "that Homer has a passage with a similar reference—

"*Ἄνδρος δὲ ψυχὴ πάλιν εἰλθειν οὐτε ληιστῆ,
Οὐθ' ἐλετῆ, ἐπεὶ ἀρ κεν ἀμειψεται ἔρκος ὀδοῦτων.*"

—Il. ix. v. 408.

“ But the soul of man returns no more, nor can it be acquired nor caught after it has passed over the barrier of the teeth.”

“ These illustrations are worthy to be remembered,” Bro. Gilkes continued. But to proceed with our discussion. Dunckerley more copiously, but to the same purpose, extends the comparison thus :—

“ ‘ How are Masonic secrets acquired ?

“ ‘ By the help of a key.

“ ‘ Is that key said to hang or lie ?

“ ‘ It is said to hang and not to lie.

“ ‘ Why so ?

“ ‘ Because it ought always to hang in a brother’s defence, and never to lie to his prejudice.

“ ‘ What does it hang by ?

“ ‘ The thread of life in the passage of entrance, nine inches or a span long, the supposed distance between the Guttural and the Pectoral.

“ ‘ Why so nearly connected with the heart ? ’ &c.

“ From one or other of these sources, you will learn that this symbol refers to the key of a Mason’s tongue, which ought always to speak as well in the absence of a brother as in his presence ; and when that cannot be done with honour, justice, and propriety, to adopt the distinguishing virtue of a Mason—silence.”

“ I confess,” said the Merchant, “ that I had not the most distant idea that Freemasonry was such a comprehensive system, or that it embraced such interesting episodes ; and I feel exceedingly gratified at being allowed the privilege of attending your discussion this evening. I have ever considered the Order merely as a harmless institution, which provided the means of whiling

away a vacant hour on a long and dreary winter's evening. And I believe, also, that the brother who invited me to join the Lodge entertains no higher opinion of it."

"Your estimate of Masonry will still improve, you may believe me," Bro. Gilkes replied, "when you have gone through the entire Lectures on this plan, which will not be accomplished in a week, nor a month, nor a year. But if you possess sufficient resolution to persevere, you will undoubtedly succeed in establishing a sound system in your mind, which will enable you to converse learnedly and authoritatively on any Masonic subject, and qualify you to execute the chief office of a Lodge, with credit to yourself and benefit to the Society. You may then profitably read—read—read—everything you can lay your hands on; and it will be a matter of indifference where you begin, so long as you read with attention, which, after such a course of preparatory discipline, you can scarcely fail to do; for your love of Masonry will by that time have become a passion, and convert every new acquisition into a source of pleasure and unmixed delight."

"You should not omit to mention," I interposed, "that during the studies of Masonic doctrine, an attention to discipline should be by no means disregarded. The Constitutions of the English Craft contain the laws by which its principles are regulated and its purity preserved, and they should occupy a share of the student's attention. No one can be a good Master who is ignorant of the system of Masonic government;

nor will he ever be able to rule a Lodge with propriety and success, unless he has some general knowledge, at the least, of the laws that have been promulgated by authority for the government of private Lodges. The Constitutions are the only sure guide in cases of doubt and difficulty; and when disputes arise amongst the brethren, they constitute the best and safest pilot to enable the W. Master to weather the storm; and if firmly maintained and enforced, without any exhibition of fear, favour, or partiality, will be sure to land him triumphantly in the haven of public approbation."

"Of course, then," the Candidate observed, "these laws or constitutions contain ample provisions to ensure amongst the members a regular and strict performance of their duties."

"Duties be hanged!" the Captain exclaimed, once more arousing himself from his nap; "we want no duties but to charge the glasses and drink them off;" and he suited the action to the word; cleared his head by sundry sternutations, and composed himself quietly to sleep.

"No human laws," Bro. Gilkes replied, "can be absolutely perfect; but I may add, that our regulations are so stringent and effective, that they seldom fail to produce the desired effect. For instance, what can be better calculated to preserve order than the following rules? 'No brother shall speak twice on the same question, unless in explanation, or the mover in reply. Every one who speaks shall rise and remain standing, addressing himself to the W. Master,

nor shall any brother presume to interrupt him unless to address the Master to order, or the Master himself shall consider it necessary to call him to order; but after he has been set right, he may proceed if he observe due order and decorum. If any member shall have been twice called to order for transgressing the rules, and shall nevertheless be guilty of a third offence at the same meeting, the W. Master shall peremptorily command him to quit the Lodge for that meeting.' ”

“These arrangements,” the Candidate remarked, “are exceedingly judicious, and, if strictly observed, I have no doubt but they would effect the intended purpose.”

“You are right,” said the Student, “for nothing could better promote the interests of a grave institution like Freemasonry than these ordinances. *Auxilia humilia firma consensus facit.*”

“Which means”—— said Bro. Gilkes, inquiringly.

“The only contention amongst Masons shall be,
Who better can work and who better agree,”

the Surgeon replied. “And accordingly we find that the Order is becoming daily more popular, because its worthy members regulate their conduct out of the Lodge by the rules and precepts which operate so harmoniously within its walls.”

“The conclusion of the whole matter,” said Bro. Gilkes, “may be briefly stated thus, and I cut it short because Low Twelve approaches, and it is time to use the right point of a Mason. During the first year after your initiation, you

should be content either to remain in silence, or with asking that you may have, with seeking that you may find, and with knocking that the door of knowledge may be opened to admit you within the precincts of the sacred portico. It will be profitable for you, during that period, to sit at the feet of Gamaliel, as St Paul did many centuries ago, and humbly receive the instruction which beams from the seat of Wisdom, without being ambitious of a higher place in the Lodge, until you have learned how to conduct yourself as a disciple."

"Supposing this probation to have been successfully encountered," the Candidate asked, "and passed in an exemplary manner, what follows?"

"Ay, what follows?" the Captain stammered, with his eyes half shut. "Think of this when you smoke tobacco;" and as the bowl was exhausted, he roared out for brandy.

"Why, it follows that your character as a Mason will be enhanced, and you will speedily rise out of the ranks to some subordinate office, or it may be to a seat in the south or west, and then you will be competent to offer instruction and to give advice; and as the Senior Warden, you will be authorised to preside over the Lodge in the absence of the W. Master. And having thus given your mind to study and contemplation, your matured opinions will be entitled to respect, and you may look forward with confidence to the moment when your brethren will pay the highest tribute in their power to your merit, by placing you at the helm of affairs as the W. Master of the Lodge."

“You will also observe, my good friend,” I said, “that the capacity of a candidate for place and power, or, in other words, for a high office in the Lodge, can only be estimated from his antecedents, for who would back a losing horse? Experience is the touchstone of merit. And I can assure you, that unless you prove yourself zealous and attentive to the preliminary duties of the Lodge, by being constantly present, uniformly diligent and obedient, and anxious on all occasions to improve yourself in Masonry, you will never be fit for a leader; nor is it likely that your fellows will confer upon you that most unmistakable token of their confidence—the uncontrollable power of regulating their proceedings.”

“And lastly,” Bro. Gilkes concluded, “I would impress it firmly on your mind, that whoever accepts the office of W. Master, stakes his reputation and character as a Mason on maintaining and preserving the status and prosperity of the Lodge during his term of office; and both will be grievously imperilled if, by supineness, mismanagement, or any other influential cause, the community which have intrusted their vital interests to his charge shall find reason to repent of their choice. And so, brethren, I give the right word and right point of a Mason—ADIEU!”

And the party broke up.

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price 6s., post free (foreign postage extra, weight 1 lb.)*

THE PYTHAGOREAN TRIANGLE;

OR,

THE SCIENCE OF NUMBERS.

BY THE REV. G. OLIVER, D.D.

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FROM DR OLIVER'S PREFACE.

. . . "When we hear, therefore, of ancient quaint phrases, whether in general literature or in Freemasonry, being swallowed up and lost in the undeviating march of scientific and moral improvement, and the substitution of others which are more in accordance with the usages of a polished era, we are not to be surprised at such occurrences, nor complain, as many worthy Masons of the old school are apt to do, of modern innovations; as if the Institution were expected to stand still, and remain exempt from the inevitable law of mutation, to which all human sciences are exposed. . . . During these gradual improvements, the doctrine of MASONIC NUMBER slowly but certainly progressed in every successive formula, until it reached its acme in the year 1814, by the introduction of all those scientific numeral phenomena which are deduced from a philosophical consideration of the PYTHAGOREAN TRIANGLE.

. . . "It is a remarkable fact, that although the Institution of Freemasonry is based upon the Science of Numbers as enunciated in the Pythagorean Triangle, we have no authorised Lecture to illustrate its fundamental principles or to display its mysterious properties. At every step we find a triad reference, but the reasons why this occurs are not satisfactorily explained. The monad, the duad, the triad, and the tetrad, meet us at every turn; and though these numbers constitute the foundation of all arithmetical calculations, the Candidate is not fully instructed how they operate or in what manner they ought to be applied.

. . . "The subject is one of surpassing interest to the free and accepted Mason, particularly if he be a lover of general science. At my first initiation, I soon discovered the numerical peculiarity by which the Order is distinguished, and wondered that the Lectures contained such a meagre explanation of this extraordinary fact. Being somewhat addicted to mathematical studies, I took an intense interest in the pursuit, and, during a course of miscellaneous reading, made various collections on the subject of numbers, simple and compound, which I found invaluable when I became the Master of a Lodge. . . . Whatever I read contributed to my store, . . . and even when I made no notes, I was steadily amassing materials for future use in the peculiar walk of Masonic literature which I was destined to pursue. . . . This treatise has been several years in hand, and I hope it will afford amusement and instruction to the assiduous Mason who consults its pages with the sober intention of improving his knowledge, by acquiring a store of additional facts which may assist his investigations into the more abstruse arcana of Masonic Numbers."

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