



The EDITH *and* LORNE PIERCE
COLLECTION *of* CANADIANA



Queen's University at Kingston



What Is Masonry?

PREPARED BY

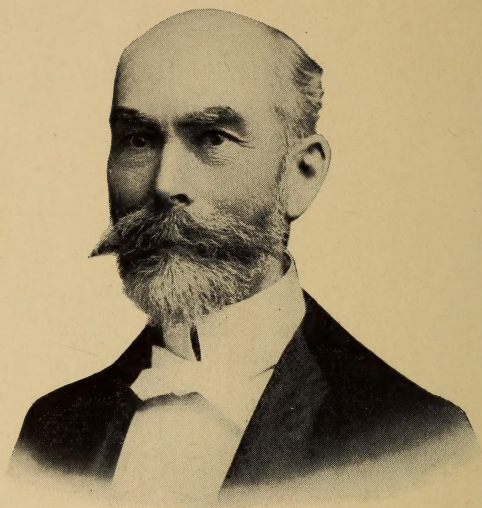
ILLUSTRIOUS BRO. JOHN R. GRANT, 32°
OF WINNIPEG

Approved by Committee of Manitoba Consistory and by Members of the Supreme Council 33° for the Dominion of Canada for private distribution among members of Manitoba Consistory and subordinate bodies.

JOHN McKECHNIE, 33°
Deputy for Manitoba and Saskatchewan

"Virtus Junxit mors non separabit"

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Fraternally yours
J. R. Grant

PREFACE

TO MY BRETHREN OF THE RITE:

You have expressed a desire through bodies of the Rite that this paper be published for the use of the Brethren.

I read the original as a sort of valedictory at the Communication of our Consistory, concluding my third year as Commander in Chief and I hope you appreciate the difficulties I labored under while preparing it. It is arranged in five separate series, each supposed to be complete in itself, viz.,

1. What is Masonry?
2. Degrees 1, 2, 3 Symbolic Masonry.
3. Degrees 4 to 14 Perfection.
4. Degrees 15 to 18 Bethesda Chapter.
5. Degrees 19 to 32 Consistory.

It does not purport to be in any sense Ritualistic. I have confined myself strictly to what I conceive to be the teachings of Masonry as exemplified in the ceremonial of the A. & A.S.R., "What is Masonry?" is not claimed to be original, merely the assembling of various sources of information, the rest of the paper is my own arrangement and suggestion, and is the result of my Masonic observation and experience for over a quarter of a century. I found it hard and almost impossible to avoid the use of some expressions so common in our system and where a word or phrase expressed the thought I desired, I used it at the risk of repeating words already familiar to every well informed Mason.

If you can approve my understanding of Masonic teaching and can receive and adopt my feeble efforts at its interpretation, in the spirit with which I tender them I shall feel fully rewarded.

J. R. GRANT.

Winnipeg, October, 1910.

What Is Masonry?

MASONRY is a union of all unions, an association of men bound together in their struggle to attain all that is noble, who desire only what is true and beautiful, who love and practice virtue for its own sake, that is Freemasonry.

Masonry is committed to the cause of humanity that it may excite in man noble aspirations, to develop in him practical charity and to make him keep in subjection rude and impure passions.

Masonry is a system of ethics based upon axiomatic propositions and illustrated by dramatic representation. The existence of divinity, the human soul and the brotherhood of man are held as facts in relation to the basis of human conduct and he who does not recognize these is considered ineligible as a candidate for Masonry.

Many theories have been advanced to show the relation of Masonry to the ancient mysteries. Does it inherit its springs of action from the patriarchial mode of worship established by God Himself? These truths revealed by Divinity

came at length to be doubted or rejected through the imperfection of human reason and though the visible symbols were retained in the mysteries of the pagan world their true interpretation was lost.

Or did Freemasonry start with the building of King Solomon's Temple and the guard of secrecy introduced to preserve it from pollution? Or does it derive its origin through the intervention of the Crusaders and their orders of Chivalry? Or does Masonry antedate Christianity and the Middle Ages, and can the secret societies of that early period be traced to Freemasonry or will we cease to look for its origin in the mysteries of Mythras or the Chivalric orders of the Crusaders, or even at the building of King Solomon's Temple, but seek for its origin and descent in that coincidence of human thought that beginning to recognize and teach the reality of a future life yield to the proneness of the human mind and endeavor to clothe this belief in symbolic dress? Or will we slightly vary from, and adopting one of the qualities of the compass expand these several theories and begin with the basic thought that the fundamental principle of Freemasonry is a belief in God? If so, then we trace a Divine Providence directing the destiny of Man, whether

in the spiritual or in the secular domain from the creation of the World, that a most potent influence for good has been achieved by legendary history taking on the form of fraternity, thus following in temporal matters the guidance of the Divine government in the spiritual affairs of the universe.

The changes which have taken place since the creation of the world no matter how we reckon time have all been under the guidance and direction of a Divine dispensation working out for humanity its noblest attainments and this great force is given fitting recognition in the expression "The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man." Does it not therefore appear that in some form or other the spirit of fraternity has always existed?

If this is true may we not claim that Freemasonry in spirit at least was co-incident with the birth of time and that during the lapse of the ages the transitory mind of man has finally evolved fraternity as we know it, ever changing indeed but following the Divine impulse, the ancient mysteries were ever the aids to progress and civilization and the sources of moral life and in recognition of the truth of that, we have translated many of these customs into our modern civilization.

I.—ENTERED APPRENTICE

The first degree in Masonry, symbolized by the Rough Ashlar, presents to you man in a state of nature, rude and uncultivated, with no other resources than those with which nature has endowed him.

The candidate as he appears is in a condition of subjection, a creature possessing passions that rule over him and thus symbolizes the great masses of the people without organization, ignorant and superstitious, yet possessing qualities, which if properly developed make them fit to adorn the Temple of Memphis, each step in moral development producing an instinctive longing for light.

Declaring that he wishes to join the craft for no selfish purpose the applicant approaches the portals of Masonry and is there received; he has declared his belief in a Supreme Being, the Great Architect of the Universe and an all-compassionate Father, who has revealed His will to man. He has accepted the obligations required of him and now stands in the Lodge as a man, in the true Roman sense AS A MAN, Masonry prescribing no creed other than a belief in that Supreme

Being who is infinite in His loving kindness. A claim is made upon the candidate on behalf of that greatest of all virtues, "that envieth not, but suffereth long and is kind." How easy it is to give of one's abundance, but poor and penniless poverty is stirred by that pathetic appeal for aid, and the candidate receives his first great lesson on the selfishness of living for one's self and the claims of sweet charity are impressed. The great benefits of Masonry fall to those who do the most for it. What Masonry will do for you rests entirely with yourself. Becoming a Mason is not sufficient, you must be one for all time. Then will Masonry reach out its arms to you, smooth away the rough places, lift you toward the summit of the high mountains and crown your life with glory.

II.—FELLOW CRAFT

As a Craftsman you are encouraged to widen your range of vision by the acquirement of knowledge, that knowledge that can alone make man master over himself. You are taught the value of association and that a union of sympathies is the bond of affiliation that will ultimately lead to Freedom. So Masonry teaches men that the forces of nature are the power of God made

manifest, that every genuine Freemason is an apostle of the truth, that there is nobility in labor, that by prudence, fortitude, temperance and justice, and not by rashness, they can become truly free. Architecture in Masonry in this degree is the voice of nature speaking to the Mason in the language of Art. As we cultivate a study of Masonry its objects become extended as our knowledge of it increases, new lights burst forth from its inmost recesses unobserved by the careless or indifferent craftsman, but which to the inquiring and reflective Mason burn with a dazzling radiance. It is in this degree the candidate first receives any other than moral instruction, while everywhere principle is emphasized as against popularity, otherwise there would be no place in Masonry for the story of the slaying of the forty and two thousand Ephraimites at the crossing of the Jordan.

III.—MASTER MASON

In the Master's Degree in addition to what you have already been taught as to your duty to your fellow, and your proper relation to life, and to "remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," your mind is being prepared for that last great change that must sooner or later come

to us all; the dignity of labor is again taught us here, and that the right to liberty in thought and action is the heritage of freedom, while through that light which is a direct result of Masonic teaching, man may be made fit for his place in the temple of character and society as typified by the perfect Ashlar, that labor is the lot of man, and that the soul is immortal is taught by an impressive symbolism and ceremony and that nothing but ignorance and spiritual bondage can enslave it. You were instructed in the duties of obedience to the law, fidelity to your brethren and charity to all, and that the perfect Ashlar or Cubical Stone as well as the working tools represent all the influences and forces under man's control and marks a new and better era amongst the people. It is a symbol of that perfection to which all our teachings point, where rule and the law of love governs with the inevitable result that harmony and equilibrium may now sit enthroned, where formerly discord and rebellion were the forces represented by despotism, intolerance and ignorance. The Volume of the Sacred Law was placed before you as the guide of all your actions, you were taught that all virtuous men may hope with confidence for a resurrection to a new and better life, that in the presence of death all rank and privileges

disappear, and that only by intelligent and unselfish application of the principles exemplified in this degree can we hope to become the almoners of God's bounty to our fellowmen, and to see in the death and resurrection of the widow's son the image of the Son of God who died and was raised again. And he alone is a Master Mason who searches into the hidden truths that lie concealed under the commonplace interpretations of the legends and symbols of this degree.

Your relation to your fellow man has been strengthened and widened and with stars over our heads and graves beneath our feet the candidate symbolically goes down into the dark bosom of the waters, all nature laments and we share the common sorrow and in Khurum rising from the grave we have a symbol of perfect freedom of intellect and conscience, from prejudice, vice and error, both spiritual and temporal, and this degree gives an interpretation of the means used for its accomplishment through the logic of symbolism, and in Him we have also a vision of the whole human race rising victorious from the grave and now redeemed, the true and living image of Him through faith in whom we may be redeemed from our iniquities and admitted to the liberty of the Sons of God.

IV.—SECRET MASTER

The candidate thus prepared approaches the portals of Scottish Rite Masonry well grounded in the great principles and leading truths on which all Freemasonry rests.

As a Secret Master the lesson of serving your fellows, your country and all mankind was urged upon you and that you must not assume obligations or esteem your promises lightly, and as you begin your ascent to where truth sits enshrined you are reminded of the steps already taken and here you were required to observe Secrecy, Obedience and Fidelity. These are the initial requirements where a certain bond of unity in thought and action are essential to enable him who would seek to restore to liberty those who had been the slaves of ignorance and oppression. Duty, the one great law, is straight as an arrow and leads directly to truth, seek no by-paths for be assured they lead to error. The necessity of being true to every trust and duty required of you whether to your family or friend, your God or your country, are here fully emphasized. Man being the realization of his own

ideal, it is only as we possess proper conceptions of morality that we are prepared to adopt the true teachings of philosophy—Masonic light, like the light of day, must follow a natural law and come by slow degrees.

V.—PERFECT MASTER

As a Perfect Master we are here taught that we should be willing even to sacrifice our lives in defence of a great principle, that we ought not to regard death as the greatest calamity that could befall us, and that where honor and duty require it, we are encouraged to self sacrifice by the honors bestowed upon the great dead, and that Masonry fulfils and justifies its existence only when it seeks to raise the people to that life of liberty which God intended for them. We are taught that the open hand is the fit companion of the pure heart and that we must deal fairly and honestly with all men. The brevity of human existence with all its vanities and the certainty that death awaits us at the end of our earthly pilgrimage should lead us to reflect upon our origin and our destiny and should direct our thoughts to leading a wise and virtuous life as our best preparation for that fate which comes alike to us all; therefore, let us be careful that we ob-

serve a proper attitude to our fellows in all the relations of life and that the spoken word of a Mason should be the equivalent of a bond, and ever remember that liberty and independence without those virtues means nothing and cannot be realized, seeing that it will not descend to us by ordinary inheritance—it is a blessing that must be earned before it can be enjoyed.

VI.—INTIMATE SECRETARY

We are here taught that evasions, quibblings and advantage taken of equivocal expressions are as dishonest as an open violation of a bargain, that cunning is not wisdom, that generosity and disinterestedness are not lightly to be esteemed, that honor and duty are a Mason's pole stars, and that the simplest things are miracles to us; but to an intelligent mind enlightened by study we teach that peace with God and man is the antidote to human misery.

Let him who would merit honor and reward be zealous and faithful; let him redeem his promises. To be not honest is to be not wise. Let us learn our proper attitude towards vice, wrong and injustice, and ever take courage from the reflection that an approving conscience is a step in that ladder which leads to perfection.

Here good faith, fidelity and a willingness to make self-sacrifice are again impressed and the utter uselessness of demanding or expecting perfect liberty until we have been enlightened by emancipation from ignorance and superstition and have given proof that we have been thus fitted for that freedom to which we aspire.

VII.—PROVOST AND JUDGE

Here we are taught that the just only possess the title to freedom, that it is our duty to enforce just decrees, to exercise impartial judgment, seasoning justice with mercy, to respect the law and to see to it that he who assumes the office of judge shall have knowledge of the law and ability to weigh evidence and be able to give an impartial verdict without regard to persons or personal interest, but with charity to all.

It is the duty of him who is entrusted with authority over the people to be a lover of truth and a hater of injustice, and to administer the law without prejudice or partiality and be himself above the influence of gifts. To be of pure morals and blameless life, and see that by a wise preparation he is made fit for assuming the duties of such an exalted position; keeping ever before him the watchwords Justice with Impar-

tiality, for be assured that with nations as with individuals injustice is the foundation of sand upon which no permanent superstructure can be raised that will withstand the test of time but lacking the power of cohesion it must crumble from its own weight.

VIII.—INTENDANT OF THE BUILDING

Here we are taught the proper relation of the employer of labor and the employed, that every man, however menial his position, is our brother; in this degree we have the embodiment of a great and noble creed—the brotherhood of man, fraternity, where equity, charity and sympathy should enter into all the relations of life. This degree directs the mind to maintaining the proper relation between the government and those intended to be governed. Those contending forces of Capital (Jachin) and Labor (Boaz) that sustain the whole fabric of human association should both be represented and protection to the interests of each would be the logical result. Many wise and merciful admonitions are here given intended to appeal to our humanitarian instincts and to create within us a mutual bond of sympathy for those whose lines have not always paralleled our own. Thus will it be made possible to unite

discordant forces now so frequently arrayed against each other and thereby induce that co-operation and harmony of purpose that is the surest guarantee of individual and national prosperity; "This above all, to thine own self be true and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

Keep constantly before you an ideal character adorned with a Virtue and Excellence, which you should strive to make your own. Then let men know that what you say you will do, that your decision made is final; no wavering; that once resolved you are not to be diverted from your purpose, here is involved the true spirit and genius of Masonry.

IX.—ELECT KNIGHT OF THE NINE

X.—ILLUS. ELECT OF THE FIFTEEN

XI.—SUBLIME KNIGHT ELECT

The only claim made for the 9th, 10th, and 11th degrees is that they are symbolic and allegorical. Our Grand Master in the ninth degree is to us the realization of freedom from intellectual and spiritual bondage, while intolerance, superstition and ignorance are the distinguishing characteristics of his assassins.

In the raising of our Grand Master we see foreshadowed the force of freedom which like truth "tho' crushed to earth shall rise again," and that ignorance and the lack of true patriotism, bravery and devotedness to duty, is a foe to national progress and must be overcome. Persons and property must be protected and crime punished by those authorized to enforce the law; we have learned that anarchy is the mother of treason and that tyranny and fanaticism as well as ignorance are the foes of mankind.

You here pledged yourself to relieve the oppressed and to devote your energies and talents to the best interests of your country. Freedom of speech and liberty of conscience are the Royal Standards which you have promised to defend and as a **SUBLIME KNIGHT ELECT** you assumed the title of "A true Man," that your word and profession were reliable, which if not lived up to, free Government would be a name only and would become the enemy of humanity, whereas we may learn that to attain the truth, and to serve our fellows our country and mankind is the noblest destiny of man.

XII.—GRAND MASTER ARCHITECT

In the 12th degree you were taught the law of progression, that no man, however great, is in-

dispensable to the world, that the slain chief has a successor, and that you had exchanged the tools of the laborer and had moved from the lower to the loftier levels of thought; even to the study of Him whose nature is above our intellects and had learned that everything changes but nothing perishes, that the nature of the effect is always in accordance with the nature of the cause, and that the Princes of Knowledge are they who know the truth, and thus were you prepared to perform your part in the purpose and plans of the GREAT ARCHITECT OF THE UNIVERSE.

XIII.—KNIGHT OF THE ROYAL ARCH

As you advance in this science new responsibilities arise, your range of vision has been widened, you now comprehend what was before an enigma.

We are commanded to love one another. Are we to disobey and disbelieve because we have not yet reached a plane sufficiently high that we can see and fully comprehend? Are we going to hate and slay one another because we cannot agree as to the nature of God and his attributes? Rather let us listen to the gentle voice of Masonry telling us that when God speaks the ear should listen; the heart should receive and with a will nothing

can conquer we should obey, believing that we have always more than we deserve.

It may be that heretofore you thought all you had to do was to step out of the shadow into the light and realize the great secrets of God and nature, but you were then in danger of mistaking the shadow for the reality; you are here taught not to undervalue the importance of truths which your limited horizon had not so far revealed to you.

XIV.—GRAND PERFECT AND SUBLIME MASON

In this degree you were taught the nature of Masonry as a teacher; that God is the infinite mind and the Supreme Intelligence was explained to you; you have learned that Masonry is of no age but belongs to all time; that it is of no one religion but finds its great truths in all.

You saw the destiny of Masonry as it involved the human family.

You were taught that a Grand Perfect and Sublime Mason acts not from motives of policy but for "conscience sake"; that the finite cannot measure the infinite; that the Deity is not an object of knowledge but of faith; not by understanding but through the moral world within

us, and that our conception of Him must be proportioned to our mental comprehension and that our highest conception will always be nearest the truth; that the hope of success and not the hope of reward should be our sustaining stimulant.

Masonry must always be a continual struggle toward the light, therefore, Hiram is to us humanity on its highest plane and prophetic of the time when all shall come into the perfection of the perfect man.

This degree symbolizes the beginning of a new era in the history of our race when all men shall be free and equal in the eyes of the law, when we may hope for the final triumph of good and for that great harmony which results from the blending of the discords and the concords of the Universe, then will the falsehood of truth and the truth of falsehood become as the harmony of the harp and but add grandeur to the anthem.

XV.—KNIGHT OF THE EAST

This degree taught you that if you would have pure water the source must be pure. The former temple was now in ruins; the people were captives, the sacred vessels of the Holy House were carried away and the manner of their final return is the lesson in the drama of this degree; it teaches us that conscience is the voice of God speaking to us; that affliction is a father's call to come back and that we may look forward with confidence for the dawn of a better day when simple truth will be the true test that will prove the ultimate triumph of principle; all this is fully symbolized here, and that if we are to possess liberty that will endure it must be purchased at the price of eternal vigilance and finally, that temptations, however strong, or cunningly devised, nor immediate necessity, will justify the sacrifice of a great principle.

XVI.—PRINCE OF JERUSALEM

The Assyrian hosts had laid waste the temple at Jerusalem and its worshippers clad in sackcloth were in captivity. The last degree por-

trays the manner of the return of the sacred vessels and there yet remains the rebuilding of the Holy House.

Masonry, whose creed is belief in God's infinite love for his creatures as well as in his wisdom and justice, seizes this symbol and in her gentle teachings adapts it to the building of the temple of liberty and character, and emphasizes the virtue of courage and the importance of constructive as opposed to destructive labor. Combine courage with toleration, truth with strength and liberty with law, and you have forged the anchors from which the great arches spring that sustain the edifice of constitutional government and personal freedom.

XVII.—KNIGHT OF THE EAST AND WEST

In the 17th degree you have the first of the philosophical teachings of our series and you saw there that if men are to be free, then ignorance and superstition must be banished for they are the fetters men forge for themselves, thus creating their own bondage. You are here taught that God only is wise, that he is the source of inspiration and truth its only test, that light will finally overcome darkness, good conquer evil and truth prevail over error; and that these doctrines

are delivered unto us as the religion and philosophy of Masonry. When men have learned these lessons, then and then only will the world once more emerge from chaos and behold the promised light which though already shining in splendour around them, the eye long inured to darkness does not at first behold.

XVIII.—KNIGHT ROSE CROIX

The student of Masonry is now rewarded with disclosures of which hitherto he has had only glimpses, and here finds the culmination of Masonic teaching. The enigma of life and our relation to it, with all its varying vicissitudes, is endeavored to be explained here.

Faith is the anchor upon which hope rests. Faith is the only true wisdom. Faith spans the gulf of death with the bridge of hope; "Faith is the substance of things hoped for," therefore, we should keep it continually watered with expectation; True faith is a torch bearer, is always rare, and the want of it is the epidemic of the age.

Hope saves us from despair and will make us strong and self reliant. Hope which is strength insures success, therefore we must not encourage doubting hopes or yield to irrational fears.

Charity is faith made manifest, so we are

encouraged to take these steps, which like Jacob's ladder, lead us to that perfection which the possession of these attributes makes possible, therefore, with faith in God's promises and charity in our hearts we seek the light. By the proper exercise of charity, with civil and religious toleration in all our relations, the human race may realize that all men are our brethren and that together we form one great family with community of interests and kindred desires and impulses; then the calamities and the miseries of the virtuous and deserving will no longer be a paradox to us, then toleration in matters civil and religious becomes not an effort requiring self denial, but the deep and onward stream of action within us.

Ecclesiastical distinctions are only the doctrines of man, each for himself endeavoring to measure the mysteries of nature. Worldly wisdom and intellectual attainments are as foolishness if we have not charity, therefore we must respect the opinion of others as we have the right to require that they respect ours. Then will the world be united, the fetters of intellectual and spiritual bondage will be broken, man having discovered himself and found his place in God's plan, all discordant elements will be harmon-

ized, the harp will give forth its sweetest melodies, then will the chords answer responsive in one mighty diapason, singing to our hearts the song "Glory to God in the Highest, on earth peace, good-will toward men."

This very important degree is what is known as the Rose Croix degree and the culmination of the second series in the Scottish Rite system as exemplified in our jurisdiction. It teaches many useful lessons and in its lecture on the symbols of the degree, and especially that of the jewel, it gives a recapitulation of Masonic teaching that appeals to the thinking and intelligent Mason.

XIX.—GRAND PONTIFF

In this beautiful and instructive degree we approach Masonry from a new viewpoint, here is emphasized the virtue of patience. We must wait for the light of truth that never fails, and learn that error only is mortal and must disappear and die. We are encouraged to work diligently for the coming of the light which we cannot see, while it is even now to God, and also to patiently wait for the revelation of the simple things that are as miracles to us. Then we may better understand the vision of the New Heaven and the New Earth, the New Jerusalem coming down from above, typifying the reign of light and truth for which we wait and confidently hope, the disappearance of sorrow and crying and of death itself, then shall we drink freely from the springs of truth and life, "for there shall be no night there, and all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes."

XX.—VENERABLE GRAND MASTER OF ALL SYMBOLIC LODGES

Masonry being progressive the candidate for this degree is instructed as to how to govern

his brethren when it is his duty to preside over them, the true Mason exemplifies charity, toleration, forbearance, humility and heroism in the discharge of his duty, the approbation of his own conscience being his sufficient reward, he does not seek distinction in Masonry through vanity or curiosity, nor leaves the performance of his Masonic duties to others.

Truth is not an inheritance and no man can claim a monopoly of it. We must not be content with what of it birth or education has conferred on us, we must still seek for it, remembering that "to whom much is given of him much shall be required." Let us no longer content ourselves with engraving our life's work on the shifting sands of the silent shore, while the great sea of opportunity for usefulness and unselfish devotion to the interests of others now lies before us unseen and unexplored.

XXI.—NOACHITE OR PRUSSIAN KNIGHT

In this degree we are reminded that it is human to err and that it is our duty to judge other men's actions by the same rule that we judge our own, believing that God only knows the truth. This degree refers in its teachings to principles to be practised and wrongs to be righted

that not only antedate the Crusades, but in some form or another existed before the time of the much loved Patriarch (Noah) after whom the degree is named. You are here taught the value of freedom which like pure air and pure water, nature's greatest gifts to man, may not be bought or sold, and that the widow in her hovel is entitled to, and should receive justice, as much as the wearers of purple in the palace, that the judiciary should be independent and exempt from all influences but that of right, so that he who is wrongfully accused or has suffered from extortion or other corrupt practices, may supplicate those in authority, with the assurance of being heard and restored to his rights.

XXII.—KNIGHT OF THE ROYAL AXE OR PRINCE OF LIBANUS

The dignity of labor is fully recognized in this degree. By labor the Cedar of Lebanon entered into the sacred Ark of the Covenant. Multiply the blades of grass, fashion the rude timber and rocks into the temple of beauty and harmony, and you have not only demonstrated that idleness and indolence are a disgrace and a reproach, but that dignified and intelligent labor will so

lift men up that in nature's heraldry they may become the fit companions of Kings.

Reflect upon the magnificence and splendour with which nature has clothed herself and then remember that she invites our co-operation. Man who is permitted to develop his faculties of mind and body in wholesome and intelligent labor may well feel that he is engaged in one of the noblest vocations, that he is a co-partner in that evolution and development which makes for the material wealth of the nation. Therefore strive to be intelligent, honest and independent, ready to receive instruction and to treat all workmen as your brethren and equals; learn to regard labor not as servile bondage but as a great privilege and a benediction and you may then take your proper place in the upward procession toward perfection, for you have then learned the principles of self government and are marching towards a freedom which you will be capable of maintaining.

XXIII.—CHIEF OF THE TABERNACLE

“And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount.” (Ex. ch. 26, v. 30.) This degree is dedicated to Holy Things, in it we re-

ceive an outline of our duty to God, exhorting us to approach Him with a pure heart and a blameless life, and divesting ourselves of every selfish and sordid wish, offer ourselves to His service for the benefit of mankind. Then shall we be unto Him "A Kingdom of priests and an holy nation."

If the world was peopled with those who obey the inspiring teachings of Masonry, then would sin and sorrow flee away and heaven itself would be upon this earth, and a new chapter would be written in the history of the world.

XXIV.—PRINCE OF THE TABERNACLE

Here we are reminded of the Tabernacle in the desert, and as a Prince of the Tabernacle we are to obey the laws of God and engrave his statutes upon our hearts, to strive to attain perfection and incessantly labor for his glory, the honor of our country and the happiness of our brethren, believing that there is a wise and merciful Creator, ruling and directing all the events of the universe.

The ancient mysteries and the symbols as well as the meaning of degrees through which you have passed are here explained. Here you learned that the logical end of thought is action, and that

true freedom like the human faculties grows from the inner heart outwards, and that we must neither be cast down by calamity nor elated by success.

Would you understand them you must stand face to face with God and nature. Would you see the perfect cube that is in every Rough Ashlar, then turn not your back to the light and then marvel at the shadow that you yourself project.

XXV.—KNIGHT OF THE BRAZEN SERPENT

The 23rd, 24th and the 25th degrees may well be studied together if we are to grasp the instruction contained in many symbols and to understand the Esoteric meaning of the allegories which may contain the truth without our knowing it, incapable as we are of comprehending the great mysteries of material and spiritual nature; that the dominion of evil is not permanent while the reign of light and good are eternal, how we are to secure the divorcing of the soul from the material body and its senses and sordid slavery, and facilitate its return to celestial splendors there to approach the Divine nature as nearly as man may do.

This degree in its philosophic and moral teachings, presents to our minds the theory of the creation of

the universe, according to the mythology of Egypt and Greece and the derivation and meaning of many mysterious symbols are here explained. We are taught the folly of worshipping ideas and images the creation of our own minds, rather than Deity Himself, the embodiment of charity and truth; therefore, true Masonry must always be confined to the few, for to the masses its truths are as foolishness and are misunderstood.

Who can comprehend fully that law of the universe by which it is balanced by opposing forces, thus maintaining equilibrium, or who can explain the mystery of life and understand why all nature is of both sexes, yet the mystery is no more profound than the great problem of man's fall and subsequent redemption, or in the realm of nature, of the opening flower and the blade of grass. The true initiate learns by reflection, let him who would comprehend look up.

XXVI.—PRINCE OF MERCY OR SCOTTISH TRINITARIAN

In this degree we are carried back to the early age of Christianity and are taught the place and manner in which our ancient brethren were instructed in the mysteries. We see the Temple of Buddha, that of the Druids, the Pyramids of

Memphis, the Holy of Holies at Jerusalem, and the Catacombs of Rome. We hear the discordant doctrines here taught and yet above all this confusion we note the upward struggle of the human mind after truth, and its fervent supplication to God that the day might soon come when all darkness and error shall take wings and flee away, and the whole earth be filled with light and truth, when persecution and intolerance will disappear, the sword become the implement of peace, and love and harmony reign triumphantly over the whole world.

We have again heard the story of earth's greatest tragedy in the death of the prophet of Nazareth. The ignorance and prejudice of those who asked the release of a robber and the blood of the Holy One, is typified by the assassin at the south gate; the clouding of the light of reason and the fanaticism that will reconcile the sacrifice of a friend and benefactor is represented by the assassin at the western entrance to the Temple; so the reign of despotism and the want of moral courage to resist its encroachments are fittingly set forth by the murderous incident symbolized at the east gate. Useful as these lessons are in directing our minds to the great truths intended to be taught, the thinking and intelligent

Mason will here see symbolized the death and burial of the natural man with all his sins and imperfections, and his resurrection to a new and better life through the exercise of faith.

XXVII.—KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE TEMPLE

This degree reiterates and emphasizes the obligations you have already assumed and touches us at every point in our relationship to our brother and our responsibility to the source of all that is. Humility, temperance, chastity and generosity are virtues strongly commended to you; the practise of these and the preservation of your own honor are the requirements of all those who would wear the emblems of this degree. Remember that fanaticism subverts the uses of both social and religious influence and that it exists in all sects “should give us pause,” knowing as we do how nearly impossible it is to reconcile opinions at variance with our own. Let us therefore fulfil all our duties in this frail tabernacle of life that we may be raised in the great day of account a shining monument of God’s glory in that “House not made with hands.”

XXVIII.—KNIGHT OF THE SUN OR PRINCE ADEPT

Would you my brother be a Prince of this degree, you must be ready to accept truth, believe that there is but one God eternal and invisible, that the soul of man is immortal, that the visible is the evidence of the invisible, that every genuine Freemason is an apostle of truth, that truth deflected becomes falsehood, that men who excel are always rare, that we must believe in God's infinite benevolence, wisdom and justice and hope for the final triumph of good over evil, and that willingness to make personal sacrifice is a test of our fitness for this degree; Masonry only requiring an adherence to those great fixed principles that are incorporated into the creed of all those whose minds and hearts are reaching out towards that spiritual Sun that illumines the world and from which all light and knowledge are derived.

XXIX.—GRAND SCOTTISH KNIGHT OF ST. ANDREW

Those who would obtain this degree must not expect a life of ease but one of toil and privation, the consciousness of duty well performed being their sole reward.

The distinctly militant character of this degree brings us face to face with many evils that infest the world and he alone is a worthy Knight who bearing the banner of our order in one hand and the sword of courage in the other marches in humility, patience and self denial against wrong, error and tyranny, until truth and right are conquerors. The princes of knowledge are those only who know the truth. If we prefer suffering to sin, then hope springs triumphant. If you prefer not reason, truth and justice to anything in the world, then you have not properly interpreted the teachings of Masonry. Times and circumstances change but duty and virtue remain. Masonry allows each of us to interpret her symbols for ourselves, the initiate learns by reflection and to become teachers of others we must begin by first being masters over ourselves, remembering that masonry is of no religion but that its truths are in all and that not believing the truth is the co-relative of not understanding it.

XXX.—KNIGHT KADOSH

Would you comprehend the lessons here taught, which only a few understand and they do not reveal them; that simple faith is wiser than all the vain speculations of philosophy, that the man

who is prepared to die rather than relinquish truth, begins to live anew, for his soul is immortal, that the greatest mysteries of the Universe are those which are ever going on about us. Why do we marvel that we do not understand the powers and operation of the human soul, when we are unable to explain the mystery involved in a single blade of grass, or that power which from seeds hidden in the same soil, produce in one case the delicate and spotless perfumed flower, and in the other the gnarled oak rearing its head toward heaven and with outstretched arms defying the wintry blast, or the scorching rays of the summer sun, and each possessing the wonderful power of reproduction. Can we by any process of reasoning explain why heat comes to us from the sun, or light from the distant stars? Is it any greater miracle to make something out of nothing or to bring the visible out of the invisible?

We must wait with patience to understand the mysteries of this Great Universe of God. That which is a guide to the wise will mislead the foolish, and to conceal the truth from the foolish will cause them to mistake it for falsehood, but conceal it from the wise and you inspire them to greater effort until they are made able to seize it in its hiding place. We were taught at the

threshold of Masonry that "It is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." The same symbolism runs through nature, all religious expression is symbolism and the earliest instruments of education were symbols, indeed nature's language is symbolism, modern science has only contributed to our better understanding and to make the analogies more striking. We need not look for the secret meaning of masonry in direct statements of doctrine, nor in labored attempts at expounding the symbols; rather would we find them in that labyrinth which is only revealed to us by hints; often a single hint and that half hidden under many veils. It is plain that we need not look to that visible and material sun to penetrate the veil, but rather to that divine and incomparably greater light that illumines all, from which all proceeds and to which all may return, that light which irradiates not the visual organs but our souls and intellects.

NOTE—THE INITIATION OF PYTHAGORAS

Pythagoras, a Grecian who lived five hundred years before Christ, who ushered in the golden age of Greece, and whom all great writers quote, went into Egypt at the request and desire of his

mother, who sold her jewels that he might receive an Egyptian education, but the doors of the Temple of Memphis were closed against him. He persisted through the long night and at the dawn the great bronze doors swung open with a clang and rough hands seized him by the hair and threw him on the cold stone floor where he lay in dense darkness while a voice seemingly coming from afar demanded, "Do you still wish to go on?" His answer was, "I desire to go on." Many other tortures, blindfolded and having his head shaved led over rocky precipices, through ice cold water, immersed in hot sand, given a coarse robe and then given black bread and water to fortify him for the ordeal to come, were imposed upon him, but in answer to the oft asked question, he always replied, "I desire to go on."

The lesson may be learned from the experience of Pythagoras that nothing in the end was as bad as it seemed, that trials and temptations should only strengthen and fortify us and that most dangers were merely illusions.

You have had a brief retrospect of the principle features of the first thirty degrees in Masonry; it remains only to make reference to the thirty-first and thirty-second degrees through which you have since passed.

XXXI.—INSPECTOR, INQUISITOR COMMANDER

The 31st degree, or Inspector, Inquisitor, Commander, is the judicial degree of the series for the hearing and determining of all offences against Masonic law, and no one below the 31st degree is eligible for a seat in this court. Let him who would be a judge supplicate our Father who is to judge us at the end of our pilgrimage that we be free from impatience, inattention to evidence, all harsh and uncharitable construction, partiality or prejudice, pride of opinion or unwarranted assumptions and from all improper influences that pervert men's judgment. The candidate must have learned to govern himself, be trustworthy, honest, of equal temper, charitable of judgment and of merciful impulses.

To judge is a task and not a privilege to be coveted, a judge must be dispassionate, upright, impartial and just. He who would become a judge of others must first prepare himself by learning to obey the laws. Justice is equity; he who would stand above the ordinary level of men must be exempt from prejudice, self conceit and obstinacy and be governed by the principles of justice alone. The whole teachings of the degree are from six columns, at each of which the

candidate receives instruction from the representatives of the kings, philosophers, teachers and law givers of antiquity.

XXXII.—SUBLIME PRINCE OF THE ROYAL SECRET

The 32nd degree or Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret, is the Military degree of the Scottish Rite system. The 29th, 30th, 31st and 32nd degrees should be studied together if we would discover what is in reality the Royal Secret. Masonry is still groping for it.

The impressive symbol of the Military Camp has been adopted for this degree and indeed the whole degree finds a place here, in order that the profound doctrines which it teaches us might be reserved for those who according to the universal law of progression have surmounted the difficulties which beset the path of every diligent student of Masonry who desires to discover the secret which the title of this degree suggests. No key is given to these great mysteries except by occasional words, not taken at random however but with some specific motive.

The aspirant clothed as a soldier marches forward against those potent enemies of humanity as represented by the Military Camps, first being

fortified by the symbol of purification and bound by his honor as an Inspector, Inquisitor, Commander. The onward march of the human race requires that the heights around it should blaze with noble and enduring lessons of courage; deeds of daring are the stars and scintillations rising from that great sea of electricity and represent the forces inherent in the people.

Passive obedience may be obtained by force acting through armies, but might wielded by tyranny is the essence of human weakness. Thus it is that liberty is sometimes gained at the sacrifice of glory, for when the pomp and circumstance of war has shifted from the scene the voice of reason may be heard.

If you will answer me and say what is that sublime, immeasurable and all-pervading cosmic force, that expression of God's great purposes for man which we call electricity. We hear its voice in the thunders that seem to shake the universe reminding us of our own nothingness and the immensity of God and is speaking to us saying, "Be still and know that I am God;" of its manifestations and effects we know something, of its origin nothing, only believing that it is co-extensive with the universe; are we entitled to say with positiveness that it is a sub-

stance or a force which the God of nature has created and having created he uses; and that it is not God Himself manifested as electricity and acting? Or again of the sun, the most awe-inspiring object in nature. Was it at all wonderful that the imagination of an infant race should be paralysed before this wonderful mystery of nature and should conceive that the Sun was God and worship it? The oldest rational religion that ever possessed the human mind was sun worship and humanity groping amid the mysteries of nature has through all the ages and in some way inherited this form of religion. It has then, after passing through all the stages of human thought known as the pagan, philosophic, theologic and rationalistic and assisted by science has demonstrated the fact that the sun is the source of life and that light and heat generate and sustain all life on our planet. Yet what the sun is, or what light and heat as entities are, the most learned knows no more today than the Egyptian who worshipped the Sun-God on the banks of the Nile, and the same can substantially be said of electricity; we see the spark but it does not reveal to us the great electric sea. Every age has had a religion suited to its capacity but what God is in himself, it is not given to man to comprehend,

guesses at the truth are only our special form of error.

Can we therefore, say positively that these mysterious forces are not that symbolism that points us to God Himself, manifest and active? If you can make answer to this then you have gone a long way towards the discovery of the Royal Secret. Can the finite mind comprehend God or must he evermore remain hidden in the depths of His mysterious being, nameless, unknown and inaccessible and beyond the reach of human intellect? Yet God is not materially remote in some far off depth of the universe because wherever we are, He is, though still inaccessible to us.

Here lies silent and mysterious, half hidden and buried and half disclosed, the Royal Secret.

THE END.

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