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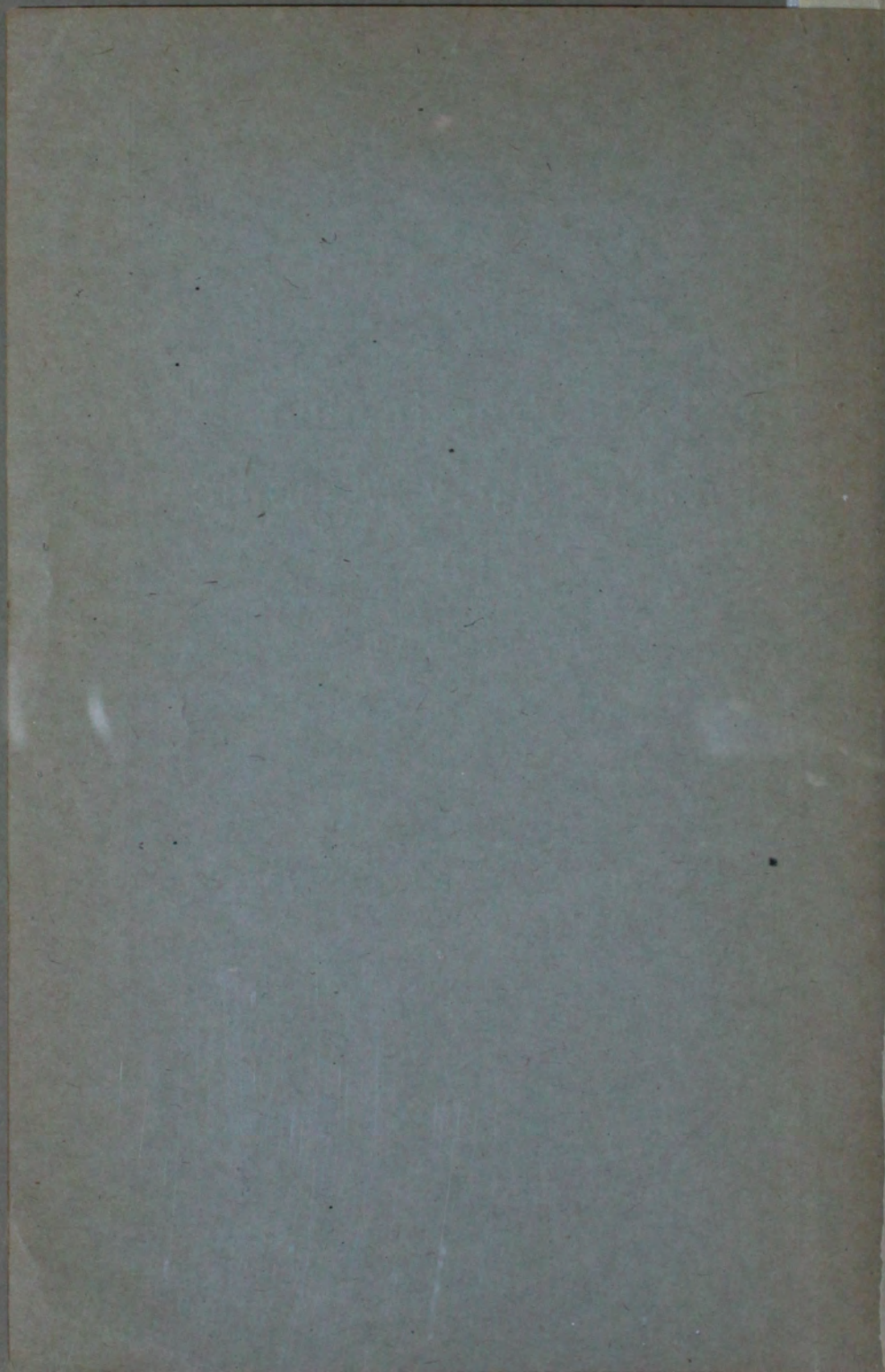
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An Examination of the Early Masonic Catechisms

By H. CARR, P.M. 2265, 6226.

A PAPER READ AT THE
LODGE OF RESEARCH, LEICESTER, No. 2429
ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25th, 1946

Printed by Bros. Johnson, Wykes & Paine, Marble Street, Leicester.



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“AN EXAMINATION
OF THE EARLY MASONIC CATECHISMS.”

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE EARLY MASONIC CATECHISMS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES.

During the past 50 years great additions have been made to our knowledge of masonic history. A new school of research workers has arisen, imbued with a desire for the accumulation of facts, rather than to find support for ill-founded theories, and gradually our Craft history is being lifted out of the realms of blind guesswork and established on a substantial basis. It is fitting that the work has been aided and rewarded by the discovery, in comparatively recent years, of many important documents which have added considerably to the body of known facts, and have done much to confirm theories already held, thus opening the way to still wider fields of enquiry.

One branch alone of masonic study has not received the attention which its interest would seem to merit, namely, the origins and evolution of masonic ritual. Our obligations of secrecy, which prevent us from dealing adequately with topics of an esoteric nature, the scarcity of documents on which research can be based, the dubious nature of some of them and their inaccessibility, all these reasons have contributed to the apparent neglect of this important field, and with the exception of Bro. Poole's paper on "*Masonic Ritual and Secrets before 1717*" (AQC 37), the principal work that has been done in this direction is in the nature of general survey rather than detailed study.

The recent appearance of another prodigious work by Bro. Douglas Knoop and his collaborators, "*The Early Masonic Catechisms*," has eliminated many of the difficulties, by providing, in compact form, reliable transcripts of all the known masonic Catechisms up to 1730. The names of the editors are in themselves a sufficient guarantee of the thoroughness with which the work has been

done, and the valuable introductory pages help to make the book a veritable boon for the student, and may be said to constitute an open invitation to carry the detailed examination of the origins of our ritual and ceremonies a stage further than has been attempted hitherto.

The 16 Catechisms which are the subject of my essay appeared, (with two exceptions) in the period 1696-1730, although several of them have only recently come to light. Nine are in MS. form and as some of these appear to have served as "aides-memoire" to the ceremonies, their authenticity may justly be rated higher than the printed versions, which were published either for motives of profit or spite. The following is a list of the documents, in chronological order, with the abbreviated titles which, for the sake of convenience, will be attached to them throughout this essay.

FULL TITLE	Date		Abbrev.
The Edinburgh Register House MS.	1696	MS.	ER
The Chetwode Crawley MS.	c.1700	MS.	CC
The Sloane MS., 3329	c.1710	MS.	SL
The Dumfries No. 4 MS.	c.1710	MS.	DU
The Trinity College Dublin MS.	1711	MS.	TC
A Mason's Examination	1723	"Flying-Post" <i>Newspaper</i>	ME
The Grand Mystery of Free-Masons Discover'd	1724	Pamphlet	GMD
The Whole Institution of Masonry	1724	MS.	WIM
Institution of Free-Masons	c.1725	MS.	IFM
The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons Opened	1725	Broadsheet	WIO
The Graham MS.	1726	MS.	GR
The Grand Mystery Laid Open	1726	Broadsheet	GMO
* A Mason's Confession	? 1727	<i>Scots Magazine</i>	MC
† The Wilkinson MS.	c.1727	MS.	W
The Mystery of Free-Masonry	Aug. 1730	<i>Daily Journal Newspaper</i>	MF
Prichard's Masonry Dissected	Oct. 1730	Pamphlet	MD

* Published in the Scots Magazine March 1755/6 and claims to be the "Working" of a Scottish Lodge of 1727. As there seems to be no reason to doubt the earlier date, I include it here.

† Newly discovered 18th Cent. Catechism, indicating a "working" of approx. 1727.

The documents generally are of a bipartite character consisting of

- (a) a brief narrative describing salutations, signs, or some part of the ceremonies,
- (b) a series of questions and answers which were doubtless used as tests of recognition, and possibly as a means of rehearsing the ceremonies for the edification of the Lodge.

None of them can be deemed to portray the complete ceremonies and, indeed, of the 16 texts under discussion, MD alone claims to be a "Universal & Genuine description of All its Branches . . ." But despite their incomplete or fragmentary nature, we can often deduce very precise details from them.

Some of the documents are differentiated from the usual two-part style, by the addition of a paragraph or two of introductory matter, often of a scurrilous nature, and occasionally merely explaining how the contents came to appear in print. The Dumfries No. 4 MS. shows much greater variation, since it consists of a version of the MS. Constitutions, together with *three* distinct sets of questions and answers, some of a conventional type, and others relating to Solomon's Temple, which are symbolical and strongly Christian in character. The Graham MS. also deviates from the usual style of the Catechisms in the highly scriptural nature of its answers, and, *inter alia*, the extraordinary Noachian legend which is comparable in many respects to our legend of HA. For the purposes of this essay, it is only necessary to mention these variations without detailing them, as we are concerned primarily with that part of the documents which throws light on the earlier development of the Ritual.

For many years it was the fashion amongst Craft students to treat these documents as masonic freaks or curiosities, and they have been collectively held suspect and considered unworthy of serious attention. Just how short-sighted this attitude could be, is shown by a glance at the Dumfries No. 4 MS., which may be described as a perfectly "legitimate" copy of the MS. Constitutions known to have been in the possession of the Old Lodge of Dumfries, and now belonging to its successor Lodge Dumfries Kilwinning No. 53. This MS. was almost certainly used for ritual purposes, and its triple Catechism is of a highly interesting nature. Another example is the Sloane MS. 3329, which is well described by its endorsement "*A Narrative of the Freemasons words and signs.*" It contains a most valuable collection of salutations, "gripes," words and signs, as well as a *double* Catechism, indicating that its compiler had knowledge of more than one system of "working," and, since it speaks of the Freemasons throughout as "they," we may conclude that the editor or compiler was not a Freemason. Nevertheless, we find in the Sloane MS., many verbal parallels which suggest that it may well have been copied from quite respectable originals.

But despite the fact that these two documents form an excellent "yardstick," enabling us to measure the importance of their predecessors and successors, quite useful and constructive studies of this kind have been virtually barred by the odour of suspicion attaching to the Catechisms in general.

For all these reasons, I have excluded none of the prints and MSS. from this study (except those dated after 1730), nor do I condemn the contents of any of them since it seems to me that, while evidence is scarce, we are not entitled to reject anything that will help us in our work.

I referred earlier to the one real study of the subject by Bro. Poole (AQC 37) who courageously undertook this pioneer work in a branch of masonic research, which, until then, had been regarded with disfavour. He not only opened up the ground but made the task easier for later students by his comparative and analytical method.

Unfortunately, he was insufficiently armed with tools for the work because at least one vital document, the "*Edinburgh Register House MS.*" (1696) was still undiscovered at that time. It is true that he had a virtual copy of the ER available in the Chetwode Crawley MS., but the latter is undated, while the former, bearing the indisputable date 1696, would have served him perfectly as a trustworthy starting point.

Another document he excluded voluntarily though it is perhaps the most important of the whole series, Prichard's "*Masonry Dissected*" (1730); but having limited his paper to the ritual of the pre-Grand Lodge era, he avoided irrelevant entanglements on the subject of degrees, etc., by using only those MSS. and prints which had appeared before Prichard's work.

It is true, of course, that *Masonry Dissected* was for several years in a class of its own as the only tri-gradal "Exposure" published in England, and, to judge by its numerous editions, and by the "notice" that was taken of it in Grand Lodge, (minutes of Dec. 15th, 1730), its popularity was too great for masonic comfort.

That Bro. Poole realized the importance of this Exposure goes without saying. To use his own words "... that epoch-making exposure which probably did as much as, if not more than, the 'rulers of masonry' to develop and stereotype masonry in the form in which we have it now . . .," but, in setting up this work as the first of a new series, he denied himself the opportunity of showing how much Prichard was indebted to the earlier Catechisms.

Since the publication of "*The Early Masonic Catechisms*," another important MS. text, "*The Wilkinson MS.*" has been discovered, and reproduced by Bro. Knoop and his colleagues in a valuable little work under that title. It consists of some 79 Questions and answers representing what would appear to be a pre-Prichard working, (i.e., before 1730), although it seems extremely likely that it was actually written some time after that date. Its contents are very nearly related to Prichard's "*Enter'd Prentice's*" Degree, yielding in many instances extraordinarily close parallels—which are of special importance in those cases when none of the earlier documents contain similar matter.

There is good internal evidence that the MS. was a copy, although the faulty sequence of some of the Questions and Answers suggests that it may have been supplemented by some additions from memory, or that the writer was working from a defective original.

Bro. Knoop's examination of the text has led him to the conclusion that it represents a working of c.1727, and, comparing it with Prichard's first degree, "that both workings are descended, through different lines, from a common ancestor, the working portrayed in our document (i.e. the Wilkinson MS.), being rather older than that portrayed by Prichard."

Although 3 grades, EA, FC and MM, are mentioned in the W Text, the work apparently relates only to the EA degree, together with some test Questions

and instructions for use away from the Lodge, and despite the element of doubt as to the date of the working it purports to describe, its contents are sufficiently important to justify its inclusion in this study, more especially as it gives convincing proof that the elaborate system of work depicted and suggested by MD was not of Prichard's own invention—but was undoubtedly copied, adapted and expanded by him from one or more earlier texts or systems.

The purpose of this essay is to examine and compare these early indications of Masonic ritual and custom, and to trace their possible influence on “*Masonry Dissected*,” and perhaps on the ritual of our own day. As regards the latter, it will usually be impracticable to stress particular points, but for the student of the ritual such emphasis will hardly be necessary.

As to the method of approach, I have taken the ER and CC as a starting point, and, dealing with the questions singly whenever possible, or in sets of 2 or 3 when they are indisputably linked, I have sought the textual parallels, variations and additions in the later documents. A similar method has been used for those questions in the later works, which have no counterpart in the earlier ones.

In some cases, I have ignored questions which seem to have no bearing either on Prichard or on present-day ritual, e.g. the “Cabalistical” points in the *Grand Mystery Laid Open* (1726). Occasionally, we shall find in the “narrative” portion of certain documents, matters which form part of the Catechism in other works, and I have, therefore, compared “narrative” with Catechism wherever necessary.

After dealing with the Questions in this way, I have adopted a somewhat similar method for various points in the narratives, classifying them under separate headings to see what evidence they yield as to the general nature and actual details of the Ceremonies, e.g., Signs, “Gripes” etc., etc.

There are two important items of internal evidence which tend to show how the Catechisms were used. In MC, at the end of one of the answers which seems to have puzzled the candidate, we read:—

“ . . . but so I was *told* to answer, which I can give
no reason for.”

Here, I suggest, is clear evidence that, during some part of the ceremony, the candidate was being prompted in his replies by an officer, in a manner quite familiar to us nowadays.

At the end of the “Charge” in DU, there is a curious instruction which quite obviously relates to the conditions prior to giving a higher degree :

“Tm that no lodge or corum of massons shall give the Royal secret to any suddenly but upon great deliberation *first let him learn his Questions by heart then his symbols* then do as the lodge thinks fit.”

Here we see that, regardless of the Catechism, which may have formed part of an actual ceremony inside the Lodge, a number of test questions (and symbolical matters) had to be memorised by the candidate before he could attain promotion, and it suggests, too, that there was a proper examination of the candidate *between* degrees, on lines somewhat similar to our present system.

The fact that the candidate was instructed in his answers, or given an opportunity of memorising them, makes the task of classifying the questions rather a difficult one, since it implies that any of the questions, even those requiring the most complicated answers, may have actually been used either during one ceremony, or as a preliminary to the next.

I have, therefore, divided the questions under the following 4 main headings in a purely arbitrary arrangement, which is designed to preserve a readable sequence, while keeping the closely related answers together so as to facilitate comparison.

- GROUP 1. General questions, probably used for admission into a Lodge, or forming part of the Catechism rehearsed inside the Lodge. Among these are questions of a symbolical or explanatory nature, whose purpose was the inculcation of the masons' tenets and principles.
- GROUP 2. Questions relating to the actual ceremonies and depicting the work inside the Lodge.
- GROUP 3. Questions which relate to the candidate's taking, or qualifying for, a higher degree.
- GROUP 4. Purely Test questions for use outside, or away from, a Lodge; questions used for purposes of recognition, and for obtaining financial assistance, and refreshment.

The numbering of the various questions and points is for the convenience of the reader, and bears no relation to the numbers which appear in some of the Catechisms.

The reader's attention is particularly directed to the fact that this essay is a study of 17th and 18th century documents, *not an examination of modern Masonic Ritual.*

The numerous quotations given here are of interest to the student and the historian, but they do not in any way refer to present day Lodge working, except when the Author's text specifically suggests comparison.

GROUP I.

Question 1. ARE YOU A MASON?

- ER. Q. Are you a mason?
A. Yes.

All the Catechisms (with only one exception, GMO) begin with one or two straightforward questions, on these lines.

CC, SL, MC, ME, MF are virtually identical with the above.

TC. Q. Wt manner of man are you?

A. I am a mason.

IFM. Q. In the name of God, Amen, Are you a Mason?

A. A Mason. (GMD is virtually identical).

WIM, WIO, GR omit this question but it is implicit in Q2.

- W & MD. *Q.* Are you a Mason?
 W. *A.* I am so taken to be Among Brothers & Fellows.
 MD. *A.* I am so taken and Accepted to be amongst Brothers and Fellows.

The DU opening gives rise to rather curious additional matter:—

- DU. *Q.* What are you? *A.* I am a man
Q. What are you no more to (text defective).
A. Yes but a man I was begotten of a man and born of a woman and besids I have severall potentat kings and mighty princes to my brothers.
 GMD. *Q.* What is a Mason?
A. A Man begot of a Man, born of a Woman, Brother to a King.
Q. What is a Fellow?
A. A Companion of a Prince.

W in defective text, apparently ill-copied from some earlier document says:—

- A.* A Man born of a Wom, Brother to a King, Companion to a prince, & fellow to a Lord.

These words, even unsupported, would suggest the possibility of an archaic legend on which they may have been founded. GR, with its customary explanatory style, actually provides a legend of sorts concerning "Bazallieil," of whom we read:—

- GR. ". . . then was masons numbered with kings & princes Here Lys the flower of masonry superiour of many other companion to a king and to two princes a brother Here Lys the heart all secrets could conceall Here Lys the tongue that never did reveal." The latter phrases are supposed to be Bazallieil's epitaph.

One can hardly fail to ascribe a common origin to the four last quotations, and the detail in the GR version becomes specially interesting, since it reminds us so forcibly of the HA Legend.

The GR contains another curious legend, reminiscent of the HA story, in its account of the "Raising of Noah" (see Q.34, p. 42), and W has an allusion to "the Manner of our Great Master Hiram's grave"; but none of the Exposures before Prichard's MD contains a story comparable to the legend we know. Is it possible that these quotations, hints and allusions point to the existence of earlier legends from which our present legend evolved?

Question 2. SIGNS AND TOKENS.

- ER. *Q.* How shall I know it?
A. (1) you shall know it in time and place convenient (This answer to be given only "if there is company present," showing that this question, with question 1 was intended for use both inside and away from the Lodge.
A. (2) by signes tokens and other points of my entrie.

CC is the only other document which has the cautious *A*(1) answer. GMD, IFM, TC, MC, MF are all identical with *A*(2).

- CC. A. by Signs and other Tokens of Entry.
 SL. A. by perfect signes and tokens and the first poynets of my Enterance.
 DU. A. by all trwe signs in ye first part of my entry.
 ME. A. By Signs and Tokens □□∟ from my Entrance into the Kitchen, and from thence to the Hall. (see Q.33). (It is uncertain whether the characters shown in this response are Hebrew letters or Geometrical figures).
 WIM. A. By True words and Tokens at my Entry.
 WIO. A. By True words and Tokens at my Entering.
 GR. A. By true words signs and tokens from my entering.
 MD. A. By Signs and Tokens and perfect Points of Entrance. (W. is virtually identical).
 GMO does not give this Q. and A.

W. & MD. are the only documents which attempt a definition of signs and tokens, thus :—

- Q. What are Signs ?
 W. A. All Square, Levells & perpendiculars.
 MD. A. All Squares Angles and Perpendiculars.
 Q. What are Tokens ? A. Certain Regular and Brotherly Gripes. (W. Certain Gripes).

Compare this with the preamble to our EA entrusting, “. . . . all Squares, Levels and Perpendiculars are true and proper” But the question about Signs is only an elaboration of a note in which four older documents concur :—

- WIM. “First Observe—That all Squares is Signs According to the subject in handling.” (WIO and GR almost identical)
 MF. “. Every Square is a Sign ;”

Question 3. HELE AND CONCEAL.

- ER. Q. What is the first point ?
 A. Tell me the first point ile tell you the second.

This cautious answer is found only in ER, CC, SL, MC, MD,

ER continues :—“*The first is to heill and conceall, second, under no less pain, which is then cutting of your throat, For you most make that sign, when you say that.*”

The final instruction that “you most make that sign etc.,” appears only in ER and CC and deserves some attention. In both MSS. the Catechisms are grouped under the heading “Some Questions That Masons Use to Put to Those Who Have ye Word, Before They Will Acknowledge Them” and the majority of the questions are such as might be used for testing purposes both inside and outside, or away from, a Lodge. This instruction, however, seems to suggest that the question was used as part of the ceremony *inside* the Lodge, since it is inconceivable that a “sign” of this kind would be made obligatory in a public place.

The words in italics are the real body of the answer to Question 3, but the later Catechisms *enlarged* the penalty clause. SL is the earliest MS. to use the word “tongue” at this point, and its phrasing is fairly representative of the majority of replies to this question.

SL. the first is heal and Conceal or Conceal and keep secrett by no less paine than cutting my tongue from my throat.

CC, ME, GMD, say "hear"; IFM says "hide"; WIM says "hold".
The word "hele" is variously spelt "heill," heall," "hale," "hail" and "heal."
GR, WIM, WIO, do not mention penalties.
W, MC, MD, give no penalties in reply to this question, but more elaborate penalties elsewhere (cf OB Q.29).

(TC, GMO, MF do not have the question at all).

DU. Q. How shal I know yt?
A. by all trwe signs in ye first part of my entry Ill heal and conceall.

DU also gives no penalties as part of its response to this question, but it has another which may be dealt with under this heading.

DU. Q. What punishment is inflicted on these yt reveals ye secret?
A. Yr heart is to be taken out alive Yr head is to be cut of and yr bodys to be buried in ye sea mark and not in any place Qr Christians are buried.

Here we see an entirely novel series of punishments, some of which will reappear in the later Catechisms as part of the OB. W & MD deal with the questions in much the same way as the majority of the Catechisms, but quite logically extend the examination as follows:—

Masonry Dissected.

MD. *Exam.* Give me the Points of your entrance.
Resp. Give me the first and I'll give you the second.
Exam. I Hail it.
Resp. I conceal it.
Exam. What do you conceal?
Resp. All Secrets and Secresy 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.

(Familiar phrases which appear later as part of the MD Obligation.) MD continues:—

Q. What are the Secrets of a Mason
A. Signs, Tokens and Many Words.
Ex. Give me the Enter'd 'Prentice's Sign, (followed by precise de-
tails of a sign, token and "lettered" word).

Wilkinson MS.

(W. does not give this sentence).
Q. Give me the first, I'll give you ye second.
M. Ex I heal.
I conceal.
Q. What do you Conceal.
A. All ye Secretts or Secrecy of a Mason or Masonry.
Q. What are Secretts.
A. Signs, tokens & many Words.
W. Gives no information at all as to sign or token but goes on to give a "lettered" word. (See Q.32, p. 40).

Question 4. A JUST AND PERFECT LODGE.

- ER. Q. Where wes you entered ?
 A. At the honourable Lodge. (CC is identical).
 SL. A. In a just and perfect or just and Lawfull Lodge.
 TC. A. In a full and perfect Lodge.

GMD, IFM, MC, MF, MD :- "In a just and perfect Lodge."

WIM, WIO, GR & W :- "... a true and perfect Lodge."

The DU and ME responses to this question are given under Q.7. (This question is not in GMO).

Question 5. WHAT MAKES A TRUE AND PERFECT LODGE.

- ER. Q. What makes a true and perfect Lodge ?
 A. Seven masters, five entered apprentices, A dayes Journey from a burroughs town, without bark of dog or crow of cock. (CC identical).

An analysis of the various answers to this question shows that the customary response contained the numbers of the several grades of masons who formed the Lodge, together with a description of the location in which it might be held, while some answers include certain symbolic matters.

NUMBERS.

As regards the first part of the answer, ER and CC have two additional questions relating to numbers, while SL also contains similar matter.

- ER. Q. Does no less make a true and perfect lodge ?
 A. Yes, five masons and three entered apprentices.
 Q. Does no less ?
 A. The more the merrier, the fewer the better chear.

It will be noticed in the chart on next page, which summarizes the replies, that 5 of our documents have *alternative* sets of numbers, while several others say plainly that variations were permitted :—

Name	Numbers Required				Comments from the Texts.
	Masters	Wardens	FC	EA	
ER	7			5	"The more the merrier, the fewer the better chear."
ER altern.	5			3	
CC	7			5	
CC altern.	4			3	
SL	2		2	2	"... the more the merrier, the fewer the Better Chear."
SL altern.	1		2	2	
TC	3		3	3	
ME	1	2	4	5	"... with Square, Compass, and Common Gudge."
GMD					"God & the Square with 5 or 7 Right & Perfect Masons."
IFM					"God & the Square with 7 or 5 Right & Perfect Masons."
GR					"any od number from 3 to 13"
MC			5	7	(See note below *)
W	1	2	2	2	"Seven . . . make a true & perfect Lodge."
W altern.					"Five free & Accepted Masons met together in place and due form."
MF	1	2	4		"... with Square, Compass, and Common Gudge."
MD	1	2	2	2	"Seven or more makes a Just & perfect Lodge."
MD altern.	1	2	1	1	"Five makes a Lodge."

It is impossible to say whether the extremely wide differences which are exhibited in this chart are the result of local variations, or of gradual changes in procedure. Certain it is that no very definite answers were expected and Bro. Poole suggests that "the numbers were evidently intended to be symbolic, or at any rate conventional." He considers, too, that the words "the more the merrier" etc., which appear in our three earliest documents and nowhere else, may have been one of the test phrases to "know a mason by," but the complete disappearance of this answer from all the later documents rather tends (in my opinion) to discount its importance.

It will be noted that GMD, IFM and GR give only odd numbers, and all 3 documents have questions relating to odds. * (MC qualifies its odd numbers with a note that they "will do the thing with fewer.")

- GMD. Q. Why do Odds make a Lodge.
 A. Because all Odds are Mens Advantage.
 (IFM almost identical).
- GR. Q. But how many masons is so called.
 A. any od number from 3 to 13.
 Q. Why so much ado and still haveing od numbers.
 A. still in refferance ffrom the blesed trinity to the comeing of Christ with his 12 apostles.

While it is possible therefore that some Lodges insisted on the odd numbers in this response, a reference to the chart shows that this was by no means unanimous.

In MD we find a curious distinction drawn between 5 who "make a Lodge" and 7 or more who "make a Just & Perfect Lodge," and, in drawing this distinction, Prichard undoubtedly laid the foundation for one sentence in our modern ritual. (The W. details are not quite so familiar).

It is also interesting to see that in four of the latest sets of figures, one Master and two Wardens form an essential part of the team, regardless of variations in the other grades.

LOCATION.

The second part of the responses dealing with the situation of the Lodge all show that the main requirement was solitude, remoteness from human habitation, and from interruption of any kind.

- MD. Q. Where does the Lodge stand?
 A. Upon Holy Ground, or the highest Hill or lowest Vale, or in the Vale of Jehosaphat, or any other secret Place. . . .

and all the replies to this question are comprised of elements contained in the ER and MD responses given here.

ER, CC, SL, DU, ME, MC, MF all use the "Bark of Dog" phrase. SL, DU, GMD, IFM, MC, MD all use the "Hill-Valley" phrase. ME, MF, W, & MD, mention the "Vale of Jehosaphat."

Bro. Poole, (AQC 37,20), quotes one of the Bye-Laws of the Lodge of Aberdeen, dated 1670, which shows that the question as to location was not a mere formality, as the close similarity of the answers might suggest, but a serious reminder of one of the Mason's duties.

"Wee ordaine lykwayes that no lodge be holden within a dwelling house wher ther is people living in it, but in the open fieldes, except it be ill weather, and then Let ther be a house chosen that no person shall heir nor sie ws."

SYMBOLIC ADDITIONS.

- ME. Q. What makes a just and perfect Lodge?
 A. A Master, two Wardens, four Fellows, five Apprentices,
with Square, Compass, and Common Gudge (gauge).
 MF gives identical "tools."
- GMD. Q. How many make a Lodge?
 A. *God and the Square*, with five or seven right and perfect
 Masons, etc., etc.
 IFM. is identical.

These additions to the stock answers in four of our documents are evidence of symbolical or speculative influence. Nowadays we consider that the VSL is an essential part of the Lodge, and our ancient Brethren were taught, in exactly the same way, that the Lodge was incomplete without those symbols which helped to make it "just and perfect," and, if we read VSL to represent the deity, we find that our modern usage is not very different from that of 1724.

As regards the "Square, Compass, and Common Gudge" I suggest that these, too, are used here not as Mason's tools but as symbols, and if evidence were needed to show that this is the sense in which our ancient Brn. adopted them, I would point out that these three are really "testing or measuring tools," as distinct from real "working tools," such as the chisel or the maul.

Question 6. WHAT IS THE NAME OF YOUR LODGE.

- ER. Q. What is the name of your Lodge?
 A. Kilwinning. (CC is identical).

Both ER and CC treat this as a "question of fact" and give the name of an actual Lodge. ME is the only other Catechism which follows this practice with the answer "I am of the Lodge of St. Stephens." But all the other documents that have this question, give the answer "The Lodge (or Holy Lodge) of St. John" with many, but trivial variations. The form of the question varies slightly too, e.g.,

- DU. Q. What Lodge were you entered in?
 ME, GMD, IFM, WIO, WIM :- Q. What Lodge are you of?
 MF. Q. To what lodge do you belong?
 W. Q. Whence Come you.

GR. has a slightly different form of the question which is linked to the Salutation :- (See Q.23).

GR. "The Sallutation is as ffollows :-

- Q. ffrom whence came you?
 A. I came ffrom a right worshipfull Lodge of Masters and
 fellows belonging to God and Holy St. John etc., etc.

WIM and WIO both have this Salutation question *in addition* to the question "what Lodge are you of."

MD opens its "Enter'd 'Prentice's Degree" with this question and, in the course of its Fellow-Crafts Degree, there is a curious N.B. to explain its origin :-

MD.(EA) Q. From whence came you? A. From the Holy Lodge of St. John's.

(FC deg.). N.B. The Reason why they Denominate themselves of the Holy Lodge of St. John's is because he was the Fore-runner of our Saviour, and Laid the first Parallel Line to the Gospel . . . etc.

Question 7. HOW STANDS YOUR LODGE.

- ER. Q. How stands your Lodge?
 A. east and west as the temple of jerusalem.
 SL. A. east and west as all holly Temples Stand.

This East-West answer appears in all the Catechisms except ME, WIO, and GMO which do not give the question at all. (In its alternative catechism, SL practically duplicates this Q & A). GR is the only marked variation from the normal :-

- GR. Q. How stood your Lodge at your entering.
 A. East, west and south
 Q. Why east and west
 A. Because churches stands east and west and porches to the south.

Question 8. WHERE WAS THE FIRST LODGE.

- ER. Q. Where was the first Lodge?
 A. In the porch of Solomon's Temple.

MF and ME. A. In Solomon's Porch : the two Pillars were called Jachin and Boaz.

This question appears only in ER, CC, ME, MF, GMD, IFM, and all the answers are similar to the examples shown.

SL, however, shows a marked variation :-

- SL. Q. Where was the word first given?
 A. At the Tower of Babylon.
 Q. Where did they call their first lodge.
 A. At the holy Chapell of St. John.

The last answer would seem to belong under the heading of Q.6., but for the fact that it is in reply to a vastly different question.

MD has a number of questions relating to Solomon's Temple, The Porch, Pillars, Middle Chamber, etc., but this question is omitted.

The names of Solomon's Two Pillars are usually elicited in answer to a separate question and it is interesting to notice that, in nearly all Catechisms in which the names appear, they are used jointly under questions relating to the EA. The exceptions are as follows :-

TC which allocates one name each to EA and FC.

MD which uses both names for EA, and the latter alone for FC.

Question 9. HOW HIGH IS YOUR LODGE.

SL. Q. How high is your Lodge.
 A. without foots yards or Inches it reaches to heaven.
 TC is almost identical.

DU Q. how high is your Lodge?
 A. inches and spans Inumberable.
 Q. how Inumberable?
 A. the material heavens and stary firmament.

Bro. Poole considered this question to be a direct allusion to the custom of holding mason's lodges in the open air, (see Q.5) but it seems to me to have been one of a series of symbolical questions, and Prichard's "expansion" suggests that he treated it in this way, since he included questions relating to length, breadth and depth, thus :-

MD. Q. What Form is the Lodge? A. A long Square.
 Q. How Long? A. From East to West.
 Q. How broad? A. From North to South.
 Q. How High? A. Inches, Feet and Yards.
 innumerable, as high as the Heavens.
 Q. How deep? A. To the Centre of the Earth.

This "How-High" question appears only in SL, DU, TC, W and MD, but the latter has yet another question on the subject.

MD. Q. What Covering have you to the Lodge?
 A. A clouded Canopy of divers Colours (or the Clouds).

The W. text is particularly interesting at this point, because it gives an entirely novel reason for the shape of the Lodge, and also introduces a broad hint of a Hiram Legend, the only indication of its kind in the whole text.

W. Q. What is the form of your Lodge?
 A. An Oblong Square.
 Q. Why so.
 A. the Manner of our Great Master Hiram's grave.

Question 10. THE LIGHTS OF THE LODGE.

ER. Q. Are there any lights in your lodge?
 A. Yes three the north east, SW, and eastern passage. The one denotes the Master mason, the other the warden The third the setter craft. (i.e. FC).

DU. Q. how many lights is in yt lodge? A. 3.
 Q. what (text faulty) of ye 3? A. ye master the fellow craftsman and ye warden.
 Q. wc way stands yee lights? A. ye one is in ye East and (one) in ye West and one in ye midle.
 Q. What is for ye one (in) ye East.
 A. it is for the master and ye West is for the fellow craftsmen and ye midle is for ye warden.

There is a general agreement in 6 of our documents (i.e., ER, CC, DU, ME, W, MF) that the lights of the Lodge were three in number, namely, the Master, Wardens and Fellows. (MF calls them "precious Jewels").

SL says "three, the sun the master and the square."

GMD and IFM. "The Three Persons, Father Son and Holy Ghost" and GR calls them "the first 3 jewels."

WIM, WIO, GR, all give 12 lights, as follows :-

"Father, Son, Holy Ghost, Sun, Moon, Master-Mason, Square, Rule, Plum, Line, Mell, Chizzel," but this appears to be a composite answer covering the equivalent of two or three questions in the other documents.

DU gives the "Trinity" answer (see GMD above) in reply to a question on the number of "steps in Jacob's Ladder."

A part of the answer to this "Lights" question was usually devoted to a description of their geographical position, and here we find wide variations, so that it is not possible to determine whether the positions given were those actually occupied by the Master, Wardens, and Fellows inside the Lodge, or whether they merely represent survivals of a test question whose original meaning and purpose is now lost.

The positions of the lights are given as follows :-

- | | | |
|-----------|-----|-----------------------------|
| ER. | CC. | NE, SW and eastern passage. |
| DU. | | E, W, and middle. |
| MC. | | SE, S and SW. |
| GMD, IFM. | | A Right East, South & West. |
| MD. | | East, South & West. |

Some of the documents treat this Lights question as one of actual illumination, thus :-

- | | | |
|-----|-----------|---|
| SL. | <u>Q.</u> | how many lights are in your Lodge ? |
| | <u>A.</u> | two one to see to go in and another to see to work. |
| DU. | <u>Q.</u> | how many lights is in your lodge ? |
| | <u>A.</u> | we be ye two ? |
| | <u>Q.</u> | ye sun riseth in ye east and sets all men to work, and sets in ye west and so turns all men to bed. |

But in addition to this 2 light response, DU also has a set of questions relating to 3 lights, (see ante), and the double set of questions seems to give good evidence of the existence of at least two different systems of Lodge working in use at this date.

- | | | |
|----|-----------|---|
| W. | <u>Q.</u> | What did you see when you was Introduc'd into the Lodge ? |
| | <u>A.</u> | three great lights. |

MD. distinguishes between symbolical lights and "fixed lights" (i.e. windows) and with his genius for expansion Prichard has made much of this question :-

- | | | |
|-----|-----------|---|
| MD. | <u>Q.</u> | Have you any Lights in your Lodge ? |
| | <u>A.</u> | Yes, Three. (He explains that they are candles on tall candlesticks). |

- W. & MD. *Q.* What do they represent ?
A. Sun, Moon and Master-Mason.
- W. & MD. *Q.* Why so ?
A. Sun to rule the Day, Moon the Night, and Master-Mason his Lodge.
- MD. *Q.* Have you any fix'd Lights in your Lodge ?
A. Yes.
Q. How many ?
A. Three. (He explains that these are three Windows, vainly supposed to be in every Lodge-room, "but more properly the four Cardinal Points according to the Antique Rules of Masonry").
Q. How are they situated ?
A. East, South and West.
Q. What are their uses ?
A. To light the Men to, at, and from their work.
Q. Why are there no Lights in the North ?
A. Because the Sun darts no Rays from thence.
- (The "Lights" question does not appear in TC and GMO).

Question II. THE JEWELS.

- ER. *Q.* Are there any jewells in your lodge.
A. Yes three, Perpend Esler, a Square pavement and a broad ovall.

CC . . . variation in spelling only.

Seven of the nine documents which have this question are agreed as to the number of jewels, i.e. three. ME says four :-

ME. *A.* Four ; Square, Astler, Diamond and Common Square. This appears to be an error due to the placing of a comma between the words Square and Astler.

MD speaks of Six Jewels, Three Movable and Three Immovable. But although the texts are almost unanimous as to the number of jewels, there are extraordinary variations in the names applied to them.

- SL Square pavemt the blazing Star and the Danty tassley.
 GMD A square Asher a Diamond and a Square.
 IFM A Square where a Diadem and a Square. □ ☒ ▿
 MC A square pavement, a dinted ashler, and a broached dornal.
 W the Mosaick Pavement, the dented Asler & the broach Urnell.
 MD Trasel Board, Rough Ashler and Broached Thurnel (Immovable Jewels).

For a close study of the technical terms contained in these answers, I would refer the student to Dring, AQC 29, p.258 etc., and to Thorpe, Leicester Lodge of Research *Reprints* No. 13, p.37, etc. It suffices to say here that the generally accepted opinion is that three of the jewels consisted of :-

- (1) a parpent Ashler (i.e. a dressed stone which passes through a wall from side to side).
- (2) a broached thurnel (i.e. a rough ashler).
- (3) a square pavement (probably alluding to the floor of the lodge).

The Diamond, Diadem and Blazing Star, all of which may be synonymous, are too vague to be explained with certainty. Three of our documents, MF, GMD, IFM, give the Square as one of the jewels, and this is not surprising, since we know that it was always considered one of the most important symbols in masonry (See Q.2 and Q.28).

This leads me to notice the geometrical diagrams in three of the Catechisms. TC. has the following. "To send for a Brother the signes are these . . .

L. □ . Δ

IFM, with a mis-reading of Square Ashler Diamond and Square, (see above) has □ ☒ ◡

ME, speaking of signs and tokens (Q.2) has the Hebrew (?) letters □ □ ◡

Note : Gould's reproduction of these three characters (in his reprint of ME) shows three geometrical figures, *not* Hebrew letters.

I now suggest that these three sets of diagrams had a common ancestry and that they are intended to represent the jewels of the Lodge, i.e., a Square Pavement of Square Ashler, a Diamond and a Square. The cone-shaped figure in TC and the central diagram in IFM may well be attempts at the Diamond, or Diadem ; and despite Dr. Cohen's ingenious explanation of the Hebrew letters in ME (see Knoop EMC) *they do not make a word*, and were most probably copied from an original MS in which the copyist failed to recognise them as diagrams and mistook them for Hebrew characters.

The W. & MD Jewel questions are much alike. I give Prichard's version :-

- MD. Q. Have you any Jewels in the Lodge. A. Yes.
- Q. How many? A. Six. Three Moveable, and three Immoveable.
- Q. What are the Moveable Jewels? A. Square Level and Plumb-rule.
- Q. What are their uses? A. Square to lay down True and Right lines, Level to try all Horizontals, and the Plumb-Rule to try all Uprights.
- Q. What are the Immoveable Jewels? A. Trasel Board, Rough Ashler, and Broach'd Thurnel.
- Q. What are their uses? A. Trasel Board for the Master to draw his designs upon, Rough Ashler for the Fellow-Craft to try their Jewels upon, and the Broach'd Thurnel for the Enter'd 'Prentice to learn to work upon.

This answer closely resembles the MC reading.

The following questions actually precede the Jewel questions in MD :-

- Q. Have you any Furniture in your Lodge? A. Yes.
 Q. What is it? A. Mosaick Pavement, Blazing Star and Indented Tarsel.
 Q. What are they. A. Mosaick Pavement, the Ground Floor of the Lodge, Blazing Star the Centre, and Indented Tarsel the Border round about it.
 Q. What is the other Furniture of a Lodge?
 A. Bible Compass and Square. (W. has this answer to a solitary "Furniture" question).
 Q. Who do they properly belong to? A. Bible to God Compass to the Master, and Square to the Fellow-Craft.

DU in reply to a question on the number of pillars in the Lodge also gives the answer "Three . . . ye Square, the compas and ye bible." (see under Q.12.)

In the Master's Part, Prichard adds still further to his dissertation on Jewels etc.

- MD. Q. What are the Master-Jewels?
 A. The Porch, Dormer and Square Pavement.
 Q. Explain them.
 A. The Porch the Entering into the Sanctum Sanctorum, the Dormer the Windows or Lights within, the Square Pavement the Ground Flooring.

The Jewel Question does not appear in DU, TC, WIM, WIO, GR, GMO.

Question 12. THE PILLARS.

- GMD. Q. How many Pillars? A. Two. Jachin and Boaz.
 Q. What do they represent? A. A Strength and Stability of the Church in all ages.

IFM is identical with above, and DU has a long paragraph on the same lines. The question here, however, is not intended as a means of eliciting a particular "test" reply, but rather for the purpose of inculcating a spiritual lesson; indeed DU in its Catechism has a three-pillar question :-

- DU. Q. how many pillers is in your Lodge? A. three.
 Q. what are these? A. ye Square, the Compas and ye bible.

and it is obvious that there was some degree of confusion as between the Pillars of Solomon, and the moral lesson to be taught on the pillars of the Lodge. W. & Prichard avoided the confusion by leaving Solomon's Pillars to play their proper parts in the catechism, and introducing 3 new pillars for the ethical lesson. (The W & MD texts are almost identical) :-

- MD. Q. What supports a Lodge? A. Three great Pillars.
 Q. What are they called? A. Wisdom, Strength and Beauty.
 Q. Why so? A. Wisdom to contrive, Strength to support, and beauty to adorn.

Question 13.

THE KEY OF THE LODGE.

- ER. Q. where shall I find the key of your lodge?
 A. Three foot and an half from the lodge door under a perpend
 esler and a green divot. But under the lap of my liver
 where all my secrets of my heart lie.
- Q. Which is the Key of your lodge?
 A. A weel hung tongue.
 Q. where lies the key? A. In the bone box.

CC is virtually identical and MC is on similar lines.

This series of Key questions occupies an important place in 10 of our documents (ER, CC, SL, DU, ME, MF, GMD, IFM, MC, MD).

I quote a few examples at length :-

- ME. Q. Is there a Key to your Lodge? A. Yes.
 Q. What is't? A. A well hung Tongue.
 Q. Where is it kept? A. In an Ivory Box between my
 Teeth, or under the Lap of my Liver, where the Secrets
 of my Heart are kept.
- Q. Where does the Key of the working Lodge lie?
 A. It lies on the Right Hand from the Door two Foot and a
 half, under a Green Turf, and one Square.

MF is almost identical. (Note, reference to the "working Lodge.").

- GMD Q. Have you the Key of the Lodge? A. Yes I have.
 Q. What is its Virtue? A. To open and shut, and shut
 and open.
 Q. Where do you keep it? A. In an Ivory Box, between
 my Tongue and my Teeth, or within my Heart, where
 all my Secrets are kept. (IFM identical).

SL and DU both have unusual readings, the former being particularly interesting by reason of its probable influence on Prichard.

- SL. Q. where Lyes the Keys of the Lodge doore?
 A. they Ley in a bound Case or under a three cornerd pavemt
 about a foot and halfe from the Lodge door.
- Q. wt is the Keys of your Lodge Doore made of?
 A. it is not made of Wood Stone Iron or steel or any sort of
 mettle but the tongue of a good report behind a brothers
 back as well as before his face.

All the replies state that the Tongue is the Key of the Lodge, that it is kept in a "bone" or "ivory" box, and all except DU and MD are agreed that it is the Key to the Safe repository of a mason's secrets, i.e., "under the lap of my liver" or the heart.

But six of the documents seem to treat the question as an ambiguous one and, in addition to their "tongue and heart" symbolism, they give an actual measurement of distance from the Lodge door, where a real key might be found, hidden under a divot, ashler or pavement. With six documents unanimous on such a point as this, I am inclined to wonder whether the question was not something more than a mere test.

As to the distances mentioned ER and CC say $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft ; ME, MF, MC say $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet ; SL says $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet. It is difficult to find an explanation of these figures, and this may be the reason why Prichard discarded this part of the answer.

- MD. Q. Where do you keep those Secrets? A. Under my Left Breast.
- Q. Have you any Key to those Secrets? A. Yes.
- Q. Does it hang or does it lie? A. It hangs.
- Q. What does it hang by? A. A Tow-Line 9 inches or a Span.
- Q. What Metal is it of? A. No manner of Metal at all ; but a Tongue of good Report is as good behind a Brother's Back as before his Face.

W. omits the "key & distance" questions entirely, but has the "secrets" Q and A., and, at a later stage (apparently in its wrong place in the text) it gives a "metal" Q. & A., thus :-

- W. Q. Where do (you) keep yr. Secretts as a Mason.
- A. in a bone box that Neither Opens nor Shuts but with Ivory keys, nine Inches or a Span from my Mouth.
- Q. Whats Metal Made off.
- A. Neither Silver nor Gold Pewter nor brass, Iron nor Steele— but the Tongue of a good Report, that Speaks the Same behind a Brother as before his face.

But the tongue of good report was not merely a novelty of the SL. that had been adopted by W. & MD. There is good evidence that it had formed part of the Masons' obligation at a much earlier date. In the Laws & Statutes of the Lodge Aberdeen dated 1670 we read "... every on to Love ane another as brotheres born and allwayes to have a good report behind ther neyghboures back as his oath tyes him" (Lodge Aberdeen 1^{ter} A. G. Miller).

Question 14. THE CABLE ROPE.

- SL. Q. how long is the Cable Rope of your Lodge?
- A. as long as from the Lop of my Liver to the root of the tongue.

This is the earliest allusion to a Cable-rope in all our documents. Originally, it was probably a part of the "Key, tongue and heart" symbolism and none of the Catechisms except W & MD mentions the cable rope in any other sense than the example given above.

- DU. Q. what is the length of your cable?
- A. It is as long as between ye point of my navel and ye shortest of my hair.

TC has no key questions at all, but has a cable question.

- TC. Q. How far is it from ye cable to ye anchor?
- A. As far as from ye tongue to ye heart.
- ME. Q. Is there a chain to it (i.e. the key)? A. Yes.
- Q. How long is it? A. As long as from my Tongue to my Heart.

GMD, IFM, MF, are all virtually identical.

MC has a curious reading which seems to confuse the answers to this and the "key" questions :-

MC. Q. Where lies the cappel-tow? A. Eighteen or nineteen foot and an half from the lodge-door; and at the end of it lies the cavel-mell to dress the stones with. - N.B. There is no such thing among them as a cappel-tow.

MD says the tongue hangs by a "Tow-line 9 inches or a Span..." (See Q.13) but in the Ob. we find both W & MD have a new use for the "Cable" phrase (see Ob. Q.29).

W. Ob. "... a Cables Length from the Land where the tide..."

MD. Ob. "... the Length of a Cable-rope from Shore, where the Tide..."

Question 15. PRINCIPLES.

SL. Q. from whome do you derive your principalls?

A. from a greater than you.

Q. who is that on earth that is greater than a freemason?

A. he yt was caryed to ye highest pinnicall of the Temple of Jerusalem.

DU. A. "... yt stood upon ye highest penacle of the temple."

Prichard uses these phrases (with suitable additions) as part of his FC degree

MD. Q. Who doth that G denote? A. One that's greater than you.

Q. Who's greater than I, that am a Free and Accepted Mason, the Master of a Lodge.

A. The Grand Architect and Contriver of the Universe, or He that was taken up to the top of the Pinnacle of the Holy Temple.

Question 16. BROTHERLY LOVE.

GMD. Q. How many particular Points pertain to a Free-Mason?

IFM. Q. How many Principal Points pertain to a Right Mason?

GMD. A. Three; Fraternity, Fidelity, Tacity.

Q. What do they represent? A. Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, among all Right Masons; for which all Masons were ordain'd at the Building of the Tower of Babel, and at the Temple of Jerusalem.

IFM is virtually identical.

These questions appear only in GMD and IFM (immediately prior to a question relating to the PROPER POINTS i.e. the "Points of Fellowship") and it is a little surprising that a question of so important and fundamental a nature should have been omitted from so many of our texts. (The replies to Q.30 may perhaps be compared with the above, although that question is entirely different).

I would hazard two reasons for these apparent omissions.

- (1) The Moral Duties already formed an important part of the MS. Constitutions (or Ancient Charges) which were read to each candidate on his admission.
- (2) At this period, and for some years later, it is probable that a substantial part of the ritual was of an extemporaneous nature.

GR has a response which runs on somewhat similar lines to GMD :-

GR. Q. what did you see in the Lodge when you did see?
A. I saw truth the world and Justice and brotherly Love.

W & MD have unusual questions which yield answers that seem to fall into this class :-

WILKINSON MS.

- Q. What did you learn by being a Mason.
A. As a Working Mason to hew Stone & Raise Perpendiculars - as a Gent. Mason Secrecy Morality & good fellowship.

MASONRY DISSECTED.

- Q. What did you learn by being a Gentleman-Mason.
A. Secresy, Morality and Good-fellowship.
Q. What do you learn by being an Operative Mason?
A. Hue, Square, Mould-stone, lay a Level and raise a Perpendicular.

Question 17. THE MERIDIAN.

- GMD. Q. How is the meridian found out?
A. When the Sun leaves the South and breaks in at the West-End of the Lodge. (IFM Identical).

Although Prichard has several "Sun" questions, he does not include this one nor can we find its parallel in any of the Catechisms.

Question 18. ORDERS IN ARCHITECTURE.

- ME. Q. How many Orders be there in Architecture?
A. Five. Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and Composite or Roman.

MF, GMD and IFM are virtually identical.

GR does not have this question, but in the course of an explanation of the FPOF it refers those signs to "the ffive points off artitector and allso to the ffive orders of Masonry."

GMD and IFM extend the question thus :-

- GMD Q. What do they answer? A. They answer to the Base Perpendicular, Diameter, Circumference and Square

These questions seem to contain the elements (or relics?) of an Architectural lesson and they are not preserved in MD. Both W. and MD however give some questions of a similar purpose, the texts being almost identical.

- MD. Q. How many Principles are there in Masonry? A. Four.
 Q. What are they? A. Point, Line, Superficies and Solid.
 Q. Explain them. A. Point the Centre (round which the
 Master cannot err) Line Length without Breadth, Super-
 ficies Length and Breadth, Solid comprehends the whole.

Question 19. THE ARCH.

- ME. Q. Whence comes the Pattern of an Arch?
 A. From the Rainbow. (MF identical).

GMD and IFM say that the Arch is derived from Architecture and that it resembles the Rainbow.

These Arch-Rainbow questions do not appear in any of the remaining documents.

Question 20. THE MASTER'S PLACE.

- SL. Q. wch is the masters place in the lodge?
 A. the east place is the masters place in the Lodge and the
 Jewell resteth on him first and he setteth men to worke
 wt the masters have in the foor-noon the wardens reap
 in the Afternoon.

This is the earliest version of a question which, in a variety of forms, finds an important place in 11 of our documents. The reference to the Jewell is a complete puzzle as the phrase has no parallel in the later Catechisms, unless Prichard's expansion q.v. (which includes the names of "jewels" worn by various officers) may be deemed a variation of SL.

TC and DU both have more formal answers although their descriptions of the Master's seat are rather curious.

- TC. Q. Where sits ye master? A. In a Chair of bone in ye
 middle of a four square pavement.

- Q. Wt sits he there for? A. To observe the suns rising
 to see to set his men to work.

- DU. Q. where layes ye master? A. in a stone trough under
 ye west window looking to ye east waiting for ye son
 rising to sett his men to work.

ME is the earliest work which gives the situation of Master, Wardens and Fellows, thus :-

- ME. Q. How do Masons take their Place in Work?
 A. The Master SE, the Wardens NE and the Fellows Eastern
 Passage.

MF has the same question but answers East for Master and Wardens, and Eastern Passage for the Fellows.

- GMD. Q. Where is the Masons Point? A. At the East Window,
 waiting the Rising of the Sun, to set his Men at work.

- Q. Where is the Wardens Point? A. At the West-Window,
 waiting the setting of the Sun, to dismiss the Entred
 Apprentices.

IFM says "Masters Post", otherwise identical.

MC places the Master SE, but its positions for FCs., Wardens, and EAs. are described too vaguely for comparison here.

- GMO. *Q.* Where sat King John in the Morning when he assembled the Society.
A. He sat in the East Window of the Temple in a Chair of Marble waiting the rising Sun.
Q. where sat He in the Evening when He dismissed it?
A. At the West End of the Temple in the same Chair, waiting the setting Sun.

(Is this an attempt to invent a legend to fit one of the test questions?)

As in the Lights Question, the geographical positions are often confusing, and sometimes contradictory, but Prichard, with his zest for detail gives us a very clear picture of the lodge, its principal officers, their garb and their duties :-

- MD. *Q.* Where stands your Master? *A.* In the East.
Q. Why so? *A.* As the Sun rises in the East and opens the Day, so the Master stands in the East (with his Right Hand upon his Left Breast being a Sign, and the Square about his Neck) to open the Lodge and to set his Men to Work.
Q. Where stands your Wardens? *A.* In the West.
Q. What's their business?
A. As the Sun sets in the West to close the Day, so the Wardens stand in the West (with their Right Hands upon their Left Breasts being a Sign, and the Level and Plumb-Rule about their Necks) to close the Lodge and dismiss the Men from Labour, paying their Wages.
Q. Where stands the Senior Enter'd 'Prentice?
A. In the South.
Q. What is his Business? *A.* to hear and receive Instructions and welcome strange Brothers.
Q. Where stands the Junior Enter'd 'Prentice?
A. In the North.
Q. What is his Business?
A. To keep off all Cowans and Evesdroppers.

Notice the Square, Level and Plumb-Rule allocated to the Master and Wardens respectively. W. contains a series of almost identical questions & answers, but omits all mention of signs or clothing.

Question 21. THE MARK.

- ME. *Q.* Where does the Master place his Mark on the Work?
A. Upon the SE Corner.

MF is almost identical with the above, and in MC we find mention of the candidate having to pay "one mark Scots" for the privilege of choosing a mark to be put upon his tools.

ME also contains the well-known rhyming allusion to the Mark :-

If a Master-Mason you would be,
Observe you well the Rule of Three ;
And what you want in Masonry,
Thy Mark and Maughbin makes thee free.

MD has preserved this rhyme in the Master's Part, but the Mark has been dropped out, and 3 new lines substituted for the last two, thus :-

If a Master-Mason you would be,
You must rightly understand the Rule of Three.
And M.B. shall make you free :
And what you want in Masonry,
Shall in this Lodge be shown to thee :

Question 22. YELLOW-BLUE COMPASSES.

- DU. Q. would you know your master if you saw him? A. Yes.
Q. what way would ye know him? A. by his habit.
Q. what couller is his habit?
A. yellow and blew, meaning the compass wc is bras and Iron.

This question appears in only four of our documents :-

- MC. Q. What's a masons livery?
A. A yellow cap and blue breeches ; meaning the compasses.

W, MF and MD are practically identical :-

- MD. Q. Have you seen your Master today? A. Yes.
Q. How was he Cloathed?
A. In a Yellow Jacket and Blue Pair of Breeches (N.B. The Yellow Jacket is the Compasses and the Blue Breeches the Steel Points).

Question 23. THE SALUTATION.

- SL. (Visitor?) God is Gratfull to all Worshipfull Masters and ffellows
in that Worshipfull Lodge from whence me (? we)
last came.
(W.M.?) and to you good fellow wt is your name?
A. (Visitor?) J. or B. then giving the grip of the hand he
will say Brother John greet you well,
A. gods good greeting to you dear Brother.

I have chosen the Sloane version of the Salutation to head this series of questions because those given in ER and CC appear to be directly connected with an actual ceremony, while this SL example is undoubtedly a visitor's test. The series of questions involving the Salutation is one of the most striking features of the Catechisms, if we may judge by the degree of unanimity which they achieve. It appears in all our documents except TC, GMO and MF.

SL gives another Salutation for the FC or MM, in which the visitor, after a suitable grip or token said :-

SL. the right worshipfull the masters and fellows in that worshipfull Lodge from whence we Last came greet you, greet you, greet you well.

to which the WM replied as before

“Gods good greeting to you dear Brother.”

(ER and CC also use the triple “greet you” in their Salutation).

The Salutation usually appears in the narrative portion of our documents, and only a few of them put it in the form of question and answer. Indeed, it would have been difficult to justify the inclusion of the Salutation with this survey of the Catechisms, except for the fact that, in many cases, certain test letters or words formed an essential part of the greeting, as may be seen in the SL example quoted above.

In GR the *manner of using the test words* is more fully explained.

GR. “The Sallutation is as ffollows :-

Q. ffrom whence came you? A. I came ffrom a right worshipfull Lodge of Masters and ffellows belonging to God and holy saint John who doth greet all true and perfect brothers of our holy secrets so do I you if I finde you to be one.

Q. I greet you well brother craveing your name—answere J and the other is to say his is B.”

The W. Salutation follows the “Lettering” test. (see Q.32 p. 40). But the text seems to have been inaccurately copied from some earlier document :-

W. Right Worshipfull, the Master & fellows of the Holy Lodge of St. John from whence I Came Greet you, Greet you, Greet you, three Welcome Brothers.

(The text might be more accurate if the word “thrice” were substituted for “three,” and followed by a full stop).

MD. Q. What Recommendations brought you from thence?
(i.e. St. John’s).

A. The Recommendations which I brought from the Right Worshipful Brothers and Fellows of the Right Worshipful and Holy Lodge of St. John’s, from whence I came, and Greet you thrice heartily well.

This is from Prichard’s 1st Degree. His Fellow-Crafts Degree contains a somewhat similar Salutation which may have been in rhyme originally, and ending “Greet you, greet you, greet you thrice, heartily well, craving your Name,” but Prichard’s Salutations appear to have been straightforward greetings, since neither of them is associated with a “word or letter” test.

GROUP 2.

**Questions relating to the actual Ceremonies and depicting
the work inside the Lodge.**

Question 24. PREPARATION OF CANDIDATE.

- DU. *Q.* hou were you brought in ?
 A. shamfully wt a rope about my neck.
 Q. whay a rop about your neck ?
 A. to hang me if I should Betry may trust.

DU is the only one of all our documents that mentions this item in the preparation of the candidate. ER and CC speak of "ceremonies to frighten" the candidate, but give no details.

- GR. *Q.* How came you into the Lodge ?
 A. poor and penless blind and Ignorant of our secrets.

It is impossible now to say whether DU and GR represent two different modes of preparation in use at that time. ME speaks of the candidate being blindfolded *after* he had taken the Oath.

In addition to GR and ME, there are two more suggestions in our texts from which we may perhaps infer that the Candidate was blindfolded during some part of the proceedings. In the MC preamble to the Oath, we are told that the Candidate was "*made to kneel*," and one of the responses in MF states that, upon entrance into the Lodge, two Wardens "took me under each Arm, and conducted me from Darkness into Light . . .", but the latter may merely refer to the "dark entry," as the text suggests that the candidate was able to notice that he was being conducted by Wardens.

W has a question which indicates that the candidate was not blindfold (see under Q.25).

GMO "At the Installation of any Member the Person to be admitted drest with an Apron before Him" etc. etc.
 This is the only work which mentions an Apron as part of the preparation.

MC describes the preparation at some length, which includes the baring of the right knee and an elbow, and an instruction to the Candidate "to deliver up any metal thing he has upon him."

MF also mentions "bare-knee'd" and deprived of weapons.

W. says "Neither Setting nor Standing, Naked nor Cloathed but in due form." ..

MD amplifies this :-

- MD. *Q.* How did he bring you ? *A.* Neither naked nor cloathed,
 barefoot nor shod, deprived of all Metal and in a right
 moving Posture.

W & MD in reply to another question refer to "bare-bended knee
 naked Left Breast" & MD speaks of "naked Right Hand."

We notice that even in the few documents which give details on this point, there is wide variation in the mode of preparation of the candidate. I suggest three possible explanations :-

- (1) Varying systems in use in different parts of the country.
- (2) Some of the details given may be complementary to each other; e.g., the preparation in DU might easily be combined with that in GR.
- (3) New customs superseding older ones, perhaps as a result of Speculative influence.

Question 25. **MODE OF ENTRANCE - PERAMBULATIONS.**

Although many of the documents give clear (but sometimes contradictory) descriptions of the preparation of a candidate, they are almost completely silent as to the *manner* of his entrance into the Lodge.

W speaks of the Junior EA acting as a sort of Tyler :-

- W. Q. What did you see before you was Admitted into the Lodge.
 A. the Iunior Apprentice with a drawn Sword in his hand.

The only detailed description is in MF, which I quote at length.

- MF. Q. How was you admitted ?
 A. When I came to the first Door, a Man with a drawn Sword asked me, If I had any Weapons? I answer'd No. Upon which he let me pass by him into a dark Entry; there two Wardens took me under each Arm, and conducted me from Darkness into Light, passing thro' two Rows of the Brotherhood, who stood mute, to the upper End of the room, from whence the Master went down the outside of one of the Rows, and touching a young Brother on the Shoulder, said, Who have we here? To which he answer'd A Gentleman who desires to be admitted a Member of the Society. Upon which he came up again, and asked me, *If I came there thro' my own desire, or at the Request or Desire of another? . . .*

In the MF description above, we have an early version of our "own free will and accord." W. also indicates the necessity for this voluntary approach to the Craft, in the form of Q. & A :-

- W. Q. How Came you to be Made a Mason.
 A. By my own Desire & y^e Recommendatⁿ of a friend.

MF gives a hint of some kind of perambulation, which is supported by certain phrases in ME, W and MD.

ME. . . . "Then a Warden leads him to the Master and Fellows; *to each of whom* he is to say . . ."

The MD hint appears under Question 26, where we notice that the Candidate was brought in at the West, taken to NE, and then back to the W., after which he was advanced eastwards again to the Master. W. says "led me round due East and West."

Although the Exposures of the 1760's make quite a feature of the perambulations, our earlier texts offer but scanty evidence on the subject.

Question 26. THREE STEPS.

GMD and IFM *Q.* How many Steps belong to a Right Mason?
A. Three.

This question appears only in these two documents, but there are indications in some of the others that three steps did play some part in the "making" ceremony of those days. MC actually shows a diagram of the candidate's three paces, by which he advanced towards the Master, setting his feet in the form of a Square at each step. ME, in a description of certain signs on meeting a Brother, describes three steps as a preliminary (see SIGNS PEDESTAL).

W & MD, in detailed descriptions of the entry of a candidate for his Initiation, also speak of three steps as a preliminary to the Obligation. The texts are virtually identical :-

MD. *Q.* How got you Admittance? *A.* By three great Knocks.
Q. Who receiv'd you? *A.* A Junior Warden.
Q. How did he dispose of you? *A.* He carried me up to the North-East Part of the Lodge, and brought me back again to the West and deliver'd me to the Senior Warden. (W. says . . . Led me Round the Lodge due East & West . . .)
Q. What did the Senior Warden do with you?
A. He presented me, and shew'd me how to walk up (by three steps) to the Master. (W. says . . . "three great Steps . . .")

Question 27. POSTURE DURING OBLIGATION.

DU. *Q.* what puster were you in when you Received?
A. neither sitting nor standing nor running nor going but on my left knee.

WIM and WIO. *A.* Kneeling with Square and Compass at my breast.

GR. *Q.* what poster did you pass your oath in?
A. . . . nether sitting standing goeing . . . etc., etc.

GR. then adds an explanatory " . . . being half naked, half cloathed, half shode, half bairfoot, half kneeling, half standing . . ."

GMO. *A.* I sat on my right knee with the Holy Bible at my Breast.

MF. *A.* Neither naked nor clothed . . . etc., but in due form . . . kneeling bare-knee'd betwixt the Bible and the Square . . .

W & MD again give most elaborate detail. After the "neither naked etc." (see question 24) there is a series of questions leading up to :-

MD. *Q.* How did he make you a Mason?
A. With my bare-bended Knee and Body within the Square, the Compass extended to my naked Left Breast, my naked Right Hand on the Holy Bible; there I took the Obligation (or oath) of a Mason.

W. says L.H. on Bible and R.H. holds compasses to N.L.B. Otherwise identical with MD.

The narrative portions of some of the documents add considerably to the foregoing details. ER and CC say "put the person, who is to get the word, upon his knees : . . . yow make him take up the Bible ; and, laying his right hand upon it . . ."

GMO. ". . . . a Trowel in his Right Hand, and a Hammer in his left, kneels on his right knee with a Bible on his Breast, supported by the Trowel and in this Posture . . . etc. . ."

MC. "He is made to kneel on the right knee, bare ; then the square is put three times round his body and applied to his breast ; the open compasses pointed to his breast and his bare elbow on the Bible with his hand lifted up ; and he swears . . ."

MF. ". . . . a Square was laid on the Ground, in which they made me kneel bare-knee'd, and giving a Compass into my Right-hand, I set the Point to my Left-Breast, and my Left-Arm hanging down."

The final words of MF are in the form of an NB which conflicts with its own version of the Posture during OB. thus :-

"There's a Bible put in the Right Hand, and the Square under the Right-Elbow." Could this have been the posture for some other purpose ?

In spite of the contradictory passages, it is possible to obtain, from all the above extracts, a fairly clear picture of the posture of the candidate during the OB. He was certainly kneeling, probably on the right knee only. He was only half-shod and the "neither naked nor clothed" suggests that he wore his shirt open (or none at all). W, MF and MD suggest that he was kneeling within the arms of a Square placed on the ground, and several documents suggest that the right hand was resting upon the Bible. Other details worthy of note are as follows :-

MC, WIM, WIO. With square and compass at the breast.

GMO. „ Holy Bible at the breast.

W, MF, MD. „ Compasses at the breast.

MC speaks of the "hand lifted up" and MF speaking of a "square under the right Elbow" also suggests an uplifted hand.

SL, which gives no information on this or the preceding question, has however 2 questions which possibly refer to preparation and posture :-

SL. Q. Whither above the Cloathes or under the C(loathes)?

A. Under the Cloathes.

Q. under what Arme? A. under the right Arme.

The first of these questions may relate to the application of the Square or Compasses "under the Cloathes"; and the 2nd question may be related to the placing of a square "under the Right Arme" as in MC above.

MC, in addition to the "posture" for the Ob. mentioned earlier, gives another "posture" worthy of notice under this heading, i.e., a posture *during the Catechism*. It appears in the form of a footnote to one of the questions, as follows :-

MC. ". . . the feet are set in the form of a square, as before shewed, being the posture he stands in *while he repeats his secrets*."

Question 28. GOD AND THE SQUARE.

SL. Q. What were you sworn by?
 A. by god and the Square.

This question, which is obviously of a symbolical nature, would appear to merit classification under Group I, rather than under this group of questions which relate to the actual ceremonies, but the insistence of a number of our documents on the importance of the Square, suggests the probability that the Square played some part in the ceremony, even when the Catechisms and narratives do not mention the fact. Notice the use of the square in the preceding question.

WIM, WIO. Q. Who is Master of all Lodges?
 A. God, and the Square.

GMO. Q. Who is your Founder?
 A. God and the Square.
 (and later :-)

Q. By what Oath did you Swear to conceal the secret word?

A. By God, the Square, the King and the Master.

GMD. Q. Who rules and governs the Lodge and is Master of it?

A. IRAH



IACHIN

} or the Right Pillar

Q. How is it governed? A. Of Square and Rule.

IFM says "Jehovah or the Right Pillar," and then, "Of Square, Plumb and Rule."

GR in response to a different question :- "... my second was to obey God and all true Square, made or sent from a brother."

MC. Q. Who made you a Mason? A. God almighty's holy will made me a mason; the square, under God, made me a mason; . . . etc.

W. has two unusual questions which appear to be related to this group :-

W. Q. if a Mason be lost where is he to be found.
 Between the Square and the Compass.

Q. Why so

A. because a Mason Sho^d always be upon the Square and live within Compass.

Prichard used a variation of this question in his "Master's Part":-

MD. Q. How came you to be pass'd Master?

A. By the help of God, the Square and my own Industry.

Q. How was you pass'd Master?

A. From the Square to the Compass.

Question 29. OBLIGATION & PENALTIES.

MD. Q. Can you repeat that Obligation ?

A. I'll do my Endeavour

W. & MD. are the only Catechisms in which the Obligation is actually given *as the reply to a Question*. We have ample evidence, dating back to our earliest Masonic MSS, that the Oath or Obligation always formed the crux of the ceremony of admission into the Craft, and numerous versions of the Oath have come down to us from these sources. (See Baxter, AQC. 31).

They are of a simple character, treating only of the care with which the mason should keep the Charges & guard the secrets of the Lodge. None of those early documents mentions the "penalties" (which seem to be a later development) and, as might be expected, where there were so many sources available the Obligations in the Catechisms tend, at first, to parallel their predecessors in the MS. Constitutions. Only 10 of our 16 texts give exact details of the Ob., yielding in all 8 different versions. To facilitate comparison, I give all 8 in chronological order and where a text has no Ob., I merely record the penalties as they appear in the Catechisms.

ER. "By god himself and you shall answer to god when you shall stand nakd before him, at the great day, you shall not reveal any pairt of what you shall hear or see at this time whither by word nor write nor put it in wryte at any time nor draw it with the point of a sword, or any other instrument upon the snow or sand nor shall you speak of it but with an entered mason, so help you god".

No penalties are mentioned *in* the OB., but the "words of entrie" include one, which may have become incorporated with the OB at a later date, i.e., "under no less pain then haveing my tongue cut out under my chin and of being buried, within the flood mark where no man shall know"

CC is identical in detail.

SL. "The mason word and everything therein contained you shall keep secrett you shall never put it in writing directly or Indirectly you shall keep all that we or your attenders shall bid you keep secret from Man, Woman or Child Stock or Stone and never reveal it but to a brother or in a Lodge of Freemasons and truly observe the Charges in ye Constitucion all this you promise and swere faithfully to keep and observe without any manner of Equivocation or mentall Resarvation directly or Indirectly so help you god and by the Contents of this book.

So he kisses the book &c."

No penalties are mentioned in this part of the MS., but in the Catechism (see Q.3), we read "by no less paine than cutting my tongue from my throat."

DU. "The Form of the Oath" is given as a part of the main Document i.e., the MS. Constitutions, as follows :-

"The Charges wc now w(e) Rehearse to you wt all othe(r) Charges and secrets otherways belonging to free masons or any that enter their intrest for curiositie together wt the counsels of this holy ludge chamber or hall you shal not for any gift bribe or Reward, favouer or affection directly or (in)directly nor for any cause Qtsoever devulge disclose ye same to ether father or mother sister or brother or children or stranger or any person Qtsoever so help you god.

The DU *penalties* shown in the Catech. are fourfold :-

- (1) "... (A rope) ... "to hang me If I should Betry may trust ..."
- (2) "... heart to be taken out alive ..."
- (3) "... head to be cut of ..."
- (4) "... bodys to be buried in ye sea mark and not in any place Qr christians are buried ..."

TC. Neither Obligation nor penalty, but under a Triple Tau diagram at the head of the MS are the words "*Under no less a penalty.*"

ME. No Obligation is given but the penalties *are* mentioned in the narrative "... on Pain of Having his Throat cut ..." also (in Q.3) "... on Pain of having my Throat cut, or Tongue pull'd out."

GMD. *The Free-Masons Oath.* You must serve God according to the best of your Knowledge and Institution, and be a true Leige Man to the King, and help and assist any Brother as far as your Ability will allow : By the Contents of the Sacred Writ you will perform this Oath. So help you God.

GMD. Penalty (see Q.3) "... of having my Throat cut *or* my Tongue pull'd out of my Head." IFM. oath is virtually identical, also penalty in Q3.

These two texts, (GMD and IFM) are exceptional in that they are the only versions which mention the Obligation to assist Brothers and completely ignore all question of secrecy.

WIM, WIO, GR, GMO, all mention the Oath, but give no details and no penalties.

WIM, WIO. Q. What were you sworne to? A. For to hold and conceal.

These texts have another question (see Q.30) which implies that the full Obligation dealt with both secrecy, and relief to distressed Brethren.

MC. "As I shall answer before God at the great day, and this company, I shall heal and conceal, or not divulge or make known the secrets of the mason-word, (Here one is taken bound, not to write them on paper, parchment, timber, stone, sand, snow, etc.) under the pain of having my tongue taken out from beneath my chowks, and my heart out from beneath my left oxter, and my body buried within the sea mark, where it ebbs and flows twice in the twenty-four hours."

Compare triple Penalties with DU, W, and MD.

MF. "I solemnly protest and swear, in the Presence of Almighty God, and this Society, that I will not, by Word of Mouth or Signs, discover any Secrets which shall be communicated to me this Night, or at any time hereafter ; That I will not write carve engrave or cause to be written carved or engraven the same, either upon Paper, Copper, Brass, Wood, or Stone, or any Moveable or Immoveable or any other way discover the same, to any but a Brother or Fellow Craft, under no less Penalty than having my Heart pluck'd thro' the Pap of my Left-Breast, my Tongue by the Roots from the Roof of my Mouth, my Body to be burnt, and my Ashes to be scatter'd abroad in the Wind, whereby I may be lost to the Remembrance of a Brother.

The W & MD Obligations are almost identical. For ease of comparison I show them side by side.

WILKINSON MS.

I do hereby Solemnly Promise & declare in the Presence of Almighty God, that I will heal & Conceal all the Secretts or Secrecy of a Mason or Masonry that has been heretofore, shall be now, or at any time hereafter, Revealed to me that I will not Speak or Declare them to any Saving a Brother or fellow after due Examination

that I will not write them, work them, mark them, Point them or Engrave them : or Cause them to be Written Marked Pointed, or Engraved on anything moveable or Immoveable

Under no less Penalty than having my Throat Cut, my tongue tore from the Roof of my Mouth, my Heart Plucked from under my left breast & buried in the Sands of the Sea, a Cables Length from the Land where the tide Ebbs & flows twice in 24 hours, my body to be burned to Ashes, and the Ashes Scattered over the face of the whole Earth that there may be no Remembrance of me —

So help me God, Kissing the bible

MASONRY DISSECTED

I hereby solemnly Vow and Swear in the Presence of Almighty God and this Right Worshipful Assembly that I will Hail and Conceal, and never Reveal the Secrets or Secresy of Masons or Masonry, that shall be Revealed unto me ; unless to a True and Lawful Brother, after due Examination, or in a Just and Worshipful Lodge of Brothers and Fellows well met.

I furthermore Promise and Vow, that I will not Write them, Print them, Mark them, Carve them or Engrave them, or cause them to be Written, Printed, Marked, Carved, or Engraved on Wood or Stone, so as the Visible Character or Impression of a Letter may appear, whereby it may be unlawfully obtain'd.

All this under no less Penalty than to have my Throat cut, my Tongue taken from the Roof of my Mouth, my Heart pluck'd from under my Left Breast, them to be buried in the Sands of the Sea, the Length of a Cable-rope from Shore, where the Tide ebbs and flows twice in 24 Hours, my Body to be burnt to Ashes my Ashes to be scatter'd upon the face of the Earth, so that there shall be no more Remembrance of me among Masons.

So help me God.

It will be noticed that the earliest penalty was associated only with the throat, and that additional horrific penalties were gradually introduced. The four-fold penalties in DU are perhaps the most interesting, since they remained entirely without parallel until 1727 when two of them appear in the MC Obligation.

MC penalties are “. . . . tongue heart body buried”

MF penalties are “. . . . heart tongue body burnt”

W & MD penalties are “. . . . throat tongue heart body burnt”

It is perhaps relevant here to observe that, regardless of the number of degrees indicated in them, none of our documents gives more than a single Obligation, even when, as in ER, CC and MC the texts tell us that the candidate "takes the Oath anew." (MC says "after he has sworn the oath *again* or declared his approbation of it"). The silence of all the later texts on the subject of an altered form of oath for the FC or Master tends to confirm that up to 1730 at least, only one obligation was known for all grades, and our oldest Masonic MS, the Regius Poem, c.1390, shows that this was truly ancient practice. "And alle schul swere the same oghth Of the masonus, ben they luf (=willing) ben they loght (=loth)." (Lines 437-8). From the texts quoted here, we are able to trace three stages in the evolution of the Ob.

- (1) Period up to 1724. The Simple Oath of Secrecy.
- (2) Period 1724-1726. The introduction of an obligation to assist Brethren. (See GMD, IFM, WIM, WIO).
- (3) Period After 1727. The incorporation of "Penalties" into the Oath. (See MC and later texts).

Quite apart from the authenticity or otherwise of the texts, the dates given here may be misleading, since it is quite possible that some forms of the Ob. which appeared late may have been in common use long before they were published. As regards the "Penalties" the fact that they appear in the Catechisms as early as 1696, suggests the probability that they may have formed part of the Ob. even at that date, although we have no evidence of their incorporation into the Ob. until 1727. (Six texts do not give the Ob. TC, ME, WIM, WIO, GR, GMO).

Question 30. THE OBLIGATION TO ASSIST.

- WIM, WIO. Q. What other Tenor did your Oath carry?
 A. For to help all Brothers of our holy secret, Fellow craft or not.

This question appears in three out of the 6 documents which give no precise details of the Obligation (see Ob. Q.29) WIM, WIO, GR.

- GR. Has a tri-partite reply to this same question, the third section ending up . . . "and relieve him when its in my power it not horting my self too far . . ."

GMO touches the subject without a question :-

- GMO. (narrative) ". . . for a Member of any Lodge is oblig'd to Furnish another Member tho' of a different Lodge, with all Necessaries in his distress and support Him to the utmost of his Power."

It is rather curious to notice that of the ten documents which give a form of the Obligation only two, GMD and IFM, embody the obligation to assist a Brother, all the rest confining themselves to the topic of secrecy.

- GMD (Ob.) ". . . and help and assist any Brother as far as your Ability will allow; . . ."

- IFM. (Ob.) ". . . . any Brother of the Antient and Noble Science, as far as your Ability etc. . . ."

Question 31. HOW LONG DO YOU SERVE YOUR MASTER.

- MD. Q. How long do you serve your Master?
 A. From Monday Morning to Saturday Night.

This question is directly related to the "words of entrie" recited by the candidate in ER and CC on his return to the lodge after being entrusted with certain secrets outside the Lodge.

MC contains a shortened version of the "words of entrie":-

- MC. Q. What say you?
 A. Here stand I . . . younger and last entered prentice;
 ready to serve my master from the Monday morning
 to the Saturday night, in all lawful employments.

- MD continues. Q. How do you serve him?
 A. With Chalk, Charcoal and Earthen Pan.
 Q. What do they denote.
 A. Freedom, Fervency and Zeal.

The reference to "Chalk etc." appears to be an early allusion to a ceremony that was made much of in the later 18th cent. Exposures, i.e. the washing of the floor of the Lodge. Neither MD nor any of our earlier documents says anything on the subject of "Drawing the Lodge," a custom that was certainly in common use in the mid-18th century, but it can hardly be a coincidence that several Exposures of the later period use the words "Chalk and Charcoal" in this connection.

Thorp (Commentary on CC. Leicester Repr. No. XIII) points out that the Monday to Saturday answer, is a relic of operative masonry, the clause appearing in many indentures as one of the conditions of service.

Question 32. LETTERING.

- W. Q. Have you any by words as a Mason.
 A. I have
 Q. Give me one
 A. I'll letter it with you
 Q. Give me the first I'll give you ye Second

1	..	..	B
2	..	..	O
3	..	..	A
4	..	..	Z
1	..	..	Bo
2	..	..	Az

There follows a textual reference to 1 Ch. 3. 17. where the Pillar names are mentioned, but the name of the R.H. Pillar is not used in the Catechism, and appears nowhere else in the text.

If we accept Bro. Knoop's date of 1727 for the Wilkinson MS., then *this is the earliest example of its kind* in the documents under review. MF and MD provide the only parallels, but with slight variations, thus :-

- MF. Q. Give me a letter. A. B. O. A. Z.
When this question is ask'd you are to give the letter B.
The Querist will say O, you A, he Z.
- MF. Q. Give me another. A. J. A. C. H. I. N. Alternately
as Boaz. N.B. Boaz and Jachin were two Pillars in
Solomon's Porch. I King's VII, 21.
- MD. Q. Give me the Word. A. I'll letter it with you. (Done).
Q. Give me another. A. Jachin. (Not lettered).

It is to be noted that in all 3 documents the tests appear as part of the Catechism, and in MF and MD, as with the majority of our texts, the lesson of the two pillars is associated with the EA. Either or both names seem to have been used quite regularly as a sort of finale to the salutation, (see Q.23), but in W. it comes *before* the salutation. This curious method of communicating the words is described by W. & MD as "lettering" and there seems little doubt that either as a part of the actual ceremony, or in the catechism which *followed* a ceremony, it formed part of the work done *inside* the Lodge.

In the SL & GR examples quoted under Q. 23, we notice that the participants used only initial letters, and it is possible that these may be two earlier instances of this same type of communication.

"HALVING." In the W. text at the head of this section, the lettering was completed by the utterance of two syllables which might be described as "Halving" In SL. we have a somewhat similar practice where the word(s) MAHA - BYN were likewise "halved." This practice is not to be confused with the method of "exchanging words" (see WIO under Words, p. 56) where the utterance of one complete word required the response of another word directly related to the first.

GROUP 3.

Questions relating to a Higher Degree.

Question 33. KITCHEN-HALL.

- ER. Q. I see you have been in the Kitchine, but I know not if
you have been in the hall?
A. I have been in the hall as weel as in the kitchine.

CC. identical.

This question was put to the Mason *after* he had been tested by means of all or some of the test questions, and had proved himself a Mason; upon the correct answer being given, a further test was imposed to prove the Brother a Fellow-Craft. (See Q.34). The question is, therefore, not a test in itself, but only the preliminary to a test. It is, nevertheless, tantalising that in the 4 documents which contain the question, the difference between the Kitchen-grade and the Hall-grade is explained, while the actual meaning or origin of

the terms remains a mystery. Thorp (Commentary on CC. Leics. L. of Research *Reprints* No. XIII) suggested that it may relate to an operative tradition that Fellows or Masters were permitted to associate with their employers, while apprentices were restricted to associating with menials and dependants.

The same test appears only in ME and MF.

MF. *Q.* Have you been in the Kitchen? *A.* Yes I have.
(N.B. You shall know an Enter'd Apprentice by this Question).

Q. Did you ever dine in the Hall? *A.* Yes I did. (N.B. A Brother Mason by this Question).

ME is virtually identical.

Another question appears in two of our texts as a further preliminary to the test of a Fellow or Master :-

MF. *Q.* How old are you? *A.* Under 5, or under 7, which you will. N.B. When you are first made a Mason, you are only entered Apprentice; and till you are made a Master, or, as they call it, pass'd the Master's Part, you are only an enter'd Apprentice and consequently must answer under 7; for if you say above, they will expect the Master's Word and Signs.

Note. There is not one Mason in a Hundred that will be at the Expence to pass the Master's Part, except it be for Interest.

MD has the identical question but with less explanatory matter.

MD. *Q.* How old are you? *A.* Under Seven (Denoting he has not pass'd Master).

W. shows an unusual set of figures :-

W. *Q.* Whats the Age of a Mason.

A. Three times Seven.

When you are asked how Old you are When an Apprentice under Seven - fellow Craft under 14; When a Master three times Seven.

Question 34.

POINTS OF FELLOWSHIP.

ER. *Q.* Are you a fellow craft? *A.* yes.

Q. How many points of the fellowship are ther?

A. fyve viz foot to foot Knee to Kn(ce) Heart to Heart, Hand to Hand and ear to ear. Then make the sign of fellowship and shake hand and you will be acknowledged a true mason

This, the final test of a Mason, appears in our texts with such a striking degree of unanimity as to suggest that it was probably of great antiquity and that it was considered of supreme importance. Indeed, it seems to have been one of those "landmarks" which, regardless of the manner of its transmission, managed to survive almost unaltered throughout the whole period under review, and is to be found in all our texts except DU, WIM and W.

The descriptions of the test are sometimes the outcome of a question in the Catechism, sometimes they appear in the narrative portion of the text. This would tend to explain those examples in which the same test is described with considerable verbal variation. The number of "Points" is usually given as Five, occasionally as Six.

SL. (Narrative) "... and standing close With their Breasts to each other the inside of Each others right Ankle Joynts the masters grip by their right hands and the top of their Left hand fingers thrust close on ye small of each others Backbone and in that posture they Stand"

TC. (Narrative) "... Squeeze the Master by ye back bone, put your knee between his and say"

Neither SL nor TC say anything on the subject of the "Points of Fellowship."

SL. calls this the Masters Word ; TC calls it the Masters sign.

ME. Q. How many points be there in Fellowship ?

A. Six. Foot to Foot, Knee to Knee, Hand to Hand, Ear to Ear, Tongue to Tongue, Heart to Heart.

ME also has a curious "narrative" paragraph which may refer to the same postures :-

ME. (Narrative) "To know a Mason privately, you place your Right Heel to his Right Instep, put your Right Arm over his Left, and your Left under his Right, and then make a Square with your middle Finger, from his Left Shoulder to the Middle of his Back, and so down to his Breeches."

GMD, IFM and MF are identical with ER, above, but the two former call them "Proper Points."

MC has a narrative paragraph in which the details are also identical with ER.

GMO. Q. Have the six Spiritual Signs any Names ?

A. Yes, but are not divulged to any new admitted Member, because they are Cabalistical ?

Q. What are these Signs, the first is Foot to Foot, the second is Knee to Knee, the third is Breast to Breast, the fourth is Hand to Back, the fifth is Cheek to Cheek, the sixth is Face to Face.

WIO (in narrative) gives "Five points of Free Masons Fellowship" identical with GMO above, but omitting the "Face to Face."

GR has a "narrative" paragraph in which the five points are detailed and then related to "the five points off artitectur and allso to the ffive orders of Masonry." But the most interesting description of all comes from the GR legend of the raising of Noah by his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. The legend relates how they went to their father's grave "for to try if they could find anything about him ffor to Lead them to the vertuable secret which this famieous preacher had." Finding nothing at the grave "save the dead body all most consumed away takeing a greip at a ffinger it came away so from Joynt to Joynt so to the wrest so to the Elbow so they Reared up the dead body and supported it setting ffoot to ffoot knee to knee Breast to breast Cheeck to cheeck and hand to back and cryed out help o ffather"

How this legend ever got into the Graham MS., is a complete puzzle and it is the only case in which Noah is associated with the Points of Fellowship.

The W text is completely blank as to a FC ceremony and has no hint anywhere of the "Points of Fellowship."

MD keeps "points of fellowship" for the 3rd degree.

MD. (Master's Part). Q. How was Hiram rais'd? A. As all other Masons are when they receive the Master's Word.

Q. How is that?

A. By the Five Points of Fellowship.

Q. What are they? A. Hand to Hand, Foot to Foot, Check to Check, Knee to Knee and Hand in Back.

In the course of the examples quoted here we see that the Points of Fellowship were originally associated with the "fellow or master," i.e., the higher degree in a bi-gradal system. In TC (1711) we find separate "signs" allocated to the EA, FC, and Master, and the Points are there associated with the superior grade in a tri-gradal system, while in MD (1730) they definitely form part of the 3rd degree or Master's Part.

I cannot close this examination of the "Points of Fellowship" without remarking on certain passages in ER and CC which seem to suggest the existence of a "Masters-sign" and perhaps a "sign of Fellowship" in conjunction with the Points of Fellowship, *but quite distinct from them.*

In the ER example under Q. 34 above we read :-

ER. "Then make the sign of fellowship"

CC. says "These make the Signs of fellowship ;"

If ER is correct, the "Sign of Fellowship" is apparently something additional to the postures or "Points of Fellowship."

Elsewhere, in the description of the re-entry of the newly made master or fellow, after having been entrusted outside the lodge with the "postures and signes of fellowship" we read in ER :-

ER. ". . . then coming in again, He makes the masters sign afterwards the youngest mason (CC. "young master") must advance and put himself into the posture he is to receive the word and sayes"

I take the "posture" here to refer to the "Points of Fellowship" i.e., a number of signs requiring two participants, and I conclude, therefore, that the "masters-sign," (or, as CC calls it the "Master-Sign") was an additional sign belonging to that ceremony, and now lost to us. MF also speaks of the Masters Signs without giving any details.

GROUP 4.

Purely Test Questions for use Outside, or away from, the Lodge.**Question 35.**

- DU. Q. what is ye night good for?
 A. ye night is better for hearing than seeing.
 Q. what is ye day good for?
 A. ye day is better for seeing than hearing.

This is the earliest version of a series of "Day-night" questions or notes which appears in 8 of our texts.

GMO, W and MD, give it in question form in the Catechism.

SL, TC, ME, MC all give it in "narrative" form and the 3 latter texts all say that this was a test used for finding or recognizing a Mason in the dark, i.e., away from the Lodge. This is a typical example of the series of test questions which I have grouped under the heading of Group 4, i.e., questions which teach us nothing of Ritual, Symbolism or Lodge Procedure. That they did originally possess a particular meaning and symbolism, is indicated by the number and variety of the documents which retain them, but their symbolism is now lost and we must treat them simply as archaisms. The remaining questions under this heading are, therefore, given without comment.


Question 36.

- GMD. Q. What a-Clock is it?
 A. Its going to Six or going to Twelve.
 IFM. A. Tis going to 12 or tis going to 6.
 MC. A. past five going to six
 W & MD. Q. What's a Clock? A. High Twelve.

Question 37.

- TC. Q. Which way blows ye wind?
 A. East and west and out of ye south.
 MC. Q. What'n morning is it?
 A. . . . The wind's in the west and the sun's in the east. . .
 MD. Q. How blows the Wind? A. Due East and West.

This completes my list of questions selected for detailed examination. It comprises the whole of the Catechisms in ER and CC and the major portions of all the later texts. Several questions have been omitted from this detailed survey, chiefly because they appear to have had few parallels in their own day. A few examples will be sufficient to show their general style :-

- DU. Q. what is Masonry? A. it is squire work.
 Q. What is a masson? A. he is a worker in stone.
 GMD and IFM. Q. How go Squares? A. Straight.
 Q. How many Angles in St. John's Lodge?
 A. Four bordering on Squares. 

DU (as an extension of Q.7) Q. might not Hiram laide ye foundation of ye temple south and north rather than east and west ?

A. no he could not.

Q. give a reason for yt.

A. david appointed ye foundation of ye temple to be laid on a barn flore . . . caled ye thrashing floor arauuah ye jebusit

GMD and IFM. Q. What is the right Word or right Point of a Mason ?

A. Adieu.

Some of the questions which can be studied more profitably under separate headings (e.g. those relating to words and signs) are dealt with later. I have also been compelled to disregard the "mystical" and scriptural questions in DU and GR and some of the "Cabalistical" matter in GMO, all of which are outside the scope of this essay.

The principal omissions, however, are from MD, where a substantial part of the FC. degree, and almost the whole of the Master's Part, consist of materials which find no parallel in the earlier texts, and must, therefore, be dealt with separately.

In my examination of the questions with their variants and expansions I have had three objects in view

- (1) To examine the texts individually.
- (2) To compare them with each other, and to notice their influence on Prichard's MD, the latest of the series. Here I have allowed the texts to speak for themselves as far as possible.
- (3) To notice those items which may be of special interest to the student of present-day ritual.

As regards the latter, I have already remarked on the difficulty of stressing or distinguishing any particular passage for this purpose. In the 37 questions and answers already dealt with, the student will often be able to trace parallels with our present system, but the full interest of these old Catechisms can only be appreciated after a careful comparison with the Section-Work of the Lectures.

SUPPOSEDLY ESOTERIC CONTENTS.

No study of the Catechisms (and Exposures) would be complete without a survey of their esoteric(?) contents, although their archaic interest for the student is certainly greater than their evidential value as to our present-day esoteric system. Indeed there is, perhaps, more to be inferred from a study of their omissions than from the actual details which are given.

A very large part of our 16 texts is devoted to supposedly esoteric matters, but the variety and abundance of the data tend to minimise its value, if only because of the differences and contradictions which they exhibit.

Broadly, the esoteric matter is of two kinds, i.e.,

- (1) Signs, "Gripes" and "Words" either forming a part of the ceremonies, or used *inside* the Lodge.
- (2) Signs, or modes of recognition, used *outside* the Lodge; and, as with some of the questions and answers in the Catechisms, it is occasionally difficult to say with certainty whether a particular item belongs under one or both headings.

For a more detailed classification, the texts themselves provide a method.

- MD. Q. How many Principle-Signs ?
 A. Four.
 Q. What are they ?
 A. Guttural, Pectoral, Manual and Pedestal.
 Q. Explain them.
 A. Guttural the Throat, Pectoral the Breast, Manual the Hand, Pedestal the Feet.

GMD and IFM also mention these 4 classifications, and an examination of the texts shows that the majority of the signs may be grouped under one of these four headings. In addition to these, I have attempted a classification of the miscellaneous signs which appear to have been used as modes of recognition outside, or away from, the Lodge.

The "Gripes" or "tokens" are equally interesting, varied and contradictory, and I quote them without comment. In all cases where a detail is associated, either specifically or by implication, with a particular grade or degree, I have noted it in parenthesis immediately after the title of the document.

SIGNS. Guttural.

ER, CC. (EA) "then he makes the sign . . . drawing his hand under his chin amongst his throat"

This sign was always to be made when answering the appropriate test question (see Q.3), and it seems probable that it was also used *on entering the Lodge*, because ER, in describing the ceremony after the candidate had retired from the Lodge, in order to be entrusted with the "signe . . . postures and words of entrie," says :-

"first when he enters again into the company he must make a ridiculous bow, *then the signe* and say then he says the words of his entrie which are as follows *then he makes the sign again* with drawing his hand under his chin" etc., as above.

CC, while omitting all mention of the first sign, also says "Then he makes the Sign *again*, . . ." thus showing the ER text to be more accurate on this point. I have concluded from the above, that the first sign was probably a normal sign made in those days upon entering a Lodge, while the repetition relates directly to the ceremony.

SL. " . . . one signe is by giving their right hand a cast cross their brest from left to right with the tops of their ffingers about 3 or 4 inches below their Chin, . . . "

(Similar signs are described, made with the hat or with a drinking-glass).

TC. (EA?) "The common sign is with your right hand rub yr mouth then cross yr throat and lay it on ye left brea(st).

ME as part of an extraordinary agglomeration of signs, describes a guttural sign made with the left hand.

MC. (EA) "... he lays the right hand near the left shoulder ..."

MD. (EA). "Extending the Four Fingers of the Right Hand and drawing of them cross his Throat, is the Sign, and demands a Token."

SIGNS. Pectoral.

SL. "Another signe some use bending their right arme in form of a Square and laying the palm of their left hand upon their heart."

TC. (EA?) After, or as part of the guttural sign, says,
"and lay it on ye left brea(st)."

ME. as a response to the guttural sign, says,
"and then he'll put his Right Hand to his Left Side under his Heart."

MC. (EA) "he lays the right hand on the left side, and says ..."

(EA) "So the master gives him the sign, with the right hand up the left side." (This is given, in the text, as part of Q.3.).

(FC) "Or he gives the sign, by the right hand above the breath, (breast?) which is called the fellow-crafts due guard ;"

MF. "Every Square is a Sign ; but the most Solemn is the Right Hand upon the Left-breast, the Arm hanging down, a little extended from the Body."

MD. (FC) "The Sign is placing the Right Hand on the Left Breast, ..."

(MM) "... placing the Thumb of the Right Hand to the Left Breast, extending the Fingers ...". This is a strange variation. (See also MD under Q.20, p. 28).

SIGNS. Manual.

There are very few *purely* manual signs given in our texts—most of them being associated with some other part of the body and, therefore, classified under other headings. Indeed, only 3 of our texts furnish information on this point, ME, GMD and its MS. counterpart IFM, and the details do not agree.

GMD. "To strike with the Right-hand on the Inside of the Little Finger of the Left three Times, as if hewing."

IFM. Text defective owing to erasures, but says :-
"... 5 times as if hewing."

GMD. "To take Hand in Hand, with Left and Right Thumbs close, and touch each Wrist three Times, with the Fore-Finger each Pulse."

IFM. Text defective, but says :-
"... 5 times hard wt the forefinger on each place."

ME, after three steps, (see Signs PEDESTAL), says :-
"... then lay your Right Hand to his Left Wrist, ..."

GNS. Pedestal.

“ . . . placing their right heell to the inside of their left in forme of a square so walk a few steps backward and forward and at every third step make a Little Stand placing their feet Square as aforesd. this done if any masons perceive it they will presently come to you . . . ”

he final words here suggest that this is an “external” sign (i.e. for use outside the Lodge) and, altogether, we find quite a number of pedal signs which are definitely for external use.

C. “To bring a man from a scaffold, or any other place, hold yr heels together, and yr toes open, and look up, then with yr hand, or Cane make a right angle . . . ”

MD, under a list of “*Signs To Know a True Mason*” says :-

“By making a Square, viz. by setting your Heels together, and the Toes of both Feet straight, at a Distance, or by any other Way of Triangle. (IFM is virtually identical).

These 2 documents, in their Catechisms, speak of three steps belonging to a ‘right mason’ (see Q.26), but they give no details.

MD too, speaks of the Cand. being advanced, “by three steps, to the Master” without describing how the steps were taken. (See Q.26). W. says “. . . three great Steps . . . ”

ME. “To meet a Brother, You must make the first Step with your Right Foot, the second with your Left : and at the third you must advance with your Right Heel to your Brother’s Right Instep ; then”

At first glance this seems to be similar to the preparations for the “*Points of Fellowship*,” (see under Q.34), but the signs which are given to complete the above, consist of one manual, one guttural and one pectoral, and bear no resemblance to the “*Points of Fellowship*.”

Finally, two amusing instructions for Masons abroad :-

SL. “To Discourse a mason in France, Spaine, or Turkey (say they) the signe is to kneel Down on his Left knee and hold up his right hand to the sunn”

MC. “If in a land where their language is not known, he is to kneel with one knee, holding up his hand before the masons.”

SIGNS, associated with Rhythm, Noises or Knocks.

SL. . . . if he takes one of their tooles or his own Staff and Strike softly on the wall or worke saying this is bosc or hollow if their be any free brother at the work he will answer it is solid wch words are signes to discover each other.

SL. . . . and if it be night or dark they will give two Little haughts and a great one as if they were forcing a bone or a lump out of their throat.

SL. . . . Another signe is by taking their handerkchief in their right hand and blow their nose then holding it Straight out before them they give it two Little shakes and a big one

- SL Another . . . is knocking at any door two little knocks and the third a big one.
- ME. To call a Mason out from among Company, you must cough three times, or knock against anything three times.
- ME. When you would enter a Lodge, you must knock three times at the Door, and they'll challenge you.
- GMD. Stroke two of your Fore-Fingers over your Eye-Lids three times.
- IFM. Similar to GMD above, but text erased and incomplete.
- MC. Coming to an house where masons may be, he is to knock three knocks on the door; a lesser, a more, and a more.
- W. Q. how was you Admitted into the Lodge? A. by three great knocks.
- MD. (EA) Q. How got you Admittance? A. By three great knocks.
- MD. (MM). Q. How was it (i.e. the Master-Mason's Word) lost? A. By Three Great Knocks, or the D . . . of our Master Hiram.
- See also GMD and IFM under "SIGNS MANUAL".

SIGNS—MISCELLANEOUS.

The following curious collection of "SIGNS" were mainly for external use, serving as a mode of introduction and recognition, usually for the purpose of obtaining financial aid or refreshment. Some of the signs appear to date back to "Operative" times notably those relating to Tools (see under Squares), and Change.


BOW. ER (EA) mentions "a ridiculous bow Then putting off his hat after a very foolish manner . . ." We cannot be certain whether the Bow was a sign in itself or only part of the hat sign which appears in several forms in the later texts. In the case of ER the absurd bowing and hat "business" were actually a part of the EA ceremony, a far cry from our dignified lodge work of today.


CHANGE. SL And to let you know he wants money he will hold a bit of a pipe (or some such thing) to you saying can you change a cole pencil (Cole—a 17th cent. slang word for money).

TC. throw a tobacco stopper to one of them and say change me a groat, and they will pay your club.

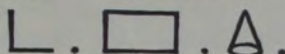
ME "A Mason, to show his Necessity, throws down a round piece of Slat and says, Can you change this Coin?"

GMD and IFM, as part of their Catechisms have the following:—

Q. Change me that  A. I will.

IFM actually gives a diagram  which together with the ME use of the word "round" shows that the essential point of this "SIGN" was that the object tendered must be circular.

IAGRAMS. TC. To send for a brother the signes are these



Compare these with diagrams shown under Q. 11, in ME & IFM all of which may have had a common origin.

TC also has a Triple-tau diagram as its heading thus :-



Under no less a penalty.

GMD as a heading to the Catechism has a series of diagrams as follows :-

THE FREEMASON'S SIGNS.

A Guttural	<
A Pedestal	∟
A Manual	7
A Pectoral	X

IFM mentions these 4 signs without diagrams, and MD has some questions on them (see ante), but I am unable to trace the origin and meaning of the geometrical figures.

EYES & MOUTH. SL. Another is by twisting their eyes toward the east and twisting their mouth toward ye west.

GLASS. SL. A guttural sign made with a glass (see SIGNS GUTTURAL), "giving the glass a cast cross under their chin from left to right."

TC. . . . turn ye top of the glass down and if after two or three times so doing, they say drink and I'll warrant you, then they will pay your clubb.

GMD. Turn a Glass, or any other Thing that is hollow, downwards, after you have drunk out of it.

HANDKERCHIEF. SL. . . . another is taking their handkerchief by the corner wth their right hand and throw it over their Left shoulder letting it hang down their back (The words here are reminiscent of the penalty of one of the higher Obs. but I can find no parallel to them among the other texts).

SL. . . . two Little shakes and a big one . . . (see under SIGNS RHYTHMIC).

HAT. ER (EA) putting off the hat after a very foolish manner . . .

GMD. To put off the Hat with two Fingers and a Thumb.

IFM lacks the word HAT which has been erased.

ME. To compliment a Brother Mason, You put your Right Hand to the right side of your Hat, and bring your Hat under your Chin; then the Brother will clap his Right Hand to the right side of his Hat and bring it to the Left Side under his heart.

KNIFE-SHEATH. SL some will signifye their want of money by pulling their knife out of the sheath and giving it to a brother in company or alone if the brother haue money he takes the knife putting it in its sheath and returne it, if he haue none he will return it bare

RIDING. MC if riding, he is to strike the horse over the left shoulder
MC A Mason's horse is found out among others by the left-foot stirrup being laid up.

ME When a Mason alights from his Horse, he lays the Stirrup over the Horses Neck.

SQUARES. SL. Another signe is by lending you a crooked pin or a bit of paper cut in the forme of a Square on receipt of wch you must come from wt place or company soever you are in

SL if you come where any masons tooles lyes lay ym in forme of a square

MC to send for another mason, he does it by sending a piece of paper with a square point folded in at the corner

MC Or, if he send his glove, then the square is put on the first Knuckle of the second finger, with the thub-nail or some other thing.

TC with your hand or Cane make a right angle
See note under Q.2. . . . "All squares is Signs"

VERBAL SIGNS.

A distinction is to be drawn here between "WORDS" used as ritual tests of a Mason, and phrases used for purposes of recognition outside the Lodge. The latter are usually accompanied by knocks or some other means of attracting attention, (e.g.) see CHANGE under Miscellaneous Signs, etc. A few of the following however, are purely verbal. (See also questions under Group 4

SL. at the Table when the glass goes not fast enough round the say Star the guile.

SL Strike softly on the wall or worke saying this is bosc or hollc if their be any free brother at the work he will answer it is sol wch words are signes to discover each other.

(The word bosc used here may be a mnemonic but MC uses the word boss to mean hollow, and TC gives the EA word as ". . . Boaz or its hollow.").

TC say ye squire is lean . . . and they will pay your club s
. . . . change me yt groat

. . . . if you say ye lodge is untiled that is as much as to say there someone in ye Company you suspect for a brother.

DU. When you enter a roome you must say is ye house cleen if th
ansure it is dropie or ill thatched you are to be sillent

The word "dropie" here refers to eavesdroppers, and MC uses another form of the word in an N.B. to Q.13. "... the unentered prentice or any others not of their society, whom they call drops."

W. When any Person or persons are in Company you know not to be a Mason, the Common Sayings are—It Rains, or it drops, or the House is Until'd—tyle the House &c.

W. continues :-

When any thing is Given you by a Mason, and he Asks what it smells off? the Ans^r is, a Mason.

MD. as an NB in the Masters Part has the following :-

If any Working-Masons are at Work, and you have a desire to distinguish Accepted Masons from the rest, take a Piece of Stone, and ask him what it smells of, he immediately replies, neither Brass, Iron, nor Steel, but of a Mason; then by asking him how old he is, he replies above Seven, which denotes he has pass'd Master.

Both MF and MD have this "How old are you" as part of the Catechism, and apparently for use inside the Lodge, (see Q.33), but the MD quotation above shows that it was used away from the Lodge as well.

TOKENS.

There is no mention of a "Grip or Token" for the EA in our two earliest texts ER and CC, but both of them speak of a grip in the superior ceremony relating to the fellow-craft, although no details are given.

ER. (FC or MM). "Then the master gives him the word and gripes his hand after the masons way"

CC in parallel text omits "the masons way."

SL emphasizes the importance of the "grip" as a part of the Salutation, and gives details of 3 different grips, one for the FC and two alternatives for the MM.

SL. (FC) "their gripe for fellow craftes is grasping their right hands in Each other thrusting their thumb naile close upon the third Joynt of each others first ffinger.

(MM) "their Masters gripe is grasping their right hands in each other placing their four fingers nails hard upon the Carpus or end of others wrists and their thumb nailes thrust hard directly between the second Joynt of the thumb and the third Joynt of the first

(MM) ffinger, but some say the masters grip is the same as I last described only each of their midle ffingers must reach an inch or three barly cornes Length higher to touch upon a vein yt comes from the heart."

TC. (EA) The Enterprentice's sign is sinues, the word

(FC) Squeese the fellow craftsman in knuckles, and sinues and say

(MM) No grip, but a version of the "Points of Fellowship" (see Q.34).

- ME. "To gripe, is when you take a Brother by the Right Hand, and put your middle Finger to his Wrist, and he'll do so to you."
- WIO. "Your first word is Jachin and Boaz is the answer to it, and Grip at the forefinger Joint.—Your 2d word is Magboe and Boe is the answer to it, and Grip at the Wrist. Your 3d Word is Gibboram, Esimberel is the Answer—and Grip at the Elbow, and Grip at the Rein of the Back.
- GR. GR in the Noah story describes a grip which is somewhat reminiscent of one of the Higher degrees (see GR under Q34.) but there is no mention of a grip as used by the masons.
- GMO gives a series of grips which appear to be a variation on the WIO series, above :-
 "The first is a Grip by the two first Fingers, and is call'd Jachin and Boaz ; the second is a Grip by the Wrist, and call'd Gibboam and Gibberum ; the third is a Grip by the Elbow, and is call'd Thimbulum and Timbulum."
- MC. (EA) "The Token or grip is by laying the ball of the thumb of the right hand upon the first or uppermost knuckle of the second finger from the thumb of the other's right hand.
- (FC) ". . . . and the grip, by clasping his fingers at the wrist, next at the elbow"
- MD. (EA) "A Token is by joining the Ball of the Thumb of the Right Hand upon the first knuckle of the Fore-Finger of the Brother's Right Hand that demands a Word."
- (FC) As for the EA above, but ". on the first knuckle of the Middle Finger."
- (MM) ". . . . they took him by the Fore-fingers and the Skin came off, which is called the Slip; then spreading the Right Hand and placing the middle Finger to the Wrist, clasping the Fore-Finger and the Fourth to the sides of the Wrist ; is called the Gripe"

It is interesting to compare the "Slip" mentioned here with a somewhat similar detail in the GR legend (see under Q.34), and Brn. of a higher grade may find something suggestive in the conjunction of the "finger-wrist-elbow" grips as given in WIO and GMO above and in the GR Legend under Q.34.

SUPPOSEDLY ESOTERIC WORDS.

Much of the interest attaching to the old Catechisms and Exposures, is derived from an examination of the "words" and names which are usually associated with particular portions of the ceremonies. We are not concerned here with their authenticity, and, as with the Signs and Tokens, the quantity and variety of the data is so great, that we may perhaps learn as much from the omissions as we do from this rich collection of words, which are often contradictory and occasionally puerile.

Even when the texts seem to agree on a particular "word" they do not always use it in the same way and it may appear in several different forms, e.g.

- (1) As a kind of test in conjunction with the Salutation (see Q23 and 32).
- (2) As a part of the Catechism. (Q.32).
- (3) In conjunction with a particular sign or token. (See TOKENS).
- (4) In conjunction with a particular grade of mason.

Frequently the texts speak of a "word" without giving it, and occasionally certain words are given descriptive titles, such as the "Jerusalem Word" and the "Universal Word" in GMD and IFM, or the "Primitive Word" in WIO. Two of our texts, GR and WIO, reveal a custom of "exchanging words", from which it would appear that certain test words were incomplete in themselves and required a different "word" in response. The following extracts are given as far as possible in chronological order, with a minimum of context to make them easily understood.

CC as a title-heading to the form of the Oath, has :-

"The words are Jachin and Boaz."

ER merely indicates the words by scriptural references at the end of the Catechism. Both ER and CC speak of a word belonging to the grade of Fellow or Master but no details are given.

SL in the salutation gives the initial J or B (see Q.23).

SL also gives something called "the masters word," thus :-

"Another they haue called the masters word and is MAHABYN which is allways divided into two words and Standing close etc. . . . and in that posture they Stand till they whisper in each others eares ye one MAHA the other replays Byn."

DU has a long symbolical explanation of Solomon's Pillars, but does not give any "words" as such.

In TC each of the words is given in conjunction with a grip (see TOKENS).

TC. "The Enterpentes word Boaz or its hollow."

"The fellow craftsman's . . . word Jachquin" (possibly Jackquin).

TC in conjunction with a form of the Points of Fellowship (see Q.34).

" and say Matchpin."

ME contains the well-known rhyme :-

"An enter'd Mason I have been,
Boaz and Jachin I have seen
A Fellow I was sworn most rare
And know the Astler Diamond and Square :
I know the Master's Part full well,
As honest Maughbin will you tell."

Here, as in ER and CC, the two Pillar Names are associated with the EA and while no word is given for the FC, the "word" Maughbin is allocated to the Master's Part.

GMD and IFM have two questions in the Catechism which give descriptive titles to the words, but they are not allocated to any particular grades.

GMD } Q. Give me the Jerusalem word. A. Giblin.
 &
 IFM } Q. Give me the Universal Word. A. Boaz.

These two documents have another question which appears nowhere else among our texts.

GMD. Q. Who rules and governs the Lodge, and is Master of it ?

A. IRAH



IACHIN

} or the Right Pillar.

The IFM response to this Question is "Iehovah the right Pillar," plainly a copyist's error.

WIM gives Jachin alone as part of the Salutation, and has two explanatory paragraphs on the Pillars.

WIO also uses the Word Jachin for the Salutation, but, in addition to its descriptive matter relating to the Pillar, it has a whole series of "words" in conjunction with grips. "Your first word is Jachin and Boaz is the answer to it, and grip

" Your 2d word is Magboe and Boe is the answer to it, . . . "

" Your 3d word is Gibboram and Esimberel is the answer, . . . "

Later, we are told that "Magboe and Boe signifies Marrow in the Bone Gibboram and Simber signifies the Gibonites who built the city of Simellon."

The final paragraph of this little Exposure contains a curious collection of "words." "Yet for all this I want the Primitive Word, I answer it was God in six Terminations, to wit, I am, and Johova is the answer to it and grip . . . or else Excellent and Excellent, Excellency is the Answer to it and grip or else Tapus Majester and Majester Tapus is the answer to it."

GR gives only the initials J and B as part of the salutation.

GMO provides an extraordinary mixture of words, some quite reasonable and others which can only be described as gibberish, so that one gets the impression that the author was attempting to conceal his lack of knowledge, or faulty memory, behind a tissue of childish invention. The first three sets of words are given in conjunction with grips (see under TOKENS) yielding the following :-

- 1st Jachin and Boaz.
- 2nd Gibboam and Gibberum.
- 3rd Thimbulum and Timbulum.

Among the remaining words given in this curious text, we are told that the Master of a Lodge was called "Oakecharing a Tochology," the Square was called "Whosly Powu Tigwawtubby" which signified "the Excellency of Excellencies," and that the secret word was invented by "Checchhabeddin Jatmouny."

MC gives Boaz as "the mason-word" "and Jachin a fellow-craft-word." Notice the "a fellow-craft-word." Does this mean that the author knew of others?

W. gives Boaz as a "lettered" word and then a scriptural reference to a passage in Chronicles where both Pillar names are mentioned. Elsewhere W has an unusual question :-

W. Q. Whats the Name of a Mason.
A. Giblin.

MF gives "Boaz and Jachin" and speaks of "the Master's Word" without giving further details.

MD. (EA) Boaz & Jachin.
(FC) Jachin.

(Master's Part) Machbenah which signifies The B * * * * is S * * * *

Thus, if we exclude the exceptional matter in WIO and GMO, we find that the words form themselves into three classes :-

- (1) The Pillar-names.
- (2) The group of words beginning MA
- (3) The group of words beginning GI

PILLAR NAMES.

These two names, in the order J and B, appear to have been associated with the EA from the earliest times. ER and CC, in their description of the "Forme of giving the Mason Word," both speak of the *Word* (singular), and Bro. Knoop in his paper on "*The Mason Word*," has put forward the intriguing theory that it was something more than a mere word, which involves the possibility that neither of the Pillar names formed the principal part of it. Certain it is that the EA acquired his knowledge of these names, and of the moral lessons to be derived from them, in the course of a ceremony in which a rough and ready horse-play ("ridiculous bow . . . postures, grimaces and ceremonies to frighten etc . . .") formed a considerable part, which tends to support Bro. Knoop's view that the EA did not acquire any important secrets. On the other hand, the fact that these two names formed a part of the Salutation Test, one of the principal modes of recognition, suggests that they were very important indeed. But in spite of this, the manner of their use varies considerably even in the short period covered by our texts. In ER and CC they were used in the original Biblical order, J and B, for the EA. In TC they were separated, B for the EA, and J for the FC. In ME they appear in the order B and J, and MD used both words in the B J order for the EA, and J alone for the FC.

It is not necessary here to consider the authenticity of any particular usage, nor can we draw any definite conclusion from the dates at which these variations appear in our texts, since it is quite possible that several systems existed simultaneously in different Lodges, and it is equally probable that, even under any individual system, there may have been one method of using the words for the purposes of the Catechism and another, altogether different, for the Salutation.

THE MA GROUP OF WORDS.

This interesting group of words is collected from 5 of our texts covering the period c.1700 to 1730.

*SL.	c. 1700	MAHABYN	(Not translated)
*TC.	1711	MATCHPIN	” ”
ME.	1723	MAUGHBIN	” ”
WIO.	1725	MAGBOE and BOE	(Marrow in the Bones)
*MD.	1730	MACHBENAH	(The B * * * * is S * * * *)

* (Associated in the text with a version of the Points of Fellowship).

Considering the shortness of the period, the extraordinary variation in the words is very striking. Four of the texts allocate the word specifically to the grade of Master, but WIO is not quite clear on this point.

From the degree of similarity which the words exhibit, it seems safe to assume that they are not of the same class as the gibberish words in GMO. On the contrary, I am convinced that these are the battered relics of Hebrew or Aramaic word-groups which had a proper meaning originally, and were probably related to a Legend, not necessarily masonic.

In this connection, it is important to notice that only MD, the latest of our five texts, gives a legend in conjunction with the “word” and also a translation which may be said to harmonize with the story. WIO gives the meaning as “Marrow in the Bones” a phrase possibly intended as a mnemonic.

Finally, if the “original word” did have a translation, as we are fully entitled to believe, then we are forced to the conclusion that a legend in connection with that ancient “word” must have formed a part of the masonic ceremonial at least as early as c.1700-1711, when it first appears in our texts. (For a fuller study of the subject see my *Hebraic Aspects of the Ritual, Transactions, Leics. Lodge of Research for 1944-45*).

THE GI GROUP OF WORDS.

Another curious group, showing marked variations.

GMD.	1724	GIBLIN.
IFM.	1725.	GIBLEN. (Text erased and spelling doubtful).
WIO.	1725	GIBBORAM.
GMO.	1726	GIBBOAM and GIBBERUM.
W.	1727?	GIBLIN.

WIO is the only text which gives a supposed meaning to the word saying that it signifies “the Gibonites”

The appearance of this group of “words” in the texts of 1724-1727, and their subsequent disappearance from the later Catechisms, is in itself a noteworthy matter. But there exists a much earlier use of this “word” in a masonic document of undoubted respectability. In 1888, Bro. Speth exhibited at the QC Lodge a copy of the MS. Constitutions now entitled the Stanley MS., dated 1677. Following the Charge, in a later handwriting, are 14 lines of doggerel entitled “The Prophecy of Brother Roger Bacon . . . etc.” The rhyme is in the style of a political conundrum from which Bro. Speth deduced the date as 1713-1714. The last four lines of the rhyme are as follows :-

“free Masons beware Brother Bacon advises
 Interlopers break in and Spoil Your Divices
 Your Giblin and Squares are all Out of Door
 And Jachin and Boaz shall bee Secretts no more.”

For comment on this rhyme I quote Speth (AQC. I.169),

"As a consequence we are bound to admit that previous to 1717, the date of the Grand Lodge of England, there existed an ampler ritual than certain amongst us have been willing to concede . . ."

MODES OF COMMUNICATION.

The custom of "lettering" (see Q.32) was not the only method of communicating the "words." Another method seems to have been to show the words (or models of the Pillars ?) to the Candidate.

ME " . . . B x x x and J x x x x x *I have seen*" . . .

MC "After the Oath, a word in the scriptures *was shewed me*
in I Kings, VII, 21

MD . . . Q. When you came through the Porch, *what did you see* ?
A. Two great Pillars.

SL has an extension of the "lettering" system for the communication of the Master's Word in which one of the participants said Maha, and the other replied Byn.

WIO suggests that Magboe and Boe were used in a similar manner. (See WIO under Tokens).

Yet another method of communication appears in our two earliest texts which may be described briefly as the "rotational whisper" and the texts state that it was used both for the EA and Master-Masons' words.

ER. "Then all the masons present whisper amongst themselves the word beginning at the youngest till it come to the master mason who gives the word to the entered apprentice." (CC identical).

ME confirms the practice in almost identical terms, but it appears nowhere else in our texts.

NUMBER OF DEGREES.

One of the most interesting branches of study relating to our Masonic Ritual is the question of the number of degrees or ceremonies which existed, or were practised at different times. This is a subject which has been very carefully examined by competent historians, (see especially Vibert, The Second Degree, AQC.39, and his Prestonian Lecture for 1925, The Trigradal System ; also Knoop "Pure Antient Masonry," AQC, 53), and as it involves the examination of documents and evidence quite outside the scope of this essay, I do not discuss it here in detail, but have summarised briefly such evidence as may be drawn from our 16 texts.

ER and CC. Both MSS. give detailed descriptions of two ceremonies, one for the EA, and one for the grade of Fellow or Master.

SL. Speaks of "Interprintices," fellow Craftes, and Master (Q.5) and gives separate "gripes" for the fellow-craft and the Master (See TOKENS). Three grades are clearly indicated, but we cannot be certain whether the "esoteric" contents relate to two or three ceremonies.

- GR. Here again three grades are indicated, EA, Fellow, Master, but evidence of only two ceremonies, one for the EA and the senior ceremony which conferred the "Royal secret" (see p.8).
- TC. clearly suggests the existence of three grades with separate secrets for each, EA, FC, Master.
- ME. suggests three degrees (see Rhyme under WORDS) and is the earliest text that makes mention of the Master's Part.
- GMD and IFM speak of the Master, (i.e.) the Worshipful Master, the Worshipful fellows, and of Entered Apprentices, but no indication as to number of ceremonies.
- WIM speaks only of Masters and Fellows.
- WIO speaks only of Masters and Fellows, but the mass of supposedly esoteric information may perhaps indicate more than two ceremonies.
- GR. "... that have obtained a trible Voice by being entered passed and raised and Conformed by 3 severall Lodges . . ." Here is conclusive evidence of three separate degrees *given on separate occasions*.
- GMO. Three distinct sets of "signs" i.e. grips, and "words" suggest three ceremonies.
- W. speaks of EA, FC, & Master, but its catechism appears to relate only to the EA, although some questions may possibly have belonged to one of the higher grades (see under Words and also under Q.33).
- MC. Only two ceremonies are indicated, EA and FC.
- MF. Only two degrees, EA and Master's Part. (See note under Q33).
- MD. Three separate ceremonies EA, FC, Masters Part.

Despite the mass of "esoteric" matter given in some of the texts, (e.g. WIO, GMO), none of them gives the slightest hint as to the presiding Master of a Lodge taking part in a ceremony in order to qualify for office, and we are compelled to believe, therefore, that the "Chair" ceremony, or degree, is a later development.

Although our two earliest texts prove the existence of only a two-degree system in 1696-1700, this does not rule out the possibility of other ceremonies then unknown to Scottish Masonry. On the contrary, a study of the "words" in the early part of our period—say up to 1714—suggests that there may have been at least three esoteric ceremonies, one of them associated with the Pillars, and each of the others connected with a particular "word."

It is, however, unlikely that these three ceremonies existed, (in the early part of our period), either in England or Scotland as a progressive tri-gradal system. How then, did the three-degree system evolve? Vibert (*op. cit.*) has suggested that it came about by a splitting-up of the work associated with the EA degree, and MD seems to support this theory. But a careful study of the texts shows that the practice as regards the EA ceremony was comparatively uniform everywhere, while the style and contents of the superior ceremonies seem to have been subject to much greater variation, and although many of our texts contain elements from which the tri-gradal system ultimately developed, it was not until 1730 that the first Exposure appeared, which claimed—however unjustly—to reveal the whole of the ceremonies of a complete trigradal System.

STYLE OR NATURE OF THE CEREMONIES.

In the course of this paper our attention has been concentrated throughout on individual details to such an extent as to prevent us from forming a clear picture of the nature or style of the ceremonies. Only a few of the documents can help us in this task, because, despite their claims to reveal all the secrets, etc., ER and CC are in fact the only texts which present a clear narrative description of a whole EA ceremony, and a very brief summary of the FC degree.

ME, W, MC, MF, MD all contain a certain amount of descriptive matter, much of it very sketchy, and a number of details, mainly of an inferential nature, may be gleaned from the remaining texts.

The following synopses are drawn up as far as possible according to the rotation indicated by the texts.

ER. The EA ceremony.

- (1) Candidate kneels.
- (2) Ceremonies to frighten him.
- (3) He places right hand on the Bible.
- (4) Exhortation to secrecy, with threats if he break his oath.
- (5) Cand. promises secrecy.
- (6) Cand. takes the oath.
- (7) Removed out of the company, with the "youngest mason."
- (8) "frighted with 1000 ridiculous postures and grimaces."
- (9) Cand. is taught (*outside the Lodge*) the "due guard" i.e., the sign, postures and words of entry.
- (10) Candidate re-enters the Lodge.
- (11) Makes a ridiculous bow. (Not in CC).
- (12) Makes the sign. (Not in CC).
- (13) Removes the hat "after a very foolish manner . . . (Not in CC).
- (14) Cand. repeats "the words of entry."
- (15) Cand. makes the sign again.
- (16) Entrusting by the "rotational whisper" round the Lodge and finally from Master to the Candidate.
- (17) Catechism including a sign.
- (18) Investiture.
- (19) Reading of the Charges.

The last three items in the above list are *not* given in the text. Undoubtedly the catechism was rehearsed at some stage in the proceedings, (MC actually mentions a *posture during the Catechism*), and although it would be impossible for the Candidate to know the answers to a lengthy series of questions, MC shows that this difficulty could be overcome by having an officer to instruct the Candidate in his answers (see p.8).

The Apron (and Gloves?) are not mentioned in ER, but there is ample extraneous evidence to suggest that the Apron, at least, formed the basis for a part of the ceremony. The "Charges" are mentioned in the SL and DU Obligations, but the *Reading of the Charges*, which, together with the Oath, formed the nucleus of our earliest known masonic ceremonial, is not mentioned in any of the catechisms. Yet, I am convinced that it formed an important part of the proceedings at this period, and was the fore-runner of the moral exhortations

which developed out of, and in conjunction with, them. There is a possible reference to the "Reading" in the ME version of the EA ceremony. (See No. 2 under ME below).

ER, The Master Mason or Fellow Craft.

- (1) All apprentices removed out of the company and none suffered to stay but masters.
- (2) Cand. kneels again.
- (3) He takes the oath anew.
- (4) He goes out with the youngest master.
- (5) He learns the "postures and signs of fellowship," outside the Lodge.
(CC says "words" instead of postures).
- (6) He re-enters the Lodge.
- (7) He makes the masters sign (CC says Master-sign).
- (8) He repeats abbreviated words of entry.
- (9) Entrusting by "rotational whisper."
- (10) Cand. advances and places himself in the posture.
- (11) A whispered salutation to the Master.
- (12) Master gives the WORD and GRIP.
- (13) All present do likewise. (This item is in CC, not in ER).
- (14) Catechism ?

Except where I have noted small differences in parenthesis, ER and CC are identical in their descriptions of these two ceremonies. Neither document speaks of a Catechism in the FC degree, but it seems highly probable that there was one, though it may have consisted only of one or two questions, such as we find under Q.33.

The ME description of the ceremony is so sketchy as to be unreliable, if not actually misleading.

ME. The EA ceremony ?

- (1) "... after having given to all present of the Fraternity a Pair of Men and Women's Gloves and Leather Apron.
- (2) "he is to hear the * * * * belonging to the Society read to him,"
(a word * * * * omitted in the text).
- (3) A warden leads him to the Master and Fellows to each of whom he recites
"I fain would a Fellow-Mason be,
As all your Worshipps may plainly see."
- (4) He swears the oath of secrecy.
- (5) He is blindfolded.
- (6) The ceremony of * * * * is performed. (* * * * word omitted in text).
- (7) He beholds and "must exactly imitate" a thousand different Postures and Grimaces. . . .
- (8) Entrusting by rotational whisper.
- (9) He puts "his Face in due Order" to receive the word.
- (10) He receives the word maughbin.
- (11) He recites the Rhyme.
- (12) The Master replies in Rhyme.

It would be easy to suggest the probable omissions, but the whole description seems to be so hopelessly confused that little reliance can be placed on it as the picture of a ceremony, although it may probably be accurate in certain details. The text gives no details of any higher ceremony.

DU, GR, and GMO all yield items of information relating to the preparation of the Cand. (see Q.24) but no detailed description of the ceremonies.

MC. The EA Ceremony.

- (1) Warden "prepares" candidate and deprives him of all metals. (See Q.24).
- (2) Cand. kneels on bared right knee etc., (see Q.27).
- (3) Sq. and Compasses applied. (See Q.27).
- (4) He swears the oath.
- (5) His "author" instructs him "a little" in the secrets.
- (6) A word is shown to him.
- (7) He advances by three steps to the Master and gives the Salutation.
- (8) Repeats words of entry (abbreviated version of those in ER and CC).
- (9) Catechism including Sign and Token with replies *dictated* to the Cand.
- (10) He selects his mark "to be put upon his tools."
- (11) He chooses his "intender" (who is to be his instructor during the next 12 months until he becomes FC).

Throughout this Exposure the writer appears to be describing only the EA ceremony, but in the course of it he mentions a word for the FC, and that the latter swears the oath again, which implies that there was a second ceremony for the FC.

W: The EA Ceremony.

- (1) Cand. "Prepared."
- (2) He passes the Junior EA who stands with a drawn sword (at the door of the Lodge?).
- (3) Three knocks at Lodge door.
- (4) Perambulation, west to east to west.
- (5) Advanced to the Master by 3 steps.
- (6) Kneels for the Ob. and kisses the Bible at the end of the Ob.
- (7) The Catech. implies that the Cand. is entrusted with a Lettered word, (and doubtless with a Sign and Token but no details are given of these).
- (8) Catechism.

MF. The EA Ceremony.

- (1) At the entrance to the Lodge, Cand. is opposed by a man with a drawn sword.
- (2) He is asked if he has any weapons.
- (3) Conducted by two wardens "from Darkness into Light."
- (4) He is advanced to the Master.
- (5) Master asks "Who have we here?" A. "A Gentleman who desires to be admitted a Member of the Society."
- (6) Master asks if Cand. comes through his own desire, etc.

- (7) Cand. is warned that he must take an oath.
- (8) Assenting, he takes up the posture.
- (9) He takes the oath.
- (10) The Entrusting is not described but is implied in the Catech.
- (11) Catech. including a sign and the lettering of 2 "words."
- (12) Cand. is "cloathed" with "Apron and Gloves."

The text speaks of the "Masters Part" but gives no details.

MD. The EA Ceremony.

- (1) Cand. "prepared" and "deprived."
- (2) Three knocks at Lodge door.
- (3) Enters Lodge at the West, advanced to NE and returned to West.
- (4) Advanced to Master by 3 steps.
- (5) Kneels in the posture for the Obligation.
- (6) Takes the Obligation.
- (7) Cand. is Entrusted - no details are given of this part of the ceremony, but it is implied in the Catech.
- (8) Invested with Apron.
- (9) Catechism including Sign, Token, and Words, the first being "lettered."

MD. The FC Ceremony.

This brief ceremony being given entirely in the form of a Catech. the information is rather vague.

- (1) The inclusion of a Salutation suggests that the candidate obtained admission by this means.
- (2) The Cand. is taught a sign and grip.
- (3) He recites the poem on the Letter G. This is in "duet" form with verses taken alternately by Cand. and an un-named officer called "Resp"(ondent?).
- (4) The Catechism relates mainly to the Porch, the Pillars, the winding stairs and middle chamber.

This may possibly be a test on matters taught to the Cand. in the EA ceremony where two Pillars were named—but it may equally be a rehearsal of work which had just been taught to the newly-made FC.

MD. The Masters Part.

Again the whole description is in the form of Catechism.

- (1) After 5 questions relating to the Master Mason (see end of Q.28) a rhyme, almost identical with the ME version.
- (2) A series of Questions which elicit the whole fully detailed Legend of HA.
- (3) Questions on the Master-Jewels, i.e., Porch, Dormer, and Square Pavement, (see end of Q.12).
- (4) Points of Fellowship and the Masters Word.

When we find in the Catechisms most detailed Questions and Answers on such matters as the Constitution of a Just and Perfect Lodge, The Lights, The Jewels, The Key, etc., it is almost impossible to believe that these could have been used in Q. and A. form until after they had been explained in some measure to the Candidate, perhaps in some sort of recitative form, comparable to our lecture on the 2nd T.B.

The various descriptions of the ceremonies to be gleaned from our texts may differ widely in matters of procedure and detail, but there is one important omission common to all of them, the lecture, i.e., the symbolical and explanatory portion of the Lodge work, which must have formed a substantial part of the Ceremonies in those days.

SURVEY.

Thus our texts give 5 really detailed descriptions of the EA ceremony, and in ER and CC a fairly clear picture of the FC or Master's ceremony. But even in those cases in which considerable detail is available, we are unable to trace any particular developments with certainty. The appearance in our later texts of a new detail of procedure, or the disappearance of an old one, does not necessarily imply an evolutionary change in the ritual, since it is far more likely that the variations represent the practices of different Lodges or localities.

One fact is outstandingly clear, that, even in 1696, when speculative influence on the Craft was only just beginning to make itself felt, there was already a fully developed 1st degree, a trifle rough and ready perhaps, and marred only by the horse-play which took place both inside and outside the Lodge.

The FC ceremony, according to ER and CC, was very similar in style and structure to the EA degree, but, shorn of all horseplay and with the added importance of its esoteric contents, it must have been a much more solemn and dignified affair, comparable in this respect at least with our present-day Lodge work.

It is a pity that Prichard's FC and Master's Part are so bare of descriptive matter that we are unable to compare them with the brief but coherent descriptions in ER and CC. His FC degree is a mere trifle, insignificant from the ritual point of view, although even this insignificance may be interesting if, as Vibert believed, it was a comparatively new ceremony developed out of materials originally associated with the EA.

We have seen from Prichard's treatment of suitable matter, (see Q's. 3, 9, 10, 11, 20), that he could not resist the opportunity for expansion, explanation and embellishment, but this habit, so obvious in his EA degree, is not so apparent in his Master's Part, which, though couched in the form of a few questions and answers, is so novel and revolutionary that we can find no true parallels in the earlier sources.

Yet, if we probe carefully into this new material, we find at least 5 links with the earlier documents, which enable us to acquit Prichard of the charge of pure invention.

- (1) The "Points of Fellowship" which appear in various forms in 12 earlier texts, (all except DU, WIM and W).
- (2) The Master's Word," which appeared with variations in 4 earlier texts, (SL, TC, ME, WIO).
- (3) The "Legend of HA," a variation of which appeared in GR, with Noah as the central character, and a hint of which appears in W.
- (4) The association of the "word" with a form of the "Points of Fellowship" which occurs in SL, TC and perhaps ME.
- (5) The association of the Legend with a form of the "Points of Fellowship ship" which occurs in GR.

I have already observed that the mere existence of the Master's Word implies that it originated in a Legend, though the latter need not necessarily have had a masonic origin. In GR we find Noah as the chief character, but the extract from the same MS. which I have quoted at the foot of Q.I., might well be the fragmentary remains of a similar Legend concerning Bezaleel!

Our real difficulty is that not one of our earlier texts shows the association of all three elements, Legend, "Word" and Points of Fellowship. GR nearly achieves this when it gives the Noachian Legend and a form of the Points of Fellowship, plus a phrase "Marrow in this bone." *This curious phrase had already been used as a supposed translation of the Master's Word in WIO, 1725, a year before GR was written.*

Whether Prichard copied or invented this association of the three elements remains in doubt; certainly his was the first work which presented them in this way, but from our experience of his treatment of the EA ceremony, we cannot help feeling that his Master's Part was a skilful piece of editing rather than an original work.

Undoubtedly the whole of MD was a compilation. How much of it was derived from Prichard's own knowledge and experience as a mason, we cannot say. I have endeavoured to demonstrate the extent to which his work may have been borrowed or adapted from earlier sources, and if we dare to take only ER as a reasonably coherent and trustworthy representation of the type of Catechism that was in vogue at the opening of the 18th century, then it is obvious that MD contains a very large amount of quite "respectable" material.

It seems probable that some parts of the making ceremonies were actually framed in the form of question and answer, on somewhat similar lines to that part of our present-day ceremony immediately after the Entrusting. It is also certain that a considerable part of the Lodge work was performed or rehearsed in this way. (See quotations from MC and DU, p. 8.)

I am inclined to believe that Prichard compiled his MD partly from memory and with substantial recourse to outside sources, but in his eagerness to give a complete and continuous version of what purported to be the whole of the ceremonies, he abandoned the original "Catechism plus Narrative" style of the earlier texts and re-wrote all of his material in the form of question and answer.

A typical example of this treatment may be seen in Prichard's unique question in the Master's Part which had for its reply the whole story of the murder of HA, while another single response described all the incidents in the "recovery."

There may indeed have been some earlier "parent text" from which Prichard copied both style and contents. The Wilkinson MS., like MD., gives the whole of the EA Obligation as the reply to a single question. But, by comparison with MD, W. is only a fragment, and it shows much evidence of faulty copying and faulty memorizing, while Prichard's work is highly detailed and sequential, even in those questions which formed – as we have seen – a more or less standard framework of the catechism in nearly every text.

But, in spite of all his care, Prichard made one obvious omission, the Apron. This badge, so closely associated with masonic ceremonial since the mid-18th century, receives but scanty attention in our 16 texts. Indeed, references to the Apron are only to be found in ME, GMO, and MD.

ME. (Narr). "When a Free-mason is enter'd, after having given to all present of the Fraternity, a pair of Men and Women's Gloves and Leathern Apron"

GMO. (Narr). "At the Installation of any Member the Person to be admitted drest with an Apron before Him"

But in his introductory paragraphs to MD, Prichard himself gives evidence which suggests that, in his day, the presentation or donning of the Apron must have been quite an important little ceremony in itself, or at least accompanied by an elaborate explanation of its symbolism. In the course of a sarcastic and critical passage on the fees which were charged for admission, he says ". . . . for which they receive that Badge of Honour, which (as they term it) is more Ancient and more honourable than is the Star and Garter" Yet there is no mention of the Apron in his Catechism!

Bro. Knoop (EMC p.19 etc.), has noted several other omissions from the early Catechisms, including MD, of items which almost certainly formed a part of the early 18th century ceremonies, e.g. an opening prayer, a reference to charity and "the short and pithy charge" or explanation of the working tools which Anderson had mentioned, not as a novelty, but quite as a matter of course in his 1723 Constitutions.

Thus, having first ascertained the extent to which Prichard may have been indebted to his predecessors for his material, and having recognised that his work is necessarily incomplete, we can best begin to assess his evidential value as to the early 18th century ritual, by transposing his questions and answers into the form in which they probably existed before Prichard re-wrote and embellished them. A simple example, Question 5, may be taken to show the effect of such treatment, when instead of 2 questions and answers we may imagine the Master telling the Candidate "Five make a Lodge, namely, one Master, Two Wardens, one Fellow-Craft and one Enter'd 'Prentice. Seven or more make a Just and Perfect Lodge namely, one Fellow craft and one Enter'd 'Prentice added to the former five."

It must be borne in mind however, that not only in Prichard's MD but in all our texts, the knowledge of the ritual was *taught* to the candidate by question and answer, and none of them preserves any conventional ritual in our sense of the word.

Even in ER and CC, with their detailed narrative descriptions of the ceremony, we get no information as to the exact form of words used by the various officers in the course of the work. This leads me to the belief that a considerable part of the Lodge work was extemporised, while only the Catechism was of a formal character, and the gradual stereotyping of the questions and responses tended, as a matter of course, towards a similar standardisation in the ceremonies generally, when they were ultimately expanded into something approaching their present-day form.

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