

THE LOST KEY

AN EXPLANATION OF
MASONIC SYMBOLS



PRENTISS TUCKER

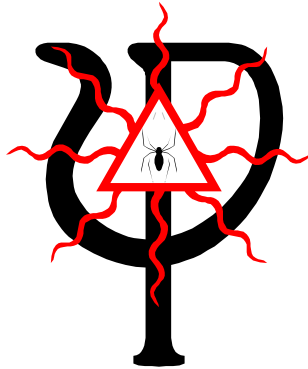
First published 1927 e.v.
by Harry M. Welliver,
Seattle, WA., U.S.A.

THE LOST KEY

AN EXPLANATION AND APPLICATION
of the
MASONIC SYMBOLS

by

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Unspeakable Press

333 Via Nefanda, Lelag, Leng

2005

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[As is obvious, this is an American work; and whilst many aspects of Masonic ritual discussed are landmarks common to all “regular” workings of the Craft degrees in English-speaking countries, a few are peculiar to U.S. workings. The American “York Rite” rituals in *Duncan’s Masonic Ritual and Monitor* appear in most (not quite all) respects sufficiently close to those with which Tucker was familiar for purposes of study.

It should not be assumed that the editor of this electronic edition agrees with everything, or indeed anything, the author says. However commenting on every doubtful or manifestly false assertion or lapse of logic would make an unreadable mess of the whole thing as footnotes and scholia eclipsed the text; the author’s text is thus presented as I found it, with only manifest typographical errors corrected and without further annotation. *Caveat lector.*]

QUESTIONS ON THE SYMBOLISM

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THE HIDDEN MEANING
OF
THE MASONIC SYMBOLISM
BY
PRENTISS TUCKER

CHAPTER I

1. Every Mason wants to know the meaning of the rites and rituals, the symbols and ceremonies of Masonry. Although it may have been years since he himself took that mystic journey towards the East and though repeated fruitless searchings may have led him to believe that the rumors of a wonderful philosophy which Masonry contains are pure imagination, yet there still lingers, like the sweet, faint fragrance which clings to old and faded garlands, the thought that, after all, there may possibly be some meaning under it.

2. And, in this intuitional thought or rather hope, he is right. Although he never knew the reason why certain symbolic actions were performed nor could his inquiries, addressed to others, elicit any such information, he felt that there must have been, at some time; a definite idea upon which the symbolism was based. The various books on Masonic Symbolism confine their attention strictly to a few of the more prominent symbols and do not take up the ritual itself nor explain why certain things are done and certain actions performed.

3. And so there is not a Mason, probably, who has not wondered, perhaps dimly, perhaps hopelessly, whether there ever was a real reason for the symbolic clothing and the shoes and for the various

other details with which he is familiar. The rituals have seemed to him at times to present the faint outlines of some systematic arrangement, vague, elusive, impossible to define or trace, yet now and then showing a wraith-like, ghostly presence, baffling but curiously attractive. If there was no meaning in the various performances of the rituals then why was so much trouble taken to devise them and whence came that unwritten and yet most powerful impression that they must not be changed? Whence came that vague feeling of reverence, almost of awe, with which Masons look upon their Ritual? He found, after becoming accustomed to his membership in the Fraternity, after "getting his bearings" as it were, an organization of men bound together closely, and he began to wonder of what the bonds consisted. Some of the members themselves seemed to think that the bonds were mainly the social features, yet these social features were insignificant when compared with the social features of certain other fraternal organizations. Others said that it was the beauty of the rituals but, when they were asked to point out just what these beauties were and what made them beautiful, they could not answer. Some said that the tie was in the wonderful lessons, but there again, when these very brothers were asked to indicate those wonderful lessons, the answers were invariably vague, uncertain, undefined. There was the feeling that the Rituals contained great lessons in morality but as to what those lessons were there seemed to be no real information. True, there were books on the Symbolism of Masonry, but those books threw no real light upon the subject. They left the great question as to the teachings of Masonry and the meanings of the details of the symbolism as much in the dark, if not more in the dark, than ever.

4. It is in the hope of partially clearing up this great conundrum that the present volume is written. For the first time in the history of the Craft, so far as the writer knows, there is an attempt to

explain the meaning of the symbolic actions of the Rituals in a plain, straight-forward, common sense way. You have probably often heard it remarked by some brother that he could not understand why Masonry has had to veil its lessons, if indeed it had any, under the cloak of allegory and symbolism and you have heard, without a doubt, answers given to this most natural and pertinent question. But the answers were so vague and dealt so largely with matters not pertinent to the question that they failed to convince or even to throw the faintest ray of light upon the darkness. The great fact that symbols repeat upon the subjective mind lessons which have already been learned, never seemed to occur to the brothers who undertook the explanation. Nor did they ever seem to grasp the fact that Masonry was originally a School in which lessons were taught verbally and then repeated by means of the Symbolism. These things and many others which are at present "mysteries" to the rank and file and even to the leaders of the great Order, will be developed in the course of this present volume. As a first step in this explanation we will take up and consider briefly the nature and function of a symbol.

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE AMERICAN FLAG

5. You are, of course, familiar with the American Flag, the "Stars and Stripes." The Flag is a Symbol. It symbolizes, or represents, the country and the power of the country. In a foreign land, raised over a Consulate, it represents the United States of America and those in that Consulate are under the "protection of the Flag." Yet the Flag, considered merely as a collection of vari-colored pieces of cloth, could not protect anything. Should a mob, in some foreign country, attack the Flag and tear it down and insult it, they would not be offering their insults to the few pieces of cloth which compose it. The insults are offered to the symbol of the country and, through it, to the country itself.

6. So the Flag is an ACTUAL SYMBOL in that it represents the country. It did not need to be composed of Stars and Stripes. When Congress was considering the adoption of a Flag it could have chosen a piece of bunting with a picture of Washington in the center, or it could have chosen a sort of checkerboard pattern or any other pattern which it might have fancied. So, whatever other symbolism the Flag may have, the ACTUAL SYMBOLISM does not depend upon color or design. It depends upon the Act of Congress which chose some sort of banner to represent or symbolize the country.

7. The 48 Stars in the blue field symbolize or stand for the 48 States which compose the Union. There were not always 48 of them and the time will probably come when there will be more than 48, so that number is a chan going symbolism. It represents the present condition or make-up of the country and hence the Stars make the Flag a REPRESENTATIVE SYMBOL.

8. The 13 alternate red and white Stripes symbolize or represent the 13 Original Colonies, hence the Flag is an HISTORICAL SYMBOL.

9. The red color symbolizes the blood shed by the patriots who died to free and to preserve the country. Hence the Flag is a COMMEMORATIVE SYMBOL.

10. The white may be taken as symbolizing that national purity of intention in our relations with other countries which has always characterized the United States and the blue, the color of devotion, symbolizes the conscientiousness of the nation and its devotion to high ideals. Hence the white may be said to give the Flag a MORAL SYMBOLISM while the blue makes it a DEVOTIONAL SYMBOL.

11. From the above we can see that the symbolism of the Flag is rather complex. It is: Actual, Effectual, Representative, Historical, Moral and Devotional.

12. The Effectual symbolism comes from the fact that, when used in the proper manner and by proper authority, it actually represents the power of this country and when it is mistreated in some foreign country the affront, directed really at the country, may easily involve the two nations in war in which many lives may be lost and countless millions in property destroyed.

13. The first two symbolisms of the Flag are the only really necessary ones. The others are beautiful and instructive but are not absolutely essential for few national flags have any such symbolisms.

14. Before you can understand the Historical and the Representative symbolisms of the Flag you must study American History. You must know about the Thirteen Original Colonies, their origin, the causes which led up to the Revolution, the formation of the country, etc. This takes time to learn, but the lessons are revealed in a flash every time that you see a Flag. To understand the Representative Symbolism you must know something of the composition of the country. This, also, takes time to learn, but this lesson as well is repeated every time you see a Flag.

15. After you have studied these things and have been told what the other symbolic meanings of the Flag are, then, whenever you see the Flag, all these meanings are repeated on your mind in the twinkling of an eye. Hence one of the greatest uses of a symbol is to repeat some lesson which has been previously learned and to impress it again upon the mind and to do this instantaneously and dramatically.

16. Suppose that, instead of the Flag in a procession, we hired a man with a loud voice whose duty would be to ride in advance and shout out the lessons in history and other things which the Flag teaches silently. What a farce that would be!

17. Suppose that a man from Mars stood on the street and watched the Flag go by. Would he understand the lessons in history and other things which are taught by the Flag? He would not. They must be taught verbally, first. After that, the lessons are repeated instantaneously every time one sees a Flag. But if the one who sees the Flag has never been taught the lessons in the history and composition of the country he cannot understand the symbolic meanings of the Flag nor would he know that the Stars and Stripes are placed there to teach something and are not merely ornaments of some chance design.

18. The value of a Symbol is that it repeats instantly some PREVIOUSLY LEARNED LESSON. But the lesson must have been learned beforehand for few symbols are so very simple that they can be understood without some previous knowledge or instruction.

19. The Mason who does not understand the symbolism of the Three Degrees is in the same position as the man from Mars would be with regard to the lessons of the Flag. The Mason sees the rituals gone through and the symbols shown, but they mean nothing to him and so he misses the lessons which they teach. The Mason misses these lessons because the original VERBAL EXPLANATIONS which accompanied the symbols have been lost to Masonry.

20. The restoration of this teaching is the purpose of this present volume. Owing to the fact that Masonry is a Progressive Science the teaching of the Three Degrees forms one continuous and interlocking whole. One symbol follows and depends upon another and symbolism melts into symbolism in such a way that they constitute one homogeneous and self-proving entity. Therefore, although the reader may not feel entirely confident at the outset that the present explanation can possibly be the true one which has been so long sought, he will find, when he has reached the end of the volume and quietly thinks the matter over, that the explanation is

SELF-PROVING. Any wrong explanation would infallibly act much as the proverbial monkey wrench thrown into the well known cog wheels.

21. At the present time these explanations are lost to Masonry. But, as Masonry is a System of Morality or a system of ethical instruction, and as the lessons involved are wrapped up in allegories and symbols which are, at present, not understood, the restoring of these explanations to Masonry constitutes the greatest service which can be rendered to the great Fraternity. It will change the dry husks of the Rituals which are, at present, only suspected of harboring a concealed teaching, into living, breathing, vital and dramatic lessons in right living and right thinking which will make the Masonic Fraternity the greatest moral force in the world. It will restore the soul of Masonry to the body of the Rituals and so will be an actual resurrection, like the Drama of the Third Degree.

22. If this be true, and the present writer firmly believes that it is, then this volume, should it accomplish the task set for it, will be of inestimable value not only to Masonry but also to humanity at large. The study of the real meaning of the Masonic Symbolism will not be merely the gratifying of curiosity on your part but it will mark a new era in your life and will give you a new viewpoint from which to regard the Craft and those great souls who, in the dim ages of the past, devised this wonderful system of instruction.

23. In this present volume the writer hopes to show that the prevailing subconscious impression which so many Masons have is not mistaken. There IS a Philosophy of Masonry. There IS a Hidden Teaching. There IS a Golden Thread. There is a depth of wonderful wisdom hidden within these various ritualistic husks and, when you realize the beauty and the vital life within them, your love for Masonry will be increased ten-fold, no, I should say a thousand-fold.

24. Now that we have seen that a symbol is like a shorthand repetition of some previously learned lesson and that the value of the symbol, as a lesson repeater, depends upon our having already learned the verbal explanation of the meaning of the symbol, we should go on and get a clear definition of Masonry itself. Definitions are very important, so important that their value cannot be over-estimated for, when we have no exact definitions we are talking more or less in the dark. For instance, a man may be speaking of a road and have in his mind the picture of a modern, concrete highway. A countryman, hearing him, one who had never seen a smooth, modern road, would have in his mind the picture of an old time country road, rutty and full of "chuck-holes." The first man, telling of driving an automobile at a speed of sixty or seventy miles an hour over this "road" could be set down by the countryman as an accomplished liar and all because they had different definitions of the same word.

25. Or the first man may be speaking of a bridge and have in mind a modern suspension bridge and speak of its cost running into millions. The listener, never having seen or heard of a bridge of that kind and being used only to small and inexpensive structures, sets the speaker down as a second Baron Munchausen.

26. So, before we can even begin our study into the meaning of the symbolism, we must have certain definitions clearly fixed in our minds. We must know exactly what is meant by the word "Masonry" or by the word "Morality" or by the word "Symbol." We must know what is meant by the term "Natural Law" or by the term "Allegory." The ideas which are brought up in the minds of many by these words are often confused and contradictory hence definitions are of the utmost importance in this study. It does not matter whether the definition given is one which you are used to or not so long as you understand clearly what is meant by the word whenever it is used in the course of this treatise for then you will

know what the author means and can adapt his meaning or definitions in your own mind.

27. We have gained a good idea of the meaning of a symbol. Now what, exactly, is Masonry? The English Lectures and our own Monitors, define Masonry as A SYSTEM OF MORALITY, VEILED IN ALLEGORY AND ILLUSTRATED BY SYMBOLS. Mackey agrees with this definition in his Masonic Encyclopedia as do other authorities, and we will take it as correct. But it gives us several other words which must be defined in clear-cut terms. Let us take the word "System" first.

28. According to the dictionary, "system" means "An orderly combination or arrangement as of particulars, parts or elements, into a whole, especially such combination according to some rational principle or organic idea giving it unity and completeness."

29. A "system," then, is a combination of parts into one whole. This involves a sort of unity among the parts for our definition says that the combination is in accordance with some rational principle. Each part must depend upon the other parts or there is no "rational principle or organic idea" in the matter at all. Here is a point which all investigators of Masonic Symbolism seem to have overlooked. The invariable custom, in writing about Masonic Symbolism, has been to take isolated and particular symbols and attempt to give some sort of meaning to each without the slightest reference to its position in the ritual or to any other symbol whatever. As this treatise develops the reader will see the vital necessity of understanding what a "system" really is.

30. No what is "Morality?" This is one of the most misunderstood words in the whole dictionary since the modern and careless use of it has restricted it, largely, in its everyday use, to some sort of reference with regard to the relations of the sexes. But, in the Masonic sense, the word is used in its broader and more correct

meaning. Let us quote again from the dictionary. Morality—The doctrine or system of man’s moral duties, including all that is due to God and man. Moral conduct. Virtue as distinguished from religious duty.

31. In other words, Morality is the living of a life in conformity with the laws of God. It is living as nearly right as one knows how in one’s relations with one’s environment. The “environment” includes all those with whom we come into any sort of relation in the world. The man who steals is immoral. The man who gives short weight is immoral. The man who grafts in any position whether public or private, is immoral. Anyone who violates the rules of right conduct in any department of life is, to that extent, immoral. The moral man tries to live up to his highest conception of truth and right and justice.

32. The word “Symbol” we have already defined. An allegory is much the same thing as a symbol extended. It is a sort of story which sets forth some truth. It is the illustrating of some subject under the guise of some other subject. An Emblem is an object used to symbolize something. Thus an emblem is always a symbol but a symbol is not always an emblem, because words are symbols, whereas an emblem is some sort of object, such as a pin worn to symbolize something.

33. Morality is the living of a life in conformity with our highest ideals, of obedience to the Divine Law. Masonry starts off by asking you whether you believe in God. If you do not believe in God you cannot become a Mason. Yet it goes no further. It does not ask you to define God. It does not ask you what church you belong to or whether you belong to any. It recommends prayer, but does not demand that you pray.

34. Masonry is a consecutive whole. It is a Progressive science because it actually does progress in regular order in the lessons

which it teaches. The symbols interlock. No real explanation of Masonry takes one symbol and tries to explain it without showing what are the relations between that symbol and other symbols. Masonry is not a religion nor does it take the place of a religion. Masonry is a system of ethics or moral conduct. Genuine religion must include morality but the science of morality does not include religion.

35. The allegory of the building of the Temple is the framework upon which the Symbolism is hung. It is a very appropriate choice and it fits the needs of the teaching exactly. Each one of us is building the Temple of his own character and also we are all building the greater Temple of Humanity. In the one, each of our characteristics and qualities is a stone or "ashlar." In the other, each one of us is an "ashlar," rough at first but gradually smoothed and polished and perfected until we are fit to be built into the great temple of the Human Race.

36. Now as to the symbolic meaning of the Lodge. In common with most symbols, the Lodge has more than one meaning but, in order to avoid confusion we shall take up but one meaning at present, remembering, however that this explanation does not contradict the fact that the Lodge has also other meanings.

37. The Masonic Lodge, when properly constructed, is an "oblong square," with a low platform along the two sides which is raised a half step or slightly less than a full step, above the level of the floor. The floor of the Lodge symbolizes or stands for or represents the ordinary level of humanity, the mental and moral level of the "man in the street." The platform which lines the sides and which is raised a half-step above the floor is where the Master Masons sit during the proceedings and it symbolizes the fact that those who sit there are supposed to have, to a certain extent at least, gained control of their lower natures or risen slightly above the level of the

ordinary, uninstructed man. They are supposed to have received lessons in ethics or moral conduct by means of which they have risen above the level of the materialistic and the sensual. Hence it symbolizes a partial conquest of the lower nature.

38. The instructions given in Masonry are instructions in obedience to the Laws of the Grand Architect of the Universe. All such "Laws" are merely our observations of the way in which the Deity works. Laws of Nature are as much Laws of God as are the Laws of Morality. We live in a universe which is governed by Law and in proportion to the degree with which we conform to these Laws will we be happy and comfortable.

39. The Laws of Nature such as the Laws of Gravity, Physics, Chemistry, etc., shade imperceptibly into those other Laws, also Laws of Nature, which govern in the realms of Morals, of Mind and of Spirit. The study of any good text book on Psychology will teach us that there are immutable Laws which govern the mind and its development and we know that these are interwoven with the Laws of Morality.

40. It may help us in our study if we will separate these Laws into two classes and, although this classification is entirely arbitrary, it will materially assist us in getting a clearer idea of the Purpose of Masonry. These two classes of Natural Law are the "Quick Acting" and the "Slow Acting." There are some Laws of Nature in which the result follows so close upon the heels of the cause that humanity is able to learn these Laws without assistance. There is no savage so primitive or so stupid that he does not know he will fall if he steps off a cliff or that he will be hurt if a rock falls upon him. This is an example of "quick acting" Law.

41. But the Laws which govern in the higher realms, the mind for instance, are different in this, that the result of any particular cause is not observable for some time. Other causes intervene until it is

almost impossible to trace back from any particular effect and discover the real cause which generated it. Yet these Laws, though slow of action, are none the less immutable and their effect upon man is just as great as is the effect of any other Law. One of the objects of any religious system is to teach humanity what these "slow action" Laws are, their importance, and the way to obey them or to live in conformity with them.

42. In the early days of humanity there were various forms of religion which were originally intended to teach such things but these religions became corrupted until their teachings were often in the very opposite direction. There were also great "Schools" of what were then called the "Mysteries" but which were nothing more than schools which taught the nature and effect of these "slow acting" Laws of Nature. Masonry is the remnant of one of these Schools and that its teaching was just what has been outlined above will be shown in the following pages. But Masonry has lost the explanation of the symbols which contain its teaching and the restoration of this explanation will make Masonry once more a great School of the Mysteries of Nature or rather of what were once "Mysteries" but which are mysteries no longer. The information that the earth revolves around the sun was once one of the most arcane of the mysteries. Now every school boy knows it to be a fact.

43. We need no elaborate system of allegory and symbol to teach us not to step off a cliff or not to submerge our heads under water, or not to step on a sharp stone. But we do need teaching in the nature and effect of the "slow acting" Laws of Nature almost as much now as in the early days of the race. The moral teachings of Masonry are in perfect conformity with the teachings of Christ and, as they put the same things in a different and dramatic manner, are of extraordinary value. They are not, however, religious teachings. They are moral teachings. Morality is the basis

of religion and is the foundation upon which any religious superstructure must be built. That religion which ignores morality as its basis and foundation was most scorchingly condemned by Christ Himself in his denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees of His day and we must always keep this fact in mind, that Masonry teaches us the great “slow acting” Laws of Nature but does not teach religion. Hence Masonry is a Philosophy, not a religion. But it is a School in the very things which must be used in building the foundation for religion.

44. Masonry, then, is a School in which is taught the nature and effect of those “slow acting” Laws which are just as disastrous in their effect when disobeyed as are the Laws of Gravity or Physics. It is a School in the Laws which govern character-building and the development of the spiritual in man for man cannot develop morally or spiritually unless such development is based upon the knowledge of and obedience to the great Moral Laws.

CHAPTER TWO

The Symbolism of the Lodge Room

45. The Masonic Lodge symbolizes or represents the individual man. The floor of the Lodge typifies the level of ordinary humanity and stands for the environment of the individual, the people with whom he is thrown into contact, his friends and associates, business and social. The low platform on the side of the Lodge symbolizes the fact that the Master Mason who sits there is supposed to have put into practice the lessons taught him by the Lodge until he has risen, in character, somewhat above the level of the “man on the street.” He is supposed to have gained some control over his lower nature. What that lower nature is we shall presently see.

46. We must always bear it in mind that, symbolically speaking, every Mason is “going through the chairs.” Every Mason has that within his being which corresponds, not only with the candidate but also to the various Officers of the Lodge and the platforms and their meanings should impress upon his mind the fact that, sooner or later, the great Law will demand that he meet the requirements of which these platforms are symbolic.

47. The one-step platform of the Junior Warden symbolizes the fact that this Officer is supposed to have gained complete control of his physical, carnal nature and hence is elevated one full step above the level of the ordinary humanity.

48. The two-step platform of the Senior Warden symbolizes the fact that the Officer who sits there, theoretically at least, is

supposed to have gained complete control of his physical and also of his emotional natures.

49. The three-step platform in the East symbolizes the fact that the Worshipful Master is supposed to have gained control or to have conquered his three lower natures, PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL and MENTAL.

50. Did you ever try to control your thoughts? If so, you know what a hard task it is. The physical body is comparatively easy to control. The emotions and desires are much more difficult, but the mind is like a wild and unruly horse, full of tricks and hard to curb. Nevertheless, Masonry teaches, in these platforms as well as in many other places which we shall point out later on, the necessity for control of the thought.

51. Remember that EVERY Mason is going through the chairs in the great Lodge of his own inner nature. He may never do this in the physical Lodge for there the number which can occupy the chairs is limited. But that makes no difference in the symbology for the demands of the platforms as to self control are demands which the Great Law makes upon every man and when a Mason enters a Lodge Room the silent lesson of the platforms should come home to him as a wonderful, dramatic teaching of that which the Grand Architect expects of him and so he should enter the Lodge Room as a place which is holy.

THE LODGE OF THE HOLY SAINTS JOHN AT JERUSALEM

52. The candidate is supposed to have come from "A Lodge of the Holy Saints John at Jerusalem." Let us examine this symbolic statement and see what it really means. Jerusalem has the symbolic meaning of peace for that is the meaning of the name. You will remember that the toilsome journey of the Israelites over

the desert ended symbolically, if not exactly, at Jerusalem. So Jerusalem means, symbolically, a place of peace, of rest, of contentment.

53. St. John the Baptist was the rough and somewhat uncouth individual, dressed in skins, who came into Jerusalem preaching repentance from sins. He symbolizes the awakening MORAL NATURE. He stirs up the individual who had heretofore been satisfied with himself and his condition and impels him to seek for something higher just as John the Baptist stirred up the people of Jerusalem and awakened them out of their lethargy. So does the awakening of the moral nature stir up the individual.

54. St. John the Evangelist, the "Beloved Disciple" symbolizes the awakened Spiritual Nature which leads the soul onwards and upwards in its search for TRUTH.

55. The statement that the candidate has "come from a Lodge of the Holy Sts. John at Jerusalem" may be put thus:—"All my life, up to very recently, I have been living at peace, contented with that spiritual and moral teaching which was given me. But then there came a change and somehow I felt that there was a higher teaching which I might have could I only find it. This feeling of dissatisfaction disturbed me and I began to look for this wonderful instruction which I felt would do me so much good. Finally my intuition led me to the door of the Masonic Lodge and I felt, somehow, that within that Lodge I would receive the wisdom-teaching which I craved. My course thus far is symbolic of that well known passage of Scripture, 'Seek and ye shall find, ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you.' "

THE PRINCIPAL SYMBOL

56. The lessons of Masonry are given to the candidate. But what is that in us which receives and learns a lesson? Is it not the mind,

the intelligence? The physical body does not learn a lesson, it is the mind within which learns. So the real candidate is the mind or intelligence of the one who is going through the initiation.

57. But we are usually prone to forget very easily and so, to make the lessons more emphatic, Masonry requires the candidate to help in acting out the initiations. He is required to take certain positions, to go through certain acts. The physical body is placed in certain positions in order to impress upon the real candidate, the mind within, the particular lessons which are intended to be taught. The candidate goes through all the initiations and in them all his physical body is used to impress certain truths upon his mind. Hence the candidate (his physical body) is the Principal Symbol of all the Degrees because he is used in all the symbology.

58. But the candidate is a composite thing, when we consider him as being a symbol. The symbology does not take him as just one single entity except in the instance in which it regards him as symbolizing the mind. It looks on him from various angles and in various lights so it is necessary that we get the various meanings of the candidate firmly fixed in our minds as otherwise we cannot understand the meaning of much of the symbolism.

59. In the first place we must realize that every human being has two great subdivisions, the VISIBLE and the INVISIBLE. So the candidate has a visible body and he also has an invisible division of his nature which you may call as you will, spirit, soul, mind or by whatever other name you prefer to designate it. But the invisible part of him is the part that learns the lessons and the visible part of him is that part which is used to symbolize the lessons to be learned. So the two great subdivisions of the candidate are the physical body and the great invisible part of his being.

60. You have a friend whom you love and respect. But you know perfectly well that, although the physical body is all that you can

see, it is not the physical body which you particularly admire. It is the character, the various traits and qualities of that invisible part of him which you admire. It is his intelligence, his kindness, his compassion for others, his helpfulness, all these things are the things which you love in him and they are not the physical body, they are traits of mind and character, not of physique.

61. But the physical body is all that you can see. These other traits which we lump under the term "character," although they are the most important part of our friend, are not visible to mortal eyes. We cannot see the character. We may see some of its effects in certain actions and in certain lines on the face, but the character itself we cannot see. So the Masonic Symbolism, wishing to portray in a symbolic or pictorial or dramatic manner certain actions of, or lessons given to, that great inner and invisible man, accomplishes this end by placing the visible part of the candidate, the physical body, in certain positions. From this it follows that we must know the basis of that symbolism in order to understand what those positions and conditions mean. Let us take up one of the most important symbolisms which is yet but very slightly understood, that of the Clothing.

THE CLOTHING

62. If the physical body of the candidate symbolizes his invisible self, the self which learns the lessons, that is, the mind, then we can easily see how fitly the clothing is used to symbolize anything which surrounds that mind and prevents it from coming into contact with exterior objects. But what is that which surrounds a mind and prevents it from coming into contact with exterior objects and, also, what exterior objects can a mind contact? A mind must contact (or touch) something of its own nature, must it not? Hence the mind contacts thought. What surrounds a mind and prevents that mind from coming into contact with a thought

except PREJUDICE? The prejudiced mind is shut in from all thought. Prejudice, or prejudging, shuts in a mind as clothing shuts in a body. As the clothing prevents the body from touching physical objects so does prejudice prevent a mind from touching truth or a new thought.

63. Hence the primary meaning of the Clothing is Prejudice. But there are two kinds of prejudice, a lower and a higher. The lower grade of prejudice prevents a mind from contacting any new thought merely because it is new. It is a prejudice against anything new or unaccustomed. There is a higher kind of prejudice, that which prevents a mind from contacting anything which is evil and base and vile. Both are prejudice but the one is harmful and limiting and is the same sort of prejudice which condemned Galileo because his judges were too stupid to consider a new thought or to use their faculty of reason. The higher sort of prejudice is that prejudice which the mind has in favor of that which is pure and good and true. It is the innate love of righteousness.

NEITHER NAKED NOR CLAD

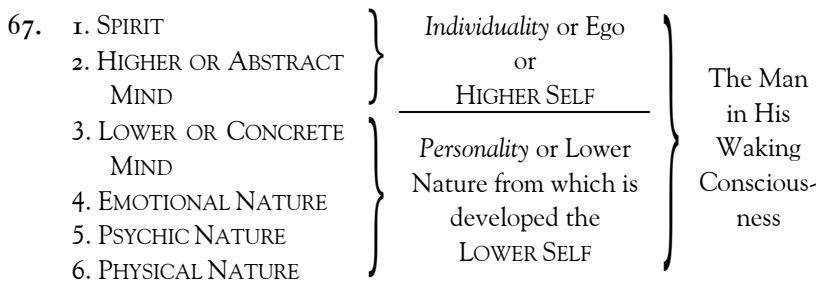
64. So when the candidate is said to be “neither naked nor clad” it means that he has laid aside his outer clothing of every day wear and has put on certain symbolic garments furnished to him by the Lodge and that he is thereby symbolizing the fact that he has laid aside his prejudice and preconceived opinions and is coming, open minded, to this great School of Truth where he will not reject any teaching merely because it is new and unaccustomed but will carefully consider that which is to be taught to him.

65. Such is the lower meaning of the clothing. But the candidate is not unclothed. This is to symbolize the fact that, while he is openminded and ready to be taught new truths, these must be along the lines of the moral, the true and the good. He is still protected by that clothing which symbolizes a love for the pure and

the clean and the righteous. This lesson of the Clothing is one of the most important and most beautiful in the entire symbolic system and we will do well to take it to heart and ask ourselves continually whether we are approaching some study such as this study into the meanings of the Symbolism, in a truly Masonic manner, that is, "neither naked nor clad."

THE NATURE OF MAN

66. There is a still further subdivision of the nature of man which must be understood by the student for, as there is the physical body which is visible and as that visible body is divided into parts and limbs, so there are various subdivisions of the inner man which are symbolized by the various parts of the physical body. In order that we may have a clear idea of this subdivision we should carefully study the accompanying diagram which will be frequently referred to in the pages which are to follow.



68. The physical body we are all familiar with. The Psychic Nature is very closely allied to what we call the "Subjective Mind." The Emotional Nature is the nature of emotions and wishes and longings. These are very frequently not mental in their nature but arise from certain desires of the lower natures. If the student desires to get a more detailed idea of these matters he would do well to study some good text book on Psychology from which he will soon learn that the invisible part of man is a very complex thing and, if he has been wise enough to select a really scientific

treatise, he will be surprised at the degree of ignorance concerning such matters which characterizes the average member of the Craft.

69. The Higher Mind or "Abstract Mind" as it is frequently called because it designates those mental powers which we use when we consider some "abstract" matter such as higher mathematics, Philosophy, etc., is closely allied to the spirit while the Lower Mind or "Concrete Mind" is so called because it is the mental power which deals with "concrete" or definite matters, such as affairs of business, such things which have shape and form and it is more closely allied to the physical. When we say that two and two make four we are not specifying any particular things. The numbers are abstract. But when we say that two apples added to two apples make four apples then we are dealing with concrete and definite objects and so we divide the mind or mental powers into two great divisions, "Concrete" and "Abstract."

70. Referring to this diagram you will see at once the sharp distinction which is made between "Personality" and "Individuality." The word "Personality" comes from the Latin "Persona," which meant the mask that the ancient actors used when portraying a part upon the stage. They wore a mask which was painted and shaped to correspond to the character which they were supposed to represent. "Per" means through and "sona" means sound, so it was the thing through which the voice of the actor sounded.

PERSONALITY

71. Hence the Personality is the mask through which the Spirit, that great immortal and eternal part of us, speaks out its little part upon the stage of human life.

72. If you will refer again to the diagram you will see that the Personality includes the lower mind, the emotional nature, the psychic nature and the physical body or physical nature. These

four natures correspond to the square of the Apron and are sometimes called the "Lower Quartemary." It is by the Personality that you know your friend. You recognize him by his physical body, perhaps, but it is through his various qualities and attributes, through what you know of his emotional nature and his habits and characteristics of thought that you know and like him as well as through your knowledge of his physical characteristics.

73. So it is through the Personality that your friend or any human being really touches or "contacts" the world. Most reasonably, then, we would expect to find the Personality symbolized by that part of the body which touches or "contacts" the symbolic representation of the environment, the floor of the Lodge. This part of the physical body, obviously, is the feet. Hence the feet symbolize the Personality.

74. But the actual, physical contact of the spirit with the world is through the physical body although the body is but the machine, so to speak. You know and like your friend by knowing his personality but you recognize that personality, when you meet it on the street, by recognizing the physical body. So we may say that the physical body comes between the personality and the environment. Now what comes between the feet and the floor? Is it not the shoes? Now let us see what we have:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 75. PHYSICAL BODY | symbolizes the mind. |
| FEET. | symbolizes the personality. |
| SHOES | symbolizes the physical body, also the power to advance. |
| FLOOR OF THE LODGE | symbolizes the environment. |

SYMBOLISM OF THE BODY

76. The body or, we might say, the trunk of the body, symbolizes the mind. But the body has four limbs, two upper limbs which are the arms and two lower limbs, the legs. The limbs, representing

the activities or the active powers of the body (trunk) symbolize the mental powers or activities. They are right and left, right arm and left arm and right and left legs.

77. Practically everybody uses the right arm or hand with more facility than he does the left. This is so universal that the exception is quite remarkable, but from this general rule has come the practice, in symbolic usage, of designating the right side as the active and positive side and the left side as the negative, receptive side. In ancient times this distinction might have required considerable explanation but in modern times there should be no one who is not familiar to some extent with the fact that every magnet or dynamo has its positive and negative poles, the positive pole being that which is active, outgoing, and the negative pole being the exact opposite, passive and incoming. So the two sides represent the polarity of the body or, when used symbolically, the polarity of the mind or spirit.

78. The arms, being the higher limbs, would naturally symbolize or represent the higher powers of the mind while the legs, the lower limbs, would represent the lower powers of the mind or the powers of the lower mind. When the candidate walks from place to place on the floor of the Lodge it is by moving his legs. Hence the legs symbolize the lower mental activities, those which are used by the personality in its progress in the world, in its environment. They are both positive and negative, right and left.

79. The arms are also classified as positive (right) and negative (left) and at the extremity of each arm is the corresponding hand which directs the activities of the arm. The hands, then, are the directive faculties of the higher mental powers or activities. Similarly the feet would be the directive faculties of the lower mental activities (legs). Like the arms and legs the hands and feet are also classified as both positive (right) and negative (left).

80. How well this classification fits in with the phenomena of life as we observe them can be understood at a glance. A man progresses in his business life, in his environment, by the use of his lower mental faculties. When one decides to go into business he uses his lower mental faculties to pick out a location, to decide as to whether this location will bring enough trade to his store or business to his office. The mental powers which he uses for this purpose are not the higher or abstract powers of the mind but the common, everyday "horse-sense." So he progresses or advances in his everyday life, his environment, by the use of his lower mental activities, just as the candidate progresses or advances over the floor of the Lodge by the movement of his legs.

81. He can make this advance in his environment because he has a physical body. Had he no body he could not engage in business for no one could see him. He would be a disembodied ghost. Now the body is the shoe of the spirit or inner man and, in like manner as the physical body enables the inner man, the invisible man to advance in his environment, so do the shoes on the feet (which enable the physical body to advance) symbolize the power to advance.

82. These subdivisions of the body are very important so it would be well to get them firmly fixed in the mind and the very best way to understand them is to understand the reason why the various limbs are assigned these various meanings. The student will do well to go over the following table and get it thoroughly impressed upon his mind for it is the key to most of the meanings of the Masonic Symbolism.

83. PHYSICAL BODY—Symbolizes the Mind.

FEET—Symbolize positive and negative aspects of the Personality.

LEGS—Symbolize Lower Mental Activities, positive and negative.

ARMS—Symbolize Higher Mental Activities, positive and negative.

HANDS—Symbolize directive principle of the Higher Mental Activities, positive and negative.

FEET—Symbolize directive principle of the Lower Mental Activities, positive and negative.

SHOES—Symbolize Physical Body, positive and negative aspects.

84. You will see from the above that the feet have a double symbolic meaning but these meanings do not conflict. The feet are the personality in its positive and negative aspects and they also symbolize the directive principle of the lower mental activities. The shoes symbolize the physical body, positive and negative aspects and, when they are on the feet, they symbolize the POWER TO ADVANCE for the reasons stated in Section (81).

CHAPTER THREE

The Lodge of the Holy Saints John at Jerusalem

85. The candidate is supposed to have come from a Lodge of the Holy Saints John at Jerusalem, and this phrase has long puzzled Masons who have been at great pains to discover some historical mention of a Lodge at Jerusalem but have been unable to do so. When taken literally the phrase is meaningless, the labored attempts to hang some sort of historical instruction on it being hardly worth notice. But when this phrase is taken symbolically it is full of meaning and instruction though it may well make most of us feel a sense of shame at the other motives which actually prompted us to join the Order.

86. Jerusalem has, when taken symbolically, the meaning of peace, rest, contentment. The name means "City of Peace." We considered this statement in its symbolic aspect in Section 52-55 but it is so prominent an item in the Masonic Symbolism and has caused so much speculation and wonder as to why it should be mentioned at all that it is well to make the matter as clear as possible.

87. At about the age of fourteen the human animal experiences an entire alteration in its outlook upon life. Then starts that period which is referred to by Shakespeare as "Flaming Youth" in which the natural exuberance and enthusiasm of youth is enhanced by these newly awakened natural forces. During this period the young person of either sex is very difficult to manage, they usually considering it to be an obvious fact that their wisdom

and knowledge is of a very much superior grade to that of the older persons about them whose continued admonitions and advice have grown so monotonous. This is a very dangerous period in human life both morally and physically. since the individual is liable to fly off on a moral tangent from which recovery may be difficult. This condition of mental and sometimes moral blindness which is quite characteristic of the years immediately following puberty and which is also distinguished by that usual feeling of self-satisfaction and self-sufficiency, is very aptly symbolized by the condition of the people of Jerusalem at the time when John the Baptist came in from the desert, clothed in skins and rebuking the people for their sins.

88. Then comes the time when, the first flaming of youth having passed, the man is brought into contact with the world where he has got to make a living for himself. He is brought into contact with hard and cold facts and soon finds out that his supposed great wisdom was nothing but the customary foolishness of youth and inexperience. After he becomes accustomed to this great shock, usually after the lapse of several years when he begins to notice that the birthdays are clicking off with remarkable rapidity, he begins to wonder whether there is any deeper knowledge available of life and its purposes. This feeling is symbolized by the coming of John the Baptist and his stirring up of the people of Jerusalem. Our feeling of satisfaction and contentment is disturbed by the AWAKENING MORAL NATURE.

89. This feeling of dissatisfaction tends to break up the condition symbolized by "Jerusalem" and the subsequent search for some form of instruction is symbolically represented by St. John the Evangelist who represents the intuitional urge of the Higher Self or the AWAKENING OF THE SPIRITUAL NATURE which finally directs us to the door of the Masonic Lodge. The candidate is already a Mason in the sense that he is a "Builder" who desires more

technical instruction in the art of building and so it is perfectly natural that he come to a School of Instruction for teaching.

THE THREE RAPS

90. A rap upon a door is, symbolically, equivalent to a request for the knowledge which is held by those behind the door. A knock on the door of a school is a symbolic request for the instruction of that school. We are accustomed to this use of the term. It is quite understandable to say of such and such a man that he “knocked upon the doors of Plato’s School and was taught in the wisdom of that sage philosopher.” Or, we might say, “He left the forests of the North and journeyed south to knock upon the gates of Harvard University in search of knowledge.” In either case we would be using the very same symbology nor would even the most unenlightened reader need to ask for an explanation.

91. But why the THREE raps? Why not one or two or four? Simply because he is asking, symbolically, for instruction in the three great departments of his lower nature, the physical, emotional and mental. Hence the three raps which correspond to the three steps of the Master’s platform.

92. We must never lose sight of the fact that a symbol may have many meanings. Almost always it has more than one meaning and we must also realize that the use of any person or thing as a symbol does not in the slightest degree imply any denial whatever of the historicity or actuality of that person or thing. The use of the Saints John as symbols does not imply a denial of their actual existence. The candidate himself is the principal symbol of each Degree and surely no one could possibly think that the existence of the candidate is denied.

THE OBLONG SQUARE

93. In ancient times it was customary to refer to any four-sided figure with square corners as a “square.” When the figure happened to be equilateral it was then spoken of as a “perfect square.” If it were what we now call an “oblong” it was called an “oblong square.” So the phrase is a relic of the past and not the statement of an impossibility in mathematics as it is when we use our present day definitions. The symbolic meaning, however, of the oblong square is—“imperfect square.”

94. The candidate is required at one point to form his feet into the shape of an oblong square. This has a wonderful meaning hidden within it so let us examine it carefully. The floor is the environment. The feet are the personality, the entire man as his friends know him. The placing of the feet in this position is a symbolic and dramatic statement by the candidate that he has tried to live in his own little world, among the people with whom his lot is cast, as nearly on the square or in as nearly an honest, moral and upright manner as it was possible for him to live.

95. This is the statement of the candidate. The square is “oblong” that is, imperfect, and this is so because, without the benefit of the great moral teachings of Masonry which he did not have and which he has come here to learn, he was not able to live in scientific accord with the great Laws of Morality, hence his square is imperfect. However, he did the best he could and was as honest and upright as his imperfect knowledge would permit.

96. But he states that he has kept his lower nature, his personality, his lower mind and his emotional and physical natures, as nearly in accord with the moral laws or with what he knew of these laws, as he could, and so, feeling that he has demonstrated his desire to obey the Law, he asks for admission and for light and instruction.

97. In this position we must note that it is not alone the feet which are in the form of the oblong square but also the shoes and, remembering the meaning of the shoes, we can understand what a comprehensive statement this is on the part of the candidate. It is evidently the last vestige of some sort of examination which apparently took place at this point in ancient times.

THE RITE OF DISCALCEATION

98. If the shoes are the physical body and the feet are the personality what is meant by leaving off a shoe or both shoes? In the Eastern countries it is customary for a worshipper or a stranger, before entering a temple, to remove the shoes and substitute a pair of slippers furnished by the temple or to enter barefooted. The common explanation of this is that it is a mark of respect for the place and this is also given as the reason why Moses was commanded to remove his shoes at the burning bush.

99. But when we come to examine this custom in the light of our knowledge of the symbolism of the body, and we must remember that this same symbolic meaning of the body is carried out in the old Myths and in the ancient Scriptures, we can readily understand that, although the removal of the shoes might be taken as a sign of respect, that meaning is really only a secondary meaning, a derivative of the prime meaning.

100. The feet are the personality and the shoes are the physical body. Now when the feet, either or both of them, are withdrawn from the shoes it represents a withdrawal of the personality from the physical body, does it not? Apparently it would represent or symbolize the withdrawal of the invisible man from the visible body. Yet we know that it does not mean quite this for it is not symbolic of death. But, if it means a withdrawal from the body and yet does not mean death, then what could it mean?

101. There are other withdrawals from the body than death. For instance, when one enters a place for which he has a high respect or reverence he would feel a sort of exaltation of spirit, a certain “lifting up” above the sordid and material things of the carnal world and what is this but a forgetfulness of the body? We speak of some one who has become so enraged that he is forgetful of all the rules of ordinary life, as being “beside himself.” This condition may come about through rage or extreme terror and what is it but the very same thing as that of which we are speaking except that, instead of being a “lifting up” of the spirit from the body it is merely a sort of moving to one side.

102. The lifting up expresses a withdrawal from the body in which the spirit rises to higher planes of thought and feeling in its forgetfulness of the flesh. This result may easily be understood in the case of a person entering a place or into the presence of one for whom he has great respect. When the forgetfulness of the physical world and the conventions of society is caused by intense anger or extreme terror, as in the case of being “beside one’s self,” there is no such rising to higher planes of thought even though the forgetfulness of the physical may be just as intense.

103. Now the Masonic Ritual expresses exactly the same thing in its Rite of Discalceation, the complete or partial lifting up of the spirit above the things of the material world (symbolically a withdrawal from the body). This effect is brought about in the case of the candidate by the fact that he comes to the door of this great School of Wisdom, fully convinced that this School has the most inestimable teaching concerning the mysteries of life and he is in an exalted frame of mind, “lifted up” as it were out of reach of the thoughts of the material and the physical.

104. We must not overlook the fact that, although the entire action is now symbolic only, there was a time when the Rite of Discalceation was a true symbol of the actual feeling of the

candidate and it ought to be so even now were the teachings and truths of Masonry known to the Craft.

105. Here, for the first time, we come into contact with the symbolism of the positive and negative sides of the body. The candidate for the First Degree is a learner only. He knows nothing of the teachings of Masonry as yet and has it all to learn. Hence the discalceation of the left foot for, as you will remember, the left foot symbolizes the receptive side of the personality. A lesson is, naturally, learned by the receptive side and is put into practice, or exemplified by the active or outgoing side. In learning a lesson we receive a certain amount of knowledge or information into ourselves. This is receptive. In putting this knowledge into practice we do so by means of our actions, words, etc. These are outgoing. They go out from us and affect others. Hence they are symbolized by the positive side.

106. It is the left or receptive side of the personality which is exalted and from which all the hindering and hampering prejudice has been removed. That is why the left foot and leg are in the condition with which every Mason is familiar.

107. After this consideration of the meaning of discalceation (or removing of the shoes) we are in a position to understand a little more concerning the oblong square. The position of the oblong square is a statement on the part of the candidate that he has been living a life as nearly upright, honest and true as he could live. It is also a statement as to his mental condition (the lower mental activities being denuded of the covering of prejudice), and we will notice, as we progress through the Degrees, that the positions of the candidate refer to his own mental status while the positions of the Great Lights indicate the demands of the Degree.

108. The candidate has come to the Masonic Lodge, and has asked to be taught concerning those "slow-acting" Laws of Nature which govern in the unseen realms, the Laws which govern the emotional

nature, the mind, etc. In order to show his fitness for this teaching he has made, symbolically, the statement that he has been trying to live an upright life in so far as he knew how, but that he is convinced of the possession by the great Mystery School of Masonry, of a deeper wisdom than he is able to attain in the outer world, and this conviction has led him to seek instruction in the Mysteries of Masonry.

109. He greatly desires to participate in this knowledge which the Institution holds since he believes that this physical life is not all there is to existence and he wants to know how to conduct himself in conformity with the Laws or Deity because in the line of conformity to such Laws lies the duty of man as well as the only possibility for ultimate happiness.

THE ALTAR

110. Before we go any further in the experiences of our friend the candidate, it would be well to get a clear and thorough idea of the meaning of the Altar. Every Mason knows that the Altar is a structure which occupies a place in approximately the center of the Masonic Lodge but the average Mason has not the slightest idea as to the real meaning of the Altar nor of the lessons which the Altar teaches.

111. An altar has, from time immemorial, carried with it the correlative ideas of a priest and a sacrifice. In the Jewish Dispensation the great brazen altar was the one on which the animals were sacrificed and their flesh burned by the sacred fire. The Jewish Dispensation was admittedly a pattern and we will remember that the animals which were sacrificed there at the brazen altar were the "clean" or domestic animals. Wild animals or "unclean" animals were not permissible as sacrifices. Only those animals could be offered which were tame, domesticated, controllable, such as sheep, lambs, oxen, etc.

112. Since everything in the Masonic Rituals is symbolic we may reasonably and logically look for the Altar to have some symbolic meaning. And since the Lodge itself symbolizes the inner man, the unseen part of each individual, it is not unreasonable to look for that symbolic meaning in the great within. What is there within each of us which could possibly correspond to the Altar on the floor of the Masonic Lodge Room?

113. We gave the key to this in Section 109. There comes a time in the life of every man when he reaches the decision that this physical life is not all there is and he greatly desires to prepare for something higher. He realizes that he is full of faults and imperfections and he wants help in overcoming and eradicating them. In other words he has set up a sort of ideal, a desire for something better and higher. It is on this ideal, if the man be honest and, of course, we are supposing that he is, it is on this ideal that he is willing to sacrifice the passions and faults and weaknesses of his being for we all recognize that, when we strive to attain to something; higher, it must be along the path of labor and sacrifice.

114. Suppose that a young man wishes to become a doctor. Will that wish make him a doctor? Assuredly not. He knows perfectly well that there must be hours and days and weeks and months and years of hard study, of toil and self-denial before he can attain that coveted diploma. That means sacrifice. No one can study hard and yet spend all his time in amusement and dissipation. If a man wishes to study he must give up something, he must sacrifice something. We use the expression all the time in our common, everyday speech. If you pick up a book and in it read the following, "John sacrificed his love for tennis and other sports upon the altar of his great desire to become a doctor," you would know exactly what it means for there is nothing mysterious about it. The great desire to become a doctor was the "Altar" on which John sacrificed certain pleasures which his lower or carnal nature craved—namely

his love for sports. He could not spend his time boating and playing tennis and billiards and still do the required amount of study necessary to become a doctor. So, upon that idealistic structure in his mind formed by his intense desire to become a doctor, he sacrificed the animals of his lower nature, his love for boating, his love for tennis and his love for other sports.

115. Similarly our candidate has erected in his mind an idealistic structure which represents his intense desire to attain spiritual growth and development and upon that idealistic structure he is taught that he must sacrifice the “animals” of his lower nature. The Altar, then, symbolizes that imaginary structure of idealism in the lower mind (remember the Altar IS between the material and the spiritual ends of the Lodge, or in the middle of the floor) on which the lower propensities, passions and desires are offered up in sacrifice to the Higher Self to be transmuted into spiritual qualities. When these lower qualities are placed upon the Altar the Divine Fire descends and consumes them but they are not really destroyed, they are transmuted into something higher. In the Jewish sacrifices the flesh of the sacrifice was rubbed with salt to typify the pain which the sacrifice of the animal was supposed to save the Jew who had brought the sacrifice to be offered.

116. The Altar is the structure of idealism on which the sacrifice is offered. The sacrifice is a quality of the lower nature which has been tamed and worked upon and domesticated until it is symbolized by one of the “clean” or domestic animals. It is then offered on this idealistic structure and changed into a spiritual quality. The salt typifies the suffering which this work and sacrifice has cost the individual. The priest symbolizes the Lower Self and all, priest, altar, sacrifice, salt, fire and everything is contained in the great within.

117. Now we are in a position to understand the philosophical reason why the candidate must form the oblong square BEFORE he can be permitted to approach the Altar. In forming the square he states that he has been living the best life he could with his limited and unscientific knowledge. But he had the desire for higher things and that is WHY he lived straight. Had he not had such a desire he would not have taken the pains to be on the square in his environment. Had his life been a life of vice and dissipation this idealistic desire would, naturally, have been absent. Hence, if he cannot form the square it is because THERE IS NO ALTAR FOR HIM TO APPROACH.

118. Manifestly, if there is no Altar for him to approach, then he cannot approach a thing which does not exist. Now you can begin to see why I made the statement, some time ago, that the forming of the oblong square is the last vestige left in our ritual of some sort of examination which either took place then or had taken place before and was symbolized then. Get this thought fixed firmly in your mind that if the candidate does not (cannot truthfully) form the angle of the oblong square then there is no Altar on the floor of the Lodge for him to approach.

119. But he does form the oblong square and this is now accepted at its face value and he is conducted to the Altar where, at this symbol of the idealistic desire in his mind, he kneels and takes his obligation.

BENDING THE KNEE

120. The LEGS are symbolic of the LOWER MENTAL ACTIVITIES. The left leg is symbolic of the receptive lower mental activities or powers and the covering of prejudice has been removed. The receptive lower mentality of the candidate is bent to the will of the Master of the Lodge (his own Higher Self).

121. Bending the knee has always been held as symbolic of submission to the will or authority of the one to whom or before whom the knee is bent. The Master of the Lodge symbolizes the Higher Self of the candidate, that Higher Self which has impelled him to seek for this wisdom and instruction and so, to the will of this Higher Self, he bends the receptive aspect of his lower mind, at the structure of idealism, imaginary if you will but none the less real, and this receptive aspect of his lower mind he has stripped of its covering of prejudice. His mind is open, ready to receive instruction, ready to be taught the great truths which he has come here to learn.

122. His body is erect. The body symbolizes the mind and the mind is erect, alert, attentive. There is no slavish submission of the mind to some one else. The Altar is his own desire for better things and he approached it of his own free will and accord. The Master is his own Higher Self and at this Altar which he himself has erected in his own inner nature he is ready to submit the desires of his Lower Self to the Will and Wisdom of his Higher Self. But he is only a candidate, only a learner. Hence it is the receptive side of his Lower Self which he bends in token of submission. He is here to learn. He has not yet had any time to put his lessons into practice, hence his right foot and his right leg are in the conditions which are familiar to every Mason.

123. Yet, the right leg is in a certain position. This is to symbolize his promise to himself, to his own Higher Self, a promise made at the Altar of his own desire for a higher and a purer life, a promise that when the teachings which he is about to receive shall flow into action they shall do so "on the square." He is promising that his future actions shall be square and right and true for the mind governs the actions and if the outgoing or active powers of his lower mind be on the square it must follow, as a matter of course, that his actions must also be on the square.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Great Lights

124. The three Great Lights of Masonry constitute one of the few symbolisms which have been explained with a considerable degree of accuracy in the existing volumes on "Masonic Symbolism" and so it will not be necessary to devote so much space to them as would otherwise have been the case. But, for the benefit of those readers who have not already made a study of the Symbolism, the meaning of these Symbols will be considered briefly.

THE HOLY BIBLE

125. This Great Light, as we might have expected, is used on the Altars of Masonry as a symbol. Everything in Masonry is symbolic and the Holy Bible symbolizes the Divine Law. If any should here object and say that it IS the Divine Law that point may well be conceded. But the use of anything as a symbol does not in the least imply a denial of the thing. It so happens that the Bible is of such shape and size that it can easily be used on the Altar "as is." Hence it is used to symbolize the Divine Law or, if you prefer to put it that way, to symbolize itself. Nevertheless, its presence on the Altar is symbolic.

126. In a Mohammedan Lodge the Koran would be used and the symbology would be just as correct. In Lodges consisting of adherents to other faiths the particular volume of the Law which they reverence would be the appropriate symbol to use. The writings of Confucius for the Chinese or the Zend-Avesta or whatever book

the members of the particular Lodge consider as sacred. That book, to them, is the Volume of the Sacred Law and so is to be used as symbolic of the great Law of God.

THE SQUARE

127. The square has always symbolized right action. But a symbol may have more than one meaning as we have seen already and so the Square, as it is an instrument used to measure and layout plane surfaces has another symbolic meaning, for the plane surface has always been taken to represent the physical world as the circle symbolizes the spiritual world.

128. So the Square, as a Great Light, symbolizes right action in the physical world or, more correctly, the world of the personality, the realms of the physical, emotional and lower mental.

THE COMPASSES

129. The Compasses are the instrument used to measure and layout a circle. The Circle symbolizes infinity and Spirit and the Compasses, when used in this connection, have the same meaning as the Square, that is, right action or right conduct in the spiritual realms, those ranges of our being which are above the personality.

130. Both the Square and the Compasses are placed upon the Bible which is to symbolize the fact that the information as to just what is right action in the lower and the higher worlds must be obtained from the Divine Law. The Square and Compasses, in their capacity as Great Lights, are based upon or founded upon the supreme Great Light, the Law or Will of God.

131. The candidate, kneeling at this symbol of his own idealism (the Altar) places his hands in a certain position and thereby states that his higher mental powers or activities on the receptive side shall always hold the Divine Law as its source of guidance and

inspiration while his higher mental powers or activities, on the active or outgoing side, shall be based upon or shall flow into action through, the Great Lights of square conduct in both the material and the spiritual phases.

132. In order that you may get a very clear idea of this, stop and consider the candidate as a dynamo generating a current of electricity. This dynamo is actuated by some force just as a real dynamo is driven by water power or by a steam engine. The dynamo has two poles, negative or receptive and positive or outgoing. So the candidate has two polarities to his being, negative and positive. He promises that the negative or receptive aspect of his being shall be guided by the Divine Law, shall, in a way, receive nothing except through (that is, what is not contrary to) the Divine Law.

133. Similarly he promises that his outgoing mental current, his thoughts and ideas and intentions, all shall flow into action through the Square and the Compasses and the Divine Law. Picture the candidate, as he kneels at the Altar, as a sort of electric machine with positive and negative poles, incoming and outgoing. Those poles are his higher mental powers, but we must remember that the thought always precedes the action and that the thoughts of the higher mind should rule the thoughts of the worldly or practical mind.

134. Now imagine a current, a thought current, flowing into the candidate through his left hand and out from him through his right hand. Do you see what those thought currents would have to pass through? This ought to give you a slight idea of the meaning of the position of the candidate at the Altar and also it shows you how the meanings already given for the various parts of the body all work out here in perfect harmony with the lessons in morality given by the great Masonic School.

135. All outgoing current from the candidate has to pass through the symbol of right action in the material world and the symbol of right action in the spiritual world and these symbols are based upon the Divine Law. In other words, he is promising that all his mental activities in the future shall pass the test of the Square and the Compasses and that his knowledge of the meanings of these Great Lights shall be drawn from the Law of God. As to his lower mental activities both active and receptive, they are symbolically represented by the legs.

136. Now, having sworn fealty to his own Higher Self at the Altar of his own idealistic longing for a better life, he begins to see the Light, that wonderful Light by which Masons work and the meaning of the three Great Lights is explained to him but he is given the curious bit of information that he can see the Great Lights only by aid of the three Lesser Lights which he is told are the Sun, Moon and Master of the Lodge. He is further told that "as the Sun rules the Day and the Moon governs the Night so should the Worshipful Master endeavor to rule and govern his Lodge with equal regularity."

137. To the candidate this means little or nothing and, unfortunately, the average member of the Craft has as little comprehension of the subject as has the candidate. Yet there is a most wonderful illumination and instruction in this symbolism so we shall examine it more closely.

138. Before we begin a critical examination of this most wonderful and dramatic lesson, however, it might be well to clarify our minds on one point. We are studying this Symbolism of Masonry for one purpose and for one purpose only, and that purpose is to find out exactly what it means. We are not attempting to change its meaning. We are not trying to read into it anything which was not originally intended to be placed there. We want to know just

exactly what the originators of these lessons intended to teach, just that and nothing more.

139. That the Masonic Symbolism, in practically the same form in which we have it today originated many centuries before the time of Christ is certain. Albert Pike, one of the greatest Masonic students who ever lived, says in *Morals and Dogma*, page 207, "It would be folly to pretend that the forms of Masonry were the same in those ages as they are now. The present name of the Order and its titles and the names of the Degrees now in use, were not then known. Even Blue Masonry cannot trace back its authentic history, with its present Degrees, further than the year 1700, if so far. But, by whatever name it was known in this or the other country, Masonry existed as it now exists, the same in spirit and at heart, not only when Solomon builded the Temple, but centuries before—before even the first colonies emigrated into southern India, Persia and Egypt from the cradle of the human race."

140. Robert Freke Gould, the great Masonic Historian, says in his *Concise History*, page 92, "If we assume the symbolism (or ceremonial) of Masonry to be older than the year 1717, there is practically no limit whatever of age that can be assigned to it." Hence, when we speak of the great antiquity of Masonry, we are not indulging in flights of the imagination. We may not be able to trace the organization back to prehistoric times—remember that it was always a secret Order and that its teachings were handed down from mouth to ear on account of the great hostility of the priesthoods to any teaching which they could not control.

141. Persecution and death by torture were frequently the lot of Masons when they were discovered to be such, not only in the times before Christ but for many centuries thereafter. Even today the antagonism of certain religious bodies is so great that only their lack of power prevents a repetition of the death penalty for

Masonic membership. Under the circumstances it is not so much of a wonder that the explanation of the Masonic Symbolism has been lost as that anything at all has survived. But, thank Heaven, it has survived to some extent, and the present volume is a humble attempt to revive some of the forgotten glory of the lost Wisdom Teaching and to infuse it into the shell of the rituals so that Masonry may once again become instinct with life, a great Power for Good in the prevailing misery of the masses of mankind.

142. But our aim is to restore—not to invent. to replace, not to substitute. So little have many brethren learned of the wonderful lessons of the Clothing that any new activity, no matter what it may be, arouses opposition and especially is this the case when they think, mistakenly of course, that the new activity involves some aspersion on their theological beliefs.

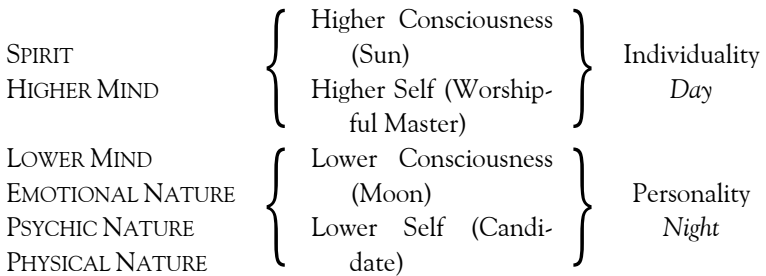
143. So let us remember that our aim is to find out what the lessons of Masonry are and were intended to be. Let us attempt to find out what were the “mysteries” hidden behind these forms of words even if, in that attempt, we are forced to admit that the ancients knew more of practical psychology than most of our advanced thinkers do at the present day.

144. In other words, Brethren, let us approach this great question in true Masonic fashion, “neither naked nor clad,” freed from the encumbering folds of hampering prejudice and dogmatic prejudging but protected by the love for truth and right and justice and purity which should ever distinguish the Masonic scholar.

145. In order to explain the exact meaning of the various items of this most peculiar statement that the Great Lights can be seen only by aid of the Lesser Lights, the following diagram is introduced. We can understand the lesson of the particular symbolism only after we have defined the terms in which it is given and, in order to understand these terms, we must understand their meaning when

employed in the ancient symbolical writings for this particular symbolic lesson in common with most of our symbolism, has come down to us, in changed language perhaps, but the same in teaching and in meaning as in ancient times.

146. DIAGRAM OF THE LESSER LIGHTS.



147. The Sun has always symbolized the Spirit or the spiritual nature in man. The Moon, probably from its association with tides and crops, has always been used to symbolize the lower or material nature or the physical world. Similarly "Day" has been used to symbolize the spiritual phases of existence and "Night" to symbolize the lower phases of existence as opposed to the spiritual. This is so obvious in its application that it is deemed unnecessary to burden this treatise with reference to authorities. The ancients, as we have already remarked, in the language of symbolism which they had developed to a considerable degree, were much more precise and exact in their symbolic reference than we are today. But, in the present treatise, it is not necessary to go into the subject of exact symbolic meanings. Should any reader be inclined to question the meanings we have assigned to "Day" and "Night" in the above it will be a good exercise for him to undertake a course of reading in symbolism, the inevitable result of which will be to convince him that the symbolic meanings we have assigned the terms in the above diagram, while not going at all deeply into the matter, are yet good, practical, working meanings which are

definite enough to serve our purpose at present and yet not so technical as to confuse the general reader.

148. Now let us revert to our cryptic phrase, “As the Sun rules the Day and the Moon governs the Night, so should the Worshipful Master endeavor to rule and govern his Lodge with equal regularity.” We will substitute our definitions and see what we have. “As the Spirit governs the spiritual realms or natures in man and as the Lower Consciousness, the reflected light of the Spirit as the light of the Moon is the reflected light of the Sun, governs the personality, so should the Higher Self endeavor to rule and govern the entire being of the man with equal regularity.”

149. We can understand how the Lower Consciousness rules the personality but as to the rule of the Spirit in the higher realms we will understand that only when we meditate on it. Take those words of St. Paul’s when he is bewailing the fact “the things that he would, he does not and the things that he would not, those he does.” This is not a literal quotation but the passage will be found in Romans 7:15. This shows that while the Spirit rules the spiritual nature and desires certain things, the reflected light of the Spirit, the Lower Consciousness, ruling in the lower nature, does not always desire the same things. St. Paul is really lamenting the fact that his Higher Self is not able to impose its will on the personality.

150. The lesson of the Greater and Lesser Lights is to the end that the Higher Self should be able to rule and govern the entire Lodge (entire being of the man) and that the Greater Lights are “seen” by the Lower Self, the waking consciousness of the man, by the aid of the Lesser Lights.

151. To “see” in this connection means to recognize and obey. If the symbolic Sun and Moon are opposed to the Great Lights or are not developed sufficiently to “see” them, then it will be impossible for the Lower Self to obey them for, to him, they will not exist.

152. If you are sitting in your room reading the Bible and your favorite dog enters, he sees the book which you are reading. He does not, however, recognize what it is except that it is something which belongs to you. He does not comprehend its nature or what it contains. The lessons in it are beyond his understanding because he cannot “see” it in the symbolic sense. Exactly similar is the case of the man whose spiritual sense is not yet awakened and whose lower consciousness is engrossed in the pleasures of the carnal and the sensual so that he does not care for the teachings contained in the Great Light. The dog might be said to have no symbolic sunlight at all and the light of his Moon is very dim. In the case of the sensualist the sunlight is dim and both it and the light of his Moon are directed away from the Great Lights, which therefore cannot be “seen” by him. It is possible, however, that the light of the Sun and the Moon of the man may, in time, be directed towards the Great Lights and they will then be “seen” by him. This is impossible, of course, with the animal.

153. So, unless we have the aid of our Lesser Lights, we cannot “see” the Great Lights of Masonry. This condition is a familiar one. The great mass of humanity at the present day is unable to “see” the Great Lights except in a very dim and partial fashion and this condition obtains because the Lesser Lights within the individual are either asleep or hostile and their light is turned away from the Great Lights which are, therefore, not recognized.

154. So the candidate is told that he “sees” the Great Lights upon the Altar of his own idealism but it is because his own Lesser Lights are awakened and are favorable or sympathetic. Let us hope for the day to come soon when all Masons will be able to “see the Great Lights” by aid of the awakened and developed Lesser Lights of their own natures.

155. We cannot be moral in any other way than that of the Divine Law for morality means obedience to the Divine Law or Law of the

Cosmos. It is very important, therefore, that our Lesser Lights be brightly burning so that we may not only “see” the Divine Law but get a correct impression from it.

156. If the Lesser Lights are hampered by prejudice it is quite possible that they may get a mistaken notion of the nature of the Great Lights and this very thing has caused untold misery to the human race in the past. Hence the Masonic Lessons of divesting one’s self of prejudice are extremely important.

157. This symbolism of the Greater and Lesser Lights is another variant of the teaching of thought control and self control which have been so prominent in the symbolism thus far. It goes into these matters a little more deeply and here, again, the Lessons show systematic progress.

158. Truly Masonry is a “System” and “Scientific” and “Progressive.” Every step which we take in these teachings only serves to bring these facts out more and more, clearly.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Apron

159. Now the Apron is given to the candidate and again there is a world of most profound teaching conveyed in the symbol. To him who understands the meaning of the Apron it is one of the most beautiful things which can be imagined and, when once learned, the lessons which it teaches flash before the mind in silent, symbolic, dramatic fashion, renewing upon the subconscious mind the beautiful teachings, those teachings which never grow old with repetition but are ever fresh and glorious and inspiring.

160. The Apron is composed of a square and a triangle. Yet the square is not quite a square, it is an “oblong square,” and the meaning of the oblong square we have already considered. The square symbolizes the physical, material nature of man, the “personality,” and it is four-sided to represent the “lower quaternary” or the fourfold lower nature (see Sections 67 and 72). This fourfold lower nature is composed of the physical, psychic, emotional and lower mental natures. The triangle, as would be guessed, symbolizes the threefold spirit.

161. The Apron is white to symbolize purity. Purity is different from innocence in that it includes the meaning of knowledge. The child is innocent and may be said to be pure also, but its purity is the purity of ignorance and inexperience, not the purity of knowledge and conscious choice. The child, though innocent and clean, has not yet been tried by temptation and its strength has not yet been developed thereby. Sometimes the most innocent child is the

one which falls the most quickly and completely when tempted. But purity has the added meaning of a knowledge of and resistance to evil.

162. White is not a primary color. It is a synthesis of all colors. It therefore symbolizes the purity which has experienced all temptations and adverse conditions and consciously prefers righteousness to unrighteousness. The lambskin symbolizes innocence because the lamb has always been considered as the most innocent of animals, so much so that it has become symbolic of innocence and also of another quality which is of great Masonic significance—*harmlessness*.

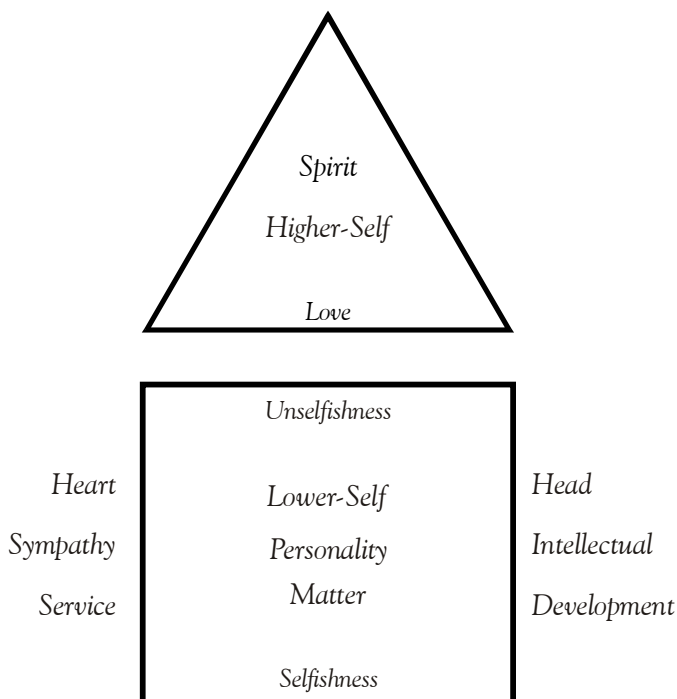
163. The white color contains all the symbolism of purity and innocence and the lambskin material symbolizes innocence and harmlessness, the refusal to give offense or to hurt another. The candidate has been taught to be as square as he can be in his relations with others, to lay aside prejudice and to listen with unbiased mind to that truth which has been handed down from the ages past. These things have been impressed upon his mind along with the various lessons of thought control and of right thought. All these lessons have been repeated again and again in different ways and now he is taught that his whole attitude towards others must be one of harmlessness as well as of justice.

164. The Apron may be divided, roughly, into two parts, the square and the triangle. The square symbolizes the lower part of human nature and the triangle symbolizes the spirit. When the triangle is folded up it signifies the fact that the spirit has not yet descended into the material there to begin the task of the redemption of the lower self and the purification of the lower natures. The folding down of the triangle over the square is to symbolize this descent of the spirit into the material and carnal. In other words, it symbolizes the fact that the young Entered Apprentice does not yet show the results of a scientific work of the spirit in the lower phases of

his being. Or it may be taken as showing that the spirit has not yet taken up its work in the redemption of the personal. The idea involved is the descent of the spirit into the "lower quaternary" to carry on there its purifying and redemptive work.

165. The square of the Apron is, as we have pointed out, not quite square and thus it symbolizes the imperfection of our lower nature, but the square also carries another symbolic instruction with it. It symbolizes or represents the proper development of human nature, and shows in dramatic form not only the attainment which we, as members of the human race must show, but the means by which we shall reach that development.

166. Herewith is a diagram of the Apron to show exactly what is meant by its various lines and proportions:



167. Beginning at the bottom line of the square we find that this symbolizes the lowest and basest of human qualities, Selfishness. Rising from this bottom line are the two side lines which symbolize the progress of development of the lower natures away from the primitive and altogether hideous passion of unadulterated selfishness. The bottom line, of course, represents “pure” selfishness, the stark, unmitigated passion. The two side lines represent the two methods of growth away from this wholly repulsive thing, but we must remember that selfishness is not conquered all at once and so the tinge and taint of it continues, growing less and less, until we finally reach the top line, the line of Unselfishness.

168. Now what do the side lines mean? Simply this, that in our development towards the great goal of spiritual enlightenment we must progress by means of two different “lines” both of which are constructive and which supplement each other. Both of these lines must be followed, not one only, if we would have our characters evenly developed. One is the line of the heart, of service to humanity through love and sympathy, and the other is the line of intellectual development. To follow one of these lines to the exclusion of the other would make the character one-sided and imperfect. The man who is intellectually developed but in whom the great throb of human suffering arouses no feeling of sympathy is very apt to develop the quality of cruelty. Even if he does not do this he leaves undeveloped and atrophied the great heart side of his being.

169. The man who progresses by means of the heart and of sympathy alone is also becoming one-sided, his heart being unbalanced by his intellect, is apt to lead him into emotional excesses and he may become a bigot in religion, one of the greatest enemies to real human progress. Both of these lines must be followed and the development must be equalized in order to have the square of our Apron properly formed. But when both lines are followed

intelligently and carefully then, in time, the top line is reached and the Mason develops the wonderful quality of unselfishness, the top line of the Apron, the line which lies next to the triangle of the Spirit.

170. The top line of the square expresses the very opposite and antithesis, as might be expected, of the bottom line. The Mason who progresses by means of service to humanity prompted by the great feeling of sympathy and balanced and kept from emotional excesses and fanatically religious cul-de-sacs or what might be called "blind alleys" up which bigotry and credulity will attempt to lead him by the accompanying development of his intellect and reason, that man is progressing in true Masonic manner, building up the square of his Apron in a scientific way, the only way which is in accord with the great Laws of the Universe.

THE TRIANGLE OF THE APRON

171. This brings us to the triangle of the Apron, the spiritual nature, the lower line of which we take as symbolic of the great quality, the spiritual quality, of LOVE. For the love which is symbolized by the bottom line of the triangle is not the carnal, passion-filled love of which we have so many evidences around us. It is the pure, spiritual love, the love of spirit for spirit which Christ emphasized in His answer to the lawyer related in Matthew 22:37 to the end of the chapter. Get out your New Testament and read this passage carefully and you will find that Christ has told us that Love is the fulfilling of the Law, that upon the Law of Love hang all the other Laws and the Prophets.

172. In other words, he who understands the Law of Love and obeys it need not bother about the rest of the commandments for he will automatically obey them all, rising above them, since all desire to break them will have left him. If this is so, and it is stated not only in the above passage but in so many other places, not only

by Christ Himself but by all the sacred writings that we may take it as true, if this is so, then it seems that a real definition of Love would be a valuable thing to have.

173. Love is the fulfilling of the Law—but what, exactly, is Love? Let us see if we cannot answer this question so as to get a real and definite idea of this most important thing.

174. The Standard Dictionary says that Love is: “A strong complex emotion or feeling causing one to appreciate, delight in and crave the presence of or possession of the object and to promote the welfare of the object; devoted affection or attachment.” Affection is defined as a “strong, tender attachment—love.” In other words, according to this definition, love is affection and affection is love.

175. Webster defines Love as: “A feeling of strong personal attachment induced by that which delights or commands admiration—by ties of kinship—ardent affection—strong liking—fondness.”

176. Both these definitions are inadequate. We are told to love humanity—but how are we going to develop a strong personal attachment induced by delight or admiration for the human race? We are told to love our neighbor—but our neighbor is, too often, unlovable. The trouble with both of the above definitions is that they are defining the word “Love” as used in its lowest and basest sense. The carnal and animalistic connotations of the word can easily be understood, but this is not what Christ meant. If He taught anything at all He taught the complete subjugation of the baser passions. He taught purity and cleanliness.

177. All the definitions of love given by the dictionaries are inadequate and unscientific. They amount to saying, “Well, you know what love is anyhow so we will just give a few partial synonyms because we have no real and exact definition. They say that love is affection and, when you turn to the word “affection” you are given the information that it is love.

178. But—if Love is as important as the Christ said that it is, then a scientific and correct definition of it will be so valuable to us that its worth in dollars and cents cannot be computed. Therefore I am going to take up some time and space to get this thing clear for if this book does nothing else than give a clear and rational and philosophic conception of the meaning of the word “Love” it would be well worth its weight in gold. This is because when we once have an exact idea of what Love is we have taken the first and greatest step towards cultivating it. The ordinary conceptions of Love make it an impossibility for us to love our neighbors (except where they are lovable and for this we get no reward in the shape of spiritual advancement for, as Christ said, “What do ye more than others?”). The definition of Love which I propose to give will not only show us exactly what it is but will also show us how to cultivate it—it will be doubly valuable. Let us approach this study in the Masonic manner, unprejudiced and open minded.

WHAT IS THE BASIS OF LOVE?

179. There are three adjectives generally used as descriptive of the Deity, OMNIPOTENT, OMNISCIENT and OMNIPRESENT. Also the term INFINITE is applied to Him. When we consider that the universe consists of molecules, atoms, ions, electrons, etc., all kept in their own proper rates of vibration, thereby differentiating the various substances of the cosmos, by some power, then we can realize that this power must be that great Power which we call God, or the Absolute, or the Grand Architect of the Universe, or The Law. It matters not by what name we call It or Him. Some great Power, Infinite, Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent keeps the universe in motion and the word “universe” includes not only the physical universe but also the finer worlds such as the mind and its great realm and the emotions and their realm. If the molecules of matter be composed of atoms and these in turn of ions which science thinks to be centers of force, then we can

realize that the various component parts of this material state of existence are made up of something belonging to a higher or finer or different world, a world which is distinctly NOT material. If this conclusion be true, then we begin to catch a glimpse of a vista of tremendous possibilities which may include the ultimate composition of matter and the resolution of the difficulty raised by the proposition of an Infinite Deity and the obvious existence of a world of matter.

180. If this statement that matter is an emanation from and is informed by the Deity and controlled by Him because actually a part of Him, is not true, then we will be forced to admit, if we are logical and reasonable, that God is not infinite nor omnipotent for there can be nothing outside of an Infinite, there cannot be an Infinite and a lot of finites, nor can there be an Omnipotent Power and any other powers, however small, which do not belong to that Omnipotence. This view of the Universe as an emanation of and as contained within the Being of the Absolute is strictly Scriptural whereas the idea of the material world as a thing apart from the Deity is distinctly unscriptural although it is the usual conception of ignorance and fanaticism.

181. To carry this discussion out logically would be very interesting but would require too much space and a volume on Masonic Symbolism is hardly the place for it. But we have mentioned it to show that when we speak of God or the Deity or the Absolute or whatever name you choose to apply to the Power behind all existence, as Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent and Infinite, we mean just that and nothing less. He is present throughout all His Universe and it is His Power which holds that Universe together for there is no other power of any kind whatsoever except His Power. There is no force, visible or invisible, which is not His force. He is present in the convolutions of the brain as well as in the great Fixed Stars and the huge nebulae of space. He knows

each thought long before it is thought in the brain and it is His Power which must carry that thought into action for all that we have of our own is our free will. He is the Doer of everything that is done. "Except the Lord build the house their labor is but vain that build it." (Ps. 127.)

182. We, as spirits, are sparks of this great Divine Flame. We are parts of Him. This is told us in many places in the Scriptures but the idea has become glossed over to a great extent and we do not realize it. Nevertheless it is true. Being parts of Him we are also parts of each other. Hence the idea of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man is not a figment of the imagination nor something which is true only with regard to those who meet the requirements of some particular school of theology. It is true of all, good, bad and indifferent. If we will lay aside our prejudice and preconceived ideas we will see at once that this **MUST** be so. We are all parts of God and children of the Heavenly Father in Whom we literally live and move and have our being and this applies to the criminal and the savage as well as to the highest type of Christian. Remember that God is **INFINITE** and there cannot be an **INFINITE** and also something else outside of that **INFINITE**. There cannot be an **INFINITE** God and even one finite man outside of and apart from Him for then there would be something else beside the **INFINITE** and that would be unthinkable.

183. We can see from this that we are all parts of God and hence parts of each other. When we injure another we injure ourselves. The Bible tells us this but, because we usually do not think very clearly, we have allowed the truth to become obscured. We should remember the Masonic Symbolism and approach such a subject as this "neither naked nor clad." Do you see the point? Are you able to free your mind from prejudice, superstition and false ideas and consider this matter logically, reasonably and clearly?

184. Now, since we are all parts of God in some way which we cannot now clearly comprehend and so call it "spiritual," and since we are, from that very fact, parts of each other and hence brothers and sisters, we can begin to see the necessity for that HARMLESSNESS we spoke of a moment ago. Also we can see this further thing, that, since the Power of God is all the power there is and since the power which we have and which we fondly and mistakenly think is our own is really God's power which we are enabled to use or allowed to use in order that we may learn and develop and grow, it follows from this that every act of ours is a use or a misuse of the power of God.

185. Recall in this connection the peculiar words of Christ "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these ye did it unto Me." Was He speaking the truth or just moralizing? Suppose that a man takes a pistol and shoots another man. If there were no trigger to the pistol it could not be shot. But, some power holds the molecules and atoms and ions of that trigger in their certain and particular rates of vibration. What is that power? The man who pulls the trigger is guilty of murder. But he has forced this great Power to work back in torsion upon Itself and to do that which is against Its nature and to harm a child of Its own. In this we can see the terrible nature of that which we usually call "sin" for it is a forcing the power of God to do that which is abhorrent to itself and yet it must submit in order that we may learn our lessons in the School of Life which are our only means of progressing in the great work of the development of character and spirit.

186. All this may seem to be a digression but it is not for, unless we have some sort of comprehension of these great facts we can have no better or more logical comprehension of the meaning of Love than the dictionary definition. It is only when we realize the spiritual unity of all mankind with God and the proper relation between that spiritual phase and the personality that we can begin to

understand the real meaning of the scientific and logical definition of the word "Love."

187. LOVE IS THE CONSCIOUS REALIZATION OF IDENTITY WITH THE OBJECT LOVED.

188. Even in the lower phases of what is commonly termed "love" we find this sense of or desire for unity, identity. The mother loves her child—because she feels that the child is a part of herself—the feeling of identity. She may adopt and grow to love a child not her own but the feeling then is like that electric current which is "induced" in a wire by the close proximity of a charged wire. It is a feeling growing out of the subconscious mind. The lover desires to possess the object of his affections again that feeling of or desire for identity. Members of a family love each other BECAUSE they are of the same family and again the feeling is based upon the idea of IDENTITY or UNITY. Notice that this family love usually weakens as the identity grows fainter. Second cousins usually do not have so strong a feeling of identity as do brothers.

189. The test of this definition will show its truth. Christ commanded that we love one another—all humanity. Now suppose that you are walking down the street and you see a cripple selling pencils out of a hat. He is dirty and ragged and his face is seamed with lines which show, not age alone but also things more pitiful, the footsteps of passions and vices. His eyes are bleared and leering. His whole personality is repulsive and disgusting.

190. Ah—there is the key! His personality. Look back at the past chapters and refresh your memory as to just exactly what the personality is and what it means. How can you love this pitiful wreck of humanity? Yet—Christ said, "LOVE." He did not tell us to love those who are beautiful and altogether pleasing to the eye. He did not tell us to love those who love us. We knew enough for that already. He did not tell us to serve and help others where that

service and help would be their own reward. No, He said something to the effect that He was sick and in prison and a stranger and poor and that in helping those who were in this condition we would be helping Him. So we come back to our pencil-seller. How are we going to cultivate a love for him?

191. By realizing that, however repellant the personality may be, there is the immortal spirit within, that spark of the Divine Flame which may, indeed, be blinded by this hideous mask of its personality but yet is, in its essence, kin to God Himself and brother to you and me. It is this spirit that we are commanded to love—not the personality. We are to help the personality and to try to relieve its suffering and its pain because of our kinship to the spirit within, but sympathy and help is all that we need show to the personality for, if we think of the spirit and its relationship to us, there will grow up for that spirit a love, a love of spirit for spirit, of spirit calling to spirit across the wilds of the material, and this love is based upon the feeling of IDENTITY. In other words, since love is based upon a realization of identity or upon a desire for identity, if we can establish the feeling of identity we have established the necessary basis and preliminary which will, of itself, bring the feeling of love. Do you see now the foundation for this wonderful love which would change and revolutionize the world if only we could come to understand that it is really the LAW OF THE UNIVERSE?

192. So, building our Aprons upward along both the lines of the intellect and of the heart, we reach the line of unselfishness and, in time, by service to our brother man and by the strong desire to be of help, we shall build that bottom line of the triangle, the Line of Love upon which all spiritual growth is based and without which there can be no such thing as real advancement.

193. When the triangle is folded up it is to signify that the spirit has not yet descended into the material to wage there its battle with the lower natures and those qualities of the lower natures which

are the Egyptians and the Babylonians in the allegorical interpretation of the Bible.

194. When the triangle is folded down it is to signify that the spirit has descended into the square of the materiality to work with the lower natures and to redeem them or rather the Lower Self from its imprisonment in matter.

195. The exigencies of necessity compel us to use linen Aprons, for the most part because they can be washed. But this does not really interfere with the symbolism. After all, linen itself is a symbol of righteousness as we see in the Book of Revelation where it is said, "Fine linen is the righteousness of saints." So the linen is really the symbol of a symbol.

196. The turning up of the right hand corner of the square of the Apron is symbolic of the work of the triangle in raising the Lower Self. It is now obsolete because Masonry is a School in which the lessons are no longer learned and the work is not done. When the time shall come that the lessons of Masonry are again studied for the beauty and the wisdom that is in them then the work of the triangle will once more be real and the corner of the square will again be lifted.

197. The great reason for our religious and philosophical differences is the fact that we do not think correctly or logically. Ask yourself the question: Is God Infinite? If you answer in the affirmative then ask yourself how there can be an Infinite and a number of finites? Remember that the word "INFINITE" means everything there is. The Infinite must include everything. How, then, can there be anything outside?

198. This teaching about the Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence of God should not be passed over lightly. Try to grasp the meaning of these words for a great deal of the Masonic Philosophy depends upon them.

CHAPTER SIX

The Working Tools

199. In considering the Working Tools of Masonry I shall take all of the tools of the first two Degrees as this will simplify the matter considerably. The Working Tools of the First Degree are the Twenty Four Inch Gauge and the Common Gavel. The Working Tools of the Second Degree are given in the Monitor as the Plumb, Square and Level. This order is incorrect and, in fact, is not the order in which they are given in all Monitors. Also one of the principal Tools of the First Degree has been arbitrarily removed, the Chisel, to the great detriment of the symbolism of the Degree and I shall consider it as one of the original Working Tools since it is still retained in the First Degree in the English Rite. In the French system the Chisel is placed upon the Trestle Board of the Second Degree as one of the Working Tools.

200. The Working Tools should be given in the order in which they would be used and to give the Chisel as a Working Tool after the presentation of the Trowel is a violation of this principle. We shall consider it in its proper order.

201. The Working Tools are given to the candidate in order that he may use them in his work upon the ashlar. The ashlar is his character or one of the qualities of his character. We must remember that the Masonic symbolism is a SYSTEM and that a system is an orderly arrangement of parts into a whole. Also we must remember that we have been told that Masonry is a Progressive Science. If these words mean anything, if they are not used

merely to fog the mind, they must mean that the teachings of Masonry are Progressive, that is, they grow continually more and more advanced. They are also systematic, that is, they depend upon one another and the various lessons are arranged into one homogeneous whole.

202. Let us now apply this knowledge. The candidate is being taught how to work upon his ashlar and the ashlar is his character. The first thing which he must do is to find out how large a block, fit for building, he can make out of his ashlar. A building block must be square cornered. The sides must be at right angles to each other, hence the various projecting corners must be knocked off or an excessive amount of cement would be required to hold the block in place in the wall. As the Cement symbolizes that love and affection which binds the brethren together it is manifest that the projecting knobs on the ashlar which symbolize the disagreeable traits of character make an undue and unnecessary demand upon the store of Cement. It requires much more effort to like the man who is essentially disagreeable than it does the man who tries to be pleasant. Therefore the man with the unpleasant traits should try to recognize them and remove them even though the removal requires some heavy blows of the Gavel.

203. So the Entered Apprentice takes his twenty four inch Gauge and measures his rough block to determine just how large a perfect block can be cut from it. The Gauge, then, symbolizes that first, rough estimate of our possibilities by means of which we direct the general trend of our activities. The Entered Apprentice measures his rough ashlar and determines what size of finished ashlar it will make—that is, he determines his general purpose in life, based upon his knowledge of his own powers and capacities, what he can make of the character with which Nature has provided him.

204. Then he takes the Gavel and begins to knock off the rough corners. Rough corners of WHAT? Why, of his character. Use

your imagination and picture yourself breaking off the rough corners of your character. What is a rough corner? It is any vice or weakness which you have and which makes your character imperfect. How do you get rid of such a vice or weakness? Not by wishing, certainly. You have to work. You have to stifle that vice or weakness, to fight against it, to throttle it. It is not easy. It is a hard task. It is well symbolized by the breaking off of the rough knobs on the stone. But how do you do it? Well you do it by the exercise of the Will Power. Is not that true? You know that wishing will not do it. You must use force. And that force must be directed by the will. Hence the common Gavel is a symbol of Will Power directed by the intelligence or spirit.

205. In the First Degree the candidate has been given certain symbolic teaching. Now he is told that he must put that teaching into practice and that it will require Will Power and Self Criticism to do it. The Gauge is a symbol of Self-Criticism, not a detailed criticism such as is given by the other tools but that first, rough estimate of the powers and capacities. The Gavel is a symbol of will power and involves pain and suffering for the ashlar, could it feel, would undoubtedly cry out in pain when its corners were knocked off by the vigorous blows of the Gavel. So the individual feels pain when he applies the Gavel to the ashlar of his character and knocks off the defects, the most prominent defects, which would unfit his ashlar for building into the wall.

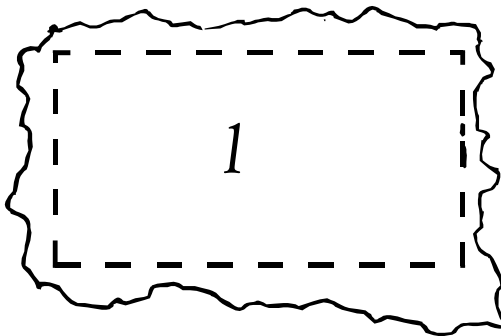
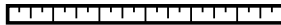
206. Then he takes the Square and determines whether the sides of the ashlar are square to each other. He has knocked off the knobs so far as he is able by the use of the Gavel and now he comes to a point where the self criticism must be much deeper and more searching. This is symbolized by the Square. The Square as a Working Tool has somewhat different meanings from the Square as a Great Light, yet there is the basic relationship of squareness and right conduct. The Square, applied to the surface of the

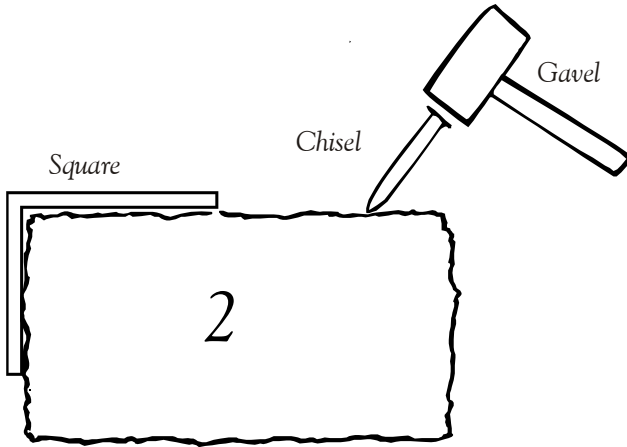
ashlar, will tell him where the bumps and hollows are, those inequalities which are not possible to be removed by the Gavel alone. So the Square, as a Working Tool, is a symbol of SELF-CRITICISM.

207. Then he takes the Gavel of Will Power and the Chisel of Corrective Training and goes to work to smooth off these rough places and inequalities which the critical Square has pointed out. The Chisel cuts and again we must imagine the ashlar endowed with feeling as its prototype, the character or personality of the candidate does feel. The Chisel is actuated by the blows of the Gavel and so it stands for those educational and corrective methods by which the workman in the School of Morality smooths out the inequalities of his character. But it also symbolizes pain and suffering for it cuts and hurts as all corrective measures do.

208. In order to make these functions of the Working Tools clear and plain it would be well to consider the following diagram which will help you to see the meanings of the different Tools:

Twenty-Four-Inch Gauge





209. Figure 1 is the rough ashlar. The dotted lines show the size of the perfect ashlar which the Apprentice has discovered, by measuring with the Twenty Four Inch Gauge, that he can make out of it. See how much of the stone has to be knocked off. The Twenty Four Inch Gauge is used to determine these dotted lines and you can see where the aspect of criticism comes in with respect to the Gauge. Figure 2 shows the ashlar after the first rough work has been done on it. Now the Apprentice, or rather the Fellow Craft, takes the Square and the Chisel as well as the Gavel.

210. There are many lessons in self-criticism given in the course of the Masonic Rituals. The twenty four inch Gauge is an emblem of self-criticism. This initial criticism is rough and is only the first estimate of the possibilities of the character. The Square denotes a much more searching criticism which must also be directed towards one's self, a criticism in which the little inequalities with which the twenty four inch Gauge did not concern itself must be taken note of and the sharp cutting edge of the Chisel applied. And back of it all there must be the force of the will power as it is symbolized by the Gavel. The Gavel must be heavy enough to do the work. A Gavel which is too light will not develop enough force to smooth anything.

211. There are two other Working Tools in the Second Degree, the Level and the Plumb. The Level serves a two-fold purpose. It may be used to some extent to criticise the ashlar just as the Square is doing in Sketch No. 2 but its principal use is to level the wall. A stone built into a course should not be above or below its fellows, it should be on the level with them. In the wall of a stone building we may conceivably imagine that the stones are not always of the same size. Some few of them may be very large yet, for the most part, they are pretty much alike. At any rate, whether the stones be larger or smaller, they must be level. The great majority being of practically the same size, the Level is used to prevent anyone stone being higher or lower than its fellows. Hence the Level is a symbol of EQUALITY and also of HUMILITY.

212. In the case of a stone which thinks that it should be placed above some other stone, the Level teaches humility. But there are some stones which are so humble and distrustful of self that they think they ought to be below their fellows. In this case the Level teaches CORRECT JUDGMENT or CORRECT OBSERVATION.

213. Then comes the Plumb. This Working Tool is in a class all by itself. The Plumb is the one absolutely perfect tool. When you tie a weight to a string you are able to find the exact perpendicular. There is no mistake due to imperfections in your instrument. The string points out absolutely, the straight way from earth to heaven. But what could that symbolize? What have we in the nature of a Plumb? The Plumb is not a cutting tool. It is a tool of Direction only. It is a tool of Guidance. It is let down from above. It tells you how to build your wall. so that it will not fall over from its own weight. It does not cut the ashlar or even criticise it. It is primarily a tool of advice.

214. Also IT IS LET DOWN FROM ABOVE. This is a very important feature. All the other tools you have picked up and used but the Plumb is a method of direction in the building of the wall and it is

let down from above. We have something which answers all these qualifications and it is the only thing which does answer them. It is the Divine Law.

215. The Divine Law is a direction for building the wall straight up from earth towards the heavens. It is absolutely perfect in the way which it points out. It is let down from above—that is—it is not of strictly human origin and it is not a thing which works on your character directly—you have to do that work yourself. The Divine Law merely shows you how to work and in what direction to work. That is, it is an advisory tool.

216. So the Fellow Craft comes first into contact with the spiritual when he has handed to him the Plumb, symbol of the Law of God which, if followed, will point out to him the way from earth to heaven.

217. If you will review in your mind the meanings of all the symbols from the very beginning of the First Degree up to as far as we have gone, you will see that through it all one single Purpose runs. You will see that it is no haphazard aggregation of unrelated symbols which are put there merely to give some one a knob on which to hang a sermon. They are all correlated parts of one beautiful whole—a teaching so wonderful and so beautiful that it is hard to find language in which to express our feelings when we first obtain a glimpse of the Great Purpose which runs through all the Rituals like a Golden Thread.

218. Here are a few more definitions:

TWENTY-FOUR INCH GAUGE—Self Estimate.

GAVEL.—Will Power.

SQUARE (as a Working Tool)—Self Criticism.

CHISEL—Self Culture and the suffering incidental to the acquiring of Self Control.

LEVEL.—Equality, Humility, Correct Judgment.

PLUMB.—Spiritual Law, Law of God.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Metals

219. We must now go back and pick up the thread of our exposition which we interrupted, somewhat, by jumping ahead and giving the meanings of the Working Tools of the Fellow Craft Degree. There comes a time when the candidate in the First Degree, being required to deposit something of a metallic kind finds himself divested of all metals and this is explained to him as meaning certain things. This explanation, however, while very beautiful, does not bring out the real symbolic meaning of the condition.

220. The Masonic Rituals are a systematic course of instruction in Moral Science or the Science of Right Living in accord with the great Cosmic Laws, the Laws of God. These lessons are given to the unseen man, the intelligence or mind of the candidate and also the lessons are repeated to those who, having themselves gone through the initiations long before, are watching from the sidelines. We must remember that, no matter how many years earlier it may have been that they took their own initiations, the candidate is, symbolically, representing each one of them in his contact with the great Laws of Nature.

221. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to suppose that some sort of lesson is concealed in this lack of metals, some lesson applicable to all men alike and not merely to the candidate. The entire symbolism of Masonry is a progressive series of instructions with regard to those "slow-acting" Laws of Nature which we ought to know for our own guidance and yet which are very difficult to learn through

observation. The formal explanation of the lack of metals does not go into the matter from this standpoint at all and hence, logically, it must be a superficial explanation.

222. Metals have always been employed as symbolic of various qualities, usually mental. The more precious metals, such as gold and silver, typify the higher qualities while the so-called lower metals typify lower Qualities. Thus gold is a symbol of spiritual qualities or wisdom. It would be an easy matter to pick out many passages from Scripture and also from the ancient mythology to prove this statement but the fact is so obvious that it is not necessary to do so. The metals are used, symbolically, even to the present day and we frequently hear some one spoken of as "brazen," or some one else is described as having a character like "steel." We speak of an "iron constitution," a heart "of gold," etc. In ancient times the symbolic meanings of the metals were somewhat more detailed than they are today but we still use the names of the metals to typify certain qualities.

223. Metals are obtained at the expense of considerable labor. Usually they have to be dug out of the rock and smelted. Gold must be "tried in the fire." Rocks are a part of the earth and the earth, the ground, has always been used to symbolize the lower natures. Metals are obtained by means of labor in the earth. Qualities of the mind or of the lower nature are obtained by means of the labor performed by the spirit or the consciousness in the lower nature.

224. Such qualities as self-control, courage, concentration, persistence, generosity and a thousand others all have to be developed by hard work and the "smelting" of the rocky material of the lower nature. The analogy is perfect, so perfect that the meaning is really obvious.

225. But—we must remember that the Entered Apprentice is only just taking his first initiation, his first lesson. Presumably he has been living an ordinary, worldly life before this, a square life as nearly as he knew how to make it square, but still “oblong.” Now he is being taught the Science of Right Living in accordance with the great Laws of Nature. But he has not yet had time to put that knowledge into practice. Hence he has not yet had time to work in a scientific manner in his lower nature for he has not known those great “slow-acting” Laws which govern the development of character and the growth of mental and spiritual qualities, the symbolic metals. So it cannot be expected of him that he will have developed any of those “Qualities” which can be appropriately symbolized by the various metals.

226. That is why the Entered Apprentice is without metals. It is to teach him that the really valuable qualities of mind and spirit and character are not obtained by the haphazard life which the ordinary uninstructed man lives. Development of mind and spirit require knowledge and this knowledge he has been taught, in part, in this Degree, but as he has not yet had a chance to put this knowledge into practice it is not to be expected that he can show the mental and spiritual “qualities” which alone can be developed or “smelted” or “mined” from the earth and rock of the lower natures, the personality, by the scientific training of the School into whose Mysteries he has just begun his study.

227. This lesson is equally valuable to the Mason who has been in the Order for a long time and who has watched the Rituals gone through with time and again until he knows them all by heart. The lesson is strictly in accordance with the rest of the symbolism and is still further proof of the fact that the lessons of Masonry are progressive and also scientific.

THE SECOND DEGREE

228. In the Second Degree the arrangement of the Clothing is altered. Remembering the meaning of the Clothing as those mental concepts which surround the mind, prejudice, preconceived opinion, hostility to any new ideas merely because they are new, as the clothing surrounds the body, and prevent that mind from receiving or "contacting" truth as the clothing prevents the body from "contacting" exterior objects. Remembering, also, that the right side is positive, active, outgoing, while the left side is negative, receptive and incoming just as the poles of a dynamo are active and passive, positive and negative, we are ready to consider the altered symbolism of the Degree.

229. We remember, also, that the shoes are the body, the feet are the personality and the legs are the lower mental activities. In the First Degree the candidate was a learner only. Hence, very appropriately, the receptive side of his personality was bare (left foot) and the receptive side of his lower mental activities (left leg). In the Second Degree the condition of his right foot shows that the exaltation of the personality is on the positive side, the outgoing side.

230. In ancient days there was a considerable lapse of time, some years usually, between the Degrees which were then given to a candidate and hence there was abundant opportunity for the candidate to put into practice the lessons taught to him in the Mystery School. At the present day one Degree follows fast upon the heels of another and, as the candidate never knew what the moral lessons were nor even that they existed any more than did his initiators, it is easy to comprehend that this change in sides, from left to right, holds but a scanty meaning. But in ancient times the candidate came to a Mystery School really to learn something and, when he had been taught that thing, he was expected to put his lessons into practice and if he did not there was no following Degree in his case.

231. So, while this change from side to side in the symbolism is now no more than theoretical we must realize that formerly it was full of genuine meaning. The discarding of the right shoe symbolizes that exaltation of spirit, that lifting out of the body which accompanies the approach to any very sacred or holy place and is, this time, on the active and outgoing side. The candidate is now hoping to show the brethren that he has profited by his former lessons, that he has actually been living his life in accordance with the scientific instruction which they gave him on the occasion of his first initiation and so it is appropriately the active, positive side of his personality which is exalted and elevated above carnal affairs.

232. Now it is the active aspect of the lower mental activities (legs) which is bent at the Altar to the will of the Higher Self and the position of the left hand and arm, a position familiar to all Masons, symbolizes the determination to receive in the entire mind only that teaching which is square and to make the higher and lower mental activities (arms and legs) on the receptive side, square and right and true.

233. The position of the right hand at the Altar in this Degree symbolizes the fact that the higher mental activities on the outgoing side (right hand and arm) shall flow into action through the Divine Law (Holy Bible), that is, that they will be guided by the precepts of the Divine Law while the lower mental activities on the positive side (right leg) are bent to the will of the Master of the Lodge or the Higher Self of the candidate.

234. Again the square must be formed before the Altar can be approached but there is a slight difference in the square, this time, although it is still an oblong or imperfect square. The right foot now takes the prominent position signifying that the candidate has been putting into practice the lessons learned. If the Masonic student will once get the basic meaning of the right and left sides, positive and negative, and the meanings of the various parts of the

body firmly fixed in his mind he will then see the principle which runs through all the changes and alterations of the candidate's positions on the floor of the Lodge. The reason for them all will be clear and plain. In this square which has to be formed before the Altar can be approached, for instance. It was appropriate that, in the First Degree, the negative or receptive side of the personality should be made prominent, because the candidate is a learner only. In the Second Degree, which is supposed to be some years after the reception of the First Degree, the candidate has had ample time, not only to put the lessons in scientific morality into practice but to have effected considerable changes in his character itself. Hence the putting of the positive or active side of the personality into prominence is not unreasonable.

235. The position of the Apron is altered to symbolize the fact that the spirit (triangle of the Apron) has now, by means of the instruction in the moral law given to the candidate in the First Degree and upon which he has been conducting his life, extended its influence down into the square of the lower nature and is working there in a conscious and scientific manner to redeem that lower nature or rather the Lower Self, from its bondage to the material and the carnal.

236. The Masonic student should note with care the progressive nature of the clothing and of the shoes, the progressive nature of the positions of the candidate at the Altar and the progressive nature of the relative positions of the Great Lights. Owing to obvious reasons it is impossible to write all these things out as plainly as one could wish. But since you, who read these lines, have not only gone through the Degrees yourself but have watched perhaps hundreds of candidates go through them as well, you should have so vivid a memory of the rituals that you can easily understand that which is "written between the lines."

237. So it should be an easy matter for you to remember the positions of the candidate at the Altar in the First Degree and in the Second Degree. First get this matter clear in your mind. Then apply your knowledge of the symbolic meanings of the shoes, feet, arms and legs. Remember that to bend the knee means to submit that side of the lower mental activities to the will of the Higher Self. To put the knee in the form of a square means that that side of the lower mental activities shall be ruled by the square, shall flow into action on the Square or that all incoming or outgoing mentalizations, thoughts, etc., shall be square (clean and honest). It means that nothing will be allowed to enter the mind except that which is square and honest and true.

238. The student will doubtless notice, in these pages, the continual repetition of the teaching of thought control, guarding of the thoughts, keeping the thoughts pure and clean which occur in the course of the Masonic Rituals. Control of thought and control of actions, and the control of them in accordance with the teachings of the Divine Law, these things are emphasized so often in the various Degrees that the Rituals seem to be one continuous series of admonitions as to thought control. Yet, when we recall the statements of Solomon and of Christ, who can say that these lessons are overemphasized? Is not lack of thought control what is the matter with the world today?

239. We must always keep in mind the fact that these dramatic lessons, these symbolic instructions in thought control and in moral conduct, have come down to us from a time long antedating the Christian Era. They have come down from a time so ancient that no man can point to their origin and say, "Before such and such a time they were not." Also that our sole aim is to find out what the various items of the Rituals mean. Whether the lessons contained in the symbolisms be of ancient or comparatively modern origin they are nevertheless not understood by the Craft at

the present day and our work is to find out their meaning so that our presentation of the rituals will be intelligent.

240. This regular and systematic teaching proves itself. If you have followed closely the explanations so far given and if you have supplemented them with any independent study of your own, you must be entirely satisfied in your own mind that they constitute the correct explanation of the meaning of the Masonic Rituals, that meaning which has, up to the present time, been looked upon as an unsolved and perhaps unsolvable enigma. But the meaning of the clothing, for instance, is simple and plain. Is it not the same meaning as that used in the Scriptures when speaking of the "Armor of God?" Armor is that which surrounds the body just as clothing does. Armor has a more aggressive allusion than has mere clothing, but when we are told to put on the armor of God no one is so stupid as to think that real, physical armor is meant. No, we are to put around the mind a something which will protect it from the harmful vibrations of evil thoughts just as armor protects the body from weapons.

241. What is the "breastplate of righteousness," the "helmet of salvation," if not something in the nature of prejudice which is to be placed around the mind? Remember that there may be a prejudice in favor of truth just as there is a prejudice against truth. When we speak of the "Breastplate of righteousness" as being a form of prejudice we mean just that very thing, only the prejudice is in favor of righteousness and truth.

THE WINDING STAIRS

242. One of the most beautiful and impressive symbols used in the Second Degree is that of the Winding Stairs with its three, five and seven steps and the payment of the Wages in the room corresponding to the Middle Chamber and the question has often arisen in the minds of candidate and lecturer alike as to the meaning of

these terms and symbols. What is the Winding Stair and why does it wind and why is it composed of three, five and seven steps and what are the wages and why are they paid at the top of the Stair?

243. We have succeeded in asking a number of very pertinent questions in the preceding paragraph. Let us see whether we can be as successful in answering them, for they all can be answered, without a doubt.

244. Let us ask another question, first. What are we trying to do? Why, you say in some surprise, we are trying to find out the meanings which lay in the minds of the originators of the Masonic Symbolism. Quite so. That is very true. Please do not forget it. We are trying to find out the meanings which lay in the minds of the originators of the Masonic Symbolisms as the reasons why they instituted these symbolic lessons. Let us remember this point very carefully and also the further fact that all these symbols date back to a period far anterior to the time of Christ.

245. It is very important to realize this for every now and then some enthusiastic but ignorant brother tries to couple up the Masonic Symbolism with Christianity. This is a great mistake and arises from the ignorant assumption that nothing can be moral which is not of Christian origin. If the reader will turn back to Sections 139 and 140 he will see that Masonry, the real Masonry, the symbolic teachings, hid their origin not only before the time of Christ but even before the time of Moses, before Abraham, before there was a Jewish people. Therefore, if we are honest, let us try to find out what the symbols really mean, not try to distort them under the tricky and untruthful plea that they are of Christian origin. If we are looking for facts then let us try to recognize facts when we meet them. If we are looking for fiction only, then let us use our imaginations more freely.

246. The meaning of the Winding Stair is perfectly plain to any man who is honestly looking for the meaning. Even though the Winding Stair is mentioned in the Old Testament as a feature of the Temple we must realize that it was probably symbolic and was borrowed from the surrounding nations just as the two Pillars on the Porch were borrowed. The Pillars on the Porch were a feature in Egyptian temples and in the temples of the so-called "Pagan" nations long before Solomon borrowed the idea of so ornamenting his Temple.

247. The ancients had, firmly embedded in their beliefs, the teaching of Rebirth, the continued coming back of the spirit into incarnation in repeated physical lives, each of which showed a slight advance on the status of preceding lives just as the child is, each day in school, slightly in advance of the preceding days. There was the further teaching that the spirit, during the interim between physical embodiments, progressed through the two higher worlds and then came back into the physical again as a babe. With the philosophical aspect of the truth or falsity of this idea we have nothing to do but we do insist that, if the student really wants to know what the symbols mean—that is, what the originators of the symbols meant them to convey—he must try to find out what those originators really thought. We do know that the belief in Rebirth was widespread in the early days and is becoming more and more so at the present day. With its truth or falsity we have naught to do but the fact of its existence we must admit if we are really in search of truth—truth in this instance being the ideas in the minds of the originators of the Symbolism.

248. We want to find out what the originators of the symbolism intended the symbols to show. We are not interested in whether the ideas and beliefs thus shown are true or false. So far as the symbolism relates to thought control and aligns itself with the teachings of the Christ we believe that it has a deep and far

reaching value. But if we are really searchers after truth we will not discard an explanation merely because it involves some things which we do not ourselves believe.

249. The ancients believed that the individual spirit incarnated (was born in the physical world), lived a life and then passed out of the physical world into a less material stage of existence where the results of the experiences here were worked and amalgamated into the spirit which then, after a period of rest, came back and was reborn again. Thus the spirit developed or evolved, growing in character and powers and capacities as these were trained and fostered by its experiences in the physical world.

250. They pictured this continuous journey of the spirit as a spiral which goes round and round while at the same time slowly ascending. We do not need to incorporate this into our own belief. We know that the Rite of Circumambulation is the last remnant of some sort of Sun worship of ancient times. But we do not therefore have to become sun worshippers ourselves even though we still retain the circumambulation in our rituals.

251. So the Winding Stairs are a symbol of the winding path of spiritual development as pictured and believed by the ancients and the three steps symbolize the three worlds through which the ancient philosophers considered the spirit to be progressing while the five steps allude to or symbolize the five senses by means of which we make progress or learn our lessons in the physical world and their counterparts (spiritual senses) by which the spirit contacts the higher worlds. The seven steps symbolize the seven sub worlds into which the ancients believed each of the three worlds was divided.

252. Such is the meaning of the Winding Stairs and the three, five and seven steps. It is a very pretty symbology when we understand what the ancient philosophers held as their beliefs. We may alter

the symbology to suit ourselves if we choose to do so but the modern ideas which have been advanced to explain the symbology of the Winding Stairs are very weak and futile and are really explanations which do not explain.

253. The Wages, the corn, wine and oil, are symbolic of the results in spiritual or mental qualities of work done by the spirit in the lower natures. Let us see how this works out. Corn is the result of work performed on the ground, seeding, cultivating, harvesting, etc. The ground, as has already been pointed out, symbolizes the lower natures, the personality, and so corn symbolizes the result in developed qualities of work done in the lower natures. Note that corn grows above the ground and so we would expect the qualities represented by corn to be higher than the ground. In other words, they are mental qualities. Wine is a symbol of wisdom, usually spiritual wisdom, and is so used in the ancient symbolic writings. It is used in this sense in the Bible and also in such writings as the Rubaiyat. It symbolizes the wisdom which the soul (candidate) will develop as a result of his labors in the direction of a scientific morality, controlling and dominating and bringing under subjection his lower or animalistic nature. Oil was used as a symbol of love. This was the common symbolic meaning of oil in the symbolic writings despite the often quoted passage which speaks of the "oil of joy." This really means "the oil which brings joy."

254. The student will note that it is compulsory that the Wages be paid at the top of the Stairs for the results of labor are not observable until after the labor is done, wages are not paid until the work is finished. The work in this instance is symbolized by the development gained by the spirit in its laborious ascent of the three, five and seven steps of the Winding Stairs which represent the work in the lower natures.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Third Degree

255. In the Third and last Degree of Ancient Craft Masonry the meaning of the shoes, the feet, the legs, the arms, the hands and the clothing are all the same as before. The difference lies in the different arrangement which the Mason will at once remember. Now the square formed before the Altar can be approached must be a perfect square. Remember that several years are supposed to have elapsed since the Second Degree and the candidate has been coached and taught and helped and advised and it is taken for granted that he has learned his lessons, the lessons in scientific morality which have been taught to him in the previous Degrees. Now he comes, so awed by the sublimity of the mysteries which he is approaching that his exaltation above the physical is complete and hence both aspects of his personality are bare (feet).

256. Now the submission to the will of the Higher Self must be complete and it will be noted that the demands of the Degree, shown by the relative positions of the Great Lights, indicate the requirement of complete subjugation of the material by the spiritual. The Compasses are entirely above the Square although both are still, as before, founded upon the Divine Law. Both the positive and negative aspects of the lower mental powers are freed from the hampering garments of prejudice and dogma. Both the positive and negative aspects of the higher mental powers are posited upon the Great Lights.

257. The first Section of this Degree teaches the requirements of perfect obedience to the lessons of the Divine Law and to the scientific teaching given in the Degrees. The “oblong square” is no longer tolerated for the candidate is now about to become a Master Mason, a Master Builder of the Temple of the Spirit.

THE TROWEL

258. The Working Tools of the Master Mason are all the implements of Masonry indiscriminately but more especially the Trowel. The Trowel is the most wonderful of all the Working Tools and teaches the lesson of service to humanity as well as repeating the lesson of Love taught by the Apron and which we considered in Sections 171 to 191. The Trowel is the instrument by which the Cement is spread and it is the Cement which binds ashlar to ashlar in the great wall of the Temple of Humanity. The Ritual itself tells us what the Cement means, Brotherly Love and Affection, but its meaning would be obvious even without this explanation.

259. The Cement binds the ashlars together and the ashlars are the stones from which the walls are built. The ashlars represent the individual human beings. What is it that binds them together but Love? Only that Love must be known, and it can be known only as it expresses itself and shows itself in service. So the Trowel symbolizes SERVICE. The Cement is the Love that binds the ashlars together. The Trowel is the Tool which spreads the Cement. Service to humanity is the means whereby the real Love, the spiritual Love, is spread.

REVIEW

260. If the reader will now go back in thought over the ground which we have so far covered and watch, in memory, the candidate go through the rituals and exemplify the symbolism, he cannot help

but be struck with the systematic way in which the symbolic drama teaches the candidate in ever progressing and developing lessons and symbols the scientific manner of complying with the demands of the great Laws of the Universe. And now he has come, in the last and highest Degree, overcome with awe at the near approach to that final, great enlightenment which will soon be his and prepared by the life which he has been living in close conformity to the teachings already given, to form, symbolically but truly, upon the floor which typifies the little world in which he lives, that perfect square, no longer distorted nor oblong, which shows the wonderful result of the Masonic Teachings and of the Light which Masonry throws upon the dark and winding paths of life.

261. It is true that in the beautiful rituals and symbolism of Masonry sometimes the little things contain lessons no less important and no less necessary for us to know than those held by the more prominent and more emphatic symbols. So it is with the Apron in the Third Degree. In a few short phrases the candidate is told the manner in which a Master Mason should wear his Apron and then there is added the statement, apparently a casual statement, that this custom has become obsolete and never again is any mention made of this really most important thing.

262. For in this Degree the lower corner of the Apron is turned up, but only for a moment and, when we remember that the square of the Apron symbolizes the personality, the more material part of man and that the triangle represents the spirit which has come down into the material nature there to wage its battle against the forces of the carnal in man and against the lusts and passions of the lower natures, so we can easily see that the turning up of the corner is to denote the partial success of the spirit in its work, which is an earnest of the glorious future. But, alas! The lessons of Masonry are no longer understood and the symbolism and the allegories and the rituals are but so many words of a curious and

unknown meaning, so many actions traditional but unexplained, and so the lessons are not learned and the work is not done and the turning up of the lower corner of the Apron has become obsolete in fact as well as in symbol and the Apron is worn by the Master Mason in the same manner as that in which it is worn by the Fellow Craft.

263. Some day, perhaps, that custom will be revived when Masonry comes to realize the magnificent beauty of its lessons and when those lessons, through the constant repetition of the symbolism shall have sunk down into the subconscious minds of the Masons who watch the rituals and have there become a part and parcel of their consciousness so that they are, in time, incorporated into the character itself. Some day the custom shall be no longer obsolete, but now that little passage in the ritual stands there to shame the members of the Craft and, every time they hear those words said and every time that they see that up raised corner of the Apron dropped again, there should arise a prayer in every heart that the day may soon come when every Master Mason shall deserve to wear his Apron with the corner turned up to distinguish him as indeed and rightfully an Overseer and Master of the Work.

264. Well does the Master know the trials which the candidate must still endure and the assaults which the ruffianly qualities of the lower nature will make again and again against the integrity of his high purpose and so, to help him in the struggle, the last and most beautiful Working Tool is given him together with the lesson of its use and purpose, that lesson which embodies the teaching that will enable him to lay up in the heavens the Golden Treasure of the Spirit, that Treasure which the Christ so strongly emphasized and whose importance He so clearly pointed out. For the ashlar which are built into the walls of the Temple are the souls and minds of men and the cement which binds them together and holds them in one great solid and substantial building is that Love

which, by the use of the Trowel of good deeds and loving-kindness and of service to humanity he spreads with all the skill of the Master Mason, thereby binding himself to others and others to himself with the bonds of that Cement of Love which is at once the Law and the fulfilling of the Law.

265. For Love is the CONSCIOUS REALIZATION OF UNITY OR IDENTITY WITH THE OBJECT LOVED and, when once this high degree is reached, the candidate has begun to realize the unity of all men in the spirit and the glorious truth of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man in the Spirit, and so there is implanted within his heart the first dim perception of that stupendous truth which, as he ponders it and meditates upon it, will show him the possibility of cultivating that great love despite the often hideous masks of personality in which the blinded and almost unconscious spirit is encased, that love of spirit for spirit which is the Love of which the Master spoke and which is the Love that He taught is the fulfilling of the Law. For, as all spirit is one, so the various sparks of that great Universal Spirit Whom we reverence and adore as God and which sparks are the brothers and sisters who compose the multitudes of humanity are one, and so he learns that in loving them, not with the carnal love of matter for matter but with the pure love of spirit for spirit, he is loving his brother, his Maker and himself.

266. The lesson of the Trowel is, perhaps, the most profound in all Masonry as it is the most important. All the other lessons have been leading up to this one glorious teaching, this teaching of the unity of one with all. To live the life as symbolized by the Trowel is to live the life which Christ commanded and it is, as He has told us, the "fulfilling of the Law." He who learns the lesson of the Trowel is no longer concerned with the other lessons of the Symbolism as he who learns the Law and obeys the Law rises above the Law and becomes a citizen of those supernal regions where law and

the penalties of law are but a memory. For he is a Law unto himself and that one Law is the Law of Love and Love is the moving power of the Universe for it is of the very Nature of God.

267. Yet we are told that the Working Tools of the Third Degree are all the implements of Masonry indiscriminately, and that is true, for not at once do we learn the transcendent lesson of the Trowel. It must be studied and pondered and thought over for long and long before we can reach the point where it will become the dominating and impelling power in our lives. And so all the Working Tools of Masonry belong to the Master Mason, the Tools of Self-Criticism, the Tools of Education and the Eradication of Faults, the Tools which teach Humility and Industry and all the other lessons which have been taught to you as you went through the Degrees. These you must use and re-use until you become proficient and adept in the work for we must remember that the Mason is always going through the Chairs and, in the Lodge of his own inner nature, he may not only be occupying all the chairs at once but he is also the candidate as well.

268. And then, when he has been given this apparently simple but really tremendous implement, the Trowel, the candidate is finished with the first course of lessons. The lessons of the clothing and of the shoes, the lessons of the control of mind and life and action, the Working Tools by which he is to mould his life and character, all these have been given to him. Yet he is not through with his instruction. He has been taught the Operative part of Speculative Masonry, but there yet remains another series of lessons, lessons so deep and so profound, so wise and so comprehensive that but few are ready to consider them in the proper light in which they were first devised. The first course of lessons gives him instruction in the great Moral Laws which govern human growth. The next instruction gives him a sort of bird's-eye view of the course of human development and shows him the Purpose of the great

Scheme, the Goal towards which he is working, the Plan upon the Trestleboard.

269. Fortunately, that Hermetic axiom, "As above, so below," is so wonderfully true that it runs through all Nature and human experience. So the lessons of the Third Degree, those lessons which follow after the teaching of the Trowel, are true in more than one sense and, although we may not be ready mentally or spiritually for the deeper meaning, the less profound meaning is still true and it is also replete with wisdom and instruction which will help us on the upward Path that lies before us.

CHAPTER NINE

The Method of Teaching—The Subjective Mind

270. Masonry is, as we have seen, a School of Morality whose lessons are veiled in Allegory and illustrated by Symbols. It has puzzled many to understand how and when and where this teaching is done, for a School certainly presupposes teaching. Who does this teaching? To understand this we must know something of the Science of Psychology. Of course we can easily understand that, when the candidate goes through the Rituals, there should be given to him some sort of explanation of just what those Rituals mean. This is not done for the reason that Masonry has lost this explanation, but, in ancient times, it was done.

271. If you will take down any good book on Psychology and read the chapter on the Subjective Mind you will find that it is that great, unseen part of us, nine-tenths of the mind, so some authorities claim, which takes care of the involuntary functions of the body and which largely governs our lives and actions. There is a great deal of controversy over what the subjective mind is and there seems to be but little chance that the question will ever be settled, but we can get a good working idea of it by finding out some of the things that it does. These things any text book on Psychology will go into at length and it is too extensive a subject to take up in this present volume. But we will just point out that, to a large extent, the subjective mind is said to be the character. It is influenced by suggestion and repetition. Repetition is its keynote. Repeat a statement often enough to your subjective mind and you

will find yourself coming to accept that statement as true and, when the time comes for action, the subjective mind will send up to the conscious mind or to the nervous system, some message whose nature will be based upon the suggestions which you have industriously been sending down into it. Thus repeated suggestions of stealing will, in time, crystallize into some sudden, actual deed of theft. Repeated suggestions of doing an act of kindness will also crystallize into the actual deed.

272. That is why the nursing of a “grouch” is so very harmful. It tinges the whole atmosphere of the subjective mind with the bad, grouchy vibrations. We use the word “vibrations” because there really is not another word which describes the condition. Whether what we call “vibrations” are really vibrations or not does not really matter so long as the meaning is grasped. Now these repeated suggestions, of whatever nature they may be, act upon the subjective mind and seem to increase the vibrations in it which are of their own nature until, finally, those vibrations grow so strong that they flash into action before the conscious will can take control of the situation.

273. The Masonic Rituals of the Three Degrees were designed to have this exact effect. The silent lessons of the Lodge Room and the platforms and the steps, the dramatic teaching of the clothing and all the other symbolisms produce suggestive effects upon the subjective mind when that mind has once come to understand the meaning of the symbols. Of course, when the meaning of the clothing, for instance, is not known, the suggestion which should be made upon the subjective mind is lost. So it is with all the other lessons of the Masonic symbology. Unless the meaning is first explained and made clear, there can be no suggestion handed down into the subjective mind for the latter to work on and incorporate into itself. That is why the clear understanding of the Rituals is of such extreme importance to Masonry, for, when the

symbolism is understood, then each initiation repeats and renews the impressions and suggestions made upon the subjective mind until these crystallize into character.

274. As we have stated and as you will find it confirmed by any competent text book on Psychology, the subjective mind is affected by suggestion and the depth and power of the effect is measured by the frequency and force of the suggestion. In other words, the two great agents in building up the subjective mind are Suggestion and Repetition. The Masonic Rituals afford constant repetition of the most beautiful and dramatic lessons in Moral Science—provided—and this must be understood well, provided the Mason watching them knows what the symbolism means. If he does not know he gets no lessons. This would seem to be so self-evident that it needs no more than the mere statement. But it follows from this that where the meaning of the symbolism is not known the great work that Masonry could do and ought to do is wasted. Think this over carefully and see if it is not correct. Where the meaning of the symbolism is not known Masonry is but little more than a mere fraternal organization and her transcendently beautiful, dramatic lessons, are almost if not entirely wasted.

MASONIC WORK

275. But, when the meanings of the symbols and the Rituals are known then the repetition of the moral lessons involved takes place in the subjective minds of all those who understand the meanings of the symbols and this constitutes "Masonic Work," this constant training and building up of the subjective mind by an UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPLATION OF THE RITUAL. Note that the mere contemplation of the Rituals is not enough. The contemplation must be an Understanding one. The Mason on the side lines must understand what he sees or it cannot produce any impression which could sink down into his subjective mind there to add itself

to other previous and similar impressions and so become a part of his character.

MASONIC LIGHT

276. But when the Mason has received Masonic Light, that is, when the meanings of the Rituals and the Symbols have been disclosed to him so that he is able to translate the actions and the words of the initiation into those real teachings which affect himself, when he is able to look at the arrangement of the clothing and comprehend the symbolic meaning involved in whatever that arrangement may happen to be, then he is in possession of that Masonic Light by which Masons work and then and not until then, he is able to do this real Masonic Work, the changing and alteration of his subjective mind by the understanding and intelligent repetition of the teachings.

277. What a beautiful idea this is, the dramatic presentation of these lessons in the Moral Laws! By thus presenting them they never grow stale nor tiresome. Were they spoken in some form of words or in a sort of sermon they would inevitably become a bore. Masons would weary of the infliction. But acted out, dramatically presented before the eyes and appealing to the sense of the artistic, they have a power and a cumulative force which Masons themselves do not dream of. When once Masonic Light shall enable Masons to apply themselves intelligently to the Masonic Work, the world will soon perceive that something beautiful and grand has happened and into the sobbing moan of pain which now humanity is uttering there will creep a note of hope for better things.

278. No sermons, no wearisome speeches, no goody-goody, namby-pamby mouthings of sentimental moralists but the Great Law acted out in symbols and in allegories. God speed the day when every Mason, everywhere, shall know the meanings of the Rituals. The constant repetition of the lessons on the subjective mind will have

a tremendous effect even though a man were hostile to morality and unwilling to be taught. This is, of course, unthinkable. Masons enter Masonry of their own free will and accord, but if these dramatic presentations of the symbols would have an effect when the mind of the spectator is hostile, how immeasurably greater must be the effect when the mind is friendly and favorable. It only needs that the rank and file of Masonry be taught the meanings. Give them Light and yet more light and soon Masonry will come into her own, soon the great fraternity will stir itself as life returns once more to the shells and husks of the Rituals and Masons will take their rightful place as the advance guard of human evolution, the leaders of humanity.

279. From the foregoing one may see how vitally necessary it is to the Mason on the side lines and also to the candidate that the ritualistic work be well done. It is the custom of many writers to sneer at the "parrot like" perfection which many Lodges seek to attain, but, as a matter of fact, that machine-like perfection is most desirable. The Ritual which is full of flaws and mistakes and omissions, is so because the members of the Lodge have been too lazy to attend to their work. This attitude of mind must inevitably produce its effect which even those who deny the existence of "vibrations" are compelled to admit. Anything which is worth doing at all is worth doing well, as well as we can possibly do it. How much more should attention be given to the perfect presentation of so important a work as a Masonic Ritual. All praise to those faithful ones who have stuck to their ideal of as nearly perfect a ritual as they could manage. When they see and comprehend the real function of the Masonic Rituals they will realize how correct their intuition was.

CHAPTER TEN

The Drama of the Third Degree

280. In the Third Degree we have, besides the regular dramatic presentation of the moral lessons in continuation and conclusion of the teachings of the other two Degrees, a dramatic presentation of the death and bringing to life again of Hiram Abif, the Grand Master and Architect of the Temple of Solomon. There have been many explanations of the meaning of this Drama presented to the Craft and to the world at large, but in each and every one of these explanations there has been some logical and fatal defect. It is a frequent happening that some Mason, disappointed because the mysteries of Masonry do not fall at once into his mind after having baffled the Masonic researchers for ages, flies to the other extreme and insists that there can be no explanation of the symbolisms or of the allegory because, indeed, he has failed to comprehend their meaning or because he has detected some of the usual contradictions.

281. And yet there should be no difficulty whatever in comprehending the meaning of the great bulk of the symbolism. The symbols, with their shifting meanings are not at all difficult to understand. On the contrary, they are very easy, infinitely easier than is the learning of a new game of cards. To the Masonic student they appear so very simple and almost childish that he wonders how they could have kept their secrets from searchers during so many centuries.

282. The answer to this conundrum is, of course, that the meaning

of the clothing was never really learned and taken to heart. One would think that it would not be necessary to enjoin upon a student to lay aside his prejudice, nevertheless it is true that it is prejudice and pre-conceived opinions based upon fallacies which are today the most potent factors in delaying the progress of the world. We ordinarily use the instance of Galileo or Morse or Langley to illustrate this point since the more any man is encased in prejudice and dogma the more highly is he offended when the fact is pointed out to him, but the truth remains that even in the study of Masonic Symbolism we have to contend against the thick coats of prejudice and the cloaks of dogma and blind, unreasoning belief which utterly prevent the wearer from even considering any explanation other than the wornout one which he is compelled, in the depths of his own heart, to recognize as not correct.

283. So, when we come to consider the Drama of the Third Degree we are approaching ground surrounded by the triple fence of Ignorance, Prejudice and Dogma. With the rest of the Rituals this difficulty was not so prominent as it is in dealing with that wonderful dramatic presentation of the ending of Hiram Abif and the consequent loss of the Mystic Word.

284. The Drama of the Third Degree, however, resembles the Scriptures in this, that it has more than one interpretation. There is the simpler and surface meaning fitted for those still unprepared to receive the mysteries of Masonry and there is also the deeper meaning. Both are true, and in giving the simpler explanation of the Third Degree as well as that of the great Symbols of the Pillars, the Mosaic Pavement, the Blazing Star, the Cable Tow and others, there is no violence done to Truth.

285. There are a number of Myths which have practically the same story as that given in the Third Degree of Masonry, and we may naturally infer that, since they are so much alike, they either had the same source or else the similarity might be accounted for by a

common teaching. We find, in every case, a murder, a death by violence, succeeded by a long search for the body of the murdered victim. The body is usually buried twice or sometimes oftener, finally being deposited in a deed grave. After much distress and a long search the grave is located and the body is resurrected.

286. There are several applications of this Masonic Drama. Humanity, in its early state of purity, was in close touch, consciously, with the divine. We read that Adam and Eve talked with God. Finally the attractions of the physical and carnal and emotional natures proved too strong for their resisting powers and they yielded to the lure of the sensual and Hiram Abif, the conscious touch with the spiritual, was killed by the increasing coarseness of the personality. Hiram Abif was the Grand Master of the work on the Temple. He drew the designs on the trestle-board. When the spirit is in conscious touch with the Divine and is able to send down its wisdom into the personality, the lower natures, the building of the Temple goes on in accordance with the will of God. But when the ruffians of the lower natures attack and kill the spiritual consciousness, they prevent this consciousness from drawing any more designs.

THE ARGUMENT

287. The argument of the Drama would seem to be that man, originally pure and innocent and hence intuitive, naturally obeyed the moral laws which he recognized through the power of his intuitive faculty. But, as he became more conscious, he became attracted by the glamour and pleasure of the physical world and his first transgression, quite naturally, was in the line of abuse of the sex force, the creative function. This abuse was a violation of the Laws of Nature (any physician at the present day will substantiate this assertion) and the result was a dimming and final loss of contact with the spiritual or a loss of the intuitive faculty. Now

this intuition had been the man's guide in his conduct and when the increasing coarseness of the personality, brought about by the abuse of the sex function, began to interfere with his intuitional perception, the "designs on the trestle-board" or the intuitive perception of right and wrong (the moral law) became less distinct and the race began to lose the spiritual perception of that oneness which is the basis of spiritual Love and Selfishness developed.

THE THREE RUFFIANS

288. The race, being no longer guided by intuition, came under the guidance or the false leadership of Ignorance and these three, IGNORANCE, SELFISHNESS and SENSUALITY caused the complete extinction of the intuitive faculty or the conscious touch with the Divine and from that time on there were no more designs upon the trestleboard—that is, man was living blindly, ignorant of the Laws which govern the Universe.

289. Hiram Abif, the architect and Grand Master, symbolizes that intuitive touch with the Divine and was killed by the three ruffians of Ignorance, Selfishness and Sensuality and his body was buried in the rubbish of the Temple, the iUs ,and mistakes and sins of the personality. Yet there was a possibility of his revival and so these three ruffians took his body and buried it in a deep grave, which symbolizes the sectarian ,beliefs of the various religions which have held the race in bondage, the dogmas of man-made systems which, not knowing the truth, have concocted a theory or maze of theories that have held the race in blindness and slavery as profound as that of the grave which is used to typify them.

290. There was, planted at the head of the grave, a sprig of acacia. This acacia has always been used in symbolic writings to represent TRUTH and the meaning is plain. When the race begins to seek and find the TRUTH regarding the great Natural Laws, the body will be found, the buried body of Hiram Abif the Intuitive Faculty. To

find the body, however, is not raising it. The instruction of the Entered Apprentice can not raise the intuitive power. The knowledge of the Fellow Craft is not great enough to raise it. There is more than a mere knowledge of the Moral Law needed more, even, than an obedience to the moral law. Not until the great strength of the Lion's Paw is used can the body of the murdered Intuition be raised from the grave which has held it prisoner during so many ages.

THE LION'S PAW

291. The Lion is the Zodiacal Sign of Leo, the sign of the Heart, the Sign of Love. Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and not until the Master Mason to whom has been given the wonderful teaching of the Trowel and who knows the Law of Love, not until he comes and uses the powerful grip of the Lion's Paw can the murdered body be raised. In other words, nothing will restore man to his pristine condition of purity and intuitive knowledge of the spiritual Law except that perfect obedience to the Law which is embodied in the term of "Service." This is in strict accordance with the teaching of Christ and in this connection read the last twelve verses of the 22nd Chapter of St. Matthew. It is this service to humanity and to Deity, this service which goes beyond the mere obedience to Law, that alone can restore the intuition or the touch with the spiritual. Did not Christ Himself say that after we have perfectly obeyed the Law we can say that we are unprofitable servants? We must do more than obey, we must serve our fellow men and do what we can to ease the pain and sorrow of the world about us. If you are in doubt as to the exact meaning of service take down your New Testament and turn to the 34th verse of the 25th Chapter of St. Matthew and read to the end of the Chapter. You will find the matter stated there far better than I can put it.

292. This is the teaching of the 'Masonic Drama of the' Third Degree as it applies to the human race. In its application to the individual it is very much the same. There is observable in the ordinary child at first, while perhaps not a real, conscious touch with the spiritual, yet a sort of sensitiveness to the spiritual which is killed by the three ruffians of selfishness, ignorance and sensuality. The exuberant outbursts of youth at the time of puberty and for some time thereafter, that burning desire for some sort of "kick," that characteristic which Shakespeare calls "Flaming Youth," serves to kill out this spiritual sensitiveness and to bury it in the rubbish of desire, passions and, perhaps, vice. Later on, as the judgment comes more to the front and the mind takes control, the grave of sectarian beliefs and dogmatism entombs the body of the slain intuitive faculty and nothing can raise it from this grave but the honest search for truth assisted by that service to God and to humanity which is symbolized by the Lion's Paw. Unfortunately it is not often that the body is so raised, for our desire for truth is usually but dim and our service but perfunctory. Nevertheless, even though it be not raised, yet the possibility of its being raised is there could we but understand the Drama and learn its lessons. Until we do, the six foot grave of creed-bound sectarianism will hold us buried.

293. The search for the body is symbolical of the first faint stirrings of that realization that something has been lost. There are no designs upon the trestleboard and the work on the Temple seems to be purposeless, with great confusion and dismay among the workmen. The more advanced of the mental qualities sense that something has gone amiss and they seek for the lost touch with the spiritual wisdom. There is a wealth of detail in this Drama which cannot be gone into without practically writing out the Legend itself. But what has been said is enough to give the real purpose and meaning of the drama and will enable any Mason to look

within himself and recognize the ruffians, the rubbish and the grave. Also it will define the meaning of the Lion's Paw and give the clue to the identity of Hiram Abif and the Craftsmen.

294. There are some problems which must be met by those who seek to engraft upon this Drama certain dogmatic religious meanings which the Drama was never intended to hold. If the Lion of the Tribe of Judah be the meaning of the Lion's Paw how is it that we find the sculptured Lion in the very act of raising the dead body of Osiris as it was graven upon the monuments of Egypt long before Moses was heard of. Also, if the raising of the body is supposed to have been an actual, physical resurrection or a symbol of such a resurrection then why was not the Lost Word recovered? If the Word was merely a sort of diploma permitting the Master Mason to travel in countries adjacent to the domains of Solomon and there ply his trade, why could not Solomon alone have given such a certificate? Why was the presence of the three Grand Masters necessary? It would be well for all students of Masonry to ask themselves, before they begin to form theories concerning the meaning of the Drama, just what it is that they are looking for. This would seem to be a superfluous question, yet a perusal of some of the wild ideas and deliberate attempts to bolster up some dogma by a perversion of the Hiramic Legend shows that it is a very necessary one.

295. The real student is looking for the meaning of the Drama, the original meaning held in the minds of the great philosophers who originated the Drama or, if it was not originated at one particular time, the teaching which it was intended to convey. We should not attempt to prove the Drama to be something which it is not. Hence we should remember the lessons of the clothing in the rituals and divest ourselves of all prejudice and preconceived opinions since our purpose, if we are honest students, is to find out what the Drama was intended to mean, not what we think that it

UGHT to mean. Therefore, the questions indicated above must be met honestly and squarely.

296. The identity of the Fellow Crafts is that of some of the more advanced qualities of the mind which, feeling the loss of something, report that loss to the Higher Self and are then sent in search of the lost something. The murderers, Ignorance, Selfishness and Sensuality gradually realize what they have done and seek to embark upon a ship, symbol of a mental vehicle in order that they may travel to Ethiopia or the higher plane of being. In other words, the vices which have killed the touch with the Divine are now attempting to excuse themselves and to flee from the lower emotional world where they belong. They wish to do this by means of a ship, a mental vehicle or a process of mentality and to reach a safe haven where the retribution for their conduct cannot overtake them. But the ports are all guarded and they cannot escape. It is not possible for the qualities of selfishness and sensuality and ignorance to reach or exist in the atmosphere of the spiritual world. Therefore their attempt co board a ship was unavailing.

297. But the conscious touch with the spirit is finally raised from its sleep in the grave of dogmatism by the obedience to the Divine Law of Love and Service as symbolized by the Lion's Paw and as exercised by the Senior Grand Warden, who represents or symbolizes the higher aspect of the Lower Self or the aspiring human soul.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Three Parts of Masonry

298. Masonry as we know it today and speaking of the three “Blue Lodge” Degrees only, readily divides itself into three distinct parts. The first part consists of the dramatic section of the Degrees, comprising the first section of each Degree, in which the candidate goes through certain ceremonies which, when explained, indicate to him the nature and scope of the “slow-acting” Laws of Nature under which human progress is made. This part might be called, arbitrarily of course, the Educational Section.

299. The second part, which might be termed the Explanatory part, consists of a number of symbols such as the Pillars, the Pavement, the Blazing Star, the Winding Stairs, the Wages, etc., which are not essentially parts of the action lessons given to the candidate, that is, the part of the rituals in which the candidate takes a share. These symbols are more general in their application than the symbolism of the “Educational” part of the rituals. They afford a wonderful glimpse of the wisdom held in ancient times and they form, as it were, a running commentary on the First Sections of the three Degrees, explaining many things which would otherwise remain hidden in mystery.

300. The candidate, for instance, is taught in the Educational Sections the great Moral Laws under which he is compelled to live, but the Pillars and the Mosaic Pavement explain to him how he came to be here and why he is under the operation of these Moral Laws at all. The Winding Stairs explain to him the means by which

he is to progress, that is, how he is to apply the knowledge he receives in the dramatic part of the rituals. It is these "Explanatory" Symbols as differentiated from the "Educational" Symbolism such as the body, clothing, shoes, etc., which the existing books on Masonic Symbolism have elected to explain. But the explanation offered has seldom taken into consideration the fact that these symbols are explanatory and illuminative of the progressive lessons which the candidate is receiving and that they must fit in with that symbolism.

301. When this fact is realized and the Pillars and the Pavement and the Winding Stairs are considered as a part of the entire initiation and not as merely individual and disconnected symbols thrown in at random in order to give "good measure," then and then only is it possible to arrive at a definite and logical conclusion as to their meaning.

302. The third part of the Masonic Symbolism is the Drama which follows the first Section of the Third Degree, the Drama of Hiram Abif. This Drama, giving the story of the death and resurrection of Hiram and which we have already considered, is a sort of symbolic bird's eye view of human development, taking up the matter from an entirely different angle from that employed in the first part of the Degrees. It is really a pictorial or dramatic story of human evolution and was originally designed by those who held the belief of Rebirth or the repeated embodiments of the spirit in physical bodies of gradually improving powers and capacities.

303. This belief of Rebirth must not be confused with the degeneration of it met with sometimes among the ignorant and called "Transmigration." Under the teaching of Rebirth there is no such thing as transmigration. At the death of the physical body the spirit exists consciously in higher realms where it absorbs and builds into itself the results of its experiences during physical life, when it comes back to rebirth and is born again in an infant body

which it gradually develops to a point where it can again learn lessons on the physical plane.

304. It surely should not be necessary to repeat the warning that the Masonic student—the real student—is seeking to find out what the originators of the symbolism had in mind just as the Egyptologists spent years of labor in deciphering the hieroglyphics on the Egyptian monuments in order to find out what they said. The Masonic student does not bind himself to incorporate into his belief everything that the old Mythology taught. One of the prominent features of the Masonic Rituals is the Rite of Circumambulation which all scholars are agreed is a remnant of the ancient Sun worship. But, when we recognize this fact, and realize that this Rite has come down to us from the ancient Sun worshipping days, this realization does not involve the necessity that we, as Masons, must immediately become sun worshippers.

305. So the recognition of the obvious fact that many of the Rites and Symbols of Masonry were devised from the standpoint of a believer in Rebirth or the evolution of the soul, does not involve any necessity on the part of the Masonic student to believe the same or to make it a part of his religious dogma any more than the Egyptologist, when he deciphers a prayer to Ra, the Sun god, carved upon some Egyptian tomb thousands of years before the time of Christ, is thereby compelled to believe in the existence and power of Ra and begin to worship him with the same prayer.

306. Those parts of the Rituals which teach Morality are extremely valuable because of the morality they teach which, when examined in the light of modern knowledge is just as true as the morality taught by our own religion. This moral teaching, contained in the three First Sections, which I have arbitrarily called the “Educational Symbolism,” is in a class by itself. The balance of the symbolism, especially the Drama of the Second Section of the Third Degree, can be understood only when we study the beliefs

held by the ancient philosophers. Studying those beliefs we can understand exactly what was meant by all of the great symbols and also by the Hiramic Legend but, as we have already pointed out, this understanding of the meaning does not require a belief in the meaning.

307. To attempt to engraft some other teaching on the Hiramic Legend and upon the great symbols than the one in the minds of the originators would be as dishonest as for the Egyptologist to rewrite the prayer to Ra, the Sun=god, and make it a prayer to the Christ and then insist that that was what was carved upon the ancient monument. Many of our Masonic investigators do not seem able to grasp the point that the Masonic Symbolism originated long before the Christian Era and that an attempt to twist the Symbolism to mean something other than what it was intended to mean is not an honest treatment of it.

308. With these points held firmly in mind, let us proceed to a consideration of the "Great Symbols" which have so puzzled Masonic students.

THE PILLARS

309. The candidate, upon entering the Lodge, passes through or between two Pillars which he is compelled to pass between before he can enter the Lodge Room, which symbolizes the Temple of Solomon. It is in this Lodge Room or Temple that he learns the lessons in Masonry which teach him how to live in accordance with the great Moral Laws of Nature, in other words, how to square and smooth the ashlar of his character and how to build his wall.

310. So, in ancient times, the Entered Apprentice Mason who came to the Temple to learn his trade, had to pass between two pillars. In a larger sense the Temple means the earth and all

humanity are Entered Apprentice Masons. Now let us see what we have. The candidate has to pass between the two pillars before he can come into the Temple where he learns his trade. Mankind is working in the Temple, the world, learning his lessons. Between what two pillars did he have to pass to enter there? Remember that we are examining this from the standpoint of the beliefs held by the ancient philosophy. The ancients believed, as has already been stated, in the Rebirth of the soul and in the accompanying Law which might be called the Law of Cause and Effect, which is practically the same thing as the first Law of Physics, that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. Under the action or control or government of these twin Laws the ancients held that the spirit had to pass before it could enter the arena of the physical world. That, the present author believes, was the original idea behind the two pillars, for these pillars are not of Hebrew origin. Solomon or his architects copied them from other temples in surrounding countries. They were frequently used in the Egyptian temples.

311. When we view the Temple as the arena of human life we have the key to the meaning. This symbol of the pillars could also be interpreted as the passing of the spirit into the realm of Polarization, for a correlative belief accompanying that of Rebirth was that the spirit incarnated alternately as male and female in order to obtain all the experiences possible to the human race. The Pillars, then, might be taken as holding; both these meanings and if such is the case this interpretation fits in exactly with all the rest of the symbolism and there is no discord nor irrelevancy.

THE MOSAIC PAVEMENT AND THE BLAZING STAR

312. The Mosaic Pavement and the Blazing Star are two other beautiful symbols whose deeper meaning cannot be understood until we have learned and taken to heart the symbolic lessons of

the clothing. The Mosaic Pavement is made up of alternate squares of black and white. Neither of these is a primary color. Black is the negation of all color and symbolizes the negative. White is the synthesis of all color and typifies the positive. If we take the masculine life or body as positive and the feminine as negative and the Blazing Star as representing the Spirit itself posted in and drawing its means of development and growth from its alternate positive and negative or male and female embodiments we have the meaning originally intended to be conveyed by this symbolism in the belief of the present writer. If this explanation be the true one it corresponds and harmonizes exactly with the meaning of the Pillars just given. To reject it because we do not believe the things it teaches is just as illogical as for a man to say that because he, himself, does not believe in the story of Isis and Osiris that no one ever, did so believe and the Egyptian sculptures must have been intended to portray something else.

THE CABLE TOW

313. This symbol has also eluded the grasp of the Masonic scholar. The Cable Tow must have meant something quite particular, something not at all such as the physical control of the candidate. As we can see when we come to examine it.

314. The Cable Tow was not a symbol peculiar to the peoples who lived upon the borders of the Mediterranean Sea alone. It was used wherever the Mysteries were practiced and that was all over the world or very nearly so. It always makes the problem of "placing" a symbol much easier if we will only take it quietly, without prejudice, and see what peculiarities it has. Applying this method to the Cable Tow we find that there are two hard and fast requirements about it. It must be a three stranded rope and it must be fastened in three different places. That it was ever at any time used as a means of controlling the candidate seems rather far-

fetched, since the symbol has come down from very ancient times and, in those early days, the brethren were much more deliberate about their candidates and initiations than we are today. Also, if it were merely a rope to hold a possibly fractious candidate, it violates the symbolic nature of the entire ceremonial, which is uniformly symbolic all through. The advocate of the explanation that it was a means of control must also explain how it came to be so universally used and why the three strands and the three locations. If it were to control the candidate one would think that one particular location would be found the best and the rope would be fastened there in every initiation. Also, why the three strands? Why would not a two-stranded rope or a braided rope be just as well? These questions must be met and satisfactorily answered before we can consider the matter settled. If the Cable Tow is symbolic in two Degrees why should it not be symbolic in all the Degrees?

315. To go back over what we know of the matter. The Cable Tow must always be of three strands (or of three triple strands), fastened in three places and loosed by the initiation. The only thing which answers to these requirements in every respect is the (usually) invisible cord which binds the spirit to the body, which is composed of three strands and each strand is rooted in a different place. This cord binds the spirit to the physical body until it is loosed by death (or by a real initiation into the higher mysteries) and it is the same thing as the "silver cord" of Ecclesiastes which has been erroneously explained as referring to the spinal marrow. This is the explanation given by the great Esoteric Schools and is the only explanation which fits every requirement of the case. For those who do not believe that anything can exist which they cannot see with the physical eye, any other explanation which they prefer will probably suit them better, even though it violate one or all of the principles of symbolic interpretation and fail completely

to meet the peculiar requirements of the symbolism. The phenomenon of the silver cord which is the Cable Tow is readily observed and studied by anyone who has developed even a slight degree of spiritual sight. But as these are comparatively few and as the symbol is not absolutely necessary for a comprehension of the moral lessons of the rituals we merely give the above explanation for whatever each reader may think it to be worth.

THE LOST WORD

316. There has been so much discussion and controversy concerning this bit of the Masonic Symbolism that it would seem to be useless to add anything more to the general confusion and yet, to the student, the matter of the Lost Word is so clear and plain that it seems impossible for it long to remain the mystery it now is to the majority. In the past, Masonic students have gone at the matter without observing the beautiful lessons of the clothing and the prejudice. In fact, the Masonic investigator has usually donned a complete suit of Arctic furs with gloves and mittens to match which have effectually prevented him from attaining even the slightest inkling of the real meaning of the Word. Let us see if we can apply some of our principles of research and gain a little light.

317. First let us understand what the Legend says. The Temple was almost completed and the insurgents demanded the Word which would allow them to travel in foreign countries and receive the Wages of a Master Mason. That the Lost Word was a word only, is inconceivable. It was a system of instruction and the expression "Word" is symbolical just as the Temple is symbolic and Solomon and Hiram are symbolic. Hiram Abif symbolized the touch with the spiritual by which the intuition reached out and grasped truth and so was enabled to draw designs upon the trestle board of life and direct the activities of the individual. Everything in the ritual is symbolic including the characters, why, then, should we insist

upon taking the Word alone as the only literal thing in it?

318. What was the Word to do? It was to enable the one who received it to travel in foreign countries. What was a foreign country? We can best answer that question by finding out first what country the individual was in. The Temple was himself, the country his environment or the physical world about him. How could he leave himself and the physical world about him? That seems to be a hard question to answer, but it is not so. To the open minded scholar who is really seeking for Light and who is acquainted with the initiations of the ancient Mysteries so far as they have come down to us, it is a well known fact that the phrase "travel in foreign countries" is a technical phrase and was applied to the belief which they held that, given a certain course of instruction and after living a certain kind of pure and spotless life, the initiate was able to detach his soul from the physical body and travel in the higher realms, coming back to his body again and resuming his ordinary life.

319. Remember the identity of the Ruffians and the identity of the Craftsmen. These qualities were not ready for such spiritual teaching as the Word involved. They had not yet completed their work on the Temple and could not receive the higher instruction which could be given only in the presence and hence, of course, with the knowledge, consent and approval of the three Grand Masters, all or whom are symbolic of various aspects of the individual. Read *Morals and Dogma* in this connection, pages 204 to 209, also pages 730 to 732, inclusive, and page 745 before you dismiss the above statements with the wave of the gloved and gauntleted hand. In discussing the meaning of the Lost Word the honest scholar is trying to find out the ORIGINAL meaning behind it, not the meaning which some modern enthusiast thinks it OUGHT to have and, to get at this original meaning, we have to consider what the ancient philosophers believed.

320. The Lost Word, then, was that final system of instruction which, following a life lived in accordance with the Laws of Morality as taught by the symbolism of the three Degrees, would enable the aspirant to penetrate the higher and unseen worlds, there to work for the advancement and betterment of the human race and so earn the Wages of a real Master Mason, a Master Builder in the Temple of Humanity.

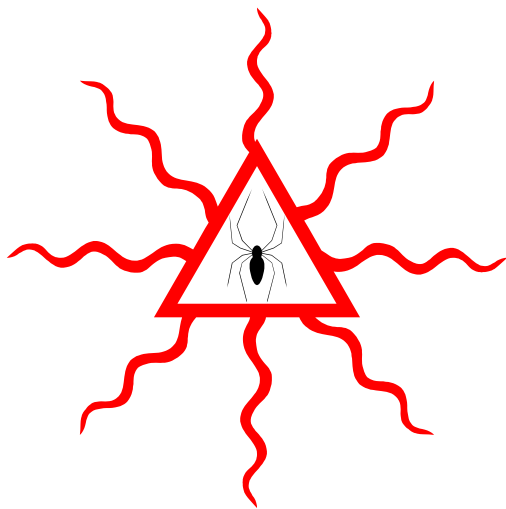
321. In this and in the preceding chapters the writer has given what he honestly believes to be the true interpretation of the Masonic Symbolism, at least the most important part of it. The active part, that which I have termed the Educational part, is of vital and absorbing interest and importance. The morality taught in the lessons of open-mindedness, of honesty, of thought control, of self-control and self-criticism, of the development of self, of the gradual improvement of the character by means of the Working Tools, these are surely of the very highest importance.

322. The meanings of the "Great" Symbols, even if they clash with the present religious beliefs of the reader, do not, as we have pointed out, have to be incorporated into his creed. But the writer honestly believes they were the original meanings in the minds of the originators of the symbolism. At least they were the beliefs held by the ancient philosophers, that much is fairly certain, and also when considered without prejudice, they fit in with the symbolism and form a compact and coherent whole with not one single false note or jangle of discord. They fully and honestly meet the requirements of the symbolism as it has been handed down to us and surely we should be willing to consider them with as much scientific honesty as the archeologist considers the ancient inscriptions written in praise of Ra or of Osiris or Isis or any of the ancient divinities.

323. We are told, in the New Testament, that when the Apostles visited Ephesus they were greeted by the shout, "Great is Diana of

the Ephesians.” Shall we say that this is untrue because we, personally, do not believe in nor worship Diana? That would be as logical as to reject the present explanation of the symbolism on the grounds that we, personally, do not believe in Rebirth or in the possibility of leaving the body during physical life.

324. The only logical objection is to point out where the present explanation does not fit the facts of the symbolism as handed down to us and the objector should indicate the discrepancies and give an explanation which will not only fit the particular symbol but will not violate the harmony of the rest of the symbolism. It should also be remembered that an explanation should be pertinent—it should bear upon the case in hand—it should put the symbol in such a light that we can see its bearing upon the rest of the symbolism. The present writer believes that this explanation preserves all of the “harmonies” and that, so far at least as the "Educational" part of the symbolism is concerned, it should make the lessons of Masonry a much more potent factor than they are at present in the building up of character and the development of morality.



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