

## On the Antiquity of Masonic Symbolism

Bro. R[obert]. F[reke]. Gould read the following paper . . .

Compiled and Edited by R.'.W.'. Gary L. Heinmiller  
Director, Onondaga & Oswego Masonic Districts Historical Societies [OMDHS]

[www.ombhs.syracuseasons.com](http://www.ombhs.syracuseasons.com)

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THE Secretary having called upon me to read the paper which has long stood in my name — "On the Degrees of Pure and Ancient Freemasonry" — I find that in order to make myself generally understood, it will be desirable that I should lay before you in the first instance, what I may venture to term a preliminary thesis, which will therefore be proceeded with. But in the lecture of this evening my object is two-fold. I wish to lay a sure foundation for a future inquiry into the early Ritual and Ceremonial, which prevailed under the Grand Lodge of England; and there is a stronger motive still for the method of treatment I have thought it advisable to adopt.

The inaugural addresses of the two brethren who have successively followed me in the chair of this Lodge, seem to me to reflect pretty accurately the opinions of a portion of our members from whom much is expected in the near future. These are, that the domain of *Ancient*, as distinguished from that of *Modern* Masonry, has been very strangely neglected, and that if we really wish to enlist the sympathy and interest of scholars and men of intelligence, in the special labours of the Lodge, we must make at least a resolute attempt to partially lift the veil, by which the earlier history of our Art or Science is obscured.

It is almost unnecessary to mention, to the brethren I am now addressing, that the adjectives "Ancient" and "Modern" as here applied to Masonry, are used in their ordinary acceptation—that is, by members of our own Lodge; or to be precise, that by the expression "Ancient Masonry," is to be understood the history of the Craft before, and by that of "Modern Masonry," the history of the Craft *after*, the era of Grand Lodges. The line of demarcation between them being therefore drawn at the year 1717.

Above that line, and reaching back to the fourteenth century, are to be found our written traditions, and whether our Symbolical traditions are entitled to take rank by their side, I shall discuss generally, and whether any place above the line can be assigned to them at all, I shall discuss specially, in the body of my paper. By this I mean, that while putting before you some speculations with regard to the remote past of our Society, which are not inconsistent with the shreds of evidence that have come down to us, these are subsidiary to my main design, which is, to satisfy your minds, that beyond all reasonable doubt the essentials of the Three Craft Degrees must have existed before the formation of the first Grand Lodge—that of England—in 1717. More than this, I shall not seek to establish, though I hope at the close of my lecture, the inclination of your judgment may be in the direction of my own, which is that the balance of probability is in favour of as early an origin being attributed to our symbolical as to our written traditions.

But if there should prove to be, at the close of the discussion which will follow this paper, anything at all approaching a consensus of opinion that the ceremonial of Masonry pre-dates the era of Grand Lodges, a highly important object will have been attained.

Scholars and antiquaries take but a languid interest—there is no use in disguising it—in the history of Modern Masonry. They do not believe that the system of Masonry, as understood by the founders of the first Grand Lodge, is capable of indefinite expansion. Degrees, in their judgment, cannot be multiplied *ad infinitum*. But the history and origin of Ancient Masonry are regarded by them in quite a different manner. These, they are not only willing but eager to study and investigate, yet an unwelcome doubt obtrudes itself which checks, if it does not wholly dissipate, the ardour of their research.

Conjointly with the old MS. Constitutions, which are of undoubted antiquity, the symbolical teaching in our Lodges—though possessing a remoteness of origin less assured—has a peculiar fascination for all genuine votaries of archaeology.

Here, however, the doubt referred to, creeps in, and the scholar or antiquary who has a longing to trace the antiquity of our symbolism, is checked by similar reflections to those which occurred to Gibbon, who kept back an hypothesis he had framed with regard to the real secret of the Ancient Mysteries, "from an apprehension of discovering what never existed;" and to the elder Disraeli, who much in the same way, excused his imperfect speculations with regard to the shadowy and half-mythical Rosicrucians. But if the symbolism of Masonry, or a material part of it, can be proved with reasonable certainty to ante-date the year 1717, the doubt, upon which I have enlarged, will disappear, and with it we may venture to hope, the present disinclination on the part of really competent investigators, to extend their researches into the only field of inquiry—the domain of Ancient Masonry—which offers any prospect whatever of rewarding the patient student of our antiquities, by a partial revelation of the origin, and by the recovery of some portion at least of the lost learning of the fraternity.

Before, however, proceeding with my main argument, let me introduce a few historical *data*, which if kindly kept in mind, will give a better grasp of the very complicated subject I have to deal with in this paper.

It is well known, that the first Grand Lodge, that of England, was founded by four London Lodges in 1717; also, that by students of the Craft, it is customary to speak of the Masonry which existed before that date as Ancient, and of the Masonry which followed afterwards as Modern.

The Grand Lodge of England pursued the even tenor of its way, without much variety occurring, until the year 1721, which is the next date I shall ask you to carry in your recollection. In this year two important things happened. First of all, a great nobleman, the Duke of Montagu, was elected Grand Master, and the Society rose at a single bound into notice and esteem. Secondly, Mr. James Anderson, a graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen, and who was then a Presbyterian Minister in London, was selected by the

Grand Master and the Grand Lodge as the most competent person to adjust, as it were, the Masonry of Ancient times upon a Modern basis.

The following is an extract from the minutes of Grand Lodge, 29th September, 1721:—" His Grace's *Worship* and the *Lodge* finding fault with all the copies of the *Old Gothic Constitutions*, order'd Brother *James Anderson*, A.M., to digest the same in a new and better method." The Constitutions referred to were certain old documents, usually in roll or scroll form, containing the Legend of the Craft and a Code of Ancient Regulations, both of which it was the custom in old days to read over to the operative Masons on their first admission into the Lodge.

By the aid of these MS. Constitutions, Anderson compiled the first "Book of Constitutions," which was published in 1723. This work contained a quantity of "Regulations," No. XIII, of which runs as follows :—"Apprentices must be admitted Masters and Fellow Craft only here [*i.e.*, in the Grand Lodge] unless by a dispensation."

This usage, however, was again varied by the Grand Lodge, on November 25th, 1725, when it was ordained, "That the Master of Each Lodge, with the consent of his Wardens and the Majority of the Brethren, being Masters, may make Masters at their discretion."<sup>1</sup>

From the foregoing it will appear that only *two* degrees (or distinct ceremonies) were recognised by the Grand Lodge of England in 1723, Apprentice, and Fellow Craft or Master, the two latter being convertible terms; also, that in 1725, the restriction was removed and that "Masters" could be made by private Lodges at discretion.

The period embraced by some of the figures I have given you, viz. from 1717 to 1723,<sup>2</sup> has been styled the Epoch of Transition, because in the opinion of many leading authorities, the system of Masonry we now possess (or in other words, the three degrees of pure and Ancient Masonry, as we are accustomed to call them), was then manufactured or concocted.

1 Grand Lodge Minutes.

2 Although the Grand Lodge Records are silent as to the exact date on which three degrees (or distinct ceremonies) were recognised by the Governing Body, it can be proved *aliunde*, that they were wrought in London in 1724, and probably earlier.

Against this view, however, we find arrayed, the conviction of another set of authorities, who are firm believers in Masonic degrees, and discredit the notion that any alterations were made by the Grand Lodge of England, in the secrets of Masonry—except in what may be termed non-essentials, or to speak with more precision, in the method adopted of imparting them.

Thus, there are two theories or schools of thought with regard to the degrees, or to use an expression I prefer, *the Symbolism of Masonry*, a wider term, and one which will cover everything done or practised in the Lodges at a later period than the so-called Epoch of Transition (1717-23), and for which (it is alleged on one side) no equivalent is to be found in the doings and practices of the Lodges in existence prior to 1717.

Each of these views or theories has its supporters, and to whichever side the argument may for the moment seem to preponderate, we cannot be too careful to recollect— that there is evidence to the contrary.

The number of authorities, indeed, by which either of these two beliefs is upheld, is so evenly balanced, that there is no middle course between reading the testimony on one side, and despising the other so thoroughly, as to refrain from ever looking at it, or to do as I shall propose to you in the present instance, that is, to give each side a patient hearing.

To-night, indeed, I can only put before you one branch of the case, namely the arguments which I think may be adduced in favour of the antiquity of degrees, or to use the wider expression already adopted, of Masonic Symbolism. But they will go far I trust, towards covering the whole ground, and if not, in the general reply to which I shall be entitled at the close of the discussion, I will do my best to grapple fairly with any counter-arguments which may be advanced in support of the other side of the question.

By this method of treatment, I shall be able to present you—not so much with my personal conclusions, as that with what will serve as an ultimate basis for your own. There is an old saying, *Quot homines, tot sententia*, "as many men, so many opinions"—and if for "men" you read "lecturers," it stands to reason, that while every person who reads a paper before you, might give a different opinion if you invited an expression of his individual judgment or crotchets upon the question in dispute—on the other hand you would be always sure to evoke some useful information, calculated to assist you in arriving at an independent conclusion, if you were to ask what could be said both on the one side and on the other.

Of the important part played by the Rev. James Anderson in the moulding of Ancient Masonry, 1721-23, upon what are averred to have been "new lines," I shall have more to say, when I get to the body of the lecture, but I ask you to carefully note the fact, that when, in 1721, it was designed to consolidate the "Constitutions of Ancient and Modern Masonry," the task of doing so was confided to a Scotsman, and who as there is good ground for believing, had been received into the Society while a resident in Aberdeen.

It may now be convenient to formulate in words, the precise question which will constitute my main contention this evening. It is this :—

Is the Symbolism of Masonry an inheritance derived from the old Masons who flourished before the era of the Grand Lodges ; or has it been borrowed from the Rosicrucians or others, after 1717?

There is also a secondary contention (or series of speculations) to which I have already referred, viz., that the Symbolism of Masonry, is very old indeed—much older than the seventeenth century, but I freely admit having been led to this supposition by a chain of conjectural evidence, which facts alone can substantiate.

For convenience sake, however, and in order to illustrate more clearly the line of argument I shall pursue, let me also formulate in words the bye or side issue, which I am desirous of raising for your consideration :—

Is there ground for supposing that the Symbolism of our present Freemasonry, existed in mediaeval times, and that it has decayed *pari passu*, with the operative Masonry of that period, and come down to us, divested of much of its real significancy, as a legacy or inheritance from the working Masons of those early times?

In the next place, and before I proceed to state my case, let me, in order that you may better understand it, when duly laid before you—make use of a comparison.

Unlike that of other nations, the civilization of Egypt presents a continuous deterioration from the earliest ages to the latest. The further we go back the more consummate is the art, the more complete the command of mechanical processes and appliances. In other words the civilization of Egypt must have culminated before the very earliest dawn of its recorded history. If Egypt is not altogether exceptional and abnormal, the use of the mechanical methods employed by the Pyramid builders points to an antecedent civilization of which the extent in time becomes literally incalculable, while it seems to become more and more inexplicable the more its real character is investigated and brought to light.

In the same way, I conceive that there is ground for reasonable conjecture, whether the Symbolism of Masonry, to a considerable portion of which, even at this day, no meaning can be assigned which is entirely satisfactory to an intelligent mind—must not "have culminated before the very earliest dawn of its recorded history." Also, that it underwent a gradual process of decay, which was arrested but only at the point we now have it, by passing into the control of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717.

Against this view, it may of course be contended, and—as many will think—with, perhaps, equal plausibility, that instead of a decline, there was an advance, a progressive development of Masonic Symbolism, and that with the solitary exception of a rude form of initiation or reception, we have inherited nothing external to the operative practice of our ancestors, the working Masons.

But as the old proverb says, "If you run after two hares you will catch neither." In maintaining the affirmative of the proposition, that the Symbolism of Masonry, has come down to us with a very respectable flavour of antiquity, I cannot undertake at one and the same time, both the attack and defence.

At this stage, and before proceeding any further with my remarks, it may be convenient if I re-state the two propositions of which I shall maintain the affirmative.

To take the wider and more comprehensive one in the first instance :—" It is, that the Symbolism of Masonry, or at all events a material part of it, is of very great antiquity—and that in substance, the system of Masonry we now possess—including the three degrees of the Craft—has come down to us, in all its essentials from times not only remote to our own, but also to those of the founders of the earliest of Grand Lodges.

The foregoing embraces the *general* contention which will pervade this address, and I shall therefore hope to be excused for once more bringing it under your notice, though I ask your more particular attention to the narrower proposition of the two, viz., that the Symbolism of Masonry is older than the year 1717.

This is my *special* contention which I shall endeavour to press home, and should our united labours result in the determination of what has hitherto been a moot point with Masonic scholars, a very distinct advance will have been made, in the path of inquiry, which it is the object and mission of the Lodge to follow up.

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In dealing with the complicated problem, which I have undertaken to treat in this lecture, I feel that I shall have need of your indulgence, while I attempt to place before you in a clear and connected form, the scattered shreds of evidence wherein we may see, as in a glass dimly, a pale reflection of some of the historic past of Freemasonry. But on the other hand, I am no less convinced that the lecturer who is unable to make the abstruse moderately simple, is not gifted with a very clear intellect, or is lacking in that modicum of literary ability which the members of a Lodge like our own, have at least the right to expect in any one of their number, who takes upon himself the function of attempting either to instruct or entertain them. Hence if I fail to put my points before you, with all the clearness that might be desirable, the fault will be my own, nor shall I register an apology in advance—for as the Duke well says to the Weaver, in A Midsummer Night's Dream, "Never excuse, if your play be a bad one, keep at least the excuses to yourself."

#### Chart

[TO ILLUSTRATE THE LECTURE.]

12TH CENTURY.

Masons' Tool-Marks in Europe betray a *Western* Origin: Transition from the Norman to the Gothic or Pointed Style of Architecture, and possible introduction of Symbolic or speculative teaching among the stone-masons of Britain practising that style.

13TH CENTURY.

ENGLAND.

SCOTLAND.

Progressive development of the Gothic or Pointed Style, and of its accompanying symbolism.  
The Masons' tool-marks betray an *Eastern* Origin.

The old style of tooling continued.

14TH CENTURY.

Continued Progressive development.

War of Independence; building stayed: decay of Mediaeval Operative Masonry when only partially developed.

15TH CENTURY.

Wars of the Roses; dormancy of the Craft in both its Operative and Speculative features; partial reproduction of the Gothic style.

Lodges exist for trade purposes only, though fragments of an incomplete symbolic (or speculative) system are handed down in an imperfect manner: Ceremonial very simple.

16TH CENTURY.

The Reformation; no more churches built; the builders die out. As above,

17TH CENTURY.

Lodges survive, mainly for Speculative purposes; Elias Ashmole initiated, A.D. 1646; "Manner of adoption very formal;" and probably adumbrated by that of the . . . . . Lodge of Aberdeen, A.D. 1670. As above,

18TH CENTURY.

"Signs and Tokens" of the Freemasons alluded to in print, 1709; Formation of the Grand Lodge of England, 1717; Dr. Anderson ordered to "digest" the old MS. Constitutions, 1721; printed book of Constitutions, 1723. Lodge procedure characterized by great simplicity until after 1717; English system of three degrees gradually introduced; Grand Lodge of Scotland erected, 1736.

The task immediately before me, is to make a beginning in historical Masonry. Let us therefore, in the first instance, put entirely on one side the speculations of Modern writers, and ascertain what independent authorities there were, before the era of Grand Lodges, by whom any period of origin has been assigned to our British Freemasonry.

Three such authorities maybe cited, Sir William Dugdale, Sir Christopher Wren, and Elias Ashmole, whose several opinions have already been recorded in our *Transactions*,<sup>1</sup> One of these, however, the statement ascribed to Dugdale, probably the greatest antiquary of his age, must again be referred to. John Aubrey, in his *Natural History of Wiltshire*, written (though not published) in 1686, observes:—

"S<sup>r</sup> William Dugdale told me many years since, that about Henry the third's time the Pope gave a Bull or diploma to a Company of Italian Architects to travel up and downe over all Europe to build Churches. From these are derived the *Fraternity of Free-Masons*. They are known to one another by certayn Signes & Watch words: it continues to this day. They have Severall Lodges in severall Counties for their reception: and when any of them fall into decay, the brotherhood is to relieve him, &c. The manner of their adoption is very formal [*please note this*], and with an Oath of Secrecy."

1. A.Q.C., 1, 68.

Very much to the same effect are the opinions of Sir Christopher Wren and Elias Ashmole. Upon the strength of these great names, it was customary for a very long period to fix the establishment of the Freemasons in England about the early part of the reign of Henry III., at which period, it was averred, that Gothic Architecture—which first of all began in the East—came forward into practice as a regular established order, and the inference was suggested (as being irresistible) that the invention and introduction of this bold and very highly scientific order of architecture must be referred to these chosen and selected artists.<sup>1</sup>

Just fifty years ago, however, Sir Francis Palgrave observed:—"The number of writers, at home and abroad, who have discussed the origin of Gothic architecture, and each of whom drives his own theory round his own park, is probably now not much less than a hundred. Yet, as far as we can judge, no one of these enquirers ever persuaded another to adopt his own opinion."<sup>2</sup>

During the half century which has elapsed since the foregoing statement first saw the light, a great host of additional writers have fastened upon the same theme, and a few words expressed thereon by myself, in 1883, may not, perhaps, be deemed out of place.

"Gothic is not only the last link in the chain of genuine and original style, the architecture of the modern as distinguished from that of the ancient world, but it was also the product of a peculiar romantic temperament developed at that particular period, which was totally unlike anything that has been seen either before or since, even among the same nations, and which showed itself, not only in architecture, but literature, and even in politics, notably in the great movement of the Crusades."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Parentalia, or Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens*, 306 ; *Arcliceologia*, ix., 110-26.

<sup>2</sup> *Edinburgh Review*, Ap. 1839.

<sup>3</sup> *History of Freemasonry*, i., 256.

"It is good sheltering under an old hedge," but I have a stronger reason for placing before you, as a basis for our inquiry, the alleged connection of the Freemasons with Gothic architecture, than the mere contention that a theory grows venerable by its age.

In the autumn of 1888, the British Archaeological Association held its annual session in Glasgow, and among the papers read before it was one by our present Junior Warden, (Professor T. Hayter Lewis), which bore the following title:—"Scottish Masons' Marks compared with those of other countries."

Among the conclusions formulated by this excellent authority, all of which he satisfactorily establishes by comparing the Masons' Marks in our own and foreign countries, are,

1st, That certain definite methods of marking the general surfaces of the stones, characterised the masonry of the styles which we call Norman, and that this had apparently a *Western* origin.

2nd, That in the thirteenth century there was introduced, with the Early Pointed Style (which is another name for Gothic), an entirely different method of finishing the surface, and that the source of this method was apparently from the *East*.

3rd, That Masons' Marks do not appear to have been commonly used in Europe until late in the twelfth century.

4th, That some of the most prominent of these marks appear to have been used continuously, from very early times, in Eastern countries.

Our Bro. J. W. then draws attention to the opinion of Viollet le Due, that the clergy who were in the company of the Crusaders returned to Europe with the knowledge of what had been done by the Saracens, and endeavoured to apply what they had seen—the art of the Saracens having thus a great influence on that of the West.

He next observes :—"I know that it will be said that the evolution of the Pointed [or Gothic] style was that of gradual development. So, no doubt, to a large extent, it was, as must be the case with every invention, no matter what. But I absolutely refuse to believe that so great a change, made in so short a time, was the result of a mere system of gradual improvement; nor can I believe in the theory which would assign the change to a partnership of minds, be they monks or citizens, in monasteries or guilds. In every great movement which the world has seen, some one great mind comes forth as a pioneer; nor can I think that it has been otherwise with our art." Our Bro. J.W. winds up with the following:—" I am not enthusiastic enough to suppose that the marks which the workmen have left will ever be so outspoken as to tell us of the *man*; but I do believe that the search into their meaning—a search which was not even begun until some fifty years since—may lead us to the *place* and to the means by which its influence was so powerfully and quickly spread."

It is not too much to say, that Masons' Marks, which have hitherto been regarded by our advanced students, as presenting a sentimental value out of all proportion to their serviceable worth, are now, owing to the research of Professor Hayter Lewis, shewn to be a very important factor in the complicated problem of Masonic history.

According to Sir William Dugdale, or to put it in another way, according to the popular belief or the oral tradition prevailing in his time, the Freemasons derived their origin from a company of architects empowered "to travell up and downe over all Europe to build churches"—"about Henry the Third's time," *i.e.*, the thirteenth century, while, at the same period, if we follow the Junior Warden, there was introduced with the Early Pointed (or Gothic) Style, "an entirely different method of finishing the surface, and that the source of this method was apparently from the East."

"It is good to have two strings to one's bow," or as otherwise expressed—

"Good riding at two anchors, men have told,  
If one fail, the other may hold."

Those who disregard the opinions ascribed to Sir William Dugdale, Sir Christopher Wren, and Elias Ashmole, viewing them as mere assertions, and wholly devoid of proof, will however, look very differently on the careful and close reasoning of Professor T. Hayter Lewis.

Indeed, as it seems to me, the arguments of the Junior Warden, virtually re-instate the old tradition, that is, in its material features, viz., the connection of the Freemasons with Gothic architecture, and the derivation in some measure of that art or style from the East.

In his learned work—" *Europe in the Middle Ages* "—Hallam tells us :—

"Some have ascribed the principal ecclesiastical structures to the fraternity of Freemasons, depositaries of a concealed and traditionary science. There is probably some ground for this opinion; and the earlier archives of that mysterious association, if they existed, might illustrate the progress of Gothic architecture and perhaps reveal its origin."<sup>1</sup>

The passage last quoted is a typical one, and in the idea it embodies has of late years been regarded as reaching the high water mark of credulity. But, as we have seen, the essay or paper read by Professor Hayter Lewis, says, in effect, almost, if not quite the same thing, the only difference being, that in recommending a search for the origin and progress of Gothic architecture, the Professor is the more practical guide of the two, as instead of looking for archives which do not exist, he prudently counsels a careful examination of the marks or emblems wrought by the Medieval Masons—which are to be met with at this day.

It will be in the recollection of my hearers, that the Junior Warden advances a very daring hypothesis. He says:—

"In every great movement which the world has seen, some one great mind comes forth as its pioneer; nor can I think that it has been otherwise with our art."

He does not believe in the theory which would assign the change from the Norman to the Early Pointed (or Gothic) Style, to a partnership of minds, be they monks or citizens, in monasteries or guilds.

Thus, instead of a School, he boldly suggests that it is a Man, to whom we must look as the pioneer of the great architectural movement which set in during the 13th century.

"The stream can never rise above the spring-head," so, if such a master-mind there was, the genealogy of the Freemasons, so far at least as it synchronizes with the rise of Gothic architecture, is exhausted.

But let us see whether the idea thrown out by Bro. Hayter Lewis, can be utilized in the particular inquiry we are pursuing.

If the Early Pointed Style of Architecture (one of the phases of Gothic) was due to the genius and commanding personality of an individual, it may be fairly assumed, that like the youngest son of King Athelstan, as recorded in the Masonic document 2 standing next in point of antiquity to the Regius MS.,

"Of speculatyfe he was a master,"

or, in other words that he was amply skilled in the *knowledge*, as well as in the *practice*, of the science of geometry, and a proficient, so to speak, both in speculative and in operative Masonry.<sup>3</sup>

After the Early Pointed, came another phase of Gothic,<sup>4</sup> the Middle or Perfect Pointed Style, known in England by the name of Decorated. It lasted from the end of the 13th to the end of the 14th century, and during this period immense progress had been made in the *technique* of the art. Stone had become, so to speak, as ductile as wax in the hands of the builders, who had surmounted every difficulty of construction. After the Decorated Style, the finest age of Gothic architecture is at an end. Still, though English architects appear, after the close of the 14th century, to lose something in wealth of spontaneous invention, the feeling for beauty of ornamental work was not yet to decay till at least the royal chapels of Windsor, Westminster, and Cambridge, and other fascinating fan-roofed buildings, were finished,—with which the true Gothic Architecture of England went out "in a blaze of glory" under the Tudors.

<sup>1</sup> *Edit.* 1853, iii., 358.

<sup>2</sup> *Mus. Brit., Addl. MS.* 23,198, 11. 623-4.

3 The following distinction was drawn by Addison—March 1, 1711—between a speculative and a practical member of a trade or profession :— "I live in the world rather as a spectator of mankind, than as one of the species, by which means I have made myself a speculative statesman, soldier, merchant, and *artisan*, without ever meddling with any practical part in life."—*Spectator*, No. 1.

4 The usual designation, 'Gothic Style,' took its rise amongst the Italians. By it they meant to distinguish a barbarous from a classic style, and this inapt appellation has become so familiar that it is difficult to get rid of it. For want of a better name, the term 'Pointed Style ' might in all cases be preferred to a term which signifies nothing, and which is only used from force of habit.—Rosengarten, *Architectural Styles*, 288.

Yet, although with the construction of the Churches and Cathedrals of the 13th and 14th centuries, the vitality of Gothic as a pure style of construction came to an end, many futile attempts to reproduce the style were made, and the practice was continued down to the death of Queen Elizabeth (1602). But by this time the great object for which Gothic had been invented—the suitable celebration of a gorgeous religious ceremonial, by which an unlettered nation might be instructed, impressed, and governed—had ceased to exist, and after the Reformation, as soon as other means for the instruction of the people were provided, the Gothic cathedral was employed for other purposes, the Gothic style of architecture all but died out, and its constructive principles and processes, *and even its traditions*, —as I shall hereafter more particularly suggest to you—were forgotten.

Thus the decline of Mediaeval Architecture was due to natural causes, like the fall of monasticism and all things mediaeval, and the one followed suit on the other. No more churches were built, and hence the builders died out; and with them, to a great extent, I believe, died the skill in arch and vault building, which was, perhaps, the great characteristic of the builders of the Middle Ages.

Gothic, however, never quite died out, and I shall now suggest to you, that the same thing may be predicated with regard to the Symbolism of the Craft—if it existed at all, within the period covered by the rise and fall of Mediaeval Operative Masonry?

Reasoning by analogy, there is evidence from which a belief that it did exist, will spring up in many minds.

"In the oldest of the Chinese Classics—the *Book of History*—which embraces a period reaching from the twenty-fourth to the seventh century before Christ, we meet with distinct allusions to the Symbolism of the Masons' art. But even if we begin," says Mr. Giles, "where the 'Book of History' ends, we find curious masonic expressions to have been in use—at any rate in the written language—more than seven hundred years before the Christian era; that is to say, only about a couple of hundred years after the death of King Solomon himself." Also, in a famous canonical work, called THE GREAT LEARNING, which is referred to the fifth century before our era, we read, that a man should abstain from doing unto others what he would not they should do unto him; "and this," adds the writer, "is called the principle of acting on the square." Mr. Giles also quotes from Confucius, B.C. 481, and from his great follower, Mencius, who flourished nearly two hundred years later. In the writings of the last-named philosopher, it is taught that men should apply the square and compasses figuratively to their lives, and the level and the marking line besides, if they would walk in the straight and even paths of wisdom, and keep themselves within the bounds of honour and virtue. In Book VI. of his philosophy we find these words :—

"A Master Mason, in teaching his apprentices, makes use of the compasses and the square. Ye who are engaged in the pursuit of wisdom must also make use of the compasses and square."<sup>1</sup>

Bro. Chaloner Alabaster tells us:—"Going then to the records we possess of the earliest historic times in China, I find clear evidence of the existence of a mystic faith expressed in allegoric form, and illustrated, as with us, by symbols. The secrets of this faith were orally transmitted, the chiefs alone pretending to have full knowledge of them. I find, moreover, that in these earliest ages this faith took a Masonic form, the secrets being recorded in symbol buildings like to the Tabernacle Moses put up in the desert, and the Temple his successor Solomon built in Jerusalem ; that the various offices in the hierarchy of this religion were distinguished by the symbolic jewels held by them during their term of office, and that, as with us, at the rites of their religion they wore leather aprons, such as have come down to us, marked with the insignia of their rank."<sup>2</sup>

According to the same authority, the mysteries of this ancient faith have now become lost, or at best obscured, though attempts at a revival may be traced in the proceedings of existing brotherhoods, whose various rituals and signs are supposed to be in some measure founded on ancient rites and symbols which have been handed down from the earliest ages.<sup>3</sup>

1 Giles, *Freemasonry in China*, 4, 6, 8; Legge, *Chinese Classics*, i, 219-45.      2 A.Q.C., ii., 120.      3 *Ibid*.

The preceding extracts I shall use no farther than to assume, on the strength of them, that among a very ancient people, and prior to the Christian era, there was a moralization of the implements of the Masons' trade, together with a symbolical teaching which in course of time became lost or obscured.

Indeed, the first learning of the world, consisted chiefly of symbols. "The wisdom of all the Ancients that is come to our hands," says Dr. Stukeley, "is symbolic." Also, as it is well put by Dr. Barlow, "emblems, symbols, types, all have this in common : they are the representatives of something else for which they stand."<sup>1</sup>

The last definition is that upon which I shall rely, in advancing the hypothesis that with emblems, symbols, or types, the stonemasons of the 14th century were familiar.

"During the splendour of Mediaeval Operative Masonry," observes Bro. Albert Pike, "the art of building stood above all other arts, and made all others subservient to it. It commanded the services of the most brilliant intellects, and of the greatest artists."

Very much to the same effect, though somewhat differently expressed, are the remarks of Professor Rogers, who states:—

"I have never studied the history of the Craft, but there can be no reason to believe that any very important principles of so mechanical an art as architecture were incommunicable except to these mystics, if indeed the brethren for whom so remote an antiquity and so wide spread an association, is claimed by their whimsical representatives in modern times, had any virtual existence. I am disposed to believe that just as when one sense is extinguished in any person the rest are stimulated to preternatural acuteness, so in the ages with which we are concerned, when literature was so scanty, and the means of occupation so unvaried, the single art which was developed in any notable degree was studied with such intensity and concentration as to bring about results which we, in our wider modes of thought, study and application, find it difficult, if not impossible, to rival."<sup>2</sup>

It is well known that the symbolical method of instruction which had been in use from the earliest times in Egypt, was adopted by the Jews. Hence under the cloak of symbols, Pagan philosophy gradually crept into the Jewish schools, and the Platonic doctrines, mixed first with Pythagorean, and afterwards with the Egyptian and Oriental, were blended with their ancient faith in their explanations of the law and the traditions. The society of the Therapeutae was formed after the model of the Pythagorean system; Aristobulus, Philo, and others, studied the Grecian philosophy, and the Cabbalists formed their mystic system upon the foundation of the tenets taught in the Alexandrian schools.

From various causes, between the third century and the tenth, but few traces of the Cabbalistic mysteries are to be met with in the writings of the Jews, but their peculiar learning began to revive when the Saracens became the patrons of philosophy, and their schools subsequently migrated to Spain, where they attained the highest distinction. These in the 13th and 14th centuries became the resort of Christian artisans, to instruct themselves in the useful arts. The Universities of Toledo, Cordova, Seville, and Granada, were sought by the pale student from other lands, to acquaint himself with the sciences of the Arabs, and the treasured lore of antiquity.

There can, indeed, be little or any doubt, that with the termination of Mediaeval operative Masonry, many of the most abstruse and abstract principles of the building art were wholly lost. For this a reason has been suggested—which may possibly be true—that these principles were presented in symbolic form.

But however this may be, it is at least certain that in the 13th and 14th centuries, the unlimited resources of architectural skill were everywhere applied to develop divine ideas through symbolized stone. The single object which presented itself to the Masonic architect was to find suitable expressions for the heart yearnings and moral aspirations of the people.<sup>3</sup> Nor was symbolization unknown to the actual workmen or stone-masons. Our early operative brethren, though somewhat coarse, were in their way, extremely witty. Stone caricatures are still to be met with, equal in strength and coarseness to those of Rowlandson and Gillray, nor need we be astonished to find a good deal turn upon the clergy, as do a great number of those of our English draughtsmen, especially in the matter of tithes; and these, together with indecencies which are, after all, not quite unknown in more refined ages, were probably the amusements of grimly-humourous workmen, when they thought they could indulge in them without fear of discovery. Thus in old churches and cathedrals we find portrayed, a nun in the embraces of a monk, a Pope descending to hell at the last judgment, a fox in priest's robes preaching to a congregation of geese, an ass performing high mass, etc.

1 *Proc. R.I.B.A., ii., 97.*

2 *History of Agriculture and Prices in England, from 1259 to 1793, i., 257.*

3 Fort, *Antiquities of Freemasonry, 154.*

That the class of workmen last referred to, possessed some knowledge of architectural symbolism, or to use more familiar words, that they symbolised the implements of their trade, has been assumed by many writers, a conclusion to which I am also led, and although incapable of strict proof, may, as it seems to me, be fortified to some slight extent by analogy.

We have already seen that during the splendour of Mediaeval Operative Masonry, the art of building, stood at the head of all the other arts, but there is a remarkable circumstance connected with the Masons' trade, to which I shall next advert, in further illustration of its unquestionable supremacy.

*By no other craft in Great Britain has documentary evidence been furnished of its having claimed at any time a legendary or traditional history.*

Our written traditions are carried back—speaking roundly—to the 14th century, and to me at least, it does not appear one whit more extraordinary, that our symbolical traditions may have enjoyed an existence in a period of time equally remote.

This leads us to the next branch of my general subject, the written traditions of the Freemasons, in the earliest of which, as we shall presently see, there is much to confirm the idea I have already thrown out, that symbolical Masonry was coeval with the most ancient writings of the Craft that have come down to us.

To pass, however, to our written traditions,—there are in the first instance, two histories of, or disquisitions upon, Masonry or Geometry, dating—according to the British Museum Authorities—from about—1425, and afterwards a long series of documents dating from about 150 years later, to which the name of Manuscript Constitutions has been applied. Of the two histories or disquisitions, one is in metrical and the other in prose<sup>1</sup> form, and it is with the former, the Regius MS. or Masonic poem, (in the present inquiry) that we are alone concerned. This manuscript, evidently belonged to a guild or fraternity of Masons, as it gives the legendary history of their Craft, and furnishes regulations for their conduct. But it is chiefly remarkable on account of the last hundred lines being almost exactly the same as a non-Masonic-poem, called *Urbanitatis*\*, giving minute directions for behaviour—in the presence of a lord—at table—and among ladies—all of which being clearly intended for *gentlemen* of those days, it has been argued, would have been out of place in a code of manners drawn up for the use of a Guild or Craft of artisans, and hence that the MS. must have been possessed by a Guild or fraternity, which commemorated the science, but without practising the art of masonry, that is, that they were what we should now call, speculative or Symbolical Masons.<sup>2</sup>

\* Note: The *Urbanitatis* noted above may be read at the end of this present transcription – g.l.h.

It is stated, in the introduction to the Masonic Poem, that the craft of geometry was founded in Egypt by Euclid, and given the name of Masonry; and in reference thereto, Bro. Albert Pike<sup>3</sup> says:—"Many of the symbols of the old religions, of Pythagoras, and of the Hermetics of later days, were geometrical figures. Some of these were symbolic because they represented certain numbers, even among the Assyrians and Babylonians. To the knowledge of these symbols, perhaps, the name 'geometry' was given, to avert suspicions and danger. The architects of churches revelled in symbolism of the most recondite kind. The Pyramids are wonders of Geometrical science. **Geometry was the handmaid of Symbolism. Symbolism, it may be said, is speculative Geometry.**"

1 *Brit. Mus. Add. MS., 23,138*; to be published in the next volume of our reprints, with a commentary by the Secretary.

2 *Quatuor Coronatorum Antigrapha, i., 49, 50.*

3 To quote still further from the same high authority:—"I am quite ready to believe, and think it can be shown, that there had been symbolism in Masonry long before 1717, but that the working-class of Masons in the Lodges had no knowledge of it, it being

confined to the men who, of another class, united themselves with the Lodges. If that was even so, those Lodges which had no members of that class had no symbolism in their Masonry. So that I do not think we can be warranted in *assuming* that, among Masons generally,—in the *body* of Masonry,—the symbolism of Free-Masonry is of earlier date than 1717: while I think you *can* prove, that among Freemasons of a certain class and limited number, the same symbolism, or a larger part of the same, afterwards placed in the degrees, did exist before, perhaps some centuries before, 1717."

Too much weight cannot be attached to any conclusions of Bro. Albert Pike, and especially with regard to Masonic Symbolism. Hence, I gladly reproduce in this note, a view that is in direct opposition to my own.

Like our excellent Bro. Pike, I believe in the hoar antiquity of Masonic Symbolism; but unlike him, I also believe that it had become the inheritance of "the working class of Masons in the [English] Lodges," before 1717. By whom it was originally introduced, and when, are questions, however, towards the solution of which I can only cherish the hope that the present paper may in some slight degree pave the way.

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In the preceding views all indeed, may not concur, but the point should not escape us, that in the oldest writing of our Craft—for such the Regius MS. undoubtedly is— *we meet with inculcations which are very far removed from the mental range of the operative brethren to whom the Manuscript Constitutions were rehearsed at a later era.*

This will accord with the supposition that Masonry as a speculative science, declined or fell into decay, *pari passu*, with Masonry as an operative art.

Leaving these two histories of, or disquisitions upon Masonry, which date as before stated, at about the year 1425, let me next take you to the Manuscript Constitutions, of which the oldest dated form is the "Grand Lodge" MS. of the year 1583.

Between these two periods there is a gap of 158 years, and with regard to it there are some considerations for which a further quotation will assist in preparing us.

The Rev. W. Denton, in his *England in the 16th Century*, tells us:—

"What was true of morals and material wealth, was true also of art. Architecture had yielded to the spirit of the age; it had lost much of its nobleness, though it had not yet descended to the depths it afterwards reached. The hand of the English sculptor had grown stiff, and the forms from his chisel no longer vied in grace with the productions of the Italian artist. Henry III. came to the Throne at the close of the long and savage War of the Roses. During the continuance of the struggle the nation went back in many ways from the refinement of the 14th century. The cultivation even of house fruits ceased with the ruin of houses and manors and the desolation of orchards and gardens. The population dwindled. The arts lost their vigour and beauty. The architecture, sculpture and metal work were not equal to what they had been, and fresh life was needed when peace was once more secured.

In the beginning of the reign of Henry VIII, we have the complaint of Sir Thomas Elyot, which would have sounded strange in the ears of a contemporary of Edward I., that "in painting and carving, in graving and embroidery, Englishmen be inferior to all other people."<sup>1</sup>

In Scotland, the deterioration of the arts was even greater. "The victory of Bannockburn drove from Scotland the very elements of its growing civilization and its material wealth. The artisans of North Britain were at that time mostly English. These retired, or were driven from Scotland, and with them the commercial importance of the Scottish towns was lost. The estates held by Englishmen in Scotland were confiscated, and the wealth which, through the hands of these proprietors had found its way from the southern parts of the kingdom and fertilized the more barren soil of the north, at once ceased.

No cathedral was built after the reign of David I. in 1153, and almost every monastery was founded before the death of Alexander III. in 1286. All these marks of refined taste and religious zeal, of wealth and public spirit ceased with the rebellion of Bruce.<sup>2</sup>

It will be seen therefore, that while England went back many degrees in civilization during the Wars of the Roses, an even greater relapse into comparative anarchy took place in Scotland owing to the War of Independence.

These historical gleanings will aid our comprehension of the extreme simplicity of the Scottish Masonic ritual, as generally known to have existed, in the 17th century. In what was then the leading Magazine of the Craft, Bro. W. P. Buchan—at that time one of the foremost investigators of Scottish Masonic history—thus expressed himself in 1869:— "Seeing how difficult it is even now, with all the aids to help and oft-recurring meetings, to get office-bearers and brethren to work our ceremonies properly, how did the old Lodges get on before 1717, who only met once a year? Oh, how elaborate must the ceremony have been, when one Mason could make another? Or, where could brethren learn our present system, had such been in use before 1717?"<sup>3</sup>

To indulge in a further quotation from the same writer:—"Those who indulge in dreams about the mysterious sciences (!) taught in pre-eighteenth century Masons' Lodges, only retail the groundless fancies of a heated imagination, while those who assert that the Masons occupied a higher position in the public estimation than any of the other Crafts are mistaken. The old Weavers used to carry a pretty high head, and Edward III, of England joined the 'Linen Armourers,' and if it were properly looked into, in a truthful manner, we would find that the operative Masons some centuries ago were no greater geniuses than they are at present. In fact, [*and here I ask your special attention*], the question is open to investigation whether the progress of the art of building, say in Britain, e.g., has it or has it not kept pace with the progress of the other arts ?"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Denton, 123; Pollen, *Gold and Silversmith's Work*, 233-35; Sir Thos. Elyot, *The Governor*, 46.

<sup>2</sup> Denton, 39. <sup>3</sup> *Freemason's Magazine*, (1869), 409. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 483.

I have quoted from Bro. Buchan, for whom as a Masonic student I have a great respect, for a double purpose. First of all because he puts into vigorous and incisive language a theory or belief, which is in direct opposition to the hypothesis I am presenting to you this evening ; and secondly, because from the point of view I am now arguing, I think it can be shown that both facts on which he bases his own inference, viz., the decay of the building art, and the simplicity of the Lodge ceremonial before



1717, may equally well represent cause and effect, and if so, not only do not militate against, but are in exact harmony with, the line of argument I am submitting for your consideration.

Let me now return to the Manuscript Constitutions, whose place in Masonic history I shall next attempt to define.

You may have noticed just now, that while alluding to the early Scottish Masonic ceremonial, I said nothing about its English equivalent. Of this indeed, we know little or nothing, for the Manuscript Constitutions, which, in a certain sense, may be described as "tombs without an epitaph," convey very scanty information with regard to living Freemasonry in the South. We know indeed, that they were used, *i.e.*, read over to candidates of the operative class, at their reception into the Lodge, but as to the formulary observed at the admission of gentlemen we are ignorant.<sup>1</sup>

Lodge minutes there are none, that is, of earlier date than the 18th century, and here a word of caution must be thrown out, against the too prevalent habit of confounding the systems of Masonry prevailing in Scotland and England respectively, the one with the other.

It is of course both easy and natural to do so. Each system presents some evidence in which the other is lacking, but we shall find I think in both cases, that like streams of water flowing in divergent courses from a common source, they have grown more impure the farther they have run from the fountain-head.

In both countries, during the 17th century, there was speculative as well as operative membership in these Lodges. Yet a difference is found which should be noted. In Scotland, the Lodges existed for trade purposes, but in England not exclusively so, indeed, quite the reverse, if we limit our observation to the only 17th century Lodges, of which any particulars have come down to us.

From this it will at least be a plausible conjecture—I shall put it no higher for the present—that while in the one instance—Scotland—the ancient symbolism of Masonry had descended to the level of the ordinary artisan; in the other instance—England—more of the old framework still existed.

Much light would be shed on this point if there were English minutes to refer to, but as the English Lodges were not kept together for trade purposes—like the Scotch—they must have some other *raison d'être* for their continuance, which if it were not a fuller ceremonial, and more ornate ritual, than was usual in the North—lands us in a still greater puzzle than that which we are attempting to solve.

I have already stated on the authority of Sir William Dugdale, what in the 17th century appears to have been the popular belief with regard to the Freemasons, and let us not forget, that:—

"Common fame,  
Is seldom to blame."

The Freemasons, we are told by Dugdale, "are known to one another by certayn signes & watch-words .1 . The manner of their adoption is *very formall*."

That there was a plurality of signs, we also find stated by Dr. Plot, in 1686,<sup>2</sup> and a plurality of "words and signes" is attested by a manuscript dating from about 1665.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> While anxious not to overload the text with digressions, I cannot resist the temptation of suggesting in a note, that in attempting to explore the remote past of our Society, a careful study of the written should precede that of the symbolical traditions of Masonry. For this many reasons might be assigned, but I shall content myself by giving one, which is, that (as stated above) of the ancient formulary of reception, we are only certain with regard to a single point,—*the legend and laws of the Craft were rehearsed*. That "the manner of adoption was very formall," we also know, though only in a general way, but the said rehearsal and formality really constitute all that is absolutely known of the symbolism (as forming a part of the ceremonial) of the early Lodges.

<sup>2</sup> *Nat. Hist. of Staffordshire*, 316-18. <sup>3</sup> *Hart, ML*, MM,

In 1709, that is to say, eight years prior to the establishment of the earliest of Grand Lodges, Mr. (afterwards Sir Richard) Steele, wrote, in a journal called the *Tatler*, about a certain class of people, of whom he says :—

"*They have their signs and tokens like Free-Masons.*"

In 1717, as previously explained, the Grand Lodge of England was founded by four London Lodges, and as for about two hundred years all the London Companies have, with insignificant exceptions, ceased to be connected in any real way with the trades whose names they bear, I must not exclude any evidence from which it has or may be contended, that the Society, remodeled in 1717, was a Company of Freemasons, that at some previous time had relinquished the occupation which gave them a name. Such evidence will be found in *Harl. MS.*, 1942, and the *Antiquity MS*. These are copies or versions of the MS. Constitutions, and in the former which as a written document dates from about the beginning of the 17th century, the following occurs among the charges and inculcations :—

4th ly. "You shall secure and keepe secret the obscure and intricate parts of the science, not disclosing them to any but such as study & use the same."

The same MS. uses the expression "accepted free Mason," who is required to provide himself with a certificate from the Lodge that "accepted him," and there is a clause which I quote at length :—

"That for the future the sayd Society, Companies, & fraternity of Freemasons shall bee regulated, & governed by one Master, & Assembly, & Wardens, as ye said Company shall think fit to chose, at every yearely generall Assembly."

The "Antiquity" MS., the other copy of the MS. Constitutions, has the following attestation clause:—

"Written by **Robert Padgett**, Clearke to the Worshippfull **Society** of the Free **Masons** of the City of **London** in the second yeare of the Raigne of our most Gracious Sovereign Lord **King James** the Second of England, &c. Annoq Domini, 1686."

Here, then, we have two pieces of evidence, one telling us that in the beginning of the 17th century, the government of the Society, Company, and fraternity of Free Masons, was confided to one Master, Assembly, and Wardens. And the other, that towards the close of the same century, viz., in 1686, there was a copy of the MS. Constitutions, written by the clerk of "the Worshippfull Society of the Free Masons of the City of London," which it is possible may have been the identical Society, Company, or fraternity of Free Masons, founded, or as it were, welded together, about 60 or 70 years previously.

These documents, however, leave much to be desired. They come down to us very insufficiently attested, and are uncorroborated by evidence from any other quarter, which would be admissible in a court of law. The silence, therefore, of all the other versions of the Manuscript Constitutions with regard to points of such importance, and as one might naturally suppose, of such notoriety, has led most students to regard them as among those puzzles that are occasionally met with in Masonic history, which in the absence of further evidence are insoluble.<sup>1</sup>

Still, "all feet tread not in one shoe," and I must not omit to state, in fairness to a minority of students, who may be satisfied as to the authenticity of these documents—that in the City Companies there have always been three grades of members. The first was that of freeman or freewoman; the second, membership of the livery; and the third a seat in the Court. Here, some may think we have the framework of our three degrees of Speculative or Symbolical Masonry.

The foundation of the Grand Lodge of England was a great event, and has been styled "the *Revival*, of A.D. 1717," which indeed it may have been, though not in the sense generally employed, viz., as the resuscitation of a pre-existing Grand Lodge. The late Bro. Woodford said with much force:—"Where did the Freemasonry of 1717 come from? To accept for one moment the suggestion that so complex and curious a system, embracing so many archaic remains, and such skilfully adjusted ceremonies, so much connected matter, accompanied by so many striking symbols, could have been the creation of a pious fraud or ingenious conviviality, presses heavily on our powers of belief, and even passes over the normal credulity of our species. *The traces of antiquity are too many to be overlooked or ignored.*"

Nor is it indeed, in my own judgment, entertainable for an instant, that the old London Masons of 1717 would have looked calmly on, had the forms and ceremonies to which they were accustomed been as suddenly metamorphosed, as it has become, to some considerable extent the fashion to believe.

Neither can we credit that at the close of Ancient, and the beginning of Modern, Masonry, there was an instantaneous change of actors—the old party retiring and the new one coming in. One generation of men, as Hume remarks, does not go off the stage at once, and another succeed, as is the case with silkworms and butterflies.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is worthy of recollection, however, that beginning with the earliest period of *Modern* Masonry, there has been a great falsification of Masonic documents. Thus, the old M.S. Constitutions were freely "embellished" by Dr. Anderson, and subsequently a variety of spurious Charters and MS., alleged to be both Ancient and Masonic, found their way into print. See further, *Hist. of F.*, chap. xi. (*Apocryphal MSS.*), and *A-Q.C.*, i., 80. (Forged versions of the M.S. Constitutions).

<sup>2</sup> *A.Q.C.* i., 30. s *Essays*, ii., 12.

The continuity of the Society, which was maintained by a constant succession of new members, may be compared to that of a woven cloth, the stitches of which interlace, so that its texture is not divisible into intervals or stages.

It was thus very different from the continuity of any one Lodge, which perhaps may be likened to that of a chain formed of single links.

Four Lodges, at least, took part in the so-called "Revival" of 1717, and both the Grand Master (Sayer), and the Grand Senior Warden (Lamball), then elected, remained active members of the Grand Lodge, until long after the "Epoch of Transition."

But I must proceed by steps. The Society of Freemasons established on a new basis in 1717, made very slow progress in public favour. Dr. Stukely, the celebrated antiquary, tells us in his diary, under the date of January 6th, 1721—on which day he was initiated—"I was the first person made a Freemason in London for many years. We had great difficulty to find members enough to perform the ceremony. Immediately upon that it took a run, and ran itself out of breath thro' the folly of the members."

The "run" referred to by Dr. Stukely, took place, no doubt, owing to the *prestige* acquired by the Society in the same year, through the acceptance by the Duke of Montagu of the Grand Mastership, and it was also in the same year, 1721, that Mr. James Anderson, a Scottish Presbyterian Minister was selected by the Grand Master and Grand Lodge to revise the old, or Manuscript Constitutions of the fraternity—which saw the light in 1723.

Mr., or as he afterwards became, Dr. Anderson, was, as you already know, a graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen, and I shall now submit to you the extreme probability that he was also a graduate of the Masonic Lodge in that city.

The three degrees of pure and ancient Masonry, viz., those of Master Mason, Fellow Craft,<sup>1</sup> and Entered Apprentice, bear titles which were evidently borrowed from the vocabulary of Scotland. Master Mason, it is true, was a term common in both kingdoms, but viewed in conjunction with the others, the *three* expressions may be regarded as having been taken *en bloc*, from the operative terminology of the northern kingdom.

All these expressions will be found in the Schaw Statutes—1598—the records of Mary's Chapel, Edinburgh—1601—and the Laws of the Aberdeen Lodge—1670—(Scottish documents). But the same terms—Master Mason, Fellow Craft, and Entered Apprentice, as *grades of symbolical Masonry*, are not alluded to in any book or manuscript of earlier date than 1723. Indeed, with the exception of the first-named—Master Mason—the expressions themselves do not occur—at least I have never met with them in the course of my reading—in the records of the building trades, or in the printed or manuscript literature of England preceding the publication of Dr. Anderson's "Book of Constitutions," produced according to the mandate received by him from the Grand Lodge of England, in 1723.

The question then is, whence did the doctor derive them? which renders it essential that we should take a closer view of the system of Masonry, under which there can be little or any doubt, that he himself had acquired his knowledge of the Craft.

The oldest register of the Aberdeen Lodge, is dated 1670, and contains the names of 49 members, who are described as "the Authoires of and Subscryuers of this Book."

The Master was "Harrie Elphinstone," collector of the King's Customs. Four noblemen were among the members, and of the whole 49, eight only are estimated to have been operative Masons. From this circumstance it is usually supposed, and I think rightly, that the large speculative membership of the Lodge must date back many years at least.

The 11th signature in the register is that of the Scribe, described as

"James Anderson, Glassier and Measson, and wreatter of this book,"

And curiously enough, his namesake, Dr. James Anderson, the Presbyterian Minister, not only imitates the form in which the signatures are shown on the Aberdeen roll, when he gives the names of the representatives of the English Lodges who signed the 1st Book of Constitutions in 1723, but also fills in his own as

"James Anderson, A. M. )  
The **Author** of this **Book.**" ) Master.

This strengthens the presumption of Dr. Anderson's connection with the Lodge, as well as with the University of Aberdeen, and there is further evidence from which the same may be inferred, though space forbids my doing more than indicate where it may be found.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Fellow" (or "Master"), is the *English* equivalent for the *Scottish* "Fellow-Craft" (or "Master"). Thus Elias Ashmole says in his diary—11th March, 1682—"I was the Senior *Fellow* among them," and he gives the names of the other "*Fellowes*" also present at the Lodge held at Mason's Hall, London. "Good Brethren and Fellowes," meaning Apprentices, and (in the old sense) "pass'd Masters" who had been admitted to the freedom of their Craft—are expressions which will be found in most versions of the MS. Constitutions. They come in directly after the Invocation, and immediately before the Legend of the Guild.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. of F., ii., 292, 354; iii., 472.*

Among the "Lawes and Statutes" ordained by the Lodge of Aberdeen, on the 27th December, 1670, are the following:—

"Wee ordaine that no Lodge be holden within a dwelling house where there is people living in it, but in the open fields except it be ill weather, and then let a house be chosen that no person shall heir or sie us. (3rd stat.)

"Wee ordaine lykwayes that all entering prentiseses be entered in our antient outfield Lodge, in the mearnes in the parish of Negg, at the stonnies at the poynnt of the Ness." (5th stat.)

Now it is very remarkable that we have here, in these "Lawes" of the Aberdeen Lodge of 1670, the *only* evidence which throws any light whatever on the actual ritual of the Ancient Masons—by which I mean the catechism or formulary, in use at the reception of a new member, prior to the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717.

There is absolutely no evidence at all from English sources, and only the above quoted laws from any Scottish one.

It was the practice, as we have seen, of the Aberdeen Masons, to hold their Lodge and enter their apprentices in the open air. Next let me read you some extracts from publications which appeared after Dr. Anderson had printed his book of Constitutions in 1723.

The 1st is from the "Mason's Examination," also published in 1723. It runs:—

Q. Where was you made?

A. In the valley of Jehosophet, behind a Rush-bush, where a Dog was never heard to bark, or Cock crow, or elsewhere.

The 2nd is from "The Grand Mystery of the Freemasons Discover'd," printed in 1724:—

Q. How many make a Lodge?

A. God and the Square, with Five or Seven right and perfect Masons, on the highest Mountains, or the lowest Valleys in the World.

The 3rd is from "Masonry dissected," 1730.

Q. Where does the Lodge stand?

A. Upon Holy Ground, or the highest Hill, or lowest Vale, or in the Vale of Jehosaphat, or any other Secret Place.

Now if we look closely into these catechisms,—that of 1723, mentions the "Valley of Jehosophet," but *not* the highest hills and lowest valleys." The next one, of 1724, does just the opposite,—the "Valley of Jehosophat" is *not* named, but "the highest Mountains, and lowest Valleys" *are*; while in the catechism of 1730 we find both phrases in full—from which we may, I think, conclude, that by incorporating what was given in the two others, it really goes back beyond or behind them, and reproduces in an ampler form, many details of a still earlier catechism than has come down to us.

These pretended revelations must be handled with due caution. In the year 1730, Deputy Grand Master Blackerby spoke in the Grand Lodge of the author of "Masonry Dissected" as "an Impostor," and "of his Book as a foolish thing not to be regarded." But even a sullied stream is a blessing compared to a total drought, and in the absence of evidence upon which we can confidently rely, even waifs and strays from the most tainted sources are not to be disregarded, provided they bear at least the impress of antiquity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> e.g., Sloane M.S. 3320, has:—"To Discourse a Mason in France, Spain, or Turkey, the signe is to kneel Down on his left knee and hold up his right hand to the sunn, and the out landish Brothr will presently take him up but [adds the compiler, who is evidently a bit of a wag], beleive me if they go on their knees on that accot they may remain there." *Per contra*, however, and as illustrating the position maintained in the text, the same MS. states that by virtue of a particular sign, a Mason must come down if required to do so from the top of a steeple. This, though also ridiculous, and doubtless equally devoid of real meaning, nevertheless lends colour to

the statement of Dr. Plot, that something precisely similar was included among the traditional observances of the Staffordshire Masons in 1686.—See *A. Q. C.*, i., 69.

We may assume, however, from the publications I have cited, without endeavouring either to reconcile their discrepancies, which would be a manifest impossibility, or to look for meanings which probably never had any existence, that the practice of Lodges meeting, and of persons being made Masons, in the open air, and under conditions favourable for secrecy, was at least an article of popular belief in 1723-30, and in it we find an echo or survival of the usage so strictly enjoined by the statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, in 1670.

Upon this two claims may be founded,—the first, that many real customs observed in Modern Masonry (1723-30), may also rest on a similar basis of antiquity, although no actual proofs are forthcoming: and secondly, if any part whatever of the ritual of Modern Masonry was founded on the Ancient Masonry prevailing at Aberdeen in 1670, it would again be carried back—but how far I will leave you to decide for yourselves—as it is a moral certainty that the customs of a Lodge composed of forty-nine members, of whom all but eight were Speculative or Symbolical Masons, had not all grown up in a day.

Whether the Masonry of Aberdeen, and inferentially of that existing in some other parts of Scotland, was *sui generis*, or an importation from England, cannot be determined, but the latter supposition, if we accord due weight to the predominance of operative Masonry as a living art, in the South, seems to be the more probable of the two.

The next question for our consideration is, did Dr. Anderson remodel the ancient ritual as well as the ancient laws of the Freemasons? The subject however is enveloped by too much confusion for a definite reply to be possible. It is probable that he did, and that we owe to him the introduction of the Scottish operative titles, and the expansion of the system of degrees, though it is quite possible that the third degree, by which I do not mean a new ceremony, but an alteration in the method of imparting the old ones, was the work of other hands.

In Dr. Anderson's Book of Constitutions, 1723, two grades only of Freemasons are mentioned, Entered Apprentice, and Fellow Craft or Master, the same as existed in the Lodge of Aberdeen. But about 1725 the titles of Fellow Craft and Master became disjoined, and as Dr. Anderson was absent from the deliberations of the Grand Lodge of England, between June 1724 and June 1731, it is perhaps a fair inference that he was not concerned in the alteration.

To sum up. It is, I think, abundantly clear, that the Masonic body had its first origin in the trades-unions of Mediaeval operatives, but we must now ask ourselves, whether there was a Survival of their Symbolism,—or indeed if they possessed any at all—when Ancient Masonry put on its Modern attire, and became as it has since continued to be, a purely speculative science.

In other words, did the Freemasons of 1717, and later, retain, many forms, ceremonies, words, and symbols, which they derived from their direct ancestors, the Working Masons.

Before, however, adducing the strongest evidence I possess, in favour of the antiquity of our existing Masonic Symbolism, and which I have purposely kept back until the last moment, let me briefly state a counter-theory that has its supporters.

It is, that some men, being learned in astrology, alchemy, and cabbalistic lore generally, were also Freemasons, and took advantage of this circumstance to indoctrinate their colleagues with their own fantastic belief, and so, under the cloak, and by means of the organization of Freemasonry, to preserve tenets which might otherwise have fallen into complete oblivion.

According to Vaughan, "Mysticism has no Genealogy. The same round of notions, occurring to minds of similar make, under similar circumstances, is common to mystics in ancient India and in modern Christendom.<sup>1</sup> The same writer observes:—"As the revival of letters spread over Europe, the taste for antiquity and natural science began to claim its share in the freedom won for theology; the pretensions of the Cabbala, of Hermes, of NeoPlatonist Theurgy became identified with the cause of progress."<sup>2</sup>

1. Hoars with the Mystics, i., 60.      2. Ibid, ii., 30.

I shall pass lightly over a subject which has lain out of my course of study, and is, perhaps, beyond my sphere of comprehension. But I believe it may be assumed, that according to the theory of which I am trying to give you an outline, the mystical knowledge or symbolism of the Craft, is supposed to have been introduced into the Lodges by the Hermetical philosophers, or Rosicrucian adepts, whose studies appear to have embraced the same objects, and between whom therefore the only difference seems to have been one of title, the former appellation being the earlier of the two, but the latter (owing to the alleged existence of a *Society* of Rosicrucians, with which, however, the *other Rosicrucians* must not be confounded) ultimately becoming the more common term by which those votaries of the "Chymical Art," or " Sons of the Fire," were alluded to.

It has been maintained by some writers, that the influence of Hermeticism upon Masonry, made itself felt during the time of Elias Ashmole, while by others it is affirmed that the symbolism of our Society is of much later institution, and that it came to us after 1717, at the hands of the Rosicrucians.

There is also a third contention—to which I have previously referred—partaking of the other two, and it is that Hermetic symbolism had penetrated into Masonry, *before*, "but that the working-class of Masons in the Lodges had no knowledge of it," until *after*, the era of Grand Lodges.

With regard to these several theories, I shall first of all put the following case. Let us suppose that we find in an individual certain habits or idiosyncracies, and that it is confidently asserted that he has inherited them from his grandfather. Further, let us imagine that with regard to his intermediate ancestor, no information whatever is forthcoming, and I think it represents fairly enough, the stretch of faith that is required of us, to yield an implicit assent to the dogma of Hermetic ancestry with which we are presented.

We should, in the one case, I think, endeavour to trace the *immediate paternity* of the individual whose habits or idiosyncracies were the subject of consideration, and this is precisely what I shall ask you to assist me in doing in the other case.

Under the Grand Lodge of England, within the first decade of its existence, there was a ceremonial, or, to vary the expression, certain ritual and emblematical observances were wrought in the Lodges, and whether these were then new or old, is, shortly stated, the main issue for our determination.

If I notice the fact that the Hermeticists or Rosicrucians, are not known to have practised themselves, any mystic or symbolical ceremonies which they could have passed on to the Freemasons, it is merely that I may proceed with the observation, that what is incapable of proof, is of course equally incapable of refutation.

But these alchemical philosophers did not pursue their curious studies in one country only, and why if they fraternized with, or in any way made use of, the Masons of Britain (or their organization), they should have as resolutely refrained from doing the same thing on the Continent, is a mystery of which the explanation is withheld from us.

Much weight has been attached to the undoubted fact that Elias Ashmole was both an Hermetical philosopher, and a Freemason. Still, conjecture must not be allowed to take the place of evidence, and we may well ask for the requisite information that will enable us to consider the influence of Hermeticism as it appears in the general body of Masonry, and not as it was circumstanced in any individual member of the Craft.

Bro. Albert Pike tells us, in words which are so beautifully chosen, that I shall need no apology for reproducing them:—

"The Symbolism of Masonry is the Soul of Masonry. Every symbol of the Lodge is a religious teacher, the mute teacher also of morals and philosophy. It is in its ancient symbols and in the knowledge of its true meanings, that the pre-eminence of Freemasonry over all other Orders consists. In other respects some of them may compete with it, rival it, perhaps even excel it; but, by its symbolism, it will reign without a peer *when it learns again what its symbols mean*, and that each is the embodiment of some great, old, rare truth."<sup>1</sup>

You will have in your immediate recollection, the words to which I specially invited your attention:—"When it learns again what its symbols mean." They proclaim a truth which is a cardinal feature of the theory or hypothesis that I am presenting to you this evening.

It is, that the meaning of a great part of our Masonic Symbolism has been forgotten, and here I shall proceed to show you, why in my judgment there are grounds for believing that this partial obliteration of its import *must* have taken place before the era of Grand Lodges.

If this view be tenable, then we may put on one side the suggestion that "the legend of the Third Degree was introduced by the new comers into Masonry, who brought into it all that is really symbolic and philosophical in the Three Degrees."<sup>2</sup>

It is unlikely—not to say impossible—that any men of intellectual attainments, who joined the Craft under the Grand Lodge of England, during the first decade of its existence, would have introduced any Symbolism of which they did not understand the meaning, and I think it can be very easily shewn from the ceremonial of that period, that it must have been quite as obscure and unintelligible in many parts, in those days as it is in our own.

But as a preliminary, let us hear what a Commentator on one of the printed catechisms wrote with regard to it at the time of its publication.

Dr. Anderson himself is said to have been the writer, though I deem this to be incorrect, but the piece was written by someone possessing great ability, and was reprinted in the Book of Constitutions, 1738. It was styled "A Defence of Masonry," and the design of the 3rd chapter was to remove the general impression produced by the publication of *Masonry Dissected*, "that the principles and the whole frame of Free-Masonry was so very weak and ridiculous, that it reflected upon Men of the least Understanding to be concerned in it." In proof of which, it was alleged that the "Dissection" discovered "nothing but an unintelligible Heap of Stuff and Jargon, without Common Sense or Connection."

Upon this, the learned and ingenious author of the "Defence," who professed it to be his object to make "a few impartial Remarks upon the *Dissection*, without contending for the Reputation of Masonry on the one hand, or reflecting upon the *Dissector* on the other," observes:—

"I confess I am of another opinion . . . the system as taught in the regular Lodges, may have some redundancies or defects, occasioned by the indolence or ignorance of the old Members. And, indeed, considering through what obscurity and darkness the Mystery has been delivered down; the many centuries it has Survived; the many countries, and languages, and sects, and parties it has run thro," we are rather to wonder it ever arrived to the present Age without more Imperfections. In short—I am apt to think that Masonry, *as it is now explained* [I ask your alteration to these words, which are in italics in the original], has in some circumstances declined from its original purity: it has run long in muddy streams, and as it were, underground; but notwithstanding the great rust it may have contracted, there is, (if I judge right) much of the old Fabrick still remaining: the Foundation is still intire; the essential Pillars of the Building may be seen through the Rubbish, though the Superstructure may be over run with Moss and Ivy, and the Stones by length of time disjointed.

And, therefore, as the *Busto* of an old Hero is of great value among the curious, though it has lost an Eye, the Nose, or the Right Hand, so *Masonry* with all its blemishes and misfortunes, instead of appearing ridiculous, ought (in my humble opinion) to be received with some Candour and esteem from a Veneration to its Antiquity."<sup>3</sup>

The passage I have just read to you, lends no colour to the supposition that any new comer into Masonry could have remodelled the ancient ritual. Indeed, as you have seen, by the general public, "the principles, and the whole frame of Free-Masonry was deemed so weak and ridiculous, that it reflected upon men of the least understanding to be concerned in it."

Of this a further example is afforded by some inuendoes in the "Ode to the Grand Khaibar, 41726, which besides allusions to the "unintelligible Gabble," and "Solemn Fooleries," of the Freemasons, has the following:—

1. *Official Bulletin* (U.S.A.) Sup. Council, S.J., viii., app. 16.
2. A.Q.C. ii., 43.
3. *A Defence of Masonry*, 105, 106.
4. Q.C.A. i., pt. ii., No. 5.

"With empty Names of Kings and Lords  
The MYSTIC LODGE may sooth the Fancy,  
Words without Meaning it affords,  
And Signs without significancy."

But to pass into a higher sphere of criticism, we may infer from the "Defence of Masonry" having been reprinted with the Book of Constitutions, 1738, that in the opinion of the leading Masonic authorities, the ancient " Fabrick" (of Masonry) had sustained such ravages at the hands of time and neglect, as to raise doubts as to *how much of it* was "still remaining."<sup>1</sup>

The proper thing to do, however, is to examine the ritual for ourselves, and here, as time presses, I must ask those brethren who are unacquainted with its peculiar phraseology to at least so far yield me their confidence, as to believe in my statement that it abounds with archaisms, which are clearly survivals of more ancient forms of speech. I will also premise, that in choosing a title for this paper, I have been influenced by the consideration, that while the Symbolism of Ancient Masonry may have embraced many things that were absent from its Ceremonial, still all we can learn of the former must be derived from our actual knowledge of the latter—a fragment it may well be, of the symbolic teaching of more remote ages, but nevertheless, all that we can rely upon with any approach to certainty, as affording a real clue to the lost secrets of the Society.

[A verbal exposition was then given of the early ritual and ceremonial under the Grand Lodge of England, together with typical illustrations of the lost meanings of some portions of the Symbolism of Masonry.<sup>2</sup>]

That the Symbolism of Masonry existed before the era of Grand Lodges (1717) is, I think, a point upon which, if we reflect at all, there can be little or any variety of opinion. But if the minor contention, which has been laid before you, is established to your satisfaction, you will find, I think, that you are carried a very great way towards accepting the major one.

In other words, if the symbolism (or ceremonial) of Masonry is older than the year 1717, there is practically no limit whatever of age that can be assigned to it. *After* the formation of a Grand Lodge, there was centralization. *Before* it there was none. Each Lodge then met by inherent right, and even if we go so far as to admit the possibility of new and strange practices being introduced with any one of them, there was no higher body by whose authority these innovations could have been imposed on the other Lodges. To put it in another way. If we once get beyond or behind the year 1717, *i.e.*, into the domain of Ancient Masonry, and again look back, the vista is perfectly illimitable, without a speck or shadow to break the continuity of view which is presented to us.

It is therefore very far from being an arbitrary hypothesis—that the Symbolism we possess has come down to us, in all its main features, from very early times, and that it originated during the splendour of Mediaeval Operative Masonry, and not in its decline.

With regard then to the antiquity of all that is of primary importance in Masonic Symbolism, some remarks of a non-Masonic writer will fit in very well by way of conclusion; he tells us:—

"That in very ancient times much knowledge of all kinds was embodied in mystical figures and schemes, such as were deemed appropriate for its preservation. Also, that many of these figures and schemes are preserved in Masonry, though their meaning is no longer understood by the fraternity."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "As well might we believe that the sun travels round the earth, instead of the earth round the sun, as to believe in all the incongruities which have been taught to Masons in the Symbolic degrees — Dalcho, *Orations*, 38.

! See A. Q. G., ii., 43, 44.

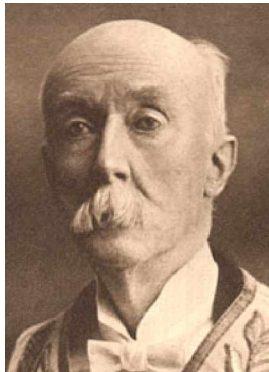
<sup>3</sup> Heckethorn, *Secret Societies*, i., 248.

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[http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/biography/gould\\_r/gould\\_r.html](http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/biography/gould_r/gould_r.html)

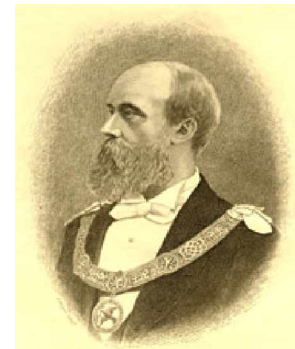
Robert Freke Gould - 1836 - March 26, 1915

A founding member and the second Master of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076, London, Robert Freke Gould contributed twenty-five papers and many notes to *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*.



A lieutenant in the 31st Regiment, English Army and later a barrister from 1868, he is best remembered as an early proponent of the authentic school of Masonic research and for his three-volume *History of Freemasonry* (1883-1887).

Charter Member  
*Initiated: 1854*  
*Royal Navy Lodge No. 429, Ramsgate*  
*Affiliated: 1857*  
*Friendship Lodge, Gibraltar*  
*Worshipful Master: 1863*  
*Northern Lodge No. 570, China*  
*Senior Grand Deacon: 1880*  
*United Grand Lodge of England*



He entered the English army at the age of eighteen, becoming a lieutenant in the same year, and serving with distinction in North China in 1869. On his return to England he studied law and became a barrister in 1868.

He was initiated at Ramsgate in the Royal Navy Lodge, No. 429, and was Master of the Inhabitants Lodge at Gibraltar, also of the Meridian Lodge, No. 743, a Military Lodge attached to his regiment.

Afterward he held the Chair of the Moira, Quatuor Coronati and Jerusalem Lodges. In 1880 he was appointed Senior Grand Deacon of England. He had been a constant writer in the Masonic press since 1858; in 1879 he published *The Four Old Lodges* and *The Atholl Lodges*, and in 1899 a book on Military Lodges.

But his greatest work is the History of Freemasonry in three large volumes, which occupied him from 1882 to 1887, which was followed in 1903 by A Concise History of Freemasonry abridged from the larger work and brought up to date.

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#### Comments and Discussion on his Paper

The W.M. having called for comments on the paper just read, the Secretary stated he had received the following observations, from several brethren, based on the advance proofs which he had forwarded them.

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Bro. Gould's paper requires more time for careful study than is permitted some, prior to the Lodge meeting, so that I must not now do much beyond expressing my warm thanks to our gifted brother for his deeply interesting and instructive essay; one of many for which we as members feel indebted.

It appears to me that unless we are prepared, on solid grounds, to admit "the antiquity of Masonic Symbolism," we need not trouble to say aught about Free-Masonry prior to the last century. Symbolism in connection with Freemasonry antedates our oldest Records, and without the first-mentioned, the latter would be lifeless; either actually or retrospectively.

I am unable, however, to assent to Bro. Gould's *main design* (at least, without exact definition), wherein he seeks to prove that "the essentials of the Three Craft Degrees must have existed before the formation of the first Grand Lodge." What is meant by the term "essentials"? In the absence of an explanation I can only reiterate my belief that Degrees are post "Revival," but Masonic Symbolism goes back to pre-historic times. "Degrees" as we understand the term—conferred only on the favoured ones, to the exclusion of all others, with "peculiar secrets attached to each," separate obligations as respects their esoteric character, and distinct ceremonies,—are, to my mind wholly modern.

That there was a Masonic Ceremonial as Bro. Gould puts it—prior "to the era of Grand Lodges, it is equally clear and has emphatically been proved over and over again; but precisely what that ceremony was, has so far eluded our grasp. One of the Masonic MSS. in the Harleian Collection, as well as Dr. Plot's Staffordshire—both of the 17th century—indicate that this Ceremony consisted of more than a simple word, for "signs" evidently were included in the "secrets." I should like much to support Bro. Gould with all the strength possible, in his desire to see more justice done to the "Old Charges of British Freemasons," for including the "Regius MS.," and the "Additional MS." (14th and 15th centuries), we have a number of trustworthy witnesses, extending over five hundred years, all of which are peculiar to the Masonic Craft, and are of immense value and importance in relation to the origin and character of that aged Society. Take the question of Masonic Symbolism so interestingly and suggestively treated by Bro. Gould. The "Melrose MS." given by me in the "Masonic Magazine" (January, 1880), through the kind offices of Bro. W. F. Vernon (C.C.) represents an original of the year 1581 or earlier, the preserved transcript (in the satisfactory custody of the *old* Melrose Lodge) bearing date December, 1674.

In it we read, in reference to "Loses" or Cowans, that Masters and Fellows were cautioned against letting "ym know ye priviledge of ye compass, Square, Levell, and ye plum-rule." At the end of this "Old Charge" is an affidavit by "John Wincester Master frie mason" that "Robert Wincester hath lafully done his duties to the science of Masonrie," the former in testimony thereof not only did "subscribe his name," but also "sett to his *Mark* in the year of our Lord 1581."

As to "Catechisms" and "Exposures" generally, they all seem to me to partake of the Grand Lodge era, though doubtless some contain in them the germs of the old regime. There must have been some common bond between the two systems to account for the ease with which old brethren were received into the new organizations, and in like manner also as respects the "constitution" of Lodges.

I am glad also to find Bro. Gould so warmly appreciates the researches of our esteemed Junior Warden in relation to Masons' Marks, for that is surely a department that has almost been overlooked by our students, and yet will repay us far more than many have the least idea, or anticipation. Let any sceptic as to this point carefully read Bro. Gould's "History of Freemasonry" in relation to the Aberdeen Lodge and its unique "Mark Book," and then remember that it is but one out of many evidences that can be consulted, and the wonder will be that such a mine of wealth has so long been neglected.

It will not do for me to go over again the ground travelled by me when reviewing Bro. Gould's very able Commentary on the "Regius MS.," save to congratulate him that he has secured such an able exponent of his views as our mutual friend, General Albert Pike.

With respect to Dr. Stukeley and his initiation in 1721, I am of the opinion that the learned antiquary is for once in error, either as to the date, or the precise circumstances; for surely at the period he names his could not have been the premier reception "for many years."

In conclusion, I have not the slightest objection to subscribe my name to the declaration of Bro. Gould's that "the balance of probability is in favour of as early an origin" of Symbolism as of our written traditions.—W. J. HUGHAN.

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I am pleased to have an opportunity of adding my mite to the discussion which I trust may arise on Bro. Gould's admirable paper. It is a subject in which I feel a keen interest. Personally, I have long held the opinion that, both the ceremonial and ritual (in a somewhat crude form, but sufficient as a real groundwork) must have been known to the "Revivalists" of 1717. I have never been able to satisfy myself that a number of individuals (and particularly Masons) then met together *to frame a new and such a wondrous system*; nor can I yet understand how the members of four lodges could *agree* to that which, *if new to them*, must have excited the ridicule, if not the disgust, of other Masons. We know there were many Masons in London besides those of the "four old lodges," but setting these aside, is it reasonable to suppose that the older members of the lodges which met at the Apple Tree Tavern (and there are always old members) would quietly acquiesce in the formation of a system and ceremonial previously unknown to them? All subsequent Masonic experience is antagonistic to such a notion. Unless it be urged that the Masons in 1717 were all willing to receive a new system and falsify their old practices, how can it be maintained that Symbolic Masonry was then originated?

Whether Bro. Gould has proved that the Symbolism of Masonry, or an appreciable portion of it, was already known to the so-called Revivalists of 1717, does not seem to be quite what we are asked to determine however. Indeed no one knows better than Bro. Gould the difficulty of *proof*, which is so great as to be frankly acknowledged here and there throughout his most interesting paper. In dealing with this subject our learned Brother exhibits, besides the skill of the well-read and deep searching student, an ardent interest in this lodge which must augur well for the future. He gives us, along with his *theory* of the antiquity of Masonic Symbolism, an opinion (which I note is shared by our Bro. J.W.) that the study of Mediaeval Masons' Marks is likely to be of great importance in either demolishing or substantiating it. I am perhaps assuming a little too much, but his words may easily be thus construed. However, his frank suggestion must be regarded as a most valuable one by the members of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, the more so as this branch of study has been notoriously neglected of late years.

Bro. Gould's theory that during the 15th and 16th centuries the Craft declined along with all the Arts, is ingenious. It has the very great merit of being plausible, and as an important stone in the fabric of his general hypothesis will no doubt carry due weight in the minds of his hearers. Thos. Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, who wrote the History of the Royal Society (1667) at a time when the ravages of the great fire, plague, and civil commotions were rarely absent from his mind, makes many pertinent allusions to the losses then felt, from a student's point of view, through those national calamities. In one place he touches upon the very essence of Bro. Gould's contention. He says (p. 118), referring to Philosophy (but it includes within its meaning most of the intellectual Arts), "If we reckon from its first setting forth in the east, we shall find, that in so long a tract of time, there have not been above four or five hundred years, at several intervals, wherein it has been in any request in the world. And if we look back on all the alterations and subversion of States that have happened in Civil Nations these three thousand years, we may still behold that the *Science of Men's brains* has been always subject to be far more injured by such vicissitudes than *the Arts of their hands.*" The inference is, as it seems to me, that the handicraft of Masonry might well survive revolutions whilst the symbolism decayed.

As regards Ancient Masonry in China, the tools of operative Masons are universally allowed to be of great antiquity, but a philosopher's application of them in a symbolic sense 400 years B.C. neither proves the existence of the Freemasonry with which Bro. Gould deals, nor identifies (as it should do) such philosopher as a Mason. I prefer Bro. Gould's suggestion of Mediaeval Marks as more sensible than looking (at present) 2,000 years back either in China or elsewhere. All the ancient philosophers found it convenient for their purposes that their principles should be "veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols," and probably the mention of such then highly prized instruments as the square and compasses, very soon suggested their significance to a moralist like Confucius. It is not unlikely that even he was a mere borrower from some earlier teacher of Ethics. However, the extract from Book VI. of Mencius is, to say the least, startling, and if it be really authentic, there is every excuse for the deductions which I presume led Mr. Giles to connect symbolic Freemasonry with so remote a period.

But seeing that I agree in the main with Bro. Gould, it is hardly fair to monopolise too much of the time allowed for discussion. I will therefore for the present be content with expressing an opinion most sincerely felt, viz., that the subject has been handled in a masterly manner, and if the discussion upon it does no more than enlighten us all on a most difficult question, it must be felt to be convincing proof of the ability, nay even the necessity, of our existence as a school of Masonic culture.—J. RAMSDEN RILEY.

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I wish to congratulate Bro. Gould on this important paper. There are brethren in the Lodge much more competent than myself to discuss most of the questions which it brings forward, so my remarks will be few. The value of this contribution to our studies will be great, and I wish to call attention to one of its lesser qualifications. It is always important to know where we are,—to know what ground we have gone over, so that we may have an idea of what is before us. Those who have sailed on the sea will understand why the captain is so particular about his latitude and longitude. This paper gives us our latitude and longitude—our position on the chart—in our voyage of discovery into the regions of Masonic archaeology. It tells us what has been done, and indicates fairly well what is generally recognised as accepted in our inquiry, and by this means it demonstrates what has yet to be laboured at, and in what direction we should work in the future. If Bro. Gould's paper contained nothing more than this, it would well deserve our thanks. I shall only add a word on the supposed origin of the Third Degree. According to Bro. Gould, it is now commonly accepted by the Craft, that it, with other mysteries, were derived from the Rosicrucians or the Hermetical adepts. This may have been so, but it seems to me that Masonic students have overlooked the monastic orders. If there were in former times bands of Masons who travelled about Europe building cathedrals, they would be more likely to be brought into intimate contact with the monks than with Rosicrucians or Hermeticists. The Benedictines were the learned order, they studied geometry, and the liberal sciences of the time—a connecting link in itself. The monastic orders were Brotherhoods—another link. Much might have been borrowed from this direction, including the main features of the Third Degree. The orders of knighthood, I am inclined to suspect, had ceremonies which may possibly have been the source, and a careful study of their rites of initiation might repay the Masonic student. The real difficulty is not the absence of such rites, but it appears that the task is to find the data by means of which a connection with any of them can be traced. However obscure the subject seems to be, we should not lose hope. Let us go on—let us work, and some simple fact may turn up that will throw light on the point where we desire it to shine. Brother Gould recognizes the importance of studying symbolism. Masons have done this, but rather, I think, from an exclusively Masonic standpoint, or, to put it in another way, they have limited themselves to interpreting symbolism a Masonic sense. Symbols are as old as human civilization, and have been the common property of all humanity,—to understand them properly, they must be studied by the comparative method. The more important Masonic symbols are ancient, and their true meaning can only be found by tracing them back into the past. This will be found to be particularly the case with the Third Degree; its true meaning can only be realized by the study of similar rites which appear to go far back into the history of our race. I will only add that the symbolism of triangles, squares, circles, etc., is only of very secondary importance in comparison with the meaning that underlies our profoundly Symbolical Third Degree.—W. SIMPSON.

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Bro. W. H. RYLANDS said he agreed with Bro. Gould in his main contention. It had always appeared to him impossible to imagine that in 1717 an entirely new system arose. Gradual changes, there were no doubt, and supplemental matter may have been introduced; but to his mind the greater part of our symbolism certainly anteceded the Grand Lodge of England.

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Bro. F. H. GOLDNEY said:—I am glad that Bro. Gould has alluded in his paper to Masons' Marks' for, if we are not able as yet to make use of them in our endeavours to throw back the antiquity of speculative Masonry to earlier times than present proofs afford,



they at least may be of considerable value and interest from an antiquarian point of view. It has been intimated that our learned Junior Warden is about to prepare a paper upon Masons' Marks, to be read at one of our meetings; from what he has made known to us on the subject, in his admirable address on Scotch Masons' Marks, delivered before the British Archaeological Society at Glasgow in August, 1888, it is sure to be a valuable contribution to the *Transactions* of our Lodge. I will briefly mention a few of the many points which readily occur, and which it is to be hoped he will be able to elucidate. For instance, who made the Masons' Marks? They would hardly have been made by each individual workman, but more probably by a "Fellow" or "Master" who employed a certain number of hands, and, if so, it would seem that the stone work was done by sub-contract or piecework, rather than by daily wage. The same system of marks to indicate the particular work done by the different "gangers," "butty-men," or whatever their designation may be, obtains at the present day amongst free-stone workers, colliers, and, doubtless, other operatives. On the other hand it is possible that these marks, in early times, represented work, passed as good, by the Menatschin or Overseers, or, as we should now call them, Clerk of the Works. However that may be, they could scarcely have been intended for ornament, for it is singular that notwithstanding the examples of beautiful designs constantly before them, these marks should have been always, with but rare exceptions, and universally the simplest and crudest arrangements of lines and angles, which never broke out into pretty compositions, such as those found amongst trade marks. And further, this simplicity seldom lent itself even to initials; still less, to a representation of the human or animal life around the makers, or objects of their everyday use, not even of the implements of their art. Attention has been called to these marks having been made upon the other side of the stone than that presented to view in the building, so as to avoid a disfigured surface being shown. It may be taken, then, that where these marks are now observed on ancient structures, it indicates that such portion of the building has been reconstructed with original stones, which have had their hidden surface brought to view to replace the former damaged one, or stones, which may in the first instance have been built over, or otherwise covered up. For example, no Masons' Marks have been found on Salisbury Cathedral, whilst they may be seen on an adjacent wall, which is known to have been built with stones brought from Old Sarum. In following out this subject much useful work may be done by brethren who do not pretend to the learning of Bros. Gould and Hayter Lewis, if they will follow the only safe rule in all investigations, of whatever nature, viz., to be careful in observation, and accurate in describing the exact portions of the buildings where the marks noted by them are found. This is most important as giving a clue to the date.

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Bro. DRIVES wished to confirm the observation made by Bro. Goldney relative to the marking of stones by modern working masons. An architect lately informed him that this is still the ordinary practice, the object being that, in the event of any defect of workmanship, the mark on the stone might show by whom it had been wrought.

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Bro. SPETH said:—I will not detain you with expressions of admiration at our brother's lecture. Bro. Gould and I have so long worked together that we are perhaps apt to allow our feelings of friendship to colour our appreciation of each other's efforts. But I believe the lecture comes none too soon: that there are learned brothers amongst us who would gladly investigate our symbolism were they sure it was not all spurious and of late origin—were they only certain of its antiquity they would readily admit the possibility of an explanation involving something deeper than the mere play upon words which our present ritual discloses, and would not deem it beneath their serious notice. My object is to support Bro. Gould's contentions by a somewhat different process from that he has chosen; to strengthen his abstract arguments by an appeal to concrete facts. Bro. Gould maintains that the ritual of 1724-30 was not understood at that time and is still less understood now. Let us take one example which will demonstrate both positions. A prominent symbol of ours is the **47th problem of Euclid**. The symbol existed as early as 1723, being figured on the frontispiece of the Book of Constitutions of that date, and again below an essay in that of 1738. Can any brother tell me what it is the symbol of? Neither then nor since has any explanation been vouchsafed in our Lodges. Its practical use is known to every bricklayer and mason; it is known to them as the "Rule of 3, 4, 5." By measuring off three units along one wall of a building and four units along another, the hypotenuse should be five units, if the angle be a true right angle. Last year I was disputing with a teacher of mathematics whether his tennis-lawn was square, and astonished him by proving, with the aid of a walking-stick that it was not. For twenty years he had taught geometry daily, and had never learnt to apply it practically. For 150 years, at least, we have used the symbol and do not yet understand it; have never made any attempt to understand it, for even this practical explanation is not given us, still less any of a symbolical nature in our ritual. It was a symbol of Pythagoras. He is said to have sacrificed 100 oxen for joy at its discovery. Let us admit that this was only an exaggerated and traditional account of his great joy, yet the fact of his exultation remains. Surely not because he had discovered a new version of 2 and 2 make four, but because he saw some strange and striking connection between the properties of a right angled triangle and some great important truth, probably of a theosophical character. There is nothing impossible in the thought that our mediaeval brethren knew this explanation of their symbol. Certain it is, we do not know it. I have seen one explanation, upon which I will not enter now and curiously enough it requires that the lines subtending the angle shall be as 3 to 4, a form in which it is rarely presented Masonically. In any case we have here a symbol which is not understood now, and was not understood in 1738—for had it been understood then, we should not have lost its meaning. Much of our early symbolism lingered on through the 18th century and was rejected in 1814, at the crystallization of our present ritual. I must not now cite many instances, but will only mention the "Broachod Thurnel." It was never understood by Grand Lodge Masons, the various and contradictory uses ascribed to it at one and the same time prove this. It was dropped in 1814 because probably utterly meaningless to the masons of those days; they dared not even attempt to explain it, however lamely. Nay, more. There are architects here present; can any one even describe *what* it was? It was an appliance evidently of use in a masons' stone yard or lodge; but what was it? Well, here are two cases of symbolism perfectly incomprehensible at the beginning of last century. *Can* we believe that Anderson, Desaguliers, or any one else, deliberately introduced them in 1717-25 or subsequently, being absolutely unable to attach any significance to them? They are obviously survivals, and consequently **the masons of 1717 were esoterically degenerate**. I could quote passage after passage of our old rituals and show they were not understood then and are not now; but it would occupy too long. But the fact proves that we inherited them from the masons of the 17th century, and how much earlier it is impossible to say. There is, however, one very pretty piece of evidence of the early years of the 16th century still extant. In the year 1830 a very old bridge (Baal's Bridge) near Limerick was being rebuilt. Under the foundations was found an old brass square, containing 'on its two surfaces this inscription:

I will strive to line with loue and care  
Upon the leuel by the square,

and the date 1517. I am not concerned to deny that some of our symbolism may be modern, but I fail to understand how any one can argue that none of it is ancient. I believe the greater part (including all essentials) is undoubtedly mediaeval at least, and probably centuries older than that. Bro. Gould, in one or two passages, seems to imply that our old MS. Constitutions afford little or no indication of our earliest ceremonies. I believe they state with tolerable precision both their number and nature. First they state that when a youth is to be made a mason, *i.e.*, apprenticed to a fellow of the Lodge, the Book of Constitutions, *i.e.*, the traditional history of the foundation of the Craft, as given in the MSS. themselves, shall be read to him. That then one of the Elders shall present to him the Bible, on which he is to take an oath to maintain the charges of a Freemason, which are then also read to him, these forming the concluding portion of the MSS. As far as we can see there was nothing symbolical in all this, it was a purely business transaction, and at the most was accompanied by the communication of one or more secret words and signs. Now what I believe to be the earliest and purest form of these Constitutions is contained in the second part of the Cooke MS., of early 15th century transcription. From this we learn that every year (if necessary) a general assembly was to be held from province to province (therefore not specially at York) in order, amongst other matters, to pass masters, *i.e.*, to free the apprentices from their indentures at the end of their seven years' service. Being made masters, they entered the fellowship of the Craft, probably *ipso facto*; and the MS. gives us the outline of the ceremony. "They that (are to) be made masters should be examined of the articles after written, and ransacked whether they be able and cunning to the profit of the lords." That is, there was a purely business examination as to their knowledge of Craft laws and regulations and respecting their technical proficiency. But it goes on to say they are to receive their charge, and then follows the well-known series of charges. Here we have some confusion, because these charges had already been given to the apprentice, and he was required to prove his knowledge of them before passing. I cannot therefore believe that the second charge, given to the masters, was identical with the first, and I do believe it is not further defined simply because it contained vital secrets. In any case we obtain a description of two separate ceremonies, and the second shows signs of esotericism. I would now call your attention to three extracts from three documents, first—Regius Poem: about 15th century, or perhaps 14th:—

"The privities of the Chamber tell he no man,  
Nor in the Lodge, whatsoever be done."

secondly, Cooke MS., 15th century,

"That he hele the counsel of his fellows in Lodge, and in Chamber, and in every place there as Masons be."

and the third from the Grand Lodge MS., date 1583 (and this represents fairly all the other versions),

"And also that ye keep all the Counsels of your Follows truly, be it in Lodge or Chamber, and all other counsels that ought to be kept by the way of Masonhood."

Now in all three extracts we have one set of secrets, those of Lodge and Chamber—to which I will revert shortly. But in the Grand Lodge MS. we have beyond this "and all *other* counsels that ought to be kept by way of Masonhood," probably also alluded to in the Cooke MS. under the words "and in every place there as Masons be." We have thus two distinct sets of secrets. Now it is only possible to imagine two kinds of secrets, technical and esoteric, and the Freemasons are known to have possessed both. Let us assume that "every counsel by way of Masonhood" refers to the technical secrets of the craft,—then the counsels of Chamber and Lodge must be the esoteric secrets, which, taken at their lowest possible valuation, were at least secrets of recognition. But in every case these are described as twofold, *viz.*, of the Lodge and of the Chamber, corresponding to the two ceremonies already described. Colloquies of the 18th century replace the words Lodge and Chamber by **Kitchen and Hall**, and state the Apprentice will say he has been in the Kitchen, the Fellow will say he has been in the Hall. On the whole (and I have but given a portion of the evidence) I submit we are perfectly justified in maintaining the following propositions:—1st, From the 14th to the 18th centuries two ceremonies existed—that of making masons, or binding to the Craft—and that of passing masters and admitting to the Fellowship. 2nd, That there were secrets, other than those of the manipulation of stone attached to each. 3rd, That the masons of 1717 inherited symbolism of the meaning of which they were ignorant, and 4th, That to produce this ignorance a long course of decay and deterioration must have obtained, thus carrying out symbolism back for an indefinite period. In a lecture I have prepared, to be delivered in Yorkshire at the end of this month, I have elaborated my arguments and attempted to prove that the secrets of those days were identical with our present ones. But the lecture takes one-and-a-half hours to deliver, and I cannot therefore do justice to the subject now. But I trust these short remarks, although somewhat lengthy viewed as a contribution to the discussion of Bro. Gould's lecture, may at least tend to support his arguments.

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Bro. C. J. BALL thought it a far cry from the 18th century to the time of Confucius, but he thought Bro. Gould perfectly justified in quoting the interesting passages he had done, and he himself intended to go further still. He then cited the Babylonian term for Square, and showed that at that remote date it comprised much that was now known as Masonic.

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Bro. T. HAYTER LEWIS said:—As Bro. Gould has alluded to a short paper on Masons' Marks and Tooling which I read recently at Glasgow, I think it right to mention that I drew it up with special reference to Scotland and without any idea that it would be of much interest to our Craft. As, however, Bros. Speth and Gould consider that some suggestions in it, if worked out, would have a considerable bearing upon the origin of Freemasonry, I have re-written the paper and placed it at the disposal of the Lodge. I welcome Bro. Gould's paper with great pleasure inasmuch as it certainly gives strong indications of the existence of our Degrees and Ritual in old times. To me, I confess, the history of Masonry in times so modern as the 18th century has scarcely any interest. But the subject bears an entirely different character if it can be shewn that its forms were a survival of those of the old times wherein arose the exquisitely beautiful buildings of the 12th and 13th centuries. Much of our Ritual seems absurd now, but I believe it to be composed in the main of fragments of a past age, just as we use in our modern buildings the stones and granites of a long past era.

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Bro. B. W. RICHARDSON having further supported the lecturer, a vote of thanks was unanimously accorded on the motion of the Worshipful Master.

While we may differ from our veteran historian as to the course to be adopted in pursuing this important enquiry, we must all join in congratulating Bro. Gould on the "new departure" which he has undertaken. If the Royal Art is indeed "veiled in allegory and

illustrated by symbols" no apology can be needed for the consideration of this momentous but hitherto neglected branch of Masonic lore. Our students may be roughly divided into two classes, one of which, to a greater or less extent, obtains inspiration from Hermetic sources, while the other takes nothing on trust, but demands chapter and verse for every statement, forgetting that, in dealing with "secrets," it may not be possible to discover "*Prichards*" in the earlier centuries. In certain directions far too much has been said about the *exposures* of 1723, *et seq.*, and, because of the absence of such questionable information, is it reasonable for the critical school, so ably headed *in the past* by Bros. Gould and HUGHAN, to assume that there was no Symbolism and no symbolic teaching prior to the Revival of 1717-24? We must bear in mind that the "Secrets" were always safeguarded by an O.B. as binding as our own, and further that, until comparatively recent times, there were no written or printed records of the ceremonial or ritual employed. Even the "MASOUN WORD," referred to in the Scotch minutes is lost: and such being the case with their very simple form of admission, a similar result might be safely predicated for the equivalent on the south side of the Tweed, where the members were of a much superior social position.

To my mind there is no question that the *essentials* of the Three Degrees long ante-date our premier Grand Lodge, one very cogent reason being that it is much easier to believe it to be so than to credit any of those whom we know to have been prominent members of the craft 1720 *circa*, with the cognition necessary for the invention of our rituals; keeping in view that they were men of artificial culture, disdainful of colloquial or archaic English as barbarous, and unfit for the lips of classical scholars. Every Latin student must have remarked in our ceremonials, striking similarities to the main features of the ancient mysteries, and noted the allusions thereto in Virgil, Apuleius, Theocritus, etc., and only by following out this hint can much of what is now dark be made clear to us.

The question presents itself "Is our system of speculative Freemasonry necessarily bound up with, or a lineal descendant from, the old operative bodies?" In fact must the two systems run together, sharing each other's joys and sorrows like the Siamese Twins? The use of the triangle or pentagon by a labouring hewer does not prove his acquaintance with the tenets supposed to be conveyed by these signs: for it is impossible that such a person could have even a rudimentary knowledge of Geometry or Euclid. Bro. Gould, in his erudite commentary on the Regius MS., conclusively proves that this was not the class addicted to "Geometry." The Swastika, equal-armed cross, circle, and other solar signs, found on Danish ornaments, ascribed to the earlier bronze age, had undoubtedly at that time some religious meanings:—the markings on the Newton stone owed their origin to theosophical reasons—the cromlechs of our ancestors had a devotional *raison d'être*, whether employed for initiation, sepulture, or worship—and we still have in our midst evident remains of phallic and other faiths, the existence of which we do not dispute although as little able to prove their descent step by step, as to establish the unbroken continuity from ancient mysteries of those dim shadowy rites which are still practised in our assemblies.

Although tempting, it is dangerous to build too much on Masons' *Marks*, for many of these forms are discernible in every part of the world, on metal as well as on stone, and are identical with some of the tribal and caste marks still common in the East. The immediate purpose for which they were chiseled on the blocks of stone, in this country at any rate, was merely to identify the hewers who cut them; and who certainly could have no idea of their esoteric meanings. Granted that our Cathedrals were built on geometrical lines it only goes to prove that those responsible for these structures were conversant, perhaps by rule of thumb, with the architectural requirements necessary for their erection, and does not by any means establish any "symbolical" knowledge; though such is indeed probable in the case of monastic overseers trained at Rome, which had long been the Western repository of Eastern wisdom and science.

A thoughtful consideration of our principal ceremony irresistibly leads us to the doctrine that was typified by the *pastos* in the king's chamber of the Great Pyramid, and connects with the main characteristic of all the mysteries, which embodied the highest truths then known to the illuminated ones.

Must symbolical Freemasonry stand or fall with the operative art? Not necessarily so, though we freely concede, in general terms, that the conditions—peace and prosperity—which are favourable to the industrious tradesman are equally so to the meditative student; for the instructive chart in which Bro. Gould compares England and Scotland shows that during the Wars civilization retrograded in both countries.

The 12th century witnessed an outbreak of mystic Symbolism, perhaps unparalleled in our era, and gave us the religious legends of the Holy Grail, which point to an Eastern origin: this period coincides with the greatest popularity of the Templars, whose fall is contemporaneous with the decadence noted by the lecturer.

Without pressing the argument, I may here suggest that some portion, at least, of our Symbolism may have come through a Templar source, Romanist yet deeply tinged with Gnosticism—while at a later date the Lollards, (supposed to be inheritors of Manichoeism), and who were but one of the many religio-political societies with which Europe was honey-combed, possibly introduced or revived some of these teachings, still tainted with similar tenets, though in a more democratic form as became their inferior rank. These bodies usually met in fields and at night, reminding us of the regulation in the Aberdeen minute book.

The *crux* still remains unsolved,—if we demand testamentary "evidence, admissible in a court of law," *pace* Bro. Gould,—how and whence did Freemasonry obtain its SYMBOLS? It must be abundantly clear that these are almost from the beginning of time, and that they were employed to transmit important dogmas. No doubt the master artificers responsible for rearing the great temples and tombs of olden days were held in great esteem, in Egypt as in England, and were men of considerable culture, but that does not satisfactorily account for the use by humble labourers of these emblems.

The Symbolism at the Revival in 1717 was evidently not understood—and therefore not then newly introduced—nor is it yet by the majority of the brethren: possibly on the principle "*omne ignotum pro magnifico*," the language had been conserved for centuries after its last exponent had been laid to rest, but nevertheless it is perilous to base any hypothesis on the archaisms which our early Grand Lodges have handed down to us. The Symbolism may be very ancient, while the ceremonies themselves might be comparatively modern.

One proposition may be advanced with safety: *viz.*, *That Operative Masonry can not explain the symbols employed in Freemasonry.*

Much stress is laid on the entries in Ashmole's diary, but he was an alchemical student, and Mainwaring was certainly not an operative any more than Handle Holme—why did these gentlemen join a Lodge? Was it not probably because at Warrington, as in many other parts of the country, these bodies interested themselves in mystic pursuits? Some colour is lent to this supposition by

the fact, that while *three* of the old Lodges, in 1717, were weak in numbers and low in station—*operatives* in fact,—*the fourth* was chiefly, if not entirely, composed of *gentlemen* who dabbled in architecture, geometry, and recondite studies, and who may well have been the disciples and successors of the astrological and similar clubs which flourished, as we are aware, many years earlier. This Lodge must have been a powerful factor in the new scheme, and no doubt exerted the leverage necessary to raise it in such a short time to the importance that justified great noblemen in accepting the dignified position of Grand Master.

Aubrey speaks of *Italian architects*, which points to the Western centre of culture, but this again was periodically nourished from the East. If the *Marks* of the 12th century betray a Western origin, while in the next period they are of Eastern extraction, we must either discard the axiom, *Ex Oriente Lux*, or assume that the original lender has been lost sight of.

One thing is certain, that satisfactory renderings of our symbols can only be obtained by a study of Eastern mysticism: Kabbalistic, Hermetic, Pythagorean, and Gnostic. Down the centuries we find enrolled the names of philosophic teachers who veiled their doctrines in figures similar to those in vogue among the Rosicrucians and still more recent students, and often identical with the signs we blazon on the walls of our Lodges and Chapters. The real reason of the palmary position assigned by Pythagoras to the 47th problem (as we term it) was only discovered after long and persistent enquiry by him whom Bro. Speth has so happily designated "the Nestor of American Freemasonry," and I heartily commend to every reader of our *Transactions* the dictum of the same venerable master (Bro. Albert Pike) as quoted in the thesis under review, "that Symbolism is the soul of Masonry,"—and his further remark, "that it is in its ancient symbols and in the knowledge of its *true* meanings that the pre-eminence of our order consists." **Symbolism is mute allegory, and without a just appreciation thereof we are not worthy to be called Craftsmen.** The Operative trace will only yield fragmentary results unless combined with Hermetic enquiry.

I am not without hope that the "*new departure*" may yet bring our eminent lecturer into closer touch and sympathy with other than the purely operative side of our earlier history. By this carefully thought out contribution to Masonic study Bro. Gould has earned the warmest gratitude of every intelligent member of the Fraternity he loves so well, and for whose best interests he has ungrudgingly spent so many years of his life.—EDW. MACREAN, I.G.

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#### Bro. Gould's Remarks

My best thanks are due to those brethren who have taken part in the discussion—oral and written—which has followed the paper I had so recently the pleasure of reading before the Lodge. Indeed, my sole regret is, that some of the speeches on the 3rd January last, notably those of Bros. Ball and Rylands, have been cut down almost to vanishing point, in the process of reproduction.

The various remarks on my lecture, and among them I include whatever criticisms from an outside source that have yet fallen in my way<sup>1</sup>, suggest at the outset of this reply, that two of our stock terms in the Lodge are capable of a more varied application than has hitherto been accorded to them. These are the phrases "Inner" and "Outer Circle," which though only used at present to distinguish the actual members of the Lodge, from the subscribers to its *Transactions*, may, as it seems to me, with perfect propriety, be employed in a double sense, the new one being, that by Inner Circle shall be understood those brethren by whom a paper is actually considered *in the Lodge*; and by Outer Circle, the full members and others who *read* the printed proceedings of our meetings, but take no part in the *oral* discussions. This idea I throw out, because if the proposed amplification of our Lodge vocabulary be deemed permissible, it will convey in a nutshell, the distinction to be drawn between the extent to which the secrets of Masonry may be legitimately discussed within a close-tiled Lodge, or in the columns of the press, respectively. These prefatory observations may serve to explain why I pass somewhat lightly over points in my paper where I am charged with expressing myself either obscurely, or with ambiguity. In both contentions, however, which I submitted to the Lodge, at its last meeting, I was sustained by the whole voice of the Inner Circle (in the new sense of that expression), but while I shall do my best, I cannot hope in a written reply, to satisfy the doubts or perplexities of that larger (or Outer) Circle, who, on the 3rd January were not actually present with us in the flesh.

<sup>1</sup> e.g., "A letter touching Masonic Symbolism"—8th Nov. 1889—from Bro. Albert Pike to the writer; and an article in the *Freemason's Chronicle*—7th Dec. 1889—entitled "Masonic Antiquity, Bro. Gould's Newly Assumed Championship For." s *Ante*, p. 30—note 3.

Thus, I cannot very well indicate, to Bro. Hughan, on paper, what I mean with regard to "the essentials of the degrees" (*i.e.*, the first Three), being the same both before and after, the so-called Revival of 1717. Neither can I pursue at any length, the distinction drawn by Bro. Pike, between a "Philosophically Symbolic" and a "Morally-Symbolic" Masonry—the one, he thinks, having existed before, and the other after, the era of Grand Lodges. Hence, I shall notice the points thus raised by these two brethren, in a single sentence, which, however, it will be my object to make as clear to them as possible. I am of opinion that the Masonic Secrets as existing at about the second decade of Modern Masonry, or to speak with greater precision, during the Grand Mastership of Lord Kingston (1729), had their origin in a period of time far anterior to the great event of .A.D. 1717. If this view be correct, the ceremonial of Masonry, which we know to have been Morally-Symbolic in 1729, was equally so before the era of Grand Lodges, and the existence of a Philosophically-Symbolic Masonry—at any time—becomes one of those shadowy speculations, to which, in the absence of further light, we can only assign a place in the vast realm of conjecture.

At the so-called "Revival," of .A.D. 1717, the introduction of a new Symbolism would have been impossible, but it is contended, that to a more or less extent new ideas were engrafted on the transmitted Symbolism. This there is no evidence to support. Indeed, quite the contrary. The earliest Masonic Symbolism we have any clear knowledge of, is that practised in the English Lodges from about 1723 to 1729. Whether the ceremonial of those days is best described as Morally-Symbolic, or by any other name, is immaterial. Whatever it was at that epoch, it *had* been from a period of time *then* remote—as I shall venture to lay down with confidence, on the authority of the consensus of opinion arrived at by the members and others who were present at the last meeting of this Lodge. I therefore pass away from the lesser contention which pervaded my address of the 3rd January.

With the larger one it is not easy to deal in the short compass which is here allowed me, nor, indeed, does its full discussion fall within the scope of my paper<sup>2</sup>. A dozen papers at least would be required to do justice to it. Still a few words on the way in which the problem should be worked out, with some passing allusions to the subsidiary puzzles which yet await solution, may have their value as presenting a rough chart or map, that will guide the student into these bye-paths of Masonic history, from whose thorough exploration much benefit may be anticipated.

With regard to the derivations of Masonry, there are, briefly, three possibilities.

It may have down to us

I. Through a strictly Masonic channel.

II. Through the Rosicrucians.

III. Through a variety of defunct societies, whose usages and customs, have been appropriated, not inherited, by the Freemasons.

The first possibility has already been considered with some minuteness in the body of my paper, and the theory I then advanced, will be fortified or the reverse, by the degree of probability which, on a fair examination, can be reasonably attached to either of the remaining theories of Masonic origin.

II. THE ROSICRUCIANS.—In 1782, Christoph Friedrich Nicolai, a learned bookseller of Berlin, advanced a singular hypothesis, *viz*, that English Masonry had its origin in the "New Atlantis" of Lord Bacon, and was the actual product of an Hermetical and Rosicrucian fraternity, of which Elias Ashmole and others were leading members. This fraternity sought to arrive at truth by the study of Alchemy and Astrology. It was established in 1646, at Warrington, and afterwards, in order to conceal their mysterious designs, the members were admitted into the Masons' Company of London, and took the name of "Free Masons."

Another German writer—Johann Gottlieb Buhle—attempted to prove, first of all in Latin (1803), and subsequently in his native language (1804), that the Freemasons were originally Rosicrucians, and derived their real origin from a secret fraternity of the latter, of which John Valentine Andrea (born 1586, died 1654) was the founder.

The theory of Professor Buhle is dead, and I am not going to raise its melancholy ghost, but the older speculation of Nicolai, may be said, in a modified form, to have its adherents even at this day.

It is well known that Ashmole was made a Freemason at Warrington in 1646, that he attended a Lodge held at the Hall of the Masons' Company, London, in 1682, and that his diary records his presence at the annual Astrologer's Feast.

Upon these facts, Nicolai seems to have erected his hypothesis, in which as a cardinal feature we find that Elias Ashmole is made to figure as the connecting link between the Freemasons and the votaries of Alchemy and Astrology. Yet there is not only a total absence of proof to warrant our belief that the Symbolism of the Hermetic Art was imported by Ashmole into Masonry, but it may also be affirmed that to do so would be to violate every canon of probability.

In the first place, it would seem, that even if possessed of the will to benefit Masonry at the expense of Hermeticism, he apparently lacked the necessary ability to carry his purpose into effect. Ashmole, according to the best authorities, "was never an Adept, and began to write when he was but a disciple." But let us judge him out of his own mouth. His diary records under the 13th of May, 1652:—"My father Backhouse lying sick in Fleet Street, over against St. Dunstan's Church; and not knowing whether he should live or die, about one of the clock, told me, in *syllables*, [italics mine] the true matter of the Philosopher's Stone, which he bequeathed to me as a legacy."

Upon the foregoing it has been remarked:—"By this we learn that a miserable wretch knew the art of *making gold*, yet always lived a beggar; and that Ashmole really imagined he was in possession of the syllables of a secret."<sup>1</sup>

The belief, however, in an Ashmolean influence having been exercised upon Freemasonry, demands our attention, notwithstanding that one scarce knows how to be serious in the confutation of an absurdity that shews itself at the first sight. It is the main prop of the theory that the Symbolism of Masonry is of late Rosicrucian (or Hermetic) origin, and its recent revival I can only attempt to explain by the following. It is related that after the decay of Paganism, a certain Roman on being rebuked for making a profound obeisance before the statue of Jupiter, excused himself by advancing the conjecture—"that perhaps his time might come round again." A somewhat similar idea is conveyed by the old English proverb:—

"He that falls to-day, may be up again to-morrow."

As a matter of fact, at the time Ashmole flourished, the study of the Hermetic Art had fallen into great disrepute, and in my judgment we must go far higher for any possible trace of its influence upon Freemasonry.<sup>2</sup>

The study of Alchemy, of which Hermes Trismegistus is supposed to have been the founder, was at first limited to the East, and the search for the Philosopher's Stone, after a dormancy (or unrecorded period) of several centuries, was again taken up in the eighth century by the Arabians, who in the tenth, pursued it with vigour in Spain, whence it spread or was re-extended throughout the rest of Europe. It therefore seems to me, that *if* Freemasonry is in any way indebted to Hermeticism for its Symbolism, the period in which the Arabian learning found its way into England, is the epoch wherein we must look for the occurrence.

<sup>1</sup> Disraeli; *Curiosities of Literature*, i., 286.

<sup>2</sup> Ashmole is, after all, only one among a crowd of persons (and not all of them *brethren*) who, living in the 17th and 18th centuries have been elevated into Masonic heroes by writers of the Craft. Thus, Wren was never Grand Master, and there is no proof that he was a Mason at all. Desaguliers' great Masonic reputation crumbles wholly away on a close examination. Martin Clare never revised the Ritual. Ramsay did not invent a single one of the numerous Rites that have been fastened on him. The young Pretender (Charles Edward) was *not* a Freemason. Lastly (though the list could be extended), Dunkerley's labours as the Ritual-monger, are as imaginary as those of Martin Clare.

<sup>3</sup> "The Alchemists pretended to derive their science from Shem, or Chem, the son of Noah, and that thence came the name *Alchemy*, and Chemistry. All writers upon Alchemy triumphantly cite the story of the golden calf in the 32nd chapter of Exodus, to prove that Moses was an Adept, and could make or unmake gold at his pleasure."—Baring Gould, *The Philosopher's Stone*, Gent. Mag., Jan. 1890.

Here, however, I invite attention to the remarks of our I.P.M. on my paper. Bro. Simpson cavils, and with good reason, at the too common assumption, that the Symbolism of our art *must* have been derived from the Rosicrucian or Hermetical Adepts. Of course it

may have been, though at a more distant date than has been ascribed to the assimilation, but I am in full accord with our I.P.M., in the doubts he expresses with regard to the reality of such a derivation.

If we go back to the Ancient mysteries, we meet with dialogue, ritual, darkness, light, death, and reproduction. Many features of the Mysteries were preserved until a comparatively late era, and to me at least, it seems a not unreasonable conjecture, that some of them may have survived without break of continuity, and are now a part of Masonry.

Other ancient sources of possible origin might be cited. "The language of signs," as observed by a recent writer, "is probably older than that of sounds, and among the ancient Hebrews, it was still a living language, to the much greater extent than it is among ourselves.<sup>1</sup>" Their prophets presented their own bodies in strange and humiliating ways as signs to the people. Isaiah stripped himself naked, and showed himself in the streets of Jerusalem.

Space forbids my more than glancing at the fact, that among all, or nearly all religions, there is a remarkable affinity with respect to the Incommunicable name of God, also that according to some authorities it was the great secret of the Mysteries.<sup>2</sup>

III. Societies now defunct, whose usages and customs may have been appropriated by the Freemasons.

This is what Bro. Simpson in a general reply to the discussion on his "Worship of Death," has very happily termed "the old clothes theory." Its principal supporter was the late Dr. Armstrong, Bishop of Graham's Town, South Africa, who contended that "the Freemasons possess the relics and cast off clothes of some deceased fraternity," and in a strain of lively banter, compared their doings with those of an imaginary Hottentot, whom he pictured as being presented with the full-dress regimentals and equipments of the 10th Hussars, and proceeding to induct himself, without instruction, into the mystic and confusing habiliments.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Turner, *Hist. of the Quakers*, 104.

<sup>2</sup> See "A contribution to the History of the lost Word."—Fort, *Early His. and Antiq. of F.* 449 *et seqq.* and Mackey, *Enycl. of F. s.v., Adonai, Jehovah, Name.*

<sup>3</sup> A.Q.C., ii., 44-48

In dealing with this theory, I shall put the following case:—Let us suppose, 1—that in different parts of Great Britain there were to be found carefully preserved suits of clothes, of an obsolete pattern and of very ancient manufacture; 2—that they were all alike, without counterparts elsewhere, and varied only from each other in the quality of the material; and 3—that they were either owned by, or had been derived from, in each case, persons bearing the same family name. We should conclude, I think, that whatever story or tradition was attached to those garments, must be looked for in the history of the family into whose custody, either nearly or remotely, they could be traced.

In the same way, I believe that the Manuscript Constitutions, the "old clothes" of my apologue—which are of great antiquity, bear a close resemblance to one another, and were used by the Masons' trade only—afford conclusive evidence that the story or tradition of Masonry must be looked for in the history of our own Craft. Also, I believe, though freely admitting that the inclination of my opinion rests upon no definite proof, that the class of persons who, in the 14th century, or earlier, constructed the Craft legend, were also capable of understanding, and did understand, to a greater extent than ourselves, the meaning of a great part of the Symbolism which has descended from Ancient to Modern Masonry.

I shall next touch upon those points in my paper, which open up some of the greatest puzzles in Masonic history. One of these, and perhaps the most insoluble, is the Harleian MS. 1942, which fairly bristles with difficulties of every kind. A second is the Antiquity MS.; a third, the use of Scottish operative terms in the English Constitutions (1723) and Ritual; and a fourth, Old Regulation XIII, (1723) ordaining that the degree of Fellow Craft (or Master), should be conferred in the Grand Lodge only.<sup>4</sup> Each of these might well form the subject of a separate study, and until they are better understood a great part of the later history of the Ancient, and of the earlier history of Modern Masonry, will continue to lie very much in the dark. As a fifth puzzle, I might instance Mason's Marks, but as the J.W. will shortly read a paper on that subject, there can be no doubt that under his able treatment of it, many of our difficulties will disappear, and that at all events, our ignorance with regard to so interesting a branch of our antiquities will be less profound.

In conclusion, I cannot urge too strongly, that the study of our written traditions and of our Symbolism should be proceeded with conjointly. To depend upon either alone—and there is rather a disposition to exalt the symbolical at the expense of the written traditions of Freemasonry—is like the case of a man using only one leg, though in the possession of two. Symbolism, as Bro. Albert Pike tells us so truly, is the *Soul* of Masonry. I am unable to complete the metaphor by saying of what the *body* consists, but the garments in which it is clad, and has come down to us from very remote times, are our Manuscript Constitutions, the connecting links—in a corporeal sense—between Ancient and Modern Freemasonry.— R. F. GOULD, P.M.



## Urbanitatis.

<http://mpoets.org/Urbanitatis.htm>

### Transcription Notes:

The following transcription of Urbanitatis is taken from pp.13-17, *The Babees Book*, edited by Frederick James Furnivall, [FJF] published for the Early English Text Society, by N. Trübner & Co., 1868. Photocopy available online at [Google Books](https://books.google.com/books?id=RXctAAAAYAAJ), [id=RXctAAAAYAAJ](https://books.google.com/books?id=RXctAAAAYAAJ), and other URLs. It was then compared with the version on pp.33-35 of *The Regius Poem*, from the Masonic Book Club, [MBC] 1970, edited by Louis L. Williams and Alphonse Cerza. The FJF book listed the citation as [Fol. 86, col. 2, MS. Cott. Calig. A. II., ab. 1460 A.D.], while the MBC had it as [Cott MS. Caligula A II., fol.88]. The MBC copy has

a side-by-side calligraphed copy of the poem for comparison. Where the manuscript had contractions, the FJF book expanded them, with the added letters in italics. The MBC book had identical text, except as noted here, but didn't indicate which text was expanded. The MBC probably copied the FJF transcription (or both drew from the same source), since punctuation generally agrees between the two, except that the FJF version hyphenated some words that were not joined in the calligraphed copy nor in the MBC transcription. Assuming the calligraphed copy is accurate, the original had no punctuation. The FJF retained the two obsolete letters thorn and yogh; the MBC kept the yogh, but changed all thorns to *th*. The transcription below retains the thorns, but replaces yogh with z. The FJF indexed every fourth line, the MBC indexed every tenth line. The FJF book also included a paraphrase of the poem as marginal notes. It's included here as the right-hand column, with line-numbering added to help alignment.

It should be noted that *v* and *u* are both the same letter, *v* when at the beginning of a word, and *u* when embedded inside a word, so that *v* sometimes corresponds to our modern *u* and vice versa.

<p>Who-so wylle of nurtur Iere,  Herken to me &amp; ze shalle here.  When þou comeste be-fore a lorde  4 In halle, yn bowre, or at þe borde,  Hooðe or kappe þou of þo.  Ere þou come hym alle vn-to,  Twyse or þryse <i>with-owten</i> dowte  8 To þat lorde þou moste lowte,  <i>With</i> þy Ryzth kne lette hit be do,  Thy worshyp þou mayst saue so.  Holde of þy cappe &amp; þy hood also  12 Tylle þou be byden hit on to do ;  Alle þe whyle þou spekest <i>with</i> hym,  Fayr &amp; louely holde vp þy chynn,  So <i>aftur</i> þe nurtur of þe book  16 In his face louely þou loke ;  Foot &amp; hond þou kepe fulle styлле  Fro clawyng or tryppyn<i>g</i>, hit ys skylle ;  Fro spettyng &amp; snetyng kepe þe also ;  20 Be <i>pry</i>u of voydance, &amp; lette hit go.  And loke þou be wyse &amp; felle,  And <i>þerto</i> also þat þow gouerne þe welle.  In-to þe halle when þou dost wende  24 Amonge þe genteles gode &amp; hende,  Prece þou not vp to hyz for no þyng,  Nor for þy hyz blood, nere for þy <i>konnyng</i>,  <i>Noþur</i> to sytte, <i>neþur</i> to lene,  28 For hit ys <i>neþur</i> good ne clene.  Lette not þy <i>contyn</i>auce also abate,  For good nurtur wylle saue þy state ;  Fadyr &amp; modyr, what <i>eur</i> þey br,  32 Welle ys þe chyld þat may the :  In halle, in chambur, ore where þou gon,  Nurtur &amp; good maners makeþ man.  To þe nexte degre loke þou wysely  36 To do hem Reuerence by and by :  Do hem no Reuerens, but sette alle <i>in</i> Rowe  But zyf þou þe bettur do hym knowe.  To þe mete when þou art sette,  40 Fayre &amp; honestly thow ete hyt :  Fyrste loke þat þy handes be clene,  And þat þy knyf be sharpe &amp; kene ;  And cutte þy breed &amp; alle þy mete  44 Ryzth euen as þou doste hit ete.  If þou sytte be a worthyor man  Then þy self thow art on,  Suffre hym fyrste to towche þe mete  48 Ere þy self any þer-of gete ;  To þe beste morselle þou may not stryke  Thowz þou <i>neu</i>ur so welle hit lyke.  Also kepe þy hondys fayre &amp; welle  52 Fro fylynge of the towelle,  Ther-on þou shalt not þy nose wype ;  <i>Noþur</i> at þy mete þy toth þou pyke ;  To depe <i>in</i> þy cuppe þou may not synke  56 Thowz þou haue good wylle to drynke,  Leste þy eyen water þere by,  Then ys hyt no curtesy.  Loke yn þy mowth be no mete  60 When þou <i>begynn</i>este to drynke or speke ;</p>	<p>3 When you come before a lord  5 take off your cap or hood,  7 and fall on your right  knee twice or thrice.  11 Keep your cap off till  you're told to put it on;  14 hold up your chin;  16 look in the lord's face;  17 keep hand and foot still;  19 don't spit or snot;  20 break wind quietly;  22 behave well.  23 When you go into the hall.  25 don't press up too high.  29 Don't be shame-faced.  31 Wherever you go, good  manners make the man.  36 Reverence your betters,  but treat all equally  whom you don't know.  39 [Fol. 86, back, col. 1.]  41 See that your hands are clean,  and your knife sharp.  45 Let worthier men help  themselves before you eat.  49 Don't clutch at the best bit.  51 Keep your hands from  dirtying the cloth,  and don't wipe your nose on it,  55 or dip too deep in your cup.  59 Have no meat in your mouth  when you drink or speak;</p>
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<p>Also when þou sest any man drynkyng  That taketh hede of þy karpyng,  Soone a-non þou sece þy tale,  64 <i>Wheþur</i> he drynke wyne or Ale.  Loke also þou skorne no mon  In what pegre<sup>1</sup> þou se hym gon ;  Nor þou shalte no mon repreue  68 <i>Zyf</i> þou wylt þy owen worshyp saue,  For suche wordys þou myzth out kaste  Sholde make þe to lyue <i>in</i> euelle reste ;  Close þyn honde yn þy feste,  72 And kepe þe welle from hadde-y-wyste.  In <i>chambur</i> among ladyes bryzth,  Kepe þy tonge &amp; spende þy syzth ;  Lawze þou not <i>with</i> no grette cry,  76 Ne Rage þou not <i>with</i> Rybawdry.  Pley þou not but <i>with</i> þy peres ;  Ne telle þou not þat þou heres,  Nor dyskeuere þou not<sup>2</sup> þyn owen dede  80 For no myrth nor for no mede ;  <i>With</i> fayr speche þou may haue þy wylle,  And <i>with</i> þy speche þou may þe spylle.  <i>Zyf</i> þou suwe a wordyer mon  84 Then þy self þou art on,  Lette þy Ryzth sholdur folow his bakke,  For nurtur þat ys, <i>with</i>-owten lakke.  When he doth speke, holde þe style ;  88 When he hath don, say þy wylle ;  Loke yn þy speche þou be felle,  And what þou sayste a-vyse þe welle ;  And be-refe þou no mon his tale,  92 <i>Nopur</i> at wyne nere at Ale.  Now, <i>criste</i> of his grette grace  Zeue vs alle bothe wytte &amp; space  Welle þis to knowe &amp; Rede,  96 And heuen to haue for <i>our</i> mede !  Amen, Amen, so moot hit be,  So saye we alle for charyte !</p>	<p>and stop talking when  your neighbour is drinking.</p> <p>65 Scorn and reprove no man.  66 [1 Marg. has <i>gre</i> for insertion.]</p> <p>71 Keep your fingers from what  would bring you to grief.  73 [Fol. 86, back, col. 2.] 73  Among ladies, look, don't  talk. Don't laugh loud,  or riot with ribalds.</p> <p>78 Don't repeat what you hear.  79 [2 <i>not</i> put in by a later hand.]</p> <p>81 Words make or mar you.</p> <p>83 If you follow a worthier man,  let your right shoulder  follow his back, and</p> <p>87 don't speak till he has done.</p> <p>89 Be austere (?) in speech;</p> <p>91 don't stop any man's tale.</p> <p>93 Christ give us all  wit to know this,</p> <p>96 and heaven as our reward. Amen!</p>
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