

FREDERICK ARMITAGE

A SHORT
MASONIC
HISTORY

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A Short Masonic History

by Frederick Armitage





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Foreword

There is probably no topic of more elusive nature to discourse upon than that of the secret societies which were the ancestors of modern Freemasonry, for the early ones are enshrouded in mystery, and their records have to be dug up from various writers and pieced together like a Mosaic, while with later ones there has always been a striving to find an early original amongst their historians, who frequently gave free rein to their fancies. Succeeding authors, awed by the glamour of their topic, have gravely repeated in solemn tones the lighter fancies of their predecessors, and thus the ultimate harvest has been one of mixed grain and cornflowers. From such stories it is the duty of the present-day writer to try to pick out the real from the fanciful, and to tell the tale as it should be told. Whether the author has succeeded or not must be left to his readers to judge, but here he desires to acknowledge the valuable aid he has obtained from the transactions of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, which is now well known as the learned Society of Freemasonry, and whose endeavours, it is hoped, may in course of time throw light on many of the present obscure pages of the history of the Craft, and of other secret societies.

Fred. Armitage, P.M.

July, 1909.

I. The Origins Of Secret Societies

In those early days of which Virgil sings, when arms and the prowess of manly exploits were considered far greater than all the acquirements of the mind, it is not surprising to find that whenever a man of genius arose among the people, he at once gathered round him a circle - small, but faithful - of followers like-minded with himself. Such a gathering either became a school, in which the master's philosophy was taught - such were the Pythagoreans; a sect wherein the master's religious ideas were expounded, as instance the Jesuits, a club where political ends were propagated, such as the Orange Society; or a guild, wherein the interests of a particular craft or trade were sought to be advanced, such as that of the operative masons in England.

Workmen in trades at all times have found it necessary to follow and find their work in such places as they could, and thus became wanderers from town to town, and city to city. A stranger arriving at a place and professing to be a skilled workman, had to be scrutinised and to give proofs, not only of his skill, but also of his apprenticeship and proper entry into the trade or craft. What was better than to turn the guild into a secret society, with a system of signs and passwords, which, when duly given, would be the hall-mark of the genuine member of a society, to belong to which betokened both experience and skill?

The history of civilisation is permeated with such societies which have sprung up from time to time, have lived their life, and died out, till in later days another society has risen and used the ashes of a former body to light its own fire of existence. In this way it is probable that, although such societies had different objects, they frequently had similarities of ideas and similarities of ritual, which were originated by, if not lavishly copied from, their predecessors. One point of resemblance runs through all of them, and that is the use of symbols, or a picture language, from which moral lessons were drawn and enshrined in a ritual of a more or less religious character, which formed a fitting frame for the sanction of a solemn oath by the members not improperly to divulge the sign and pass words to outsiders. The idea of symbols was doubtless drawn from the religion they professed. The rites of the ancient Egyptians, the heathen worship of the Greeks, and the ritual of the Christians teemed with pictorial and other illustrations of their truths. The figures of the lamb and the eagle were familiar to all as symbols, while the key, the anchor, and the ship form another class, and each had their own moral lesson to convey. In the same way the coats of arms worn by knights in mediaeval days were all symbolic of the virtues supposed to be possessed by those who bore them.

The characteristics of all secret societies from the earliest ages are twofold. First, an initiation ceremony for the candidate, prior to which he had to give proofs of his character and adaptability to the fraternity, and during which he swore an oath to keep the secrets entrusted to him. Secondly, in order to guard the true brother from the rash intruder or the spurious coyon, or cowan, who tried to be a workman without proper apprenticeship, there were signs and passwords which could only be given by those who had been properly initiated.

It is a generally accepted opinion that when two bodies are found to have similar rules, the one has been copied from the 'other, unless both have a common ancestor. In this way the historical continuity of modern secret societies from ancient ones has been preserved, though there are not wanting those critics who say that "the likeness admits of explanation by the general doctrine of psychical identity" - a high sounding phrase, by which is meant that by a

coincidence two minds may arrive at the same truth at the same time by two independent trains of thought. The explanation of two copyists from one original, derived from the example of schoolboys, seems however, the easier and more probable.

II. The Persians

Among ancient races the worship of the sun was one of the most obvious and most generally practised of religious rites. To the agricultural mind the question of the raising of cereal crops, both for human food and pasture for cattle, was the prime necessity of life; and, as both these primarily depended on the sun, it was accordingly considered the most powerful of the forces of Nature, and as such, a deity to be worshipped. It had also to be propitiated, for it could be a bane as well as a blessing, as in the absence of water it created famines, and in the deserts it was the cause of those common Eastern complaints - sunstroke and ophthalmia - caused by the glare of light upon the head or eyes. Sun-worship was therefore almost universally practised by Eastern nations - the Persians, Assyrians, and all the tribes whose borders were adjacent to the Hebrew nations in Old Testament times. Over and over again the Israelites are recorded to have copied the habits of their neighbours. Indeed, Solomon, after the building of the Temple, practised the old heathen worship, and no deity was better known to the people of Palestine than Baal, who was the Sun god. It was obvious that it rose in the east, at midday attained its meridian in the south, and at the close of day set in the west. After that it was out of sight, and what became of it during that time? The gods were supposed to take it in hand, place it in a golden goblet, and navigate it through an ocean on a northerly course, until it reached the east again next morning. Aristotle, while rejecting the theory of the ocean voyage, believed that the sun was conveyed somehow by night across the northern regions, and that darkness was due to lofty mountains, which screened off the sunbeams during the voyage.

It is not therefore surprising to find that the idea of the daily progress of the sun through the heavens was easily seized upon and taken up by the societies, which within closed doors practised their secret rites, or "mysteries," as they preferred to call them, and transmitted to their successors portions of ritual in which this daily progress from north to east, and from east to west was copied, and the east made the post of honour in their meetings.

The oldest of these societies was probably founded in that land of locked secrets, Thibet, where the sacred Lhamas, if we are to credit modern exponents of their methods, had a body of secret doctrines, now known as esoteric, or hidden, mysteries, which may or may not be correctly interpreted by the Theosophists of to-day.

Nearly adjoining their territory came the Persians, whose religion was founded on the God of light and fire. "Fire-worshippers" is a familiar phrase, and the High Priest of the order was Zoroaster, who is represented in sculptured figures with a blazing sun round his head. He certainly practised within the recesses of caverns and labyrinths, mysteries, the knowledge of which he is said to have obtained from Upper Egypt. Fire and light were only the children of the Sun, which was the Deity they all looked up to, for they always worshipped at their fire-altars with their faces to the Sun. When a higher cult of the priests arose, and some knowledge was gained of chemistry, what was more natural than for these priests to arrogate to themselves supernatural powers, and to practise the arts and experiments of those who, in later days, were called alchemists? Magic was an earlier word for the same thing, and accordingly the Persian priests became magi, or magicians.

Persia's power was at its height in the age of Cyrus, who overcame the armies of Babylon in 538 b.c., and Persia's hosts overran Egypt and Greece until under Darius they were defeated by the Greeks on land at the battle of Marathon in 490 b.c., and by sea at Salamis in 480 b.c. It is probable that in this way Persia acquired a knowledge of some of the Egyptian

magic arts. One name of great note in connection with the subject of secret societies is that of the Greek scholar, Pythagoras, to whom we shall refer later, and who undoubtedly learned and practised some of the Egyptian rites. There is a story in some writers that, whilst in Egypt, he was carried away by the Persian King Cambyses, and in this way became acquainted at first hand with the Magi, from whom he learned some of their secrets. The story, however, lacks confirmation, and it is improbable that these secret arts should have been taught to a foreigner.

The Persian Magi are supposed to be the originals of "the Wise Men from the East," who visited our Lord after his birth (Matt, ii., 1), though some commentators prefer to think that these "Wise Men from the East" came from the country of the Chaldeans. These Persian philosophers are also supposed to be referred to in the Old Testament, where it is stated that "Solomon's wisdom excelled that of all the children of the East country, and all the wisdom of Egypt" (1 Kings iv., 30).

There seems little doubt that in common with the Jews and all other Eastern nations, much of the learning of these Magi was expended on the interpretation of dreams, the Eastern mind being filled with picturesque ideas which were repeated in their sleep, and had to them varied and strange significance.

To be able to coin a new word which has been adopted in the vocabularies of the world, bespeaks greatness in the man, or in the country which gives it birth. Such an honour, if it be one, for the coining of a word which has not the most pleasantest association, is possessed by Persia, to which country belonged the Society of the Assassins, whose history is associated with the names of their antagonists the Knights Templars.

The assassins derived their name either from the oriental drug "hashish," an extract of opium, with which the members of the society used to excite their imagination, or from the name of their founder, Hassan-ben-Sabah. The Mohammedans, after the death of Mahomet in 632 a.d., split into two sections over the question of who was his legitimate successor as Caliph. One body were called the Tunnites, or orthodox Moslems, who were found in Turkey, and the other was a heterodox one known as the Shiites, who were the members of the Moslems in Persia. The Shiites later on split into two sections on a similar question - that of the proper Imam, or high priest - and the members of the new branch were called the Ismaelites, who contended that the Imamship should go to Ismael, the eldest son of Ali, the deceased priest. It is not surprising to find that the result of these divisions was that the new body of the Ismaelites developed new ideas of their faith, and, departing from the strictness of the Koran, formed a secret doctrine that all religions were the invention of man, that good and evil were not fixed qualities, and that expediency was to be sole test of what was right or wrong. They therefore allied themselves to the Freethinkers of their country, who were found in the Magi of Persia, and they placed themselves under one of the Magi named Abdallah, who professed to hate the Arabs and their religion, and who is said to have formed a secret society of his own. The Ismaelites afterwards went into Egypt, where they succeeded in placing a descendant of Ismael on the throne, and a lodge of the secret society was founded at Cairo, while its members spread over Asia, their objects being to establish their own Caliphs as head of the Mohammedan religion, and to replace what they regarded as the spurious one at Bagdad. It was at this time that Hassan-ben-Sabah journeyed to Egypt, and became a zealous member of the Ismaelite lodge. He afterwards went to Alimoot, in Persia, and there in 1090 he founded the order of the "Assassins," with himself as the master, or Skeikh-ad-Jebel, which meant "Master of the Mountain," the town of Alimoot being situated on a lofty hill, though in Europe he became popularly known as the "Old man of the mountain."

There were seven degrees in the order, the first being that of the master; the second were three grand priors; third, the initiated masters, or dais; fourth, the companions, or refeeks; fifth, the devoted, or fedavees; sixth, the novices, or lafecks; and seventh, the profane, or common members. For the initiated there was a ritual with seven precepts - implicit obedience to the master, secrecy, and a direction that the interpretation of the sacred book of the Koran was to be allegorical and not literal, so that any meaning might be given to it which suited the purpose of the moment. This secret interpretation was, however, only communicated to the initiated, and the rest of the members had to wait till the meaning was given to them. The fifth class, or fedavees, were the working members, and were usually clothed in white garments, with a red fez and girdle, though when sent on any duty they could disguise themselves in any costume they thought proper.

The fedavee, when required to work, was stupified with hashish, which caused him to dream fanciful visions, and he was made to believe he was in the Paradise of the Prophet, and that death, if it came to him, was the entrance to the most delicious after-life.

The society was attacked by the Sultan of Turkey, but the fedavees carried out their missions of assassination when and wherever they were ordered. The Assassins spread into Syria and Tripoli, where they acquired much power, and Hassan, the master, died in 1124. He left as his successor Buzoorg, who afterwards came into touch with Baldwin II., the Crusader-King of Jerusalem, through Hugh de Paganes, the Grand Master of the Temples, and they agreed to join forces against the Saracens. The Assassins seem to have been free lances in their warfare, a Caliph of Bagdad and a Sultan of Cairo-falling victims to their society. The Templars, however, found themselves the stronger, and the Assassins had to submit to a yearly tribute of 40,000 gold ducats, which the latter tried to have remitted by an offer made to them to Almeric, King of Jerusalem, to become Christians. The envoy, who made the offer was, however, killed by the Templars as he returned, when the Assassins again resumed their deadly work; and in 1192 they murdered Conrad of Tyre at the instigation, it is said, of Richard Coeur de Lion. The Assassins levied tribute on the Christians of Tripoli and other places, though they unsuccessfully demanded it of King Louis of France when he passed through Acre. The Assassins in Persia were defeated by the Mongols in 1256, and the Syrian branch was exterminated in 1270, though traces of them are still said to exist in Persia.

III. The Egyptians

The worship of the Egyptians was a many sided one, and their deities were not only numerous, but of many descriptions, in this respect closely bordering on a Pantheism, which accounted many of the living things of the universe as gods. In this way many animals figured as deities, such as the bull, the ram, the hawk, the crocodile, the serpent, and the cat. Sun-worship held also a foremost place, that body being known under the names of Ra, Aten and some others. Ra was the subject of worship at that city, which afterwards took the Greek name of Heliopolis, or city of the Sun. Seb was the god personifying the earth, who brought to the agriculturist her fruits in due season, aided by the god Hapi, the sacred river Nile, whose overflowing irrigated the lands of the farmers. The temple of the Sun, or Ra, was a familiar feature of most of the towns of Egypt, and the mysteries of Sun-worship occupied the army of priests, who, as Herodotus tells us, "in a word used a number of ceremonies." The rising and setting of the sun naturally formed an allegory of life, with its periods of birth and death; and one is not surprised to find growing up alongside the worship of the Sun that of the two well-known Egyptian gods, Osiris and Isis. Osiris was reputed to have been a King who ruled in the South of Egypt, who had a wife named Isis, and a jealous brother named Set. The latter, by a stratagem, drowned Osiris in the Nile, and the body was carried by the waters to the swamps of the Delta, where it became deposited on the lower branches of an acacia tree, which grew up and concealed it. Isis discovered, by magical means, where the body was, and hid it in a secret place. There it was found by Set, who cut it into fourteen pieces, which he scattered in different places, but the devoted Isis discovered and buried them- She then instructed her son Horus, assisted by his followers, to perform the proper burial ceremonies, which had the effect of raising Osiris from the dead, and establishing him as a god and King of the hidden world. The story is told in full by Plutarch in his work "De Iside et Osiride," and there are many allusions to it in Egyptian inscriptions.

It is matter of remark that in some secret societies of after-days the Egyptian legends of the progress of the sun through the heavens, of the murder of Osiris, and the finding of his remains, became embodied in the mysteries of such societies. It is certain, from the evidence of the relics of ancient Egypt, from the pictures carved upon its tombs, and from its mortuary chambers, the Pyramids, that death was the main subject of the rites. Once every year the death of Osiris was commemorated, and a procession was formed in which an ark or boat - often figured on Egyptian tombs - was borne on the priests' shoulders. The ark was supposed to contain a dead body in memory of the boat which floating on the Nile, bore the severed remains of Osiris down the river, and told again the story of a daughter of the Pharaohs' finding a human body - in this case a dead one - floating in an ark on the sacred river.

The temples of Egypt have one feature which distinguish them from those of any other nation - the erection of obelisks outside, and numerous pillars, within, as witness those of Thebes and Karnak. These obelisks and pillars also became the originals of similar features found within the lodges of the later societies.

Herodotus, in the division of his book called "Euterpe," which deals with Egypt, describes some of the ceremonies of the Egyptian priests, and also talks of the huge labyrinths which the priests showed him, constructed on the shore of Lake Moeris, this, large piece of water having been, in part, artificially made. These' labyrinths, if we may believe the glowing accounts of French and other writers, formed a temple for the magical and mystical ceremonies of the Egyptians, the rites being accompanied by theatrical effects of lightning and thunder, and by startling appearances of a blazing sun shining through the darkness.

Thomas Moore, the poet, has given a glowing account of some of these ceremonies in his prose work, "The Epicurean," published in 1839, which he accompanies by notes from many learned writers. The work also contains illustrations of some of these scenes from the pencil of the artist, J. M. W. Turner, R.A.

IV. The Pythagoreans

There is one man whose name is always associated with matters of scientific or mystic lore in past ages, and that is the Greek Pythagoras, who lived between 580 and 500 b.c. Born in the island of Samos, his mind inclined to Greek philosophy, in which he became proficient. Greece was at this time much influenced by Egyptian learning, and it is not surprising to find that Pythagoras journeyed to Egypt to study the learning of that country at its fountain head. The priests were the depositaries of learning; and if we are to believe tradition, Pythagoras was instructed in their mysteries as well as in their hieroglyphical writings. The mind of man, ever credulous and ready to imagine that the marvellous is enshrouded in the unknown, readily thought that the hieroglyphs which covered the temples and ancient tombs of Egypt had dark secrets to unfold of mystic rites and ceremonies, and this was well enough while the secrets of those curious writings remained locked up. Modern research has, however, found the key to decipher them, and while they are found to contain matters of history of the greatest interest and importance, they do not reveal any of those mysteries said to have been communicated to Pythagoras. The story, however, goes one step further, for our traveller's journeys were said to be contemporaneous with the Persian invasion of Egypt under Cambyses, the son of that Cyrus, King of Persia, who assisted in the return of the Jews from their Babylonish captivity. Cambyses, it is said, took Pythagoras with him on his return to Persia, where the hidden learning of the Magi of that country was revealed to him. Thus, armed with the ancient lore of two kingdoms, Pythagoras, then aged 40, returned first to his native land and then to the Greek colony of Crotona, on the gulf of Tarentum, in the south of Italy, where he set up a school of thought of his own, and an army of scholars known as Pythagoreans.

His researches took him foremost to the fields of astronomy, and he first taught that the planets moved in regular succession round the sun, a doctrine which was derided for many years, till Galileo proved it correct in the 16th century. These movements he deemed to be such that musical sounds were evolved by them in their motion, hence called the "music of the spheres." Directly flowing from Egyptian modes of thought, the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul became also one of the branches of his philosophy- G. H. Lewes in his "History of Philosophy" has summarised these teachings of Pythagoras and those of his followers. In mathematics he was a discoverer, and the glory of the well-known 47th problem of Euclid as to the properties of the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is credited to him, and not to Euclid.

In three other points Pythagoras followed the Egyptians; the first was in the inclusion of women among his disciples, amongst whom he numbered his own wife and fifteen other ladies; the second being abstinence from beans as food, for reasons connected with ancient legends; while the third was the use by Pythagoras of ciphers and symbols in order to preserve the hermetic nature of his learning.

That the body of Pythagoreans was an influential one is clear from the history of Italy, where the pupils took part in political struggles against the democratic party, and eventually had to flee from persecution. As to their mysteries, Herodotus tells us that the Pythagoreans were worshippers of Orpheus and Bacchus, the latter name itself being a keynote to the mysteries, and the same historian adds that it was considered profane for one who was initiated in their mysteries to be buried in woollen garments, and a religious reason is given for this custom. Herodotus also has a story of a former slave of Pythagoras, who acquired riches, and in order

to carry on the doctrines he learned from his master, built himself a subterranean dwelling, where he lived three years, and practised there the mysteries of the order.

Pythagoras is said to have clothed himself like an Egyptian priest, and to have undergone the rite of circumcision, which was indispensable to initiation into the sacred mysteries of those days. He also paid his adoration to the gods in the temples early in the morning, and had a great reputation for sanctity. Those who joined his school were not allowed to speak in his presence till after five years of training, and he is said to have taught them to communicate with one another by means of the symbolic writings he had learnt when abroad. He died about 500 b.c., and on his death was venerated as a god, and his house was revered as a temple.

V. The Eleusinians

It has always been the tendency for one nation to copy another in its modes of thought, architecture, and ceremonies, and this rule obtained also in the relations of the Egyptians and the Greeks. The mysterious rites of the former race in time became the envy of their neighbours, and were consciously or unconsciously copied. Accordingly we find that in the year 1350 b.c., the Greeks founded certain rites, which continued for a space of no less than 1,800 years. The ceremonies took place every five years, in the month of September, lasting nine days, and were accompanied by the greatest secrecy, and an obligation not to divulge them, while he who disobeyed was ostracised from the society of his fellows, and was subject to be put to death. The festivals were held in honour of Ceres, the goddess of corn and harvest, and her daughter Proserpine. The initiates were of both sexes, and the rites were almost compulsory, for the persons who refused to undergo the necessary ordeals were looked down upon, and deemed not to be worthy of the delights of the world beyond.

There were two degrees in the order, the lesser and the greater, and the first had to be undergone as a prelude to the second. The lesser mysteries were practised at Agrae, near the Illissus, and none but persons of unblemished character were admitted to them, nor then till after purifications, prayers, and sacrifices, and with ceremonial sprinkling of water upon them. The "initiate" in the following year developed, by partaking of the second degree, into an "inspector." The ceremony began at night in a building called "the mystical temple," where the initiates were received by a priest, known as "Hierophantes," who recited to them those elementary principles of philosophy or morality which pointed out that clean bodies must be the receptacles of clean minds. The "Hierophantes" was assisted by three deacons and many other inferior officers. Certain admonitions were then read from inscriptions carved on stones, after which a catechism was put to the initiates. The mind of the novice was now in that pliable condition in which it was most susceptible of outward influences, and here the magic arts of the Egyptians stepped in, and the effects of thunder, lightning, and earthquake were in some manner imitated. On subsequent days there were sacred processions, sacrifices, and games. As showing the relations of these mysteries to those from which they were copied, and towards those of other mysteries which in after years appear to have been copied from them, it is significant to note that the officiating priest bore the types of the sun and moon, and that on the last day of the rites two earthen pots were filled with wine, one being placed in the east, the other in the west, the wine being afterwards spilled on the ground as a libation, to the accompaniment of a mystical formula of words.

By a natural sequence of events the mysteries, though originally founded at Eleusis, in Greece, afterward found a home in Rome, much further west, and ultimately came to a close in the reign of the Roman Emperor, Theodosius the Great, in a.d. 450, or thereabouts.

The example of Egypt was also followed in the rejection of beans as food, the reason given being that beans were considered as impure by Ceres.

VI. The Temple Builders

Freemasons have always taught that their art was derived from the Jews, and that the builders of the first temple were the original masons.

Apart from the traditions of the old “charges” of the operative masons, copied by Dr. Anderson, in that lengthy history of Freemasonry contained in his famous “Book of the Constitutions,” there is no historical basis for this story, but it is of such interest to all students of the lore of secret societies that to make the subject plain it is necessary to give some historical account of this temple, and its builders. The story gets colour from the Jewish tradition that King Solomon had the highest skill in magical arts, and power over the invisible world, and that Tadmor in the Wilderness had been built by his enchantments. The temple was built by King Solomon on the plateau of Mount Moriah, to the east of the City of Jerusalem, having been begun b.c. 1012, and completed b.c. 1005. Being built on the top of a hill, it was approached by many steps, which led first to a low wall, enclosing the “Court of the Gentiles.” Inside this was another wall containing the “Court of the Israelites,” where no Gentile might enter, and within this court was the temple proper. At “the west, nearest to Jerusalem, was the “Holy of Holies,” containing the ark, while the next chamber was the “Holy Place,” containing the golden candlestick, table, and altar of incense. Without was the temple court, approached by the porch which faced east on the Mount of Olives. This enabled the worshippers to view from thence the rising of the sun, and in this respect the temple was planned like the Roman basilicas, and exactly the reverse to the arrangement of the Christian churches, the entrances to which always faced the west. The details of the building are given in i King vi. and vii., and also by Ezekiel in his Vision of the Temple, which he had seen with his own eyes, and the description of which is given in Chapter XL. of his book. The dimensions are given to cubits, the popular measure of length in the East, being equal to the length of an average man’s arm from the elbow to the middle finger tip, or about 21 inches. According to this the extreme length of the temple was 108 ft., the height 54 ft., and the breadth 36ft. Josephus in his “Antiquities,” (b. vii. c. 3), also describes the building, which he says was made of a limestone, found near Jerusalem, and which could be polished to appear like white marble. The foundations described by Josephus were investigated by Sir Charles Warren, for the “Palestine Exploration Fund,” and his reports confirm the statements of Josephus as to their great depth. One of the most interesting features of the temple were the porches, of which there appear to have been several in the different courts. There was the porch of pillars, the porch for the throne where Solomon might judge in Eastern fashion, and “the porch before the temple of the house,” supposed to have been a tower. This porch was adorned with two hollow brass pillars made by Hiram the Architect, which are fully described in the Book of Kings and by Josephus. Their height in both writers is given as 18 cubits, or 33 ft., though in 2 Chron. iii. 15, the height is given as 35 cubits, or 63 ft., which may include part of the steps referred to in 2 Chron. ix. 4, as the King’s “ascent by which he went up into the House of the Lord.” Authorities differ as to whether these pillars were separate from the building, or supported the entablature, though the better opinion is in favour of the former view.

One thing is perfectly clear about the design of the Temple, and that is that the plan of it was not an original one, for it was designed to be only a copy on a larger scale of the Tabernacle. This want of originality in design was also reflected in its ornamentation, for the King of Tyre being appealed to by Solomon for assistance, which was evidently lacking in Jerusalem at the time, an artificer was sent from Tyre itself to supply those ideas which were needed at

the headquarters of the building. One can imagine Hiram the Architect gazing at those plans, which merely attempted to translate into the more lasting form of stone the temporary woodwork of the Tabernacle, and wondering in what way it could be improved. His thoughts would naturally turn to the temple which stood in Tyre itself, and which is thus described by Herodotus, the Greek historian (b. ii. c. 44): "And being desirous of obtaining certain information from whatever source I could, I sailed to Tyre in Phoenicia, having heard that there was a temple dedicated to Hercules; and I saw it richly adorned with a great variety of offerings, and in it were two pillars, one fine gold, the other emerald stone, both shining exceedingly at night." The temple was probably open to the air, and the historian is picturing the magnificent view of the pillars as they appeared by bright moonlight.

Hiram, when summoned to Jerusalem, might naturally have bethought himself of these magnificent pillars of the Tyrian temple, and designed two others of different shape and different materials, but yet intended by him to be as noteworthy as those of his native city which, being practically an island, had always stood for independence both in action and character.

It will probably be remarked that Herodotus viewed the temple at Tyre in 443 b.c., or about 550 years after the temple at Jerusalem had been built, but on this question he expressly tells us that the priests at Tyre assured him that their temple had stood for 2,300 years, and consequently it must have been in existence prior to King Solomon's time.

Whether the two pillars in King Hiram's temple had any special religious significance, or were merely architectural necessities, remains to be seen, but it is worthy of attention that amongst the Egyptians, who were the earliest builders of the world, and from whom other peoples - and probably also the Tyrians - derived their ideas, pillars were held in great honour, the Egyptian great god Osiris being known as the "Lord of the Pillars." One of the familiar scenes in Egyptian sculptures was the great festival of "setting up the pillars," in which the Kings took a prominent part. It may well be that the pillars at the entrances of temples were borrowed from the ancient altars, composed of a pillar of stone, such as we read Jacob in the early Hebrew days erected at Bethel, and the Druids used at Stonehenge for their sacrificial rites.

The Temple of Solomon had an army of workmen, some thousands in number, some of whom were employed to hew down timber in the forests of Lebanon, whence it was taken to the port of Tyre, carried in rafts to Joppa - the modern Jaffa - and thence by road about thirty miles to Jerusalem. The stones we are told were all worked and shaped at the quarries, so that no sound of axe or chisel was heard during the building. Masonic tradition asserts that these workmen were banded together in a secret society, under the leadership of the overseers, or as the Hebrew word in 2 Chron. ii. 18, gives it, "the Menatzchim," and that Solomon was the Grand Master of the Society.

Solomon's temple lasted for 400 years, when it was destroyed by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar. When Babylon was in turn taken by the Persians, Ezra was allowed by Cyrus the King to return and build up the City of Jerusalem, and Zerubbabel, working with Ezra, built the second temple. This stood for over 500 years, until the time of Herod, b.c. 18, who, seeing that it was much dilapidated, resolved with a view to please his Jewish subjects to rebuild it. This he did, and that building was the temple which was standing in Jerusalem at the time of Christ. In a.d. 70 Jerusalem was again besieged by the Romans under Titus, when Herod's temple was burnt down by the soldiers contrary to the will of the commander who tried to save it from destruction.

Some masonic writers have wondered whether the selection of King Solomon's temple as the centre of Freemasonry was in any way due to Bacon, who in his book, "The New Atlantis," imagined an island called Bensalem, which had a society known as "The House of Solomon," to promote the arts and sciences under a master who was indebted to Solomon for his wisdom. It is pointed out, however, by De Quincey that the supposition must be fallacious, as Bacon himself stood as the head of the antagonists of the school of Alchemists and Cabalists, who were supposed to be the progenitors of Freemasonry.

VII. The Essenes

One of the most interesting of the secret societies and one which gave the keynote to many of its successors, was a Jewish one which existed in Palestine in the time of Christ, known as the Essenes, and which lasted nearly 300 years, from about 200 b.c. till 100 a.d. For its record we are indebted to three writers - Josephus, the Jewish historian, who was an initiate for three years, but did not complete his education amongst the sect, and who has given the fullest account; Philo, of Alexandria, the Jewish philosopher; and the Roman writer, Pliny the Younger. Philo locates the body on the shores of the Dead Sea, but Josephus tells us they had no one city and were scattered in various spots in Palestine. They are treated as an extreme sect of the Pharisees, who lived in communities under recognised heads, professed a strict adherence to the laws of Moses, and practised the greatest austerities in life, similar somewhat to John the Baptist. Without despising the married state, they were celibates and adopted other people's children when they found apt pupils. They copied the Stoics in their rejection of pleasures and in being despisers of wealth, charity and virtue being their only riches. They appear to have been a very early order of monks, for they lived a life of devotion, rising before sunrise for prayers, and talking of no worldly matters before that luminary appeared. They were socialists in practice, having all their goods in common, administered by stewards appointed for the purpose, the members thus avoiding riches on the one side and poverty on the other, while they rejected the idea of slavery as being in conflict with the equality of all men in their order. After morning prayers, which were recited to a set formula, they worked for several hours at their appointed tasks set by curators, and then at a signal they met together, bathed in cold water, and put on white robes in the vestibule of the meeting house. They then proceeded to the refectory, where each was brought a loaf and a single plate of food, the meal being preceded and followed by grace said by a priest. No strangers were allowed at this morning meal, which took place at eleven o'clock, consisting of bread, salt, and hyssop. After its conclusion, the white robes were again laid aside in the vestibule and work resumed till the evening, while in like manner supper was served, but at this latter meal strangers might be admitted. Everything was done according to rule, and in quietness; no general conversation was allowed, but if any one wished to speak he could do so in his turn, and without interruption by others, so that no man dared to speak unless he had something of importance or originality to discuss. The needy were looked after, and charity bestowed, but in order to prevent any appearance of unfairness no man was allowed to give to his own relatives directly, any claim of that kind being referred to the curators to deal with. They devoted their leisure to studying the works of the old Hebrew writers, and were messengers of peace to all, restraining their anger, every man treating his word as his bond and avoiding oaths, except those they took as part of the ritual of their society. Josephus says he saw a great similarity between their views and those of the Pythagoreans, amongst the most prominent of the Essenes' ideas being the belief in a resurrection after death, a judgment day, and the punishment of the wicked.

If any one wished to become a member of the order, he was a probationer, living the same life with the others for a year, and being given a small spade, a linen apron, which was also used as a towel, and a white garment for use at meal times. There does not appear to have been any uniform habit used by the members, but it is stated that they wore their clothes till they were in rags, when new ones were provided by the curators, and each man had only one change of raiment and one pair of shoes. After the expiration of a year the man became a novice, and went through a kind of baptismal ceremony, and again continued with the brethren for another two years. If, after this long trial, he satisfied all the tests to the

satisfaction of the Brethren, he was elected a member of the society, but before he was admitted to full rights in the order and allowed to join his brethren in their daily routine and meals, he was obliged to take what Josephus describes as “tremendous oaths,” which have a great analogy to those of the secret societies of later days. He swore, first of all, to observe piety towards his God; then as to his fellow-men he was to observe justice towards them, to do them no harm, either by his own will or by the direction of others; to hate the wicked and help the good. He further swore to be a faithful citizen, to show respect to those in authority, and, if placed in power, never to abuse it or endeavour to outshine his subjects in dress or finery, and to keep his hands from theft, and his lips from lying. Finally, as to the order, he swore to conceal nothing from his brethren; never to divulge to others the secrets he received from them; not to alter the constitutions of the order; and to jealously preserve the books wherein the secrets were written.

Their numbers do not appear to have exceeded 4,000, and as they made little appearance before the Jewish world, no direct reference is found to them in the New Testament, unless it be in the passages wherein swearing is prohibited, Matt. v. 34, and James v. 12, and as to the worshipping of angels (Col. ii. 18), which was a part of the religious ceremonies of this sect.

There was another society of Jews in existence in Egypt in Philo’s time known as “The Therapeutae,” who are often classed with the Essenes, though there is no evidence that they used the rites and ceremonies of the latter body. In his work on the “Contemplative Life,” Philo tells us they lived in cells for speculative purposes, and met for united prayer on the Sabbath day. By some writers they are described as “Contemplative Essenes,” and Eusebius chose to claim them as Christians, probably only because their manner of worship was different from that of the Egyptians, amongst whom they dwelt.

VIII. The Roman Builders

When a new city is founded we expect to find engineers, architects, and builders flocking there by the score, and we are not surprised to hear that in the legendary days of Romulus, the founder, and first King of Rome, many men became builders. When the second king, Numa Pompilius, ascended the throne in b.c. 629, building had become well advanced, trades were established, and workmen began to combine in their guilds. One of these societies was said to be that of masons, though the Romans' great idea was to construct their work of concrete instead of stone. These guilds, like those of other days, favoured apprentices, and there was some form of initiating a new man into the craft, with sound rules of conduct in life and regulations for the guild and its meetings, though it cannot be said to deserve the title of a secret society.

In connection with this subject comes the story of the "Four Crowned Martyrs," or Quatuor Coronati, which has at all times been of deep interest to masons. It goes back to the time of the Christian persecutions under the Emperor Diocletian a.d 300. It is said that there were five Christian masons, or sculptors, in Rome who were ordered to do some work to pagan statues which, from religious scruples, they refused to carry out. They were sentenced to death and became martyrs, and should have been honoured as the "five crowned martyrs," save for the fact that two years afterwards, Diocletian still continuing his cruel career, four Christian soldiers became the object of his wrath for refusing to burn incense on the altar of the god Esculapius. These four also suffered the penalty of their devotion to the faith, and joined the noble army of martyrs. Tradition asserts that the deaths, both of the first five and the second four, happened to take place on November 8th, with a gap of a couple of years between.

Four years later, in a.d. 304, Diocletian having resigned the reigns of government, sought rest in a country house at Salona, in Dalmatia, and the Christians had peace. He was succeeded by a man of totally different character, Constantine the Great, who allowed the Christian religion equality with the pagan creeds, presided over the famous church council at Nicaea in 325 - when the Nicene creed was propounded - and ended by accepting Christianity under Bishop Eusebius.

To come back to the martyrs, we find that in a.d. 308, ten years after the death of the five masons, Pope Melchiades being anxious to show the change in public sentiment which had taken place since the time of Diocletian, revived the memory of the martyrdom, and appointed November 8th as the feast-day of the four crowned martyrs, and this institution has continued in the Roman Catholic Church to the present day. Five hundred years later, in the year 848, a church was erected and dedicated to these martyrs, the remains of the nine being placed in them, and travellers to Rome to-day can visit the church of the Quattro Incoronati, which stands on the site, and is the successor of the original building erected in the ninth century.

Coming to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries we find a college of Italian architects, or Freemasons, settled on the shores of Lake Como in Northern Italy, who may have been the successors of the Roman art, as they were of the Roman blood, and who taught the kings of Lombardy how to build their churches. If free rein is given to the fancy we can imagine them as the guiding spirit of European architecture, and at last penetrating into England and becoming the tutors of the English stonemasons and their offspring, the Freemasons. But although such fancies have been discussed as actual facts, we have no option but to repeat the

story, and leave the Como architects to bring their main influence to bear in their own neighbourhood. In Aubrey's "Natural History of Wiltshire," and in Ashmole's "Antiquities of Berkshire," the story is expanded, so that we are to believe that in the reign of Henry III. the Pope granted a Bull to these Freemasons to travel up and down Italy to build churches, and, further, that these masons were part of a secret society which had an oath of secrecy with certain signs and passwords. The story winds up "and it continues to this day," which has been taken as proof positive that these Roman builders were the lineal ancestors of modern day Freemasons.

IX. The Knights Templars

It has often been asserted that part of the degrees of Freemasonry were derived from the ancient order of the Knights Templars of Jerusalem, though this appears to be only one of those vague speculations so often met with in writers who derive their facts from ideas only. The story is an interesting one, and we proceed to tell it in brief.

In the days of the first Crusade by Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, and his brother the Duke of Flanders in 1099, Jerusalem was taken from the Saracens, and Godfrey was made King, though he contented himself with the title of Defender of the Holy Sepulchre, explaining that he did not care to wear a crown of gold where his Saviour had worn one of thorns. Twenty years afterwards a small body of nine Christian knights, desiring to preserve free access for the pilgrims to the Holy Land, against the Mussulmans and robbers of the neighbourhood, banded themselves together into an association known as the Knights Templars, or "Brethren of the Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem." There were two leaders, Hugh de Paganes and Geoffrey de St. Omer who, professing poverty, adopted as their seal two knights riding on one horse; and Matthew Paris, the historian, gravely relates as a fact that one horse served two of them. Baldwin II, King of Jerusalem, found quarters for them in his palace, and the abbot of the church and convent of the Temple gave them a building in which to keep their weapons. At first they lived only on alms which flowed in so freely that they speedily became very rich, and disdained to mix with any but the upper classes of nobles. Hugh de Paganes adopted the title of "Master of the Temple," which has continued to the present day, and in 1128 he came to England to stir up enthusiasm on behalf of his order. Here he established a branch with a prior of the Temple at its head, and it speedily grew into power, and had several houses, the chief of which was in Southampton Row, near Holborn. Afterwards the order acquired the site of the temple near Fleet Street, where they built their circular church in imitation of the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and afterwards three similar round churches were built at Cambridge, Northampton, and Mapleshead, in Essex.

Hugh returned to Jerusalem with 300 English followers, and in the same year, 1128, he requested the Council of Troyes to frame rules for the order, which were drawn up and sanctioned by Pope Honorius II. In 1146 Pope Eugenius II. ordered them to wear a red cross on their left breast and on their banner, which was of black and white stripes, known as the Beauseant, and this word also became their battle cry, meaning "sitting firmly," while the Templars were often called "Red Cross Knights."

The order now assumed a definite form, the head of it being known as the Grand Master, who was elected by the chapter of the Knights, and under him was a seneschal. The branch associations were divided into provinces and ruled by a Grand Prior, under whom were priors, and lower still in the scale preceptors. Ecclesiastics were also admitted, known as chaplains, with serving brethren, some of whom acted as squires to the knights, and there were also non-fighting members.

After this the Saracens made headway in the Holy Land, and in 1185 a second mission was despatched by the Knights Templars to England, when Heraclius the Patriarch arrived in England and was received with open arms by Henry II., who had just performed his penance for the death of Thomas a Becket. Heraclius took the opportunity to consecrate the Temple Church while he was here, but he failed to get the pecuniary assistance he required, and in 1187 Jerusalem was taken by Saladin. Notwithstanding the efforts of King Richard Coeur de

Lion in 1190, Jerusalem remained in the hands of the Saracens, and the Templars retired from Jerusalem to Cyprus.

They still continued as a powerful and wealthy body in France and England, and we have records of their piety, which was highly thought of, for people talked of the devotion of Templars who rose at midnight to say their prayers, and it was esteemed a great privilege to be allowed to be buried in their grounds, a favour only to be acquired by large gifts of money or lands. Their piety was illustrated by the strictness of the discipline, which punished offenders against the rules by whippings, performed in church on Sundays, or by scourgings at the hands of the master in the cells; and there was, in the north wall of the Temple Church, near where the organ now stands, a penitential cell four feet six inches long by two feet six inches wide. In this confined space those who had transgressed the rules were confined, whose monotony was only relieved by being permitted to gaze at the altar in the church through a hole made in the wall of the cell.

There was a proper initiation ceremony among the Templars conducted by the master, who, after putting the initiate through a catechism, made him kneel, and then put into his hands a copy of the Gospels, with the Templars' red cross upon it. He had then to swear to obey the master, to hold no property of his own, to observe chastity, never to consent that any man should be spoiled of his heritage, to lay violent hands on no man, except in self defence or on the Saracens, and not to reveal the secrets of the Order. The candidate then kissed the cross on the Gospels, and the master gave him a white mantle to wear, placed a linen coif on his head, and gave him a kiss on his mouth. Henceforth the Templar wore the girdle by day and night, and allowed his beard to grow - a custom borrowed from the Saracens themselves.

The Order lasted for nearly 200 years, but the year 1307 saw the beginning of its downfall, for then Philip the Fair of France, having got James de Molay, the Master of the Order, within his power, imprisoned him and all the French Templars, and in January, 1308, the members met a similar fate in England. In August, 1308, the Pope, Clement V., issued a Bull commanding all Christian kings to assist him in inquiring into the Order, and for two years the inquiry went on. Charges were made against them of gross immorality and impiety, which were attempted to be supported by evidence of renegade Templars who had their own ends to serve, and by confessions extorted from the accused parties while upon the rack, though it must not be forgotten that Pope and Kings alike had a greedy eye upon the Templars' wealth. It was asserted that the novices of the Order were taught to despise the crucifix and trample it under foot, and that from their association with their natural foes - the Mohammedans - they had learnt from them to renounce the Trinity and to adopt a system of natural religion opposed to Roman Catholicism. The lessons they had learned from their enemies of the East were said to have been enshrouded as mysteries communicated only to those who attained the highest of the degrees of their Order, and some of their wrong doings were alleged to be in connection with an image kept in their Temples. The figure represented a human bust of large dimensions and ridiculous aspect, covered with human embalmed skin, having a shiny appearance, and with two carbuncles for eyes. Much controversy was aroused as to the origin of its alleged name, "Baphomet." De Quincey, in his essay on "Rosicrucians and Freemasons," goes into the subject, and concludes that the name was a compound effected by cutting off the two first letters of Mahomet, and substituting Bap or Pap, the first syllable of the Italian word "Papa" meaning the Pope. The secret of this name, it is said, was not disclosed by the members of the Order, even under the tortures of the rack, probably for the good reason that there was nothing to reveal. In fact, nothing was too ridiculous to be made the subject of a charge against them; they were supposed to worship a cat, to raise devils, and to murder babies. Needless to say the clergy of the day found them guilty, and in Paris 113 members of the Order were burnt to death at the stake, which only formed a prelude to the

slaying of James de Molay on March 18th, 1313, who was roasted to death over charcoal fires, the site of his execution being one of the little islands of the Seine, near Paris.

In England milder measures prevailed, for after many examinations and rackings, the Templars, to save their lives, confessed to the charges, and received absolution on the steps at the south door of St. Paul's Cathedral. Their property, however, was forfeited, and to save appearances was supposed to be given to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John, but only a small fraction went to that body, and the King and his advisers shared the rest. The Temple Church and its precincts was sold by the Order of the Hospitallers of St. John in 1313, after which it became the residence and school of the lawyers.

The old Order of the Knights Templars is said to be associated with modern Freemasonry by the fact that, when the Grand Master was killed, Pierre d'Aumont, the next Templar in order, with several knights escaped to Scotland in the disguise of masons, where they were able to perpetuate the secrets of the Order, to which in time became added a ceremony in connection with the death of the Grand Master, and they then called themselves Franc Maçons. It was a favourite theory with old writers that this was the origin of Freemasonry itself, but this is abundantly disproved now, though it is a fact that in 1743 a new ceremony known as the "Rite of Strict Observance" was founded in Scotland, and in it the death of the Grand Master of the Knights Templars and some of their mysteries was adopted. It is interesting to learn that the Young Pretender, who was in Scotland at the time, was himself initiated into the rite.

There is a modern order of Knights Templars which has derived its name, if not its ritual, from the old Templars. Their meetings are called "Encampments," and there are three principal officers known as the Most Eminent Grand Commander, the Generalissimo and the Captain General, who wear robes and not an apron only.

X. The Vehmegerichte

We now come to a secret society of a different order to the preceding ones, for this is of a political stamp, and was designed in the Middle Ages as a secret police for the establishment of law and order. The scene of their labours was the ancient Duchy of Westphalia, which amongst the members was known as the "Red Earth," either from the blood spilt in carrying out the decrees of the order, or from the colour of the standard of Westphalia. There were many courts of the order, the country being divided into districts for the purpose, and the Lord of the Manor was the head of each.

There were two Circles of the Order - the Outer, or Offenbare Ding, and the Inner, known as Heimliche Acht, or True Oak, from its proceedings taking place in the open air under an oak tree.

The Outer Circle was not a secret society, and met three times a year, always on a Tuesday. It seems to have been a kind of grand jury composed of householders who made presentations of all crimes and wrongs of which they had any knowledge, which were to be punished by the Inner Circle.

The Inner Circle was composed of the Wissenden, or initiated, and to become such the candidate, being bareheaded and deprived of weapons, underwent an examination similar to that of other secret societies. He was compelled to state that he was free-born, of German birth, and not guilty of any crime against the principles of the Order. He then took an oath on the Bible to preserve the secrets of the Order from all his relatives, from every creature upon which the sun shone or rain fell, and from every living thing between earth and heaven. He further swore to disclose all offenders of whom he knew or heard, and that he would not fail so to do for fear or favour, for gold, silver, or precious stones. He was then entrusted with a grip, by which to test his fellow members, and a password to make himself known to them. The direful penalty of failure to comply with his oath was to be blindfolded, thrown to the ground, his tongue torn out by the back of his neck, and to be hanged seven times higher than other criminals.

The various branches of the order were presided over by a Grand Chapter, the Grand Master of which was either the Emperor himself or his deputy, the Stadtholder of the Duchy, who was at one time the Archbishop of Cologne.

The accused persons do not always appear to have had the privilege of a trial, but to have been condemned by the oath of members of the Inner Circle, whose duty was to carry out the sentence of death on the accused, who was known as "verfambt," or "outlawed" The Wissenden themselves, if accused, had the privilege of a trial before the Inner Circle, which proceeded upon the lines of a trial in a criminal' court of those days.

The Vehmegerichte attained its highest powers in the 14th century, when it is stated to have numbered no less than 100,000 members.

Its proceedings were depicted in the pages of fiction by Sir Walter Scott, in his novel "Anne of Geierstein," chapter XX., but he candidly confesses that he has coloured the picture to-suit his readers, and indeed he has largely produced a copy of a court of the Spanish Inquisition, composed of judges in black cowls, sitting in an underground court, with an altar in the centre, bearing a cord to bind the victim, and a poignard to stab him.

XI. The Rosicrucians

There is no name more fascinating to the student of mediaeval days on the Continent, nor so elusive, as that of the secret society of the Rosicrucians. Their mysteries have either been so well-kept, or were so unimportant, as to bring about in the minds of many students the conviction that there were no mysteries at all, and that at best the society performed no better task than hoaxing the watchful and spying world, which attempted to peep through the chinks of its doors. Lord Lytton set before himself the task of making a follower of the Rosicrucians his central figure in his novel of "Zanoni," but he has attempted no account of their rites or mysteries, and confined himself to the study of a recluse who dabbled in the magic arts of the ancient alchemy, cabalism, and astrology, though the author makes one of the characters say that "the Rosicrucians were wiser than the Alchemists." Lytton imagines (following the German writer Andrea, of whom we shall speak presently), that the order emanated from the brains of the Arabians, who at Damascus, in 1378, taught to a wandering German certain secrets which afterwards became those of the Rosicrucians. This German was named Christian Rosenkreuz, who prolonged his life, either by natural causes, or by reason of this discovery of new drugs and elixirs, to the well-seasoned age of 106.

If we are to believe the account of him, told in a work known as the "Fama Fraternitas," Rosenkreuz, on his return to Germany, established a secret society consisting at first of four, and afterwards of eight members, who lived together in a house known as the "House of the Holy Ghost." To these members, under vows of secrecy and fidelity, he communicated the secrets of the Order, and their rules were to cure the sick gratuitously, to meet together in the house at certain appointed periods, each brother to appoint a successor to take his place on his death, that the society was to be kept a profound secret for a hundred years, and that their watchword should be the word "Rosy-cross," which was later explained as "the Cross of Christ sprinkled with his rosy blood." It is asserted that 120 years after the death of Rosenkreuz search was made in the house, and a seven-sided vault discovered, upon the door of which was inscribed in Latin, "I shall open after 120 years." In the centre of the vault was an altar illuminated by a blazing sun, with four figures upon it, and under the altar was found the body of Rosenkreuz. A chest which was also discovered contained some secret books of the Order, with mirrors, bells, burning lamps, and some mechanical musical instruments.

The name of Paracelsus, the subject of Browning's poem, has also been associated with this Order. Paracelsus was a name coined by Philip Bombastus Hohenheim, a man filled with conceit and empty pride, to indicate that he was far and away superior in medical skill to the celebrated Latin physician, Celsus, who in a.d. 50 wrote an important treatise, "De Medicina." Paracelsus was born in 1493 at the Swiss village of Einsiedeln, near Zurich, and was a relative of the Hohenheim who became Grand Prior of the Order of Malta. The portrait of Paracelsus, a man with a sensuous, heavy face, was painted by Rubens, and hangs in the Picture Gallery at Brussels. Paracelsus spent his time in travelling from country to country in pursuit of the mystic knowledge . of astrology, witchcraft, magic, and alchemy, in which he is said to have been initiated by his father, though it is more probable that most of his learning came from the English writer, Roger Bacon. He travelled both on the Continent and in the East, including Egypt and Tartary, in both of which countries he is said to have been initiated into the mysteries of the Oriental magicians. In 1529 we find him at Crotona, in Austria, where he founded an organisation for the high-sounding purpose of the "moral reformation of society at large," and which apparently bore some resemblance to a religious brotherhood, and a secret society.

He died, notwithstanding his much vaunted discovery of the elixir of life, at Salzburg, in 1541, and the chief results of his life were the introduction of mercury and laudanum as drugs, and the coining of the word “bombast” as meaning great boasting on shallow foundations. If he actually belonged to the Rosicrucians he must have been a visitor of many lodges by reason of his travels, and he was the type of man who would be amusing as a visitor, but most annoying as a constant companion.

The name of Rosenkreuz came prominently before the learned men of Europe again in 1614, when, in the town of Cassala, was published by an anonymous German writer a work entitled “The Universal and General Reformation of the whole World, together with the History of the Brotherhood of the worthy Order of the Rosicrucians.” Possibly, if it had not been for this work, the name of Rosenkreuz might have been unknown amongst us to-day. The author of it is now supposed to have been Andrea, a professor of theology, who had caught the spirit of the earlier teachings of Paracelsus and Rosenkreuz. The work, known from part of the Latin title as the “Fama Fraternitas,” was translated into English and published here shortly after 1614 by Dr. Robert Fludd, an English medical man, and an enthusiast in mysticism, who combined with the use of drugs the practice of a system of faith-healing, which he professed to have derived from the doctrines of the Rosicrucians. Andrea did undoubtedly write another German work, published in 1616, called “The Chemical Nuptials of Christian Rosenkreuz,” which is imbued with chemical and astrological fancies. It is only on the acknowledged authorship of this work that the “Fama Fraternitas” is traced to Andrea, and it is only on this later work that the existence of the Rosicrucian Society, or Brothers of the Rosy-cross, is founded. The book, after giving the details of the finding of the body of Rosenkreuz, professes to declare the principles of the Order. The members are stated to have been of the Protestant faith; they honoured their king and country; and, dealing with the important question of the transmutation of base metals into gold, the writer declares that this was not done for the mere purpose of acquiring wealth, but for the study of chemistry and the mystic arts of alchemy. One declaration of the Rosicrucians is stated to have been that “Our House of the Holy Ghost, though a hundred thousand men should have looked upon it, is yet destined to remain untouched, imperturbable, out of sight, and unrevealed to the whole godless world for ever.”

Andrea also published another work in Latin, “The Confession of the Brotherhood of the Rosy-cross to the Learned of Europe,” in which he stated that the Order had different degrees, that its members included both rich and poor, from princes downwards, so long as their motives were pure and their objects worthy of the Order; that it had a language of its own; and that, though it possessed vast stores of silver and gold, it counted itself rich only in its wealth of learning and its philosophy.

It appears that curiosity was much aroused in Germany over the Rosicrucians, and as they could not be met with openly, letters were sent to them which were never answered. No lodge answering to the pretensions of Rosicrucianism was ever found in Germany, and we feel compelled to come to the same conclusion as Leibnitz many years afterwards, who, writing to a friend, said: “It appears to me that all that has been said of the Brothers of the Rosy-cross is a pure invention of some ingenious person.” It has also been pointed out as a straw which might show the way the wind raised by Andrea might blow, that the armorial bearings of Andrea’s family were a St. Andrew’s cross with four roses, and that with these emblems constantly before him, it was a short step for him to imagine the existence of a society bearing those marks as its badge.

Fludd, the translator of Andrea’s works, as we might suppose for a man so wedded to his studies, remained a bachelor, and died in 1637, aged 63, and is buried in the church of

Bearsted, near Maidstone. A topic such as the search for the elixir vitae, the main object of the Rosicrucians, would lend a charm to any romance, and Goethe aptly introduced it into the pages of his immortal play of "Faust," having learned the details from the writings which Paracelsus left behind him. In Part I., Scene II, Faust, a doctor of philosophy, jurisprudence, medicine, and alchemy, discloses the secret method of the Rosicrucians to obtain the celebrated elixir, the whole passage being a poetical description of an experiment in which the chemicals are treated as being masculine and feminine.

"My father's was a sombre, brooding brain,
Which through the holy spheres of Nature groped and wandered,
And honestly, in his own fashion, pondered
With labour whimsical, and pain.
Who, in his dusky work-shop bending,
With proved adepts in company,
Made, from his recipes unending,
Opposing substances agree.
There was a Lion red, a wooer daring,
Within the Lily's tepid bath espoused;
And both, tormented then by flame unsparing,
By turns in either bridal chamber housed.
If then appeared, with colours splendid,
The young Queen in her crystal shell,
This was the medicine - the patients woes soon ended,
And none demanded - who got well?"

The explanation of this passage is that the red chemical known as sulphate of mercury was pictured as a red lion wooing a white lily, which was a preparation of antimony, known as "the Lily of Paracelsus." These were placed in a tepid bath of water, after which they were put in double retorts and "tormented by flame unsparing." The result was a chemical compound pictured as the "young queen," of a ruby or purple colour, which, taken as a medicine, would either speedily kill or cure the patient. Such an experiment, to modern eyes, would excite no wonder, but in the days of the Rosicrucians a professor, armed with such chemicals and apparatus, would speedily acquire the reputation of a worker of magic, who was allied with mystical spirits and occult influences, and when several such chemists worked together, they would easily be taken for a secret society who practised black arts and incantations.

It is suggested that if a poisonous substance were evolved as the result of such experiments, the subtle mind of the alchemist, by a complete reversal of reasoning, might be able to call that an elixir of life, which was really only an elixir of death, leading to the life beyond.

De Quincey, the essayist, became interested in the Order, as one may well imagine in a writer who dreamed the mystical dreams of an opium eater, and in the "London Magazine" for January, 1824, he wrote a paper entitled "An Historico-critical Inquiry into the Origin of the Rosicrucians and the Freemasons." De Quincey was well versed both in Latin and German, and had been at much trouble to study the works of Andrea, Fludd, and other writers, though

the present stores of knowledge as to Freemasonry which modern research has brought to light might have modified some of his historical conclusions as to the Freemasons. He goes back to the mysteries of the Persians, the Egyptians, and the Arabs, and finding no trace of Freemasonry in them asserts: "In general, then, I affirm as a fact established upon historical research that, before the beginning of the seventeenth century, no traces are to be met with of the Rosicrucian or Masonic Orders." His' final conclusions are summarised when he states that "Freemasonry is neither more nor less than Rosicrucianism, as modified by those who transplanted it to England."

XII. The Woodcutters

During the Feudal times in France the working classes, especially in the provinces, found it necessary to band themselves together in societies for mutual defence and protection against the Barons who, with their armed followers, became a means of oppression rather than of defence and support. The woodcutters and charcoal burners of the forests in the Jura mountains were pioneers in this direction, and formed an Order of Francharbonnorie, or Free Charcoal Burners, which had a ritual of its own, and bound its members by an oath. There is always a tendency to ante-date these guilds, besides associating the names of kings with them, and accordingly Francis I. of France has been dubbed as being a member of it in 1510. To come from a conjecture to actual fact, we know that in 1748 a society known as "Les Fendeurs," or Wood Cutters, was in full activity, and held a meeting in Paris, though by a fiction that city was supposed to be a place in the centre of the King's forests. The society was said to be founded for the protection of those who lived in the woods, and who, being likely to meet dangerous characters there, could only be effectually helped by the combined force of the members. The lodges were called "Chantiers," or wood-yards, and were held in the open woods in summer, and at other times in a room adorned with branches and leaves, or painted woodland scenery. Charity and the duty of hospitality was its keynote, founded on the beatitudes in Matthew xxv., as translated from their French version. "I was naked and ye clothed me; thirsty, and ye gave me to drink; hungry, and ye gave me to eat; in prison, and ye visited me; ill, and ye succoured me; cold, and ye warmed me; afflicted, and ye consoled me." The master, or pere-maitre, sat in the East, while before him lay a log of oak and a hatchet. There were also a book of the constitutions of the Order, a cup of stone, a biscuit, a parcel containing five halfpence, a pair of white gloves, a yellow ribbon, representing a dead leaf, and a little gilded hatchet, while behind the master was a holly-bush. Four huts formed part of the property of the Chantier, in each of which, part of the ceremony was performed.

The candidate for initiation was supposed to be lost in a wood and demanded admittance. He had water poured over him to cleanse and purify him, and was presented with bread and wine, and to help him on his way was given the five sous, which at a later stage he put in a money box for the cause of charity. He was then made to repeat the oath, "I swear upon my honour, upon the bread and wine of hospitality, that I will never reveal the secrets of a woodcutter. I promise to offer to my cousins in their need hospitality, bread, soup, shavings, and half of my day's wages, when I shall have earned it. May the axe of the wood-cutter separate my head from my body if I ever perjure myself." "Shavings" was only a pleasant way of referring to the white and red wine, which was drunk during the meeting. A song was sung to wind up the proceedings.

"Friends and comrades, brave wood-choppers,

Who the axe itself resemble;

Is it for mere empty pleasures

That we choppers here assemble?

Let us love, and drink our fill,

Sing, and chop with hearty will."

The brethren of the Lodge did not disdain to have their lady friends as members, and, copying the example of the great kings and lords, addressed one another as "cousins." There were

signs and passwords to enable them to recognise fellow members if they met in the forests, and these signs were all of a woodland character, the body being deemed to resemble the trunk of the tree, the arms being the branches, the forked tree the ten fingers, and the twisted tree the right leg bent.

The catechism goes through many of these similitudes, and concludes as follows: -

Q.: "What have you found in the Lodge?"

A.: "Good cousins and fellow wood-choppers, zealous in work, courageous and charitable."

Q.: "If I have need of help what will you give me?"

A.: "I will share my day's wages with you, when I shall have obtained it, with my bread of adversity. We will burn together my sack of shavings, and I will lodge you in my cabin."

Q.: "If anyone wishes to do me harm, what will you do?"

A.: "I will defend you to the point of death."

This association, which had originally, a trade origin, gradually developed into a speculative society, and its working-class members were augmented by those of higher social standing. The society existed till the early part of the nineteenth century, but afterwards traces of it are lost.

XIII. The Italian And Spanish Societies

The Order of Charcoal Burners, or Charbonnerie, which originated in France, and of which the Wood-choppers or Fendeurs were a development, not unnaturally spread its branches across the Alps in the early days of the nineteenth century, where the French workmen were joined by their Italian brethren of the same trade. In France the society had no political or religious aims, but in Italy it partook of another character, and became a society of violent partizans, whose objects were the independence of Italy, then oppressed by Austria and France, and the reform of the church. Side by side with the practice of their ritual, and under the cloak of secret meetings, the Carbonari conspired together for political purposes, till in 1814 they caused such trouble in the province of Calabria that Ferdinand, King of Naples, forbade them to assemble any more.

The dangers aroused by the plots of the Carbonari were met by the formation of a counter society called the Calderari, which was originally composed of a large number of people who had been excluded from the ranks of the Carbonari; and the Calderari were favoured by the ministry of Ferdinand and assisted to put down the others. The watchwords of the Carbonari were those which they had learned from the French populace in the days of the Revolution - "Liberty, equality of rights, and constitutional administration."

The Carbonari were succeeded in Italy by another political secret society, known as "Italy Reunited," which was in existence in 1852 and possessed three distinct Orders, with passwords, signs, and insignia. These were given to the members after they had passed an examination and taken an oath, the penalty for disobedience being death. Every member had the right to demand of the others protection and help, and if he died poor, the society looked after his children. There are at the present day various secret societies in Italy, but as their objects are purely transitory and political, we need make no further reference to them.

It is popularly supposed that there is an Italian secret society with signs and passwords, known as the "Mafia," but it is not quite clear whether it is a definite body, or only a part of a wide-spread system under a name which had its origin in Sicily and spread to Italy, and which is defined as the spirit of hostility to law and its ministers prevailing among a large portion of the population. The Mafia consider it dishonourable to have recourse to law for the redress of wrong and crime, and prefer the system of the vendetta, or what has in later days become known as the "unwritten law." The idea of a secret sign might well arise from such a simple every-day occurrence, as a mother motioning to a child that she would punish him with a cane in case of disobedience, and a motion of the hand by one Italian to another to keep silence might similarly be interpreted as part of a pre-arranged code of signs.

In his novel of "Lothair," Benjamin Disraeli, who afterwards became Earl of Beaconsfield, refers constantly to the Italian secret societies which existed at the time of Garibaldi, in 1867. Of one of these the "Madre Natura," or "Natural Mother," he gives the following interesting account: - "The Madre Natura is the oldest, the most powerful, and the most occult of the secret societies of Italy. Its mythic origin reaches the era of paganism, and it is not impossible that it may have been founded by some of the despoiled professors of the ancient faith. As time advanced, the brotherhood assumed many outward forms, according to the varying spirit of the age. Sometimes they were Freemasons, sometimes they were soldiers, sometimes artists, sometimes men of letters. But whether their external representation were a lodge, a commandery, a studio, or an academy, their inward purpose was ever the same; and that was to cherish the memory, and, if possible, to secure the restoration of the Roman republic, and

to expel from the Aryan settlement of Romulus, the creeds and sovereignty of what they styled the Semitic invasion.” The author proceeds to relate a tradition that Cardinal de Medici, afterwards Pope Leo X., was admitted to the Fraternity, and attempted, strangely enough, to preserve its principles after he occupied the Papal chair. Disraeli pictures the Order as being one of activity at a time when the conflict of the Italians against the temporal power of the Pope was in progress, and explains that “they guarded against the corruptions and abuses of the religion of nature by the entire abolition of the priestly order, and on the principle that every man should be his own priest they believed they had found the necessary security.”

A Spanish society was copied from the Carbonari, with the name of the “Communeros,” and took its rise in 1820. It professed high aims and declared that the social and philanthropic bases of Freemasonry were not wide enough for its purposes. Ladies were admitted to its ranks, which numbered as many as 40,000. The oath taken by all the members was a rigorous one, and read thus: “I swear to put to death whoever shall be pointed out as a traitor by this society, and if I am found wanting in carrying out this promise, may my head fall under the axe, my remains be consumed by fire, and my ashes be thrown to the winds.”

XIV. The Illuminati

THERE is in Bavaria, on the banks of the Danube, about 50 miles from Munich, the little town of Ingolstadt, which became known to fame in the early days of the Jesuits for its devotion to the Roman Catholic faith, and the enthusiasm which it showed to that great missionary, Ignatius Loyala, the founder of the Jesuit Society. Here was a college of that Order, and Loyala termed the town, by way of endearment, his "Little Benjamin." Here, too, lived in 1776, one Adam Weishaupt, who was a Jesuit, and a professor of canon law in the college.

At length Weishaupt found the collar of Jesuit discipline too tight for his neck, and he in that year broke away from it, and founded a secret society, to which he gave the old Christian name of the "Illuminati," or Initiated. His society, which in ritual was probably much like the other secret orders, declared itself in matters religious simply Deistic, and in matters political as tending to Republicanism. It was difficult, however, to break entirely away from the Jesuit habits, which had moulded the life of the founder, Weishaupt, and we find that a system of confession was preached by its members, who also formed themselves into a secret police force to spy into the habits and mode of life of the other members.

Guided by a man who had broken away from his old traditions, it is no matter of surprise to find that there was another cleavage, for in 1785 Weishaupt quarrelled with the influential noble, Baron von Knigge, and was banished the kingdom of Bavaria, which brought of itself a speedy end to the society of the Illuminati.

XV. Freemasonry. The Operative Masons

No society has at any time, so far as can be found, attained the world-wide character that distinguishes Freemasonry, which has appropriated to itself the title of "The Craft." This word at once gives us the idea of an association of men working in a trade, who had special methods of carrying out their work, and used their utmost skill and craft to perform it, and in truth the society did not belie its name when it was originally founded, for it was undoubtedly an association of those operative stone-masons who, when the cathedrals of Europe, and particularly of England, were being built, carried out the higher branches of the work, and made those lovely traceries in windows, arches, and mouldings which are the glory of our Gothic cathedrals. Their axes, as shown in illustrations of the period, were boat-shaped, flat at one end and pointed at the other, and with these tools they, in Norman days, carved those zigzag ornaments which we see over the doorways at Durham Cathedral and Waltham Abbey, and which are now known as "axe work." The same kind of tool is now used by Freemasons at their meetings, and called a gavel.

The architects of those days were the abbots and monks, who copied their plans from those of other similar buildings, and gave them to the masons to carry out. The latter being skilled workmen and possibly of some education, were necessarily above the serfs, or bondmen, and the masons were proud to call themselves "free." The work of building would go on for some considerable time, but, like all other mundane things, it saw its end at last, and the masons moved away from one job to find another sphere of work at another cathedral or abbey. The first question would be that of lodgings, and what was more natural than for the masons to erect near the intended building a "lodge" where they could reside together as a community while their work lasted? During this time they would be brought into close contact every day with the bishop or the abbot, as the case might be, and with the canons of the cathedral or monks of the abbey who had prepared the plans, and who would superintend the work either as advising architects or in the capacity known nowadays as "clerk of the works," to accept or reject the material to be used on the building. In this way the mason had a touch of the ecclesiastic about him, as the churchman acquired in part the character of a mason, and each took an interest in the affairs of the other.

One body of monks who interested themselves in the doings of masons were the Culdees, who were most prominent in Scotland, where they had monasteries at St-Andrews, Dunkeld, and Lochleven. They resided in separate monasteries, each governed by an abbot, who owed no allegiance to any other head of the Order, and the members were tied down by monastic rules, like the Benedictines and Cistercians. They had members also in Ireland and in parts of England and Wales, but the body which established itself at York is the one which most concerns us in connection with our present subject. . It certainly interested itself a great deal with the masons, who from time to time were engaged in building the minster at York, of which they were in charge in the days of King Athelstan. That King in 936 was a worshipper at York, and gave the "Colidei," or monks, certain grants of land as thanksgiving offerings for his successes in battle.

The Culdees were at York for several hundred years, certainly up to the year 1200, and there were building operations going on there from time to time. The church which Athelstan was acquainted with was burnt down in 1069, when a new one was built, which itself was enlarged in 1154, and entirely reconstructed in 1230.

The Culdees had every opportunity of enlarging their minds, for in addition to their acquaintance with the working masons, their doors were always wide open for the reception of all wanderers and travellers, amongst whom would be numbered the jester and singer who, like their followers in these days, went from one baron's castle to another to amuse the guests at dinners and festivals; the pedlar, who sold goods from the pack he carried on his back; the workman searching for a job; the mendicant friar and pardoner, and the pilgrim who went from holy place to holy place to worship at shrines, and to view the relics of saints.

It is said that the Culdees had mysteries of their own, of a masonic type, which they had derived from Egyptian sources, and had dignified those Eastern myths by blending them with the doctrines of Christianity. It seems more probable that from close contact with the masons the monks learned the use of the tools, and treating them as symbols of higher things, taught the masons to look upon their everyday implements as guides to faith, and gave a spiritual meaning to the axe and the chisel, which might mould lives, as well as stone; also to the square and compasses, which gave precision and certainty to work which would otherwise be executed roughly by the unguided hand. Shakespeare voiced the idea when he said:

“There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will.”

Hamlet, Act. v. s.2.

The last appearance of the Culdees in Scottish history is in the beginning of the 14th century, when they made a claim, but unsuccessfully, to take part in the election of a primate of Scotland.

The York Culdees are responsible, probably, for what is known as the “Edwin legend,” to which they gave a local setting. In the “ancient charges” of the Order, to which we shall allude presently, and which were undoubtedly written by monks, there is the story, which may or may not have had a foundation in history, that after the death of St. Alban there were wars in England which had the effect of destroying the good rule of masonry until the reign of King Athelstan, “who loved well masons.” Athelstan was supposed to have a son called Edwin, who, it is stated, loved masons more than his father did. Edwin obtained from his father a charter for the masons to hold a yearly assembly, the first of which was at York, where Edwin himself presided and made masons.

So runs the story written by the monks for the glorification of the masons, but no charter of Athelstan has been preserved, and it is impossible to test the truth of this part of the story. If it is true, it places the date of English Freemasonry in the year 930, or thereabouts, for Athelstan reigned from 925 to 940. There is one difficulty in the story which has puzzled, and probably will continue to puzzle, the student, for King Athelstan himself, the grandson of King Alfred, had no son at all, and the question arises, Who was this Edwin? With an anxious desire to make the English institution as old as possible, many authors have admitted the mistake in the word “son,” and, throwing probability to the winds, have said it was another Edwin, who was King of Northumbria in 674. In truth Athelstan had a half-brother named Edwin, who was probably the person intended to be designated, and an old charter signed by King Athelstan at Winchester, his capital city, has come to light, which is witnessed by this Edwin, who describes himself as “cliton,” a word signifying an important office in the State, such as might fairly be filled by a king's half-brother.

The rest of the story, as to the establishment of an assembly or Chapter of Masons in the interests of the trade, was undoubtedly true, either in the days of Athelstan or of following kings of England in Plantagenet days, for there is ample evidence that such Lodges or Chapters were annually held to control the industry and its apprentices, and to regulate

wages. The latter matter was a direct infringement of the Statute of Labourers, passed in 1350, which fixed the wages of a master Free stonemason at the moderate sum of fourpence per day, and in connection with this it is interesting to note that in the ancient charge, from which we have already quoted, the author, with a view to the monetary interest of masons, states that St. Alban, who also was said to “love well masons,” made their pay “right good, standing as the realm did, for he gave them 2s. 6d. a week and 3d. for their assistants. And before that time, through all this land, a mason took but a penny a day, and his meat.” The good St. Alban, we may add, was reputed to have also obtained for the masons a charter which was afterwards destroyed. These Lodges or Chapters of workmen at last became obnoxious in the eyes of employers of labour, who had perforce to pay more dearly for their work, and another Act of Edward III., passed in 1360, prohibited “all alliances of masons and carpenters, and congregations, chapters, ordinances, and oaths betwixt them made, or to be made.” A more notable Act, however, was passed in 1425 (3 Henry VI. cap. 1), when the King was only four years old, forbidding, under penalty of fine and imprisonment, the holding of the “annual congregations and confederacies made by masons in the general chapters and assemblies,” on the ground that by reason of them the good course and effects of the Statutes of Labourers was openly violated and broken, in subversion of the law, and to the great damage of all the Commons. It is said, however, that - the Act was never enforced, and that the Chapters went on as before, so powerful was the masonic rule, and Lord Chief Justice Coke considered it as virtually repealed by an Act passed in 1563 (5 Elizabeth, cap. 4), though this was afterwards formally done by an Act of Parliament passed in 1825 (6 George IV. cap. 129).

XVI. Freemasonry. The Ancient Charges

In order to give a tone of dignity and impressiveness to these Chapters, and a religious setting, “charges,” or moral discourses were drawn up for the operative masons containing rules of conduct in life, which were intended to be read to the members at each meeting, and confirmed by a solemn oath on the Bible. Several of these charges have come to light, and from the nature of their composition and the handwriting, it seems clear that they were the production of the churchmen, who fathered the mystic side of the mason’s art.

One of them is now in the library at Freemasons Hall, being known as the “Grand Lodge MS.,” and was bought for £25 from the owner, a lady, about 50 years ago. Its date is December 25th, 1583, in Queen Mary’s reign, and after the dissolution of the monasteries, when the monks had been disbanded; and this particular charge does not therefore lend itself to the idea that it was written in an abbey for the benefit of the masons who were engaged in its building. It is, however, almost a copy of others in existence, and there is no reason to doubt that the chain of the charges goes back at least to the time of William the Conqueror in 1066. In fact, for some years the date of the Grand Lodge MS. was quoted as 1183, the writer of it being very careless as to the clearness of his figures, the earlier date given causing no surprise to anyone. These charges are in three parts, the first being an invocation to the Trinity, the second a comprehensive history of builders in all ages, and the third a series of moral precepts.

Another charge, known as the “Dowling MS.,” was published in the “Gentleman’s Magazine” for 1815, and as it is very similar to the other ancient charges we give it in full, but modernising the words and spelling.

The Invocation.

“The might of the Father of the Kings, with the wisdom of his glorious grace, through the grace of the goodness of the Holy Ghost, there being three persons in one Godhead, be with us at our beginning, and give us grace so to govern us here, in this mortal life living, that we may come to His kingdom, that never shall have ending. Amen.

The Masonic History.

“Good Brethren and Fellows, our purpose is to tell you how and in what manner this worthy science of masonry was begun, and afterwards how it was favoured by worthy kings and princes, and by many other worshipful men. And also to those that be willing we will declare the charge that belongeth to any true mason to keep for in good faith. And ye have good heed thereto; it is well worthy to be well kept for a worthy craft and a curious science.

“For there be seven liberal sciences, of the which seven it is one of them. And the names of the seven sciences be these: First is grammar, and it teacheth man to speak truly and write truly. And the second is rhetoric, and teacheth a man to speak fair in subtle terms. And the third is dialect; and that teacheth a man for to discern or know truth from false. And the fourth is arithmetic; and that teacheth a man for to reckon and to count all manner of numbers. And the fifth is called geometry; and that teacheth mete and measure of earth, and of all other things; and which science is called masonry. And the sixth science is called music; and that teacheth a man of song and voice of tongue and organ, harp and trumpet. And the seventh science is called astronomy; and that teacheth a man the course of the sun, moon, and stars. These be the seven liberal sciences, the which being all founded by one science, that is to say, geometry. And this may a man prove, that the science of the work is founded by

geometry, for geometry teacheth a man mete and measure, ponderation and weight of all manner of things on earth, for there is no man that worketh any science but he worketh by some mete or some measure, nor no man that buyeth or selleth, but he buyeth or selleth by some measure or by some weight ; and all this is geometry. And these merchants and all craftsmen, and all other of the seven sciences, and in especial the ploughman and tillers of all manner of grounds, grains, seeds, vines, flowers, and sellers of other fruits; for neither grammar nor rhetoric, astronomy, nor none of all the other seven sciences can no man find mete nor measure without geometry. Wherefore me thinketh that the science of geometry is most worthy, and that findeth all other.

“How that these worthy sciences were first begun I shall you tell. Before Noah’s flood there was a man called Lamech, as it is written in the Bible in the 4th chapter of Genesis; and this Lamech had two wives, and the one was called Adah, and the other called Zillah; by his first wife, Adah, he got two sons, and that one Jabel and the other Jubal. And by that other wife, Zillah, he got a son and a daughter. And these four children founded the beginning of all sciences in the world. And this elder son Jabel found the science of geometry, and he minded flocks of lambs and sheep in the field, and first wrought house of stone and tree, as it is noted in the chapter above said. And his brother, Jubal, founded the science of music, songs of tongue, harp, and organ. And the third brother, Tubal-Cain, founded smithcraft of gold, silver, copper, iron, and steel; and the daughter founded the craft of weaving. And these children knew well that God would take vengeance for sin, either by fire or by water, wherefore they wrote their science that they had found in two pillars of stone, that they might be found after Noah’s flood. And that one stone was marble, for that one would not burn with fire, and that other stone was called ‘laterns,’ and would not drown in no water. Our intent is to tell you truly how and in what manner these stones were found that this science was written ort. The great Hermarynes was that Cub’s son, the which Cub was Shem’s son, that was Noah’s son. This Hermarynes afterward was called Hermes, the father of wise men. He found one of the pillars of stone, and found the science written there, and he taught it to other men. And at the making of the Tower of Babylon there was masonry first made much of. And the King of Babylon, that hight Nimrod, was a mason himself, and loved well the science, as it is said by masters of histories. And when the City of Nineveh and other cities of the East should be made, Nimrod, the King of Babylon, sent thither threescore masons at the roagation of the King of Nineveh, his cousin. And when he sent them forth he gave them a charge on this manner: That they should be true each of them to other, and that they should love truly together, and that they should serve their lord truly for their pay, so that the master may have worship, and all that belong to him. And other more charges he gave them. And this was the first time that ever mason had any charge of his science.

“Moreover, when Abraham and Sarah his wife went into Egypt, there he taught the seven sciences to the Egyptians; and he had a worthy scholar named Euclid, and he learned right well, and was a master of all the seven sciences liberal. And in his days it befel that the lord and the estates of the realm had many sons. And they had no competent livelihood to find with their children, wherefore they made much care. And then the king of the land made a great counsel and a parliament to will how they might find their children honestly as gentlemen. And they could find no manner of good way. And then they did cry through all the realm, if there were any who could inform them, that he should come to them, and he should be so rewarded for his travail, that he should hold him pleased.

“After that this cry was made, then came this worthy clerk, Euclid, and said to the King and to all his great lords: ‘If ye will, take me your children to govern, and to teach them of the seven sciences, wherewith they may live honestly as gentlemen should, under a condition that ye should grant me, and them, a commission that I may have power to rule them after the

manner that the science ought to be ruled.’ And that the king and all his counsel granted to him alone, and sealed their commission. And then this worthy doctor took to him these lords’ sons and taught them the science of geometry in practice, for to work in stones all manner of worthy work that belongeth to building churches, temples, castles, towers, and manors, and all other manner of buildings; and he gave them a charge on this manner.

“The first was that they should be true to the King and to the lord that they own. And that they should love well together, and be true each one to other. And that they should call each other his fellow or else brother, and not his servant nor his knave, nor none other foul name. And that truly they should deserve their pay of the lord, or of the master that they serve. And that they should ordain the wisest of them to be master of the work, and neither for love, nor great lineage, nor riches, nor for no favour, to let another that hath little knowledge to be master of the lord’s work, through which the lord should be evil served and they ashamed. And also that they should call their governor of the work ‘master’ in the time that they work with him. And other many more charges that are long to tell. And to all these charges he made them to swear a great oath that men used in that time, and ordained for them reasonable wages that they might live honestly by. And also that they should come and assemble every year once, how they might work best to serve the lord for his-profit, and to their own worship, and to correct within themselves him that had trespassed against the science, and thus was the science grounded there; and that worthy Euclid gave it the name of geometry. And now it is called through all this land masonry.

“So then, long after, when the children of Israel were coming into the land of promise, that is now called among us the country of Jerusalem, King David began the Temple that they called ‘Templum Domini,’ and it is named with, us ‘the Temple of Jerusalem.’ And the same King David loved masons well, and cherished them much, and gave them good pay. And he-gave the charges and the manners as he had learned of Egypt given by Euclid, and other charges more that ye shall hear afterward. And after the decease of King David, Solomon, that was, David’s son, finished the Temple that his father began, and sent after masons into divers-countries and of divers lands, and gathered them together, so that he had fourscore thousand workers of stone, and were all named masons. And he chose out of them three thousand that were ordained to be masters and governors of his work. And, furthermore, there was a king of another region, that men called Hiram, and he loved well King Solomon, and he gave him timber to his work. And he had a son called Hiram, and he was a master of geometry, and was chief master of all his masons, and was master of all gravings and carvings, and of all other manner of masonry that belonged to the Temple, and this is witnessed by the Bible in chapter V. Book of Kings. And this Solomon confirmed both the charges and the manners that his father had given to masons. And thus was that worthy science of masonry confirmed in the country of Jerusalem and in many other kingdoms.

“Curious craftsmen walked about full wide into divers countries, some because of learning more craft and cunning, and some to teach them that had but little knowledge. And so it befel that there was one curious mason, called Maymus Grecus, that had been at the making of Solomon’s Temple, and he came into France, and there he taught the science of masonry to men of France. And there was one of the regal line of France called Charles Martell, and he was a man that loved well such a science, and drew to him this Maymus Grecus, that is abovesaid, and learned of him the science, and took upon him the charges and manners; and afterwards by the grace of God he was elected to be King of France. And when he was in his estate he took masons and did help to make men masons that were none, and set them to work, and gave them both the charges and the manners, and good pay, as he had learned of other masons, and confirmed them a charter from year to year to hold their assembly where they would, and cherished them right much. And thus came the science into France.

“England in all this, season stood void as for any charge of masonry unto St. Alban’s time. And in his days the King of England, that was a Pagan, he did wall the town about that is called St. Alban’s. And Saint Alban was a worthy knight, and steward with the King of his household, and had governance of the realm, and also of the making of the town walls, and loved well masons and cherished them much. And he made their pay right good, standing as the realm did, for he gave them 2s. 6d. a week, and 3d. to their assistants. And before that time, through all this land, a mason took but a penny a day, and his meat, till Saint Alban amended it and gave them a charter of the King and his counsel for to hold a general council, and gave it the name of assembly; and thereat he was himself, and helped to make masons, and gave them charges as ye shall hear afterward.

“Right soon after the decease of Saint Alban there came divers wars into the realm of England of divers nations, so that the good rule of masonry was destroyed unto the time of King Athelstan’s days, that was a worthy King of England, and brought this land into good rest and peace, and builded many great works of abbeyes and towers, and other many divers buildings, and loved well masons. And he had a son called Edwin, and he loved masons much more than his father did. And he was a great practiser in geometry, and he drew him much to talk and to commune with masons, and to learn of them science, and afterwards for love that he had to masons and to the science, he was made mason, and he got of the King, his father, a charter and commission to hold every year once an assembly, where that ever they would within the realm of England; and to correct within themselves defaults and trespasses that were done within the science. And he held himself an assembly at York, and there he made masons and gave them charges, and taught them the manners, and commanded that rule to be kept for ever after, and took then the charter and the commission to keep and made ordinance that it should be renewed from king to king.

“And when the assembly was gathered, he made a cry that all old masons and young that had any writings, or understanding oi the charges, and the manners that were made before in this land or in any other, that they should show them forth. And when it was proved, there was found some in French, and some in Greek, and some in English, and some in other languages; and the intent of them was found to be all one. And he did make a book thereof, and how the science was founded. And he himself bade and commanded that it should be read or told when that any mason should be made for to give him his charge. And from that day unto this time manners of masons have been kept in that form as well as men might govern it. And, furthermore, divers assemblies have been held, and they ordained certain charges by the best advice of masters and fellows.”

Here follows a direction in Latin that one of the seniors are to hold a Bible upon which the candidate is to place his hand, and then the charges are to be read to him as follows :

The Charges.

“Every man that is a mason, take right good heed to these charges; if that any man find himself guilty in any of these charges, that he amend himself against God. And in principal, ye that been to be charged, take good heed that ye may keep these charges right well, for it is great peril for a man to forswear himself upon a book.

“The first charge is that he or thou shall be true man to God and Holy Church, and that he use neither error nor heresy by your understanding, or discreet men or wise men’s teaching. And also that he shall be true liege man to the King of England, without treason or any other falsehood; and that they know no treason nor treachery, but ye amend it privily, if ye may, or else warn the King or his council. And also ye shall be true each one to other, that is to say, to every mason of .the science of masonry that have been masons allowed, ye shall do to them

as ye would that they should do to you; and also that ye keep truly all the counsels of Lodge and Chamber, and all other counsels that ought to be kept by way of masonhood. And also that no mason shall be in theft nor thievish, for as far forth as he may think or know. And also that ye shall be true to the lord or master that ye serve, and truly see his profit and his advantage. And also ye shall call masons your brethren, or else your fellows, and none other foul names. And also ye shall not take your fellow's wife in villiany, nor desire ungodly his servant, nor put him to no disworship. And also that ye pay truly for your meat and drink where ye go to board. And also ye shall do no villiany in that place where ye go to board, whereby the science might be slandered thereby. These be the charges in general that belongeth to every true mason to keep, both masters and fellows.

“Rehearsed will now other charges singular for masters and fellows. First, that no master shall not take upon him no lord's work, nor none other man's work, but that he know himself able and sufficient of cunning to perform and end the lord's work, so that the science have no slander or no disworship, but that the lord may be well served and truly. And also that no master take no work, but that he take it reasonable, so that the lord may be truly served with his own good, and the master to live honestly, and to pay his fellows truly their pay as the manner is. And also that no master, nor fellow, shall not supplant other of their work, that is to say, if he have taken a work, or else stand master of the lord's work, ye shall not put him out, but if he be unable of cunning for to end the work; and also that no master nor no fellow take no apprentice within the term of seven years; and that the apprentice be able, of birth free-born, and of limbs whole, as a man. ought to be. And also that no master nor fellow take no allowance to be made mason without the assent and the counsel of his fellows at the least six or seven given years; and he that shall be made mason to be able in all manner of degrees, that is to say, free-born and of good kindred come, and true, and no bondman. And also that no mason shall not take no apprentice, but if he have sufficient occupation for to occupy one, two, or three fellows at the least. And also that no master, nor fellow, put no lord's work to task that was wont to go -to journey, and also that every master shall give pay to his fellows but as he may deserve, so that ye be not deceived by false workmen, and also none of you slander another behind his back, to make him to lose his good name, or his worldly goods. And also that no fellow within the Lodge, or without, misanswer either ungodly or reprovably without reasonable cause; and also that every mason shall reverence his elder and put him to worship. And also that no mason shall not be any common player at hazard or at the dice, nor at any other unlawful plays, whereby the science might be slandered. And also that no mason shall not use no lechery, nor be no bawd, whereby the science might be slandered. And also that no fellow go into the town at night time without that he have a fellow with him that he may bear him witness that he was in an honest place. Also that every master and fellow shall come to the assembly if it be within fifty miles about him; and if ye have trespassed against the science, for to abide the award of masters and fellows, and to make them accorded if they may, and if they may not accord then to go to the common law. And that also, no master nor fellow make neither mould, nor square, nor rule to no layer (inferior workmen), nor set no layer within the lodge or without, to hew or mould stones; and also that every mason receive and cherish strange fellows when they come over the countries, and set them at work, and they will as the manner is, that is to say, if he have not moulded stones in his place, he shall refresh him with money into the next lodge. And also that every mason shall truly serve the lord for his pay, and every master truly make an end of his work, be it task or journey, if ye have your covenants and all that ye ought for to have. These charges that we have now rehearsed to you and all other that belongeth to masons, ye shall keep, so help you God, and your holydom, and by this Book unto your power. Amen.”

Thus was the operative mason introduced into a society where speculative mysteries were engrafted on his own trade and craft.

Human nature will peep out even from a parchment, for these charges were written in a clerkly hand on long, narrow rolls of parchment, which would be held by the reader and slowly unwound as he proceeded with the reading. If one looks at the backs of some of these charges it will be seen that part of them are cleaner than others, which goes to show that the gentle art of skipping a book was not unknown in those days, and that sometimes the Master recited the preface and the ending, and left out the middle as being too prolix or too well-known to need repetition.

The memory of these ancient charges is brought back when a citizen is made a Freeman of the City of London, for, in addition to the parchment record of his freedom, he also receives a little book corresponding to the masonic charges “containing some rules for the conduct of life, to which are added a few cautions for the use of such freemen of the City of London as take apprentices.”

XVII. Freemasonry. The Masonic Poem

It would be strange in such a society as we have pictured if there did not arise someone with a musical ear who was able to write an epic poem, which could be easily learned and easily remembered, containing the traditions which had been handed down from time to time. Such a poet for the masons appeared in the reign of Richard II., about 1390, who wrote a quaint work known as the "masonic poem," consisting of 800 lines, which is now in the British Museum, and catalogued as the "Regius MS."

The poem begins with a brief introduction relating to the foundation of masonry in Egypt by Euclid, as already told in the ancient charges.

"Here begin the constitutions of the art of geometry according to Euclid."

"Who will both read and look,
 He may find written in old book
 Of great lords, and also ladies,
 That had many children together, I know,
 And had no income to provide them with,
 Neither in town nor field, nor wood;
 A counsel together they did them take,
 To ordain, for these children's sake,
 How they might best lead their life
 Without great trouble, care, and strife.
 They sent them then after great clerks,
 To teach them their good works.
 In that time, through good Geometry,
 This honest craft of good Masonry
 Was ordained and made in this manner,
 Imitated of these clerks together,
 At these lords' prayers they imitated Geometry,
 And gave it the name of Masonry
 For the most honest craft of all.
 These lords' children thereto did fall
 To have of him the craft of Geometry,
 The which he made full curiously,
 This great clerk's name was called Euclid,
 His name it spread full wondrous wide.
 And so each should teach the other,

And love together as sister and brother.
 Furthermore yet ordained he,
 Master called so should he be;
 But Masons should never one other call,
 Within the craft amongst them all;
 Neither subject, nor servant - my dear brother,
 Though he be not so perfect as another.
 On this manner, through good wit of Geometry,
 Began first the craft of Masonry;
 The clerk Euclid on this wise it found,
 This craft of geometry in Egypt's land.
 In Egypt he taught it full wide,
 In divers lands on every side.
 Many years afterwards I understand,
 Ere that the craft came into this land,
 This craft came into England, as you may say,
 In time of good King Athelstan's day.
 He made then both hall, and also bower,
 And high temples of great honour,
 To disport him in, both day and night,
 And to worship his God with all his might.
 This good lord loved the craft full well,
 And purpose to strengthen it every del (part).
 For divers defaults that in the craft he found,
 He sent about unto the land After all the Masons of the craft
 To come to him, full even strait (angered),
 For to amend these defaults all By good counsel."

There follow 15 articles and 15 points of good conduct to masons, and the poem then goes on to deal with the interesting legend of the "Quatuor Coronati," or Four Crowned Martyrs, which we referred to in a previous chapter.

The masonic poem afterwards resumes the story of masonry, going back to the building of the Tower of Babel, and then comes the latter part, which could only have been written by a monk or clergyman, containing rules for good behaviour at church in days when manners were not an essential part of a gentleman's education.

"Look then come not to church late,
 For to speak scandal in the gate.
 Then to the church, when thou dost fare,

Have in thy mind ever more
 To worship thy Lord God both day and night,
 With all thy wit, and all thy might.”

This latter part is substantially repeated in a work, now in the British Museum, entitled “Instructions for a Parish Priest,” by John Myrc, though the perversity of some antiquarians will have it that the “Masonic poem” is the copy, and that the “Parish Priest” came earlier in date.

Drawbacks, serious indeed, to the building trades were the Wars of the Roses, which lasted from 1455 to 1485, and, more important still, the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII. in 1549, and the subsequent destruction of many of them. “The ruined abbeys of England” is a phrase which must bring a note of sadness to the minds of all who have any regard for the works of our ancestors, and to the rise of the beautiful in art as exhibited in the walls and windows of those sacred buildings. The Abbeys of Fountains and Rievaulx in the North, Crowland Abbey in the Midlands, and Netley Abbey in the South, are sufficient, even if they were all, to raise our enthusiasm for the old wonderworking masons.

“In the elder days of art,
 Builders wrought with greatest care
 Each minute and hidden part,
 For the gods see everywhere.”

Longfellow's “Builders.”

One great virtue cannot be denied to the masonic writers of a hundred years ago - that of precision, which admits of no doubt in their statements. If we are to believe them, masonry pursued an even and well-chronicled course in all ages in England from the days of Athelstan, and by a masterly but simple system of singling out the man who in each reign had important buildings erected for him, these writers make that man the “Grand Master” of masonry for that period. In fact, there is a small basis of truth to go upon, for in the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II. one Henry Yvele bore the official title of “King’s Master Mason,” acting as a superintendent of building works. He had a successor in 1400 who bore only the title of “King’s Chief Mason,” but neither of them can be dignified with the title of Grand Master of a masons’ society.

The undaunted historian knows not of the existence of such men as Yvele, and makes his own heroes for his own domestic drama. One writer in the “Encyclopaedia Londiniensis,” published in 1816, sets out a most interesting list of these supposed Grand Masters and the important buildings erected in their days. He starts his list with Leofric, Earl of Coventry, in the days of Edward the Confessor, in 1041, when Westminster Abbey was rebuilt. After the conquest, the Tower of London needed masons, and the Bishop of Rochester and the Earl of Shrewsbury are promoted to be joint patrons of the masons. In the days of Henry I. and Stephen, when a chapel was built at Westminster, near the House of Commons, the president of the Lodges was the Marquis of Pembroke. By the time Henry II. came to the throne, the Lodges were supposed to be under the superintendence of the Grand Master of the Knights Templars, who employed masons in 1155 to build the Temple in Fleet Street. Masonry continued under this order till 1199, and in the days of John a new Grand Master was found in the person of Peter de Colechurch, who began to rebuild London Bridge with stone. Peter de Rupibus succeeded as Grand Master, and in 1272, when Westminster Abbey was finished, Edward I, appointed the Archbishop of York as head of the masons. In the following reign

the Bishop of Exeter was Grand Master, his appointment dates from 1307, and he superintended the building of Exeter and Oriel Colleges at Oxford, and Clare Hall at Cambridge. William of Wykeham succeeded in the days of Richard II, building New College at Oxford and the College at Winchester. The Earl of Surrey came to the front as Grand Master in the days of Henry IV, when Battle Abbey and the castle at Fotheringhay were built, as well as the Guildhall in London. On the accession of Henry V, Chicheley, Archbishop of Canterbury, was appointed, under whom the Lodges and communications of the fraternity were said to be frequent. Masonry suffered its reverse in the early days of Henry VI. by the Act forbidding their chapters and congregations, though we are assured the Act was never actually put in force, and the Archbishop still continued to preside, but in 1442 a new phase came over the craft, when the King was himself admitted into masonry, presiding over the Lodges in person, but nominating Wanefleet, Bishop of Winchester, as Grand Master, who built Magdalen College, Oxford.

The statement that Henry VI. was a supporter of the masons is contained in two of the ancient charges, known as the "William Watson M.S.," and the "Henry Head M.S.," the latter of which is dated 1675, and is in the Inner Temple library. It states that "these charges have been seen and perused by our late Sovereign Lord, King Henry VI., and the Lords of his Honourable Council, and they have allowed them and said that they were right and good and reasonable to be holden."

In the reign of Edward IV. English masonry was continued under the headship of the Bishop of Salisbury, who was the Chancellor of the Order of the Garter, and repaired Windsor Castle. Henry VII. presided as Grand Master at a Lodge held in his palace in 1502, his reason for doing so being that he wished to build, with its wonderful fan-tracery, his chapel at the East end of Westminster Abbey. In Henry VIII's days Cardinal Wolsey was Grand Master, and he signalled his office by building Hampton Court and Christ Church College, Oxford, and he was succeeded in 1547 by the Duke of Somerset, who built Somerset House.

In Elizabeth's days, Sir Thomas Sackville held the premier position, and the Queen, with the curiosity of her sex, hearing that masons had secrets, which she desired to know, sent an armed force to the Lodge at York to find out what the mysteries were. The Grand Master was by no means non-plussed, and took the sagacious course of initiating the chief officers sent by the Queen into the craft, and on their return they in some way persuaded the Queen that the secrets were not worth knowing, and that the body of masons were loyal subjects who should be left in peace. A similar story is told of Maria Theresa, the Empress of Austria, who desired to find out the secrets of the Lodge in Vienna, but she, like Elizabeth, failed to achieve her object. Sir Thomas Gresham was also in the line of masonic rulers, and in the days of James I., Inigo Jones, the architect, rose to the post, and was succeeded in 1618 by the Earl of Pembroke.

The days of Cromwell afford many speculations, and Nicolai, one of the writers on masonry, expresses his views as follows, "After the death of Charles I. in 1649, several people of rank united themselves with the Freemasons, because under this mask they could assemble and determine on their future measures. They found means to establish within this society, a secret conclave, which held meetings apart from the general meetings. This conclave adopted secret signs, expressive of its grief for its murdered master; of its hope to revenge him on his murderers, and of its search for the lost word or logos (the King's son), and its design to re-establish him on his father's throne. As faithful adherents of the Royal family, whose head the Queen (Henrietta Maria) had now become, they called themselves 'Sons of the Widow.' In this way a secret connection was established amongst all persons attached to the Royal

family, as well in Great Britain and Ireland as in France and the Netherlands, which subsisted until the death of Cromwell, and had the well-known issue for the royal cause,”

Other ingenious speculators of old days had another and quite different theory, this time of a democratic nature, for they made Oliver Cromwell himself the founder of Freemasonry, in 1645, when he and his friends Ireton, Sidney, Neville, and others, are supposed to have established an order of Freemasons, apparently to reconcile the contending parties in politics and religion, but really to safeguard the protector's projects.

XVIII. The Transition From Operative To Speculative Freemasonry

The transition from the meetings of the operative to those of the speculative Freemasons is the last link of our subject which joins the present with the past, and it affords views of great interest if we can but revive the faded colours of the picture. We can imagine the original operative masons' Lodges consisting of rude, unlettered builders, who came in their working aprons of leather, and brought with them their working tools, which they placed in front of them. The master of the Lodge may have been able to read, and, if so, he would give a short reading from the beginning, and end of one of the ancient charges treasured within the Lodge, or, if he could not read, he would recite as much of it as he could remember. After a time, when education became more popular, a superior class of men were found in such lodges, and a short, formal ritual was learned. This brings us to the days of the Stuarts, when the trade union idea of the working masons broke down, and they began to realise that the lessons they sought to draw from their tools were universal ones, and worthy to be taught to the limited circle of outsiders, who would appreciate the peculiar methods of the masons. So it was that from time to time some of these strangers were brought in, of whom the best known example is that of the learned antiquary Elias Ashmole. He was born in 1617, and at 21 years of age became a solicitor. The law, however, had no attraction for him, and he became a dabbler in mathematics, astronomy, astrology, and alchemy, and wrote one work on chemistry and another on "The History of the Order of the Garter." He also left behind him a most entertaining diary, as also did his personal friends, Pepys and Evelyn. In this he notes, under date October 16th, 1646 (when, by the way, the writer was only 29 years old), "I was made a Freemason at Warrington, in Lancashire, with Col. Henry Mainwaring, of Karincham, in Cheshire." He lets in a sidelight on the story by informing us that the Lodge began in the afternoon at 4.30, but the members doubtless allowed the daylight to fade away long before it dissolved. It is a significant fact that it cannot be found that any of the surviving members of the body in 1646 were operative masons, so that the later phase of masonry was plainly visible then. In this way Ashmole became one of the first speculative Freemasons, who had nothing to do with the building trade, and his name is held in high veneration among Freemasons from having been one of the pioneers in exploring the new land discovered by the operative masons. He was a fit man for the subject, for, in addition to his learned studies, he was not only a clubbable man, but one who cared for the welfare of his fellow men, as was proved by his magnificent gift to Oxford of the well-known Ashmolean Museum.

The genial Pepys met Ashmole in October, 1660, whom, he says, "I found a very ingenious gentleman," so ingenious that in May, 1661, when they both met at a Lord Mayor's banquet, Ashmole made the credulous Pepys believe "that frogs and many insects do often fall from the sky, ready formed." Pepys does not seem to have been informed that these frogs and insects must have started their career on the earth before being, taken aloft by the wind or other natural causes.

Ashmole lived at Lambeth, where John Evelyn went to see him on July 23rd, 1678, which the latter notes as follows : "Went to see Mr. Elias Ashmole's library and curiosities at Lambeth. He has divers MSS., but most of them astrological, to which study he is addicted, though I believe not very learned, but very industrious, as his 'History of the Order of the Garter'

proves. He showed me a toad included in amber. The famous John Tradescant bequeathed his repository to this gentleman, who has given them to the University of Oxford.”

In his diary, Ashmole has another note, by which it appears that on March nth, 1680, by invitation, delivered only the day before, he went to Masons’ Hall, London, where Sir W. Wilson, Capt. Borthwick, and three other gentlemen were admitted into the “fellowship of Freemasons.” Ashmole notes with pride that he was the senior fellow amongst them, as it was 34 years since he himself had been admitted a Freemason.

Hall was the master of the City Company of the Masons, the foundation of which company is not easy to discover, though it is possible the date may be put as 1220, in the reign of Henry III. There is a firm place to rest upon in the time of Edward III., in 1376, when the Masons Company was officially stated by the Corporation of London to be entitled to return four members to the Court of Common Council. In 1472 the company got its grant of arms from the Heralds College, and in the warrant it is described as the “Hole crafte and fellowship of Masons,” though in the reign of Henry VIII. its title became the simpler one of the “Company of Freemasons.” Eventually, in the time of Oliver Cromwell, in 1656, the Company took its modern name of the “Worshipful Company of Masons,” though its members always seem to have delighted to dub themselves “Freemasons,” and this is a title found on several city tombstones relating to members of this Company.

Some inner meetings of the Company were called “acceptions,” from which obviously comes the word “accepted,” in relation to masonry, and the members were divided into masons who were simply “Free,” and others who were “Free and accepted.” For the latter ceremony fees were charged amounting to twenty shillings for a candidate already a member of the Company, and forty shillings for outsiders. The Company obviously took the same lines as the rest of the City Companies, such as the Salters, Goldsmiths, Fishmongers, and others, who in the days of Charles II. had broken down the enclosures which admitted members of their own craft or trade only, and were glad to allow approved outsiders to join in their assemblies.

The operative masons copied this example of the City Companies, and though Ashmole was an early stranger within the gates, he was followed in time by armies of others.

Another outsider who copied Ashmole’s example was an antiquary and genealogist, named Randle Holme, who was born in 1627, and in 1665 wrote out a copy of some Masonic Constitutions, which is now in the British Museum, where it is indexed as part of the Harleian MSS. Annexed to this copy is a note by Holme, as follows: “There are several words and signs of a Freemason to be revealed to you, which, as you will answer before God at the great Day of Judgment, you keep secret, and not to reveal the same to any in the ears of any person, but to the masters and fellows of the said Society of Freemasons.” In 1688 he wrote a book, entitled “The Academy of Armoury,” and in it says: “I cannot but honour the masons, the more as being a member of that Society called ‘Freemasons.’ Randle Holme had a father and grandfather of the same name as himself, but he was doubtless the Randle Holme whose name occurs as a member of a Masons’ Lodge held at Chester from 1665 to 1675. In addition to the Chester Lodge, there was an operative Masons’ Lodge held at Alnwick in Northumberland, while the York Lodge and its offshoot at Scarborough continued to exist as independent Lodges after the creation of Grand Lodge in 1717.

Another well-known writer of those days was Dr. Robert Plot, who was not a Freemason. He wrote many works, amongst them the “Natural History of Wiltshire,” to which we shall presently allude, and another known as the “Natural History of Staffordshire.” In the latter work - flying rather wide of his subject - he discourses (as if he were talking of birds and not

men), of the Freemasons of Staffordshire who, he says, “abounded most on the moorlands of the county,” though he admits that he found “the custom spread, more or less, all over the nation,” and that “persons of most eminent quality did not disdain to be of this fellowship.” He also alludes to the ancient charges which were read in Masons’ Lodges, and talks of “a large parchment volume they have amongst them, containing the history and rules of the craft of masonry.” The secret of the success of the society in Staffordshire might be guessed from the fact that Lodge meetings were preceded, instead of being followed, by a dinner, to which both the candidates and their wives were invited. When the repast was finished, the Lodge was formed, when not less than five or six members (or ancients) had to be present, who “communicated certain secret signs whereby they were known to each other, and by which they had maintenance wherever they travelled.” Plot adds, in his own original way, “for if any man appear, though altogether unknown, that can show any of these signs to a fellow of the Society, whom they otherwise call an accepted mason, he is obliged presently to come to him from what company or place soever he be in; nay, though from the top of a steeple (what hazard or inconvenience soever he run), to know his pleasure and assist him, viz., if he want work, he is bound to find him some, or if he cannot do that, to give him money, or otherwise support him till work can be had, which is one of their articles.”

The last step for Freemasonry to take was to cut itself adrift altogether from the old operative masons, and to admit as its members the outside world, “who were not all operative but rather free and accepted, or speculative Freemasons,” so that those who were formerly only members by courtesy occupied the chair of Master of a Lodge by right. There were at no time any great number of operative Masonic Lodges in existence, after the great cathedrals had all been finished; but after the Fire of London in 1666, when no building was in progress, an army of architects and builders were assembled together in London, chief of whom was Sir Christopher Wren. He must have been the busiest architect of his day, for in May, 1681, Evelyn states that Wren, “His Majesty’s architect and surveyor,” was building St. Paul’s Cathedral, the Monument, and 50 parish churches. From his official position as architect to the King, Wren is, of course, made by the old writers and also by Anderson in the “Book of the Constitutions,” to occupy the position of Grand Master of the Masons of his day, a mythical post, though it is quite worthy of credence that Wren was a member of that Lodge, founded in 1691, of the masons engaged in rebuilding the Cathedral, which met at a tavern in St. Paul’s Churchyard, and was probably that known as the “Goose and Gridiron,” which subsequently became for a time Lodge No. 1. On Sunday, December 5th, 1697, the first service was held in the Cathedral, and the dome was finished in 1710. Wren was 78 years old at that time, and in 1723 he died at the mature age of 91. We cannot imagine that in 1717, Wren at his advanced age, would take any great interest in founding the new order of things, but we believe that it was owing to the men who had worked under his leadership, and who found the number of their brethren lessened when St. Paul’s was completed, that the establishment of masonry on a broad basis was due. It is stated by Dr. Plot in his “Natural History of Wiltshire,” that on Monday, May 18th, 1691, was a “great convention at St. Paul’s Church of the fraternity of adopted masons, where Sir Christopher Wren was to be adopted a brother.” It is impossible that any part of St. Paul’s Cathedral could be used for the purposes of a Masons’ Lodge, especially as it was incomplete, and it is fair to assume that the Lodge was held in St. Paul’s Churchyard. In any event it seems beyond question that Wren was made a Mason in his later days, though the statement that he was at one time Grand Master is obviously fallacious. One writer, De Quincey, declares with no show of authority, that Wren was a member of the Order of Knights Templars.

It is interesting to note that on March 25th. 1723, there was an announcement in the “Post Boy” of the funeral of Sir C. Wren, in which he was described as “that worthy Freemason.”

One of the workmen who assisted Sir Christopher Wren in the building of St. Paul's Cathedral, probably a member of the same Lodge, was Edward Strong, whose death at New Barnet on February 8th, 1724, was announced in Read's "Weekly Journal." In this journal it is stated that Strong was "one of the ancientest Masons and Freemasons in England, and formerly mason of St. Paul's Cathedral." The paper adds: "It is remarkable of that church that it was begun and finished under the direction of one and the same architect, Sir Christopher Wren; that one and the same Mason (Mr. Strong mentioned above) laid the first and last stone; and that it was begun and finished during the see of one and the same Bishop, Dr. Henry Compton."

As marking the influence of operative masonry on its offspring, the speculative masons, we may note four points in which the masons of later days copied their predecessors. The first was the white leather apron worn by the Master of the Lodge, which reminded the members that work, and not play, was the keynote of the masters of earlier days. In the same manner, too, that a workman would not disdain to wear his apron when returning home from his labour, it appears to have been usual for a Worshipful Master to return home in his apron, and we find it stated that the Duke of Wharton, in 1721, returned to his house in Pall Mall from his Lodge in his white leather apron. Leather was the orthodox material for all aprons of workmen in days past, and Shakespeare describes it as the material for the aprons even of servants in ale houses, which proves that leather aprons were the usual ones for workmen of all classes in his days.

PRINCE : How might we see Falstaff bestow himself to-night in his true colours, and not ourselves be seen?

POINS : Put on two leathern jerkins and aprons, and wait upon him at his table as drawers.

Henry IV., Act 11., s. 2.

In the early days after 1717, when Masonry began to be fashionable amongst the upper classes, the wearing of the working apron of the operative Mason was objected to, and we hear that, as a subterfuge, the fashion arose of wearing the apron upside down, till it was found that it was decidedly inconvenient to have the strings of the upper part dangling on the floor, and at some later period a new and smaller apron was devised.

Writing in 1807, Thomas Paine also says: "In speaking of the apparel of the masons in their Lodges, part of which, as we see in their public processions, is a white leather apron.."

In the second place, we pay some attention to the form of what is known in general terms as the "hammer" of the chairman of a meeting, and the similar instrument used by an auctioneer, both of which were probably derived from the tool known as a gavel, used by the Master of a Lodge of Operative Masons. The most generally used form is navicular or boatshaped, flat at the keel and stern, and with a sharp edge at the bows. This very type of tool is figured in old drawings of masons, and by the use of it, and without a chisel, the old Norman builders were able to carve out those zigzag mouldings over doorways seen at Waltham Abbey, and Durham and Peterborough Cathedrals, which are now known as "axe-work." The other form of gavel used in Masons' Lodges resembles a big hammer with a long claw to it, and this type is also seen in some drawings on old MSS. representing mediaeval builders.

A third point was that in order to keep up the associations of the operative masons, it was for some years after 1717 laid down as a cardinal point that at least one of the members of a Lodge must be an operative mason, by which was probably meant one associated with the building trade. This is specially mentioned in a broadside called "The Puerile Signs of a Freemason," published in 1730, and the first senior warden of Grand Lodge was a carpenter.

The fourth point was the use of the word “accepted,” which, as we have shown in the case of the Masons’ Company, referred to an outsider, such as Ashmole, being accepted as a member in a society of a different class to himself, and to which he had no original right to belong.

XIX. The Grand Lodge

Thus we pass by easy stages to the reign of George I. and the year 1717, so well remembered by Freemasons. These were the days of the Golden Age in English literature, when the essayists, Addison and Steele, were at their best, and when the rhythmic lines of Pope rang in the ears of those who had a soul for such forms of art. Freemasonry was at a low ebb, for only four Lodges in all can be numbered at that time. These are stated in the second edition of the "Book of the Constitutions" to have been those that met respectively at the Goose and Gridiron ale house in St. Paul's Churchyard; the Crown alehouse in Parker's Lane, near Drury Lane; the Apple Tree tavern in Charles Street, Covent Garden; and the Rummer and Grapes tavern in Channel Row, Westminster- In the same edition of the "Book of the Constitutions," it is stated that after the rebellion was over in 1716, these four Lodges in London "thought fit to unite under a Grand Master at the centre of Union of Harmony, and meeting at the Apple Tree tavern put into the chair the oldest Master Mason who was then the Master of a Lodge, and formed themselves into a Grand Lodge in due form. They revived the quarterly communication of the officers of Lodges, resolved to hold an annual assembly and feast, and then to choose a Grand Master from among themselves till they should have the honour of a noble brother at their head." It appears that the meeting duly took place on June 24th, 1717, at the Goose and Gridiron, in St. Paul's Churchyard, when Anthony Sayer, a private gentleman, was installed as the first Grand Master, and congratulated by the assembly, who paid him the homage due to him. The Grand Master appointed Jacob Lamball as his Senior Grand Warden, and it is important to observe that he is described as a carpenter, in this manner satisfying the requirement of the Lodge, having at least one operative Mason amongst its members. The word "Mason" was obviously interpreted to include all members of the building trade. The Junior Grand Warden was Capt. Joseph Elliott, who would represent the speculative, as opposed to the operative mason.

At first the Lodges were only known by the names of the taverns where they met, but in 1728 they were given numbers. In Pine's "Engraved List of Lodges," published in 1729, when Lord Kingston was Grand Master, is contained "a list of regular lodges according to the Seniority and Constitution," which sets out the four oldest with their places and dates of meeting as follows: -

1. St. Paul's Churchyard; meeting on first and third Mondays in the month. Constituted 1691.
2. Against Furnival's Inn, in Holborn; meeting on second Wednesday of month. Constituted 1712.
3. Westminster; meeting on the third Friday.
4. Ivy Lane; meeting every other Thursday.

No date of constitution appears against either of the last two Lodges.

Future growth is not, however, to be judged by the diminutive size of the sapling, but by the life-energy contained within it. This quality was present amongst three enthusiastic members of these four Lodges, whose names were Dr. James Anderson, Dr. J. T. Desaguliers, and Mr. Payne, who banded themselves together to make a living force of Freemasonry with a proper ritual, written constitutions, and a governing body.

The ritual, which was quite short, as compared with that of modern days, would naturally be derived from the old written charges of the masons, and the oral traditions they had handed

down, and it is believed that Mr. Payne was part author of this. It comprised only one degree - answering in essentials to our first and second degrees - was formed in the shape of question and answer, passing between the Master of the Lodge and his different officers, and is to be found published in various newspapers and broadsides issued at the time. As the ritual of those days is now quite antiquated, and no guide to present-day methods, it may be referred to here. In 1730 was published a broadside, with the title of "Puerile Signs and Wonders of a Freemason," and although this was written by an opponent of the craft, there is no reason to doubt its correctness. One important note to it, which is of great interest as showing the transition character of the growth of Freemasonry as a speculative system, states that one at least of the members of a Lodge "must be a working mason," while another note points out that there were then two degrees in the ritual, but that the second, or master mason's part, now known as the third degree, was not ordinarily performed. The writer says: "There is not one Mason who will be at the expense to pass the masters part, except it be for interest," and, in fact, this degree was only performed by the Grand Lodge, and was not learnt by the heads of the private Lodges. This note, if correct, tends to show that the new degree of Master Mason was established by 1730, and this is confirmed by another work written in the same year by Samuel Pritchard, called "Masonry Dissected," which contains the ritual of the Master Mason's degree. Amongst the questions and answers are the following quaint specimens: -

Q.: "Where was you made?"

A.: "In the valley of Jehoshaphat, behind a rush bush, where a dog was never found to bark nor a cock to crow, or elsewhere."

Q.: "How was the master clothed?"

A.: "In a yellow jacket, and blue pair of breeches."

The writer of the broadside, in another note, tries to reassure his astonished readers by telling them that "the master is not otherwise clothed than common, the question and answer are only emblematical"; and another writer explains that a pair of compasses is referred to, which, with its brass top, appeared to have a yellow jacket, while its two steel legs made a blue pair of breeches.

Paine became Grand Master in 1721, and died in 1757.

Rev. Dr. Desaguliers was of French parentage, his father having been a Huguenot refugee from France in 1685, when the Edict of Nantes, which gave toleration to the Protestants, was revoked by Louis XIV. He was a clergyman of the established church who, in 1730, became rector of Whitchurch, near Edgware, the church having been built by the Duke of Chandos. He was a man of refinement, and well fitted to take a part in the establishment of the revived society. He became Grand Master in 1719, and afterwards several times held the post of Deputy G.M., and died in 1744.

Dr. Jame's Anderson was, however, the most active of the triumvirate, and to him the craft is indebted for the first two editions of the "Book of the Constitutions," which he edited and partly wrote in 1723 and 1738. He was a Scotch Presbyterian minister in London, of great learning, especially in the Hebrew tongue, and of a subtlety of mind which revelled in symbolic and mystic researches. The most interesting part of Dr. Anderson's book is the long history of Freemasonry, which forms its first part, and which was derived, and much elaborated, from some of the old "charges." Anderson brings into his net of Masonry every scripture character who ever made a tent or raised an altar. Beginning at Adam, Lamech, Enoch, Moses, Solomon, and many others are swept into the net; and then we get Euclid, Julius Caesar, Charles Martel, who was King of France, St. Alban, and King Athelstan; and

the author winds up with an anti-climax in the shape of an account of the laying of the foundation stone of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, Westminster, in 1726, with Masonic honours, by the famous historian, Dr. Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, in the reign of George III. Dr. Anderson never attained the degree of Grand Master, and died in 1739.

St. John the Evangelist, from his symbolic pictures in the Book of the Revelations, became practically the patron saint of the craft, and his name is often included in the mythical list of members of the Fraternity. The feast day of that apostle is in winter time, on December 27th, but he speedily became confused with the other saint of a similar name, St. John the Baptist, whose feast day is in summer, on June 24th. The latter day was likely to enjoy more agreeable weather than the December one, and accordingly the new Grand Lodge fixed on St. John's day in summer for its annual meetings, and this became a recognised day for such gatherings. An exception to this date was made in 1725, when Grand Lodge met at Merchant Taylors' Hall on St. John's day in winter, the Duke of Richmond as Grand Master being continued in office until that date.

The number of the Lodges began to grow after 1717, and Masonry speedily became a fashion in the town, and members of the nobility were drawn to it. The Duke of Montague joined it, so did the Dukes of Kent, Sussex, and Wharton, and in George III's reign the whole of his sons were members of the craft, while in Germany, Frederick the Great took upon himself its obligations, as did George Washington in America.

The Grand Lodge at York continued to meet as usual, and the old dispute as to precedence between the Archbishops of Canterbury and York was repeated in a similar rivalry between the Grand Lodges of London and of York. The ecclesiastical controversy was settled by calling the Archbishop of Canterbury "the Primate of all England," while his Grace of York became simply "Primate of England." In the same way, if we can believe a possibly fallacious chronicler, the Grand Lodge of London called itself "The Grand Lodge of all England," while that of York was known as "the Grand Lodge of England." A breach between the two Grand Lodges occurred later on in 1738, when the Duke of Chandos as Grand Master of the London Lodges appointed a Provincial Grand Master for the West Riding of Yorkshire, which was resented by the York Grand Lodge as an encroachment on its privileges. This caused for some time a cessation of all correspondence between the two Grand Lodges, and when divisions occurred afterwards in the craft the seceders took the title of "York Masons."

Coming to 1721 we hear that Grand Lodge of London met at the Queen's Arms tavern, in St. Paul's Churchyard, whither had been removed the old Lodge of St. Paul's, afterwards the Lodge of Antiquity, No. 2. The Duke of Montague took his seat as Grand Master, and initiated the Earl of Chesterfield into the Order. We hear that the Grand Lodge then adjourned in open procession through the streets to Stationers Hall, "where they sat down in the ancient manner of Masons to a very elegant feast."

The regular minutes of Grand Lodges in the first six years of its life were either not duly recorded or have been lost, and it is only from June 24th, 1723, when the Duke of Wharton vacated the chair, that we have their light to guide us in our search amongst the records of the brotherhood. We have, however, the unofficial, but on the whole correct, records of the newspapers of the time, which have been zealously and laboriously searched by Bro-Alfred F. Robbins, to whose industry we must here pay due tribute as we have made liberal use of his researches to fill up the gaps in the history. Four years from the establishment of Grand Lodge, the young Duke of Wharton - a man of remarkable character, or want of it - caused considerable commotion in Masonic circles through his greed of office and rashness. He had been initiated into the Order in August, 1721, "the ceremonies," as the "Weekly Journal"

announced, being performed “at the King’s Arms tavern in St. Paul’s Churchyard, and his Grace came home to his house in the Pall Mall in a white leathern apron.” Etiquette would have bidden him ascend the degrees of Masonry in order, but he at once aimed at the chair of the Grand Master, the next election for which - to replace the Duke of Montagu - would take place on June 24th, 1722. It is stated in the official records that “Philip, Duke of Wharton, lately made a Brother, though not the Master of a Lodge, being ambitious of the chair, got a number of others to meet him at Stationers’ Hall on June 24th, 1722, and having no grand officers, they put into the chair the oldest Master Mason (who’ was not the present master of a Lodge, also irregular), and, without the usual decent ceremonials, the said old mason proclaimed aloud Philip Wharton, Duke of Wharton, Grand Master of Masons, but his Grace appointed no deputy, nor was the Lodge opened and closed in due form.” Irregular as the meeting undoubtedly was, we cannot find that any proper meeting was held on St. John’s day, so that it could not be said that two rival Grand Masters claimed the chair at the same time. The situation was none the less irritating to the craft, and it was due to the diplomacy of the former Grand Master, the Duke of Montagu, to pour oil on the troubled waves by summoning a proper meeting at the King’s Arms on January 17th, 1723, when Wharton was regularly proposed and elected as Grand Master. His term of office expired June 24th, 1723, and if the post had not been merely a yearly one, it is clear that Wharton’s wayward nature had already tired of the position. A preliminary meeting of Grand Lodge was held on April 25th, 1723, to settle upon the choice of the new Grand Master, and although Wharton agreed to the appointment of the Earl of Dalkeith in that office, he had old judges to pay off against Dr- Desaguliers, and strongly objected to his appointment as Deputy Grand Master. Wharton’s conduct in the chair was strongly objected to, and having lost his point, we hear “that the late Grand Master went away from the Hall without ceremony,” which sounds as if the Duke was not man enough to know how to suffer defeat gracefully.

Wharton got over his displeasure with Desaguliers so far as to allow himself the pleasure of attending at Grand Lodge at Merchant Taylors’ Hall, on the following St. John’s day, when in the presence of about 600 Masons, the Earl of Dalkeith was regularly appointed as Grand Master. Wharton’s presence may be explained partly by the newspaper announcement in Reid’s “Weekly Journal,” which states that “there was a noble feast, in which the stewards gave entire content, and gained universal applause; and there was a handsome entertainment, both of vocal and instrumental musick.” Wharton was a great Jacobite, and a personal friend of the Young Pretender, so that it was feared that Masonry might be considered as a training ground for rebels to the State. Accordingly, in the year after Wharton’s retirement, a deputation from Grand Lodge went to Lord Townsend, one of the Secretaries of State, to assure him that Masons were supporters of the Government, and to be assured that the usual convocation of Masons would cause no umbrage. To this a satisfactory, but ambiguous, answer was returned, that “much as mankind loved mischief, no one had ever betrayed the Masons.”

Wharton having spent his force on Masonry pined for other worlds to conquer, and in December, 1724, only eighteen months after he had ceased to be Grand Master of the Masons, the following paragraph appeared in “The British Journal” : - “We hear that a peer of the first rank, a noted member of the Society of Freemasons, hath suffered himself to-be degraded as a member of that society, and his leather apron and gloves to be burnt, and thereupon entered himself a member of the Society of Gormogans at the Castle Tavern in Fleet Street.” The rest of this story is told in our chapter relating to the Gormogans.

Until comparatively recent times it was usual to talk of the “schism” which took place in Masonry in 1751, when the Grand Lodge of England was supposed to have split up into two opposing sections, the new body in a fine burst of irony arrogating to itself the title of the

“Independent Lodge of Ancients,” consisting at first of 6 Lodges with 70 to 80 members, and calling its elder brethren the Moderns. Happily, this ancient libel has been dispersed by the learning of Bro. Henry Sadler in his two works, “Masonic Facts and Fictions,” published in 1887, and “Masonic Reprints and Revelations,” in 1898. The movement was led by an Irish Mason, Laurence Dermott, who, being W-M. of Lodge. 26 in Dublin, in June, 1846, was elected Grand Secretary of the new body on February 5th, 1752, and acted as such till 1771, when he was appointed Deputy Grand Master by the Duke of Atholl, G.M., and held the post till 1787. Bro. Sadler finds that no considerable number of the Ancients ever bore allegiance to the Grand Lodge of England; that, in fact, they were Irish Masons, who, in consequence of the doors of the English Lodges being closed against them, formed their own Lodges till they were strong enough to band themselves first into a Grand Committee, and afterwards, on December 27th, 1753, into a Grand Lodge.

Their Book of Constitutions, called “Ahiman Rezon,” written by Dermott was partly copied from “Spratt’s Irish Constitutions, 1751,” and the work is entitled “Rules and Orders to be observed by the most Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, as agreed and settled by a committee appointed by a general assembly held at the Turk’s Head, Greek Street, Soho, on Wednesday, July 17th, 1751, in the year of Masonry, 5751.”

So matters went on till St. John’s Day in summer, June 24th, 1814, when the Duke of Kent being the Grand Master of the Ancients, and the Duke of Sussex the Grand Master of the Moderns, a fusion took place, and a “United Grand Lodge of Ancient Freemasons of England” was formed with the Duke of Sussex as its new Grand Master. Since then the record is of a growing society, with many distinguished members. There has never been a difficulty in finding eminent peers to fill the two principal offices of Grand Master and pro-Grand Master, and in our own time. Edward VII., when Prince of Wales, held the post of Grand Master, and was followed by his brother, the Duke of Connaught. The Lodges which, in 1717, numbered only four, in 200 years since that time have grown to close upon 4,000 under the Grand Lodge of England alone.

An opportunity for the craft to express its gratitude for the exception made in its favour by the statute of 1799 occurred shortly after that date, for in the next year George III’s life was attempted to be taken by Hadfield, and Grand Lodge, at a meeting held at Freemasons’ Hall on June 3, 1800, drew up an address to the King, which the Prince of Wales, being a Freemason, presented to him. We append two interesting extracts from the address: -

“The law, by permitting under certain regulations, the meetings of Freemasons, has defined the existence of the society, binding, at the same time, the members of it by a new obligation of gratitude for the confidence extended toward them to labour, so far as their feeble powers may apply, in inculcating loyalty to the King and reverence to the inestimable fabric of the British constitution.

“As a veil of secrecy conceals the transactions at our meetings, our fellow-subjects have no assurance that there may not be in our association a tendency injurious to their interests, other than the general tenor of our conduct, and the notoriety that the door of Freemasonry, is not closed against any class, profession, or sect, providing the individual desiring admission be unstained in moral character. To remove therefore, as far as possible, any ground for suspicion, it has been, from time immemorial, a fundamental rule, most rigidly maintained, that no political topic shall on any pretence be mentioned in the Lodge.”

Freemasons felt, after a time, that they wanted some permanent home for Grand Lodge, which had since its formation in 1717, been held at different taverns, unless it could secure the hospitality of one of the City companies and borrow its hall, such as that of the Merchant

Tailors in Threadneedle Street, and the Stationers near St. Paul's. Accordingly, a site was secured in Great Queen Street, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, where, on May 1st 1775, the foundation stone of Freemasons' Hall was laid with Masonic honours by Lord Petre, the Grand Master. On May 23rd, 1776, it was dedicated, and the usual procession of Freemasons, in their regalia, took place through the streets. The original cost of the building was over £12,000. At the dedication of it, Dr. Dodd, as Grand Chaplain, made an oration, founded on the building of Solomon's Temple. "Now," said he, "be it remembered that this great event took place above 1,000 years before the Christian era, and consequently more than a century before Homer, the first of the Grecian poets, wrote; and above five centuries before Pythagoras brought from the East his sublime system of truly Masonic instruction to illuminate our western world.

"But remote as this period is, we date not from thence the commencement of our art. For, though it might owe to the wise and glorious King of Israel some of its many mystic forms and hieroglyphic ceremonies, yet certainly the art itself is coeval with man, the great subject of it.

"We trace its footsteps in the most distant, the most remote ages, and nations of the world. We find it among the first and most celebrated civilisers of the East. We deduce it regularly from the first astronomers on the plains of Chaldea, to the wise and mystic kings and priests of Egypt, the sages of Greece, and the philosophers of Rome."

The inadequacy of the present Freemasons' Hall to accommodate the increasing number of Masons who are entitled to resort there, has long been felt; but at length, in 1908, a resolution was passed in Grand Lodge to form a fund, by the yearly contribution to Grand Lodge of 6d. per head by each Mason in England, for the ultimate rebuilding and enlargement of the building.

Grand Lodge has the oversight of Masonry all over England and the British Colonies, and is a Court of Appeal from the decisions of the District Grand Lodges of the Colonies. Grand Lodge has at its head the Grand Master, who is elected annually in March, and if he is a prince of the Blood Royal, he may appoint a Pro-Grand Master, who must be a Peer. The other officers appointed by the Grand Master are the Deputy-Grand Master, with Grand Wardens, Deacons, Chaplains, Registrar, Director of Ceremonies, Sword and Standard Bearers, and Pursuivants, besides, of course, the Grand Secretary, and Grand Tyler. In addition to these, there are nineteen stewards, who are appointed annually by as many private lodges, which earned this right from time to time. These stewards who, in contrast to the dark blue clothing of other members of Grand Lodge, wear scarlet collars and aprons, have various duties in connection with the annual Grand Masonic Festival, which is held on the Wednesday following April 23rd, St. George's Day. There is a Committee of Grand Lodge, known as the Board of Benevolence, which administers its charity, and the Board of General Purposes, which deals with all its business affairs. Grand Lodge itself meets four times a year, on the first Wednesdays of March, June, September, and December, and the Masters, past and present, of all Lodges, with their Wardens, are eligible to attend.

In addition to the charity dispensed by each private Lodge from its own benevolent fund, and by Grand Lodge from the larger charitable funds of the Board of Benevolence, there are three permanent charities. The Royal Masonic Institution for Girls, with its school at Clapham Junction, was founded in 1788, and was followed in 1798, by the Royal Masonic Institution for Boys which now has its schools at Bushey, Herts., while the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution, which grants pensions to aged Freemasons and their widows, and has almshouses at Croydon, was established in 1842. Each of these charities holds a festival, the "Old People's," in February, the Girls' in May, and the Boys' in June, and it is the usual practice

for the Master of each Lodge to go up as steward for one of these charities, during his year of office, and he collects from his Lodge and its members contributions to the funds of the charity.

The study of the ritual of Freemasonry has been greatly advanced by the establishment of Lodges of Instruction, held in connection with various private Lodges. The most important of these is the "Emulation Lodge of Improvement," held at Freemasons' Hall, which has set a standard of ritual and working. The ceremony used at some of these Lodges of Instruction, is known as "The fifteen sections of the three lectures on Craft Freemasonry," which is a useful catechism on the ceremonies of each degree, in which are contained some of the old speculative explanations concerning the craft. A part of the fifth section of first lecture is oftentimes used in regular Lodges, to explain the working tools of the second degree, and this is known as the "longer working." Milton and Shakespeare have both been drawn upon by the writers of these "lectures," or catechisms, to adorn some of their beautiful passages of rhetoric.

For those Masons who desire to inquire into the history of Masonry - and the number of them is constantly increasing - there are two Lodges, which meet to read and discuss papers and lectures on these subjects, and which publish their transactions. One is the "Quatuor Coronati Lodge," which meets at Freemasons' Hall, London, and the other is the "Lodge of Research," which meets at Leicester. The former has an Inner Circle of members, elected for their research work; and there is also a Correspondence Circle of outside members, who now number over 3,000, and are constantly increasing.

England was parcelled out for Masonic purposes into "provinces," as early as 1725, that being the date of the Cheshire P. G. Lodge, and in each is held a Provincial Grand Lodge, which meets once a year or more, and invites all the Master Masons in its area to attend. It is governed by a Provincial Grand Master, who exercises authority over Lodges in his province, and has his Deputy, with officers, similar to those of Grand Lodge.

London has no province for itself, and consequently its members were debarred from provincial honours, but in 1908, in response to a demand for the establishment of a Provincial Lodge for London, the Grand Master established a new class of honours for London Masons, known as "London Rank," the members of which have no precedence over each other.

The ordinary Lodges are presided over by its Worshipful Master, who is elected for a year, and new Lodges are formed by a petition to the Grand Master from seven Master Masons, who are called the Founders of the Lodge, and to whom the warrant is addressed. Each Lodge has a number and name given to it, the Grand Masters' Lodge being No. I, while the Grand Stewards' Lodge, which has no power of making Masons, has no number given to it, but is placed at the head of all other Lodges, and ranks accordingly.

It may be noted that the processions of Freemasons in the streets, so often referred to by different writers, which made the craft an object of derision, were at length put an end to by the action of Grand Lodge, who passed a rule that no brother should appear clothed in any of the jewels, collars, or badges, of the craft, in any procession, or at any funeral, ball, theatre, public assembly, or meetings, unless by the special dispensation of the Grand Master.

Another degree in Freemasonry, known as the "Royal Arch," was founded about 1740, the meetings of which are known under the old title of chapters. As in craft Masonry, the Royal Arch had two branches, which were united in 1817. It is ruled by a Grand Chapter similar to that of the sister society of Freemasons.

The degree of "Mark Masonry," which has never been formally recognised by the Grand Lodge of Freemasons, was founded in 1769. As an appendix to this is the Order of "Royal Ark Mariners," the Lodges of which are officially styled "moored," to Mark Lodges.

There are two other bodies, one known as the 18th Degree, the other as the 33rd Degree, but they are not officially recognised.

One phase in the history of Freemasonry must not be passed over, and that is the hostility which it incurred from the Pope, who several times has put it under his ban. The French Order of the Compagnonage was prohibited by the Council of Avignon as early as the year 1376, as it was found to be favourable to liberty of thought and religious toleration, and perhaps also because it savoured of religious views which might grow too wide to come within the pale of orthodoxy. In the early operative Masonry, as we have seen, the guilds were under the direct influence of the Church, and in the first "Book of the Constitutions," published in 1723, Freemasons were required to be of the religion of the country in which they lived. The second "Book of the Constitutions," published in 1738, altered this, and admitted all believers in God, which brought down the Papal displeasure, and in the same year, Pope Clement XII. issued his Bull against it. This was followed by another Bull of Benedict XIV. in 1751; and so recently as 1884, the fulminations of the Roman Church against Freemasons were again confirmed by the Pope.

XX. Freemasonry Outside England

The story of Freemasonry appears to be the same in England, Scotland, France, and Germany, for in each we start with a society or guild of men engaged in trades, who banded themselves together for business purposes.

Scottish building ran on parallel lines to English, though in that country there is practically only one style, analogous to what we call "Early English." The masons engaged in the buildings were probably the same in many cases, the men journeying whither their services were required; and their habits were similar, for we have evidences of charters for the formation of a guild society of "Wrytches and Masons," by which was meant woodwrights and stonemasons, so far back as 1475. Another reference to masonry in Scotland in 1598 is found in certain "Codes of Law," signed by William Schaw, "Mastei of the King's Work and Warden of the Masons," which were addressed particularly to a Lodge or chapter which had been established at Kilwinning, in Ayrshire, near which, in after years, Robert Burns, the poet, and a Freemason, was to reside.

Masonry seems to have flourished in the northern kingdom, for in the 17th century we find traces of it in many places, and an interesting case is quoted of the Rev. J. Ainslie, a Presbyterian minister at Kelso, who in 1652 was objected to as being a Mason. The Synod, however, absolved him, considering that there was "neither sin nor scandal in that word, Masons in the purest times of the church having been ministers."

The Scottish rite has always arrogated a special place to itself, and the old imaginative writers tell the story in their own way. Starting with the Kilwinning Lodge, they tell us that King James I. of Scotland took the matter in hand, and ordered that every Grand Master chosen from either the nobility or clergy was entitled to receive four pounds (Scots) from each Master Mason, and a fee on the initiation of every new member. He also had the power of a judge over the members, and appointed wardens in the chief towns of Scotland. James II. appointed the Earl of Orkney, who was also Baron of Roslyn, as Grand Master, and made the office an hereditary one to his successors in the Barony. It is obvious why this Earl should have been chosen, as his name will always be associated with the beautiful chapel of Roslyn, near Edinburgh, which he built, and which contains some of the most delicate stone carving in Scotland. One column there is called the "apprentices' column," and is associated with the legend of an apprentice mason, who outdid his master in his carving, and was slain in consequence of the jealousy he aroused by his superior work. The Barons of Roslyn were said to have held their Grand Lodge at Kilwinning, where they granted warrants for the establishment of lodges throughout Scotland. In the reign of James VI. there is a warrant dated September 25th, 1590, from Holyrood, granted by the King to "Patrick Copland for using and exercising the office of wardenry over the art and craft of masonry over all the boundaries of Aberdeen, Banff, and Kincardine, to hold warden and justice courts within the said boundaries, and there to minister justice."

As further proving the antiquity of masonry in Scotland, it may be mentioned that the Lodge at Edinburgh, known as St. Mary's Chapel, has records as far back as 1598, from which it appears that Thomas Boswell was made warden in 1600, and that the Hon. Robert Moray, Quartermaster-General to the Scotch army, was made a Master Mason in 1641.

In 1736 the then Earl of Roslyn summoned a meeting of 32 lodges, and formed a Grand Lodge of Scotland, after the pattern of the English one, and the Earl was chosen as the first

“Grand Master” of the newly-constituted Grand Lodge, the heads of the ordinary lodges being given the title of “Right Worshipful Master.”

Another variation of the story of Scottish masonry is made by an old writer, Nicolai, as follows: -

“After the death of Cromwell and the deposition of his son, the Government of England fell into the hands of a violent, but weak and disunited faction. In such hands, as every patriot saw, the Government could not be durable, and the sole means for delivering the country was to restore the kingly authority. But in this there was the greatest difficulty, for the principal officers of the army in England, though otherwise in disagreement with each other, were yet unanimous in their hostility to the King. Under these circumstances the eyes of all parties were turned upon the English army in Scotland, at that time under the command of Monk, who was privately well affected to the Royal cause; and the secret society of the King’s friends in London, who placed all their hopes on him, saw the necessity in such a critical period of going warily and mysteriously. It strengthened their sense of this necessity, that one of their own members, Sir Richard Willis, became suspected of treachery, and, therefore, out of the bosom of the ‘secret conclave’ (the masonic master’s degree) they resolved to form a still narrower conclave, to whom the Scotch, i.e., the most secret, affairs should be confided. They choose new symbols adapted to their own extremely critical situation. These symbols imported that in the business of this interior conclave wisdom, obedience, - courage, self-sacrifice, and moderation were necessary. Their motto was ‘Wisdom above thee.’ ‘For greater security they altered their signs, and reminded each other in -their tottering condition not to stumble and break the arm.” The last reference is probably to a part of the old ritual of the masonry of Scotland, which was introduced into Paris in 1743 under the title of the “Rite of Strict Observance.” Later on, in 1786, it was established there as the regular French order, which still flourishes, and is known as “The Grand Orient of France,” and has since been introduced into Belgium, Egypt, and many of the states of South America.

Tracing French Freemasonry backwards from the present institution, we find the same class of trade guilds as in England, and a society known in that country as the “Companionage,” the members of which were called “Compagnons de Devoir.” They are heard of at different dates, from 800 to 1631, and again in 1730, at which latter date there were at least two branches of the Fraternity at La Cran, in Provence, the members of which, in a fit of rivalry, had a fight, using firearms, and the military had to be called out to quell the riot.

The members provided free board and lodging for their travelling fellow craftsmen, and there were certain observances at the grave of a deceased brother. That they did not forget the observance of friendly repasts after lodge duties, seems obvious from prints, which are in existence, showing the Compagnons in procession to a feast along a country road, armed with staves, and some even with what are undoubtedly bottles of wine.

An interesting reminiscence is contained in the fact that after the Napoleonic Wars ended, and while there were many French prisoners of war billeted in the villages of Dorsetshire and elsewhere in England, the French soldiers whiled away part of their time by establishing Masonic Lodges, and perfecting themselves in their lodge work. There are many memorials of these lodges left in the shape of addresses to the brethren in French, some obviously addressed to members who proposed to escape from their imprisonment and return to France, and in which the members wished the fugitives “bon-voyage.”

Germany, prior to the famous Vehmgerichte, of which we have spoken in a previous chapter, had its system of the Steinmetzen, which was a trade guild of masons who looked after its apprentices and made rules for good conduct. It does not appear to have had a regular system

of signs and passwords, but when the Steinmetzen built the Cathedral at Wartzburg, they showed their affinity to other secret societies by placing there two pillars, named after those of King Solomon's Temple.

In 1738 a lodge was founded in Brunswick, where Frederick the Great, who was then Crown Prince of Prussia, was initiated, and the German order has always been considered as a most important one in continental Freemasonry.

Another German secret society, but of a political nature, was the Tugend-Bund, or Society of the Friends of Virtue. This came into existence about 1806, born of the enthusiasm created in Europe by the French Revolution, and Field Marshal Blucher, who helped Wellington at Waterloo in 1815, was said to have been in his early days a member of it. In 1813 it received the approbation of the authorities as being a patriotic band of men, but afterwards it fell back in public estimation, and was branded as a society of demagogues, and ultimately died away.

Irish architecture in the Middle Ages was of a simple character, and it is not surprising to find an absence of the trade guilds of masons which characterised England and Scotland. It is said that some system of Freemasonry had permeated Ireland, prior to the establishment of the Orange Society, but we gain firm ground in 1726, when we find a "Grand Lodge of Munster" in existence, which in 1731 became merged into the still existing "Grand Lodge of Ireland."

America followed the fashion of England in masonic matters after the movement of 1717, and a lodge was founded in 1731 at Philadelphia, another at Boston, Massachusetts, in 1733, and two at Savannah and Charleston in 1735. The great Benjamin Franklin acted as Grand Master of the Philadelphia Lodge in 1754, which in 1782 became known as the "Grand Lodge of Massachusetts." George Washington was an initiate of the Order in 1752, his portrait as such hanging in Freemasons Hall, London; and masonry flourishes exceedingly in America at the present day.

In Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South America, Egypt; in fact in any place where the foot of the Englishman treads, Masonic Lodges have been established; and we have the testimony of bishops who are masons, that in those places where churches are few and far between Masonry has proved itself "the handmaid of religion."

XXI. The Gregorians

The growing vitality of the Order of Freemasonry, after its renaissance in 1717, was sufficient to give rise to many offshoots from the parent stem, which would enable other men to take the honours of the position of Grand Master of their Order, and rival the importance attached to that post by the Freemasons themselves.

Alexander Pope, the poet, was himself a Freemason, and in the 4th book of his satirical poem, "The Dunciad," published in 1742, he refers to two fresh growths which had sprung up.

"Some deep Freemasons join the silent race,

Worthy to fill Pythagoras's place;

Some botanists, or florists, at the least,

Or issue members of an annual feast.

Nor pass'd the meanest unregarded, one

Rose a Gregorian, one a Gormogon."

The "Order of Gregorians" were a secret society, founded about 1736, with a regular initiation service for candidates, whose qualifications were that they must be "men of honour, sound morals, and true loyalty." The Order was presided over by an official known as "The Grand of the Order," who in 1797 was Prince William Frederick of Gloucester, one of the sons of George III. The chapters of the Order were presided over by a "Grand," who was assisted by a secretary, two wardens, and seven committee men. There were separate chapters held in several taverns in London, and also at St. Albans, Crewkerne, and Norwich, of which last-named chapter Sir Edward Astley, M.P., was the Grand in 1771. This chapter in 1797 did itself the honour of electing Nelson, himself a Norfolk man, as an honorary member, and Nelson acknowledged the compliment by a letter written by him from his ship lying in Yarmouth roads, but it does not appear that he ever attended any of the meetings.

The Order terminated about the year 1805, when all reasons for its existence as a Protestant society had died out.

It had a song set to music for two voices, and known as "The Merry Grigs," the first verse of which is as follows: -

"Let poets and historians

Record the brave Gregorians

In long and lasting lays;

While hearts and voices joining

In gladsome songs combining,

Sing forth their deathless praise."

Smollett in his book, "Travels through France and Italy," written in 1765, referring to the processions of the Roman Catholics at Easter in Nice, compares them to the Freemasons and Gregorians, both of which bodies in those days, as we have before remarked, had processions through the public street, the members being dressed in their regalia.

Crabbe, in his poem entitled "The Borough," published in 1810, refers to the Order: -

“ Griggs and Gregorians here their meetings hold.

Convivial Sects, and bucks alert and bold;

A kind of Masons, but without their sign,

The bonds of Union - pleasure, song and wine.”

There appears to have been, so far back as 1673, a society known as “The Gregories,” but whether the Gregorians derived descent from them or not is not known. Their character may be guessed at from the fact that a sermon was preached to them in the church of St. Michael, Cornhill, on June 19th, 1673, by Rev. Dr. Gregory, one of the Chaplains of Charles II.

XXII. The Gormogans

It seems a pity to have to include the subject of a joke in a serious work of this kind, but as the humour has infected men of standing, like Pope and Hogarth, who have conferred immortality upon the subject of it, we must do our duty and treat it as a part of the story we are to tell.

Pope's lines as to the Gormogans we recalled in our account of the Gregorians, and Hogarth, himself a Freemason - as was his father-in-law, Sir James Thornhill, the painter - played the part of the comic muse in relation to the society, in a caricature he published in 1743, entitled "The Mystery of Freemasonry brought to Light by the Gormogans." In this he shows a procession headed by the Emperor of China, and three Mandarins, who are followed by a monkey, wearing out-size gloves, and a woman on a donkey, supporting one end of a ladder. The other end is borne by a man who has his head between two of the steps, while a knight in armour brings up the rear, wearing a Masonic apron. In the background are a crowd of people confined in a house, and looking out of the door and windows. At the foot of the plate are the following lines: -

"From Eastern climes, transplanted to our coasts.

Two oldest orders that creation boasts

Here meet in miniature, exposed to view,

That by their conduct we may judge their due.

The Gormogans, a venerable race,

Appear distinguished with peculiar grace.

What honour, wisdom, truth and social love!

Sure such an order had its birth above."

The lines conclude with a reference to Freemasonry in an ironic vein, so as to appear to palliate the wrath of the Gormogans for the scorn thrown upon them by the artist in the caricature. To preserve the Chinese character of the scheme, Hogarth playfully adds, "Painted at Peking by Matochauter. Graved by Hoge."

The leader of the society which Hogarth ridiculed was a spendthrift, whimsical and changeable as the wind in springtime. A man who caught the public eye and amused it for the time; a man who might have played an important part in the State if he could have gained steadiness by experience; a man whose faults can only be excused by the spirit of the times in which he lived. This was Philip, Duke of Wharton, an Irish peer, born in 1698, married at 16, made a Duke in the English peerage for political purposes at 20, bankrupt at 24, indicted for high treason and a refugee in Spain at 31, and dead at 33. He was the associate of the most extravagant men-about-town of his day, and his vanity could not be appeased without an attempt to attain the highest position in any club or society of men to which he might belong. Having become a Mason, he at once made up his mind to occupy no post less than that of Grand Master, and as this appeared to be difficult of achievement in the regular way, he summoned a private meeting of his own Masonic friends for St. John's Day, June 24th, 1722, at Stationers' Hall, who proclaimed him Grand Master. This naturally caused dissention, but the vanity of the Duke was eventually satisfied by an arrangement being made that he should

be regularly appointed as Grand Master in the following January, which was actually done. The moment the prize was seized it became worthless to him, and he held it only five months, and was replaced by another Grand Master on the succeeding St. John's Day in June, 1723; when, quarrelling with his colleagues, another whim took his fancy, to form a rival society, and to call it "The Order of Gormogans." Wharton had spoken in Parliament once on the subject of the South Sea Company, and his speech made a great impression at the time, besides which he affected to be a literary man. The new Order was therefore heralded by announcements in the Press, which were either written or inspired by Wharton himself, as to the antiquity of the Order he was just founding. In September and October, 1724, notices appeared in several papers that at the Castle Tavern, Fleet Street, was to be held the first Chapter of the "Ancient Noble Order of the Gormogans, instituted by the first Emperor of China many years before Adam." Of course, Wharton was its head, as he was of that infamous coterie he founded, called the "Hell-fire Club." Anyway, the Gormogans did not know him long, for his fortunes were soon broken, and in a few months he left England, never to return. Proceeding to Paris in 1725, he met the Old Pretender, whose cause he warmly espoused, and in 1728 Wharton published a continuation of the farcical account of the Gormogans, from a Jacobite standpoint, taking occasion to ridicule the Georgian rule of England. The Pretender sent him to Madrid on a political mission, where he is said to have founded a Lodge of Freemasons.

Hogarth probably had Wharton in his mind when he painted his "Rake's Progress," and Pope left a character sketch of Wharton, "the scorn and wonder of our days," in his "Epistle to Sir R. Temple."

"Thus with each gift of Nature and of art,
 And wanting nothing but an honest heart;
 Grown all to all; from no one vice exempt,
 And most contemptible to shun contempt.
 His passion still to covet general praise,
 His life to forfeit it a thousand ways.
 Ask you why Wharton broke through every rule?
 'Twas all for fear the Knaves would call him fool."

XXIII. The Orange Society

It is generally considered that the body of Freemasons, during the Stuart risings in the reigns of George I. and George II., were Jacobites at heart, and some of the scorn which, was poured out upon them in those times, particularly by the Press and by pamphleteers, was⁴ due to this cause.

It is not, therefore, surprising to find a secret society, established with opposite aims, to glorify that revolution of the wheel of kingship which occurred when William III., Prince of Orange, in 1688 ousted James II. from the throne of England, and established Protestantism as the State religion. Some time after this-the Orange Society of ultra-Protestants was founded in Belfast. It partook of the nature of such societies in having a regular ceremony of initiation, with passwords and signs. It originally consisted of scattered Lodges, which were-independent of one another; but in 1795, in the-reign of George III., it followed the example-of the Freemasons and established itself as an organised body with a Grand Lodge, so that branches of it sprung up in England and. America. The Order still flourishes in a modified form in Ireland, and the principal days observed by them are November 5th, when the-Prince of Orange landed in England; July 1st, the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne,. fought in 1690; and July 12th, in memory of the Battle of Aughrim, fought in 1691, on which days the members are supposed to wear an orange lily flower. Its opponents, of course, wore the national colour of Irish shamrock - green.

In the days of William IV., the society took a new, but brief lease of life, when active branches of it were formed in England for political purposes, and in 1835 the Duke of Cumberland, uncle to Queen Victoria, was appointed its Grand Master. In 1836 it was discovered that the society was engaged in a treasonable conspiracy, and on the motion of the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, an address was moved in the House of Commons to the King, calling on him to proclaim its condemnation, which was done, and the English society came to an inglorious end.

XXIV. The United Irishmen's Society

The influence of the French Revolution of 1789 made itself felt all over Europe, and wherever there was a national grievance, the people felt that salvation was to be found by copying the French pattern, and putting their rulers in awe; and we find that this lasted for many years after the last rumbling of the earthquake of revolution in France had subsided. In no country did it find a more ready response than in Ireland, which had its grievances on the subject of Roman Catholic emancipation, and the tyranny to which members of that church were subject. The Irish Parliament in 1798, under Grattan, was largely a Protestant one, and the Roman Catholics felt that if they waited for redress by constitutional means alone, they might wait for ever. A young Irish barrister, curiously enough a Protestant, with a winning tongue and a brain on fire with enthusiasm for the cause, named Wolf Tone, became the leader of their thoughts, which he attempted to translate into action by calling to Ireland's aid the arch-enemy of England at that time - Buonaparte. Tone was already the secretary of a secret society, who had an oath, signs, and passwords, and went by the name of the "Association of United Irishmen." Tone went to France and saw the imperious Frenchman, who sent three successive expeditions to Ireland to raise the standard of rebellion there. As with the Armada of Elizabeth's days, the winds were contrary, and Buonaparte's ships were delayed and scattered. Fresh members of the United Irishmen were daily being sworn in and armed with weapons to join the French invaders. All was, however, to no purpose, for a further fleet, intended for Ireland, was despatched by Buonaparte to Egypt, and the Irish had to fight by themselves. Lord Edward Fitzgerald, another Protestant, was then chosen for leader, and in the spring of 1798, the rebellion broke out in Wexford. An Irish priest, Father Murphy, became one of the leaders, and at first there were some successes, but Father Murphy was caught and executed in May, and Lord Fitzgerald was likewise captured, and died in gaol, in June, 1798. In October the remnant of a French fleet, which at first numbered nine vessels, and eventually was counted as four - with Tone on board, dressed as a French officer - arrived at Lough Swilly, in Ireland. It was easily defeated by the English fleet, the French soldiers taken captive; while Tone was arrested, tried for treason, condemned to death, but anticipated his execution by committing suicide in prison.

Such an experience of a secret society was not to be lightly thought of by the English Government, especially as other similar societies, in which members were incited to action by the sacred reality of an oath to do their duty, had been formed both in Scotland and in England. The Government naturally concluded that all secret societies were dangerous, and must be suppressed, so a Bill was drafted to carry out the purpose. As soon as the session of Parliament was opened in 1799, the Bill was introduced and eventually passed into law on July 12th, 1799. It is known as the "Unlawful Societies Act, 1799," and its language is of the greatest interest.

It starts with Buonaparte, and says that a traitorous conspiracy had long been carried on, in conjunction with the persons from time to time exercising the powers of government in France, to overturn the laws and the civil and ecclesiastical establishment of Great Britain and Ireland, and that in order to carry out this object, societies had been instituted of a new and dangerous nature, inconsistent with public tranquility, particularly certain societies calling themselves Societies of United Englishmen, United Scotsmen, United Britons, United Irishmen, and the London Corresponding Society. The nature of the organisation of these societies is explained by the statement that the members of them had taken unlawful oaths, and engagements of fidelity and secrecy, had used secret signs, and appointed committees,

secretaries, and other officers. The Act goes on to forbid the meetings of any such societies under the pains of incurring a fine of an undefined amount, and imprisonment for an undefined time.

It will, of course, be observed that, throwing the net so wide, a society such as that of the Freemasons would be caught within its meshes. Accordingly, when the Bill went into Committee, the Duke of Atholl and the Earl of Moira, two prominent Freemasons, carried amendments which excluded their fellows in the craft from its ban, upon condition that the various Lodges were duly registered with the Clerk of the Peace of the County, in which they usually met. A further certificate of respect for the craft was given by stating that Freemasonry had "been long accustomed to be holden in this kingdom under the denomination of Lodges of Freemasons"; and further, to relieve it of any suspicion that its gatherings were convivial only, the Act states that "such meetings were in great measure directed to charitable purposes."

The Act was eventually thought to afford protection only to Masonic Lodges actually in existence in 1799, and eight years afterwards the "Seditious Meetings Act, 1817," was passed, which, amongst other provisions, made it apply to new Lodges, as well as old ones - a wise enactment, looking at the large increase Masonry had made since the date of the former Act.

XXV. The Friendly Societies

There are certain benefit societies now registered under the Friendly Societies Acts, which have passwords and signs, and many of the characteristics of secret societies. The Ancient Order of Foresters is a very important Friendly Society, which, having signs, passwords, and an initiation ceremony, is also entitled to be classed as a secret society. Its members number no less than 1,289,900, composed of both sexes and juveniles, and its benefits to sick members and their widows are considerable. Its meetings are known as "Courts," which are presided over by a Chief Ranger, whose officers are known as Sub-Chief Ranger, Senior and Junior Woodwards, Senior and Junior Beadles, besides a treasurer and secretary.

Orders of Foresters can be traced, it is alleged, from ages back in the New Forest, and there are stories of initiation ceremonies, where brethren were dressed as woodmen, carrying boughs of trees. In some respects a resemblance may be found to the French Societies of Wood-choppers.

The first established Court of the Foresters was held at the Old Crown Inn, Kirkgate, Leeds, in 1790, but the society was much hampered in those days by the provisions of the Unlawful Societies Act, 1799, and the Seditious Meetings Act, 1817, the latter of which enacted that meetings of more than fifty members of a secret society were unlawful.

It is stated that the old initiation ceremony, which has been altered in later days, was free from that Masonic influence which permeated the ritual of old Oddfellows. The Chief Ranger of the Foresters began with an impressive prayer, "O Thou Eternal and Supreme Being, whose power is manifested unto man in the whirlwind and in the storm, when the rushing winds howl through the forest and the affrighted deer flee, they know not witherward, from their coverts; when the rain descends in torrents, and the mighty waves in wild commotion lash each other; when lightnings illumine the heavens, and the loud thunder reverberates from beetling crag to towering cliff," and so on.

Until 1843 the initiate had to undergo a mock combat with a member of the Court, both being armed with cudgels. This was, however, treated in a symbolic manner, the explanation being that as Adam had to fight and contend with wild and savage beasts of the Forest, so all faithful Foresters were bound to contend with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

The supreme government of the Order is vested in a "High Court," held every year, at a different town, and presided over by a "High Chief Ranger."

The "Order of Oddfellows" is another benefit and secret society, with signs and passwords by which the members can recognise each other, and an oath to bind them. The Order was founded in Manchester. The annual meetings are held in different towns, selected from time to time, and are attended by delegates chosen from the different Lodges. The Order in 1884 comprised 600,000 members and the numbers are now increased to over a million. There is an old medal of the Order of Oddfellows in existence, which has an imitation of an heraldic design. Two crossed swords are partly covered by a shield, which contains three faces of men, who may justly be designated as Oddfellows. The crest on the shield is a raised hand, with a heart in its centre. There are two figures on either side, supporting the shield, of Oddfellows dressed in the costume of the 18th century, wearing scarves suspended over the shoulder. There are also two mottoes, "Upon my honour," and "Quid rides," which may be translated "Why do you laugh?"

The head of each Oddfellows' Lodge is called the "Grand," and his two principal officers are called "right supporter" and "left supporter," while the head of the whole society is called "Noble Grand."

The "Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes," sometimes known as a system of "Working Man's Freemasonry," is mainly of a social character, but has now the basis of a fund for the benefit of the orphan children of deceased members. It has an initiation ceremony, and the heads of its Lodge are known as "Primos," the supreme rule over the Order being wielded by the "Grand Primo." The officers are known by courtesy titles of lords and knights. The society is not strictly a Friendly Society, and is included here only for the sake of convenience.

The "Order of Druids," is a benefit and secret society, founded in 1780, whose Lodges are called "Groves," recalling those early British days when the Ancient Druids, in the glades of the forest, performed their rites, and taught such of the principles of geometry and philosophy as were known in those days. Even these old philosophers are made to pay tribute to the mythical histories of Freemasonry, as related by some old writers. De Quincey, as we have seen, insists that Freemasonry had its origin in Rosicrucianism. Richard Carlile, in his "Mysteries of Freemasonry," in company with other writers, carries it back to the Egyptians; while Thomas Paine, the author of "An Essay on the Origin of Freemasonry," finds its source in the rites of the Ancient Druids. Paine's theory can be set out in two passages at the beginning and conclusion of his essay. "It is always understood that Freemasons have a secret which they carefully conceal; but from everything that can be collected from their own accounts of Masons, their real secret is no other than their origin, which but few of them understand; and those that do envelope it in mystery." The essay concludes thus: "The Druids became the subjects of persecution. This would naturally and necessarily oblige such of them as remained attached to their original religion to meet in secret and under the strongest injunctions of secrecy. Their safety depended upon it. A false brother might expose the lives of many of them to destruction; and from the remains of the religion of the Druids, thus preserved, arose the institution which, to avoid the name of Druid, took that of Mason, and practised under this new name the rights and ceremonies of Druids." The sole argument Paine uses in support of this conclusion is that in the Masonic ritual there are distinct traces of Sun worship, and as this was practised by the Druids, the inference that one was copied from the other is to him irresistible. He also makes use of the statement of Captain Smith, a writer in 1783, on Masonry, that, notwithstanding the obscurity which envelopes Masonic history in Britain, various circumstances contribute to prove that Freemasonry was introduced into Britain 1030 years before Christ. From this exceedingly vague and unproved statement Paine argues that as the Druids flourished in Britain at that period, it is from them that Masonry is descended, and it is obvious that arguing on such slender premises, it would have been possible to prove anything one wished as the basis of Masonry.

XXVI. Freemasonry In Literature And Art

It may be laid down as an axiom that if the history of a country were to be lost, it could be re-written from its contemporary literature and art, for it is impossible to keep out of books, whether novels, biography, poetry, or essays, or out of pictures references to the life going on at the time of their being written or painted. The fact that Shakespeare makes no reference to any secret society, though he reflects in his writings most of the characteristics of his age, is proof positive that masonry in Queen Elizabeth's days was a small and select circle, and the only reference he makes to working masons is to compare them to a swarm of honey bees, who are described as,

The singing Masons building roofs of gold. - *Henry V., Act. I, s.2.*

In Charles II.'s reign, Masonry existed only in its transition stage from operative to speculative, but it had its signs and passwords, as the public of that day were aware, for Andrew Marvell, who wrote from Hull, in 1672, in his work "The Rehearsal Transposed," says, "As those that have the Masons' word secretly discern one another." Such a phrase in a writer of the period is proof of existing Masonry beyond tons of theory.

Dr. Johnson, though born in 1709, only eight years before the revival of Freemasonry, and living till 1783, through the days when the craft was heard of a good deal in literary circles, must have come into contact with many Freemasons in his time. To quote Mr. Augustin. Birrell, "he knew not only books, but a great deal about trades and manufactures, ways of existence, customs of business. He had been in all sorts of societies, kept every kind of company." In his dictionary Johnson absolutely ignores Freemasonry, so that one may well imagine it had for him no definite existence as a permanent institution.

One prominent Mason, Dr. William Dodd, he certainly knew, but not favourably. That famous divine and fashionable preacher, Dodd, was a member of Grand Lodge, but falling upon evil days, he forged the name of his patron, Lord Chesterfield, to a bond for £4,000, for which he was tried at the Old Bailey and found guilty in July, 1777. Dodd was the author of a well-known work, "The Beauties of Shakespeare," and from a friendly feeling for a brother author, Dr. Johnson, wrote some sermons for Dodd to preach while in prison, and also drafted a petition in favour of his reprieve, which was widely supported. Dodd passed his enforced leisure by writing a poem called "Thoughts in Prison," which was passable from a literary standpoint, but it only called forth from Dr. Johnson the comment, "A man who has been canting all his life, may cant to the last." Dodd subsequently met the fate which in those days followed persons found guilty of forgery.

In 1709 Steele, writing in the "Tatler," talks of "a set of people who assume the name of pretty fellows, get new names, and have their signs and tokens like Freemasons." Again, in 1710 he writes in the same paper of certain idle fellows that "one would think that they had some secret intimation of each other like the Freemasons." Both of these extracts are interesting, as showing that the old Freemasonry, prior to 1717, was known sufficiently to be talked about in current conversation and writings.

An early reference to Freemasonry is made in a poem called "The Masonic Hymn," reproduced in a volume known as "Ancient Poems," published in 1846 by the Percy Society, and there stated to be "a very ancient production." In this poem it is alluded to thus: -

"For in Heaven there's a lodge, and St. Peter keeps the door,

And none can enter in but those that are pure.”

The first official poet of the new Freemasons after 1717 was Matthew Birkhead, a well-known actor and Master of Lodge No. 5 in 1722, who wrote what has become well-known in Masonic circles as “The Entered Apprentices’ Song,” which is still sung as a toast at the dinners of many Lodges. It first appeared in print in the columns of “Read’s Weekly Journal.” on December 1st, 1722, under the title of “The Freemason’s Health,” and was the next year printed by Dr. Anderson in his first “Book of the Constitutions,” where it is set to music, and is directed “to be sung when all grave business is over, and with the master’s leave.” The song had seven verses, of which we quote the first two; and the writer is at much trouble to find a passable rhyme for “Mason” in each verse, which varies from “occasion,” which occurs twice, “station,” and “nation,” to rhymes worthy of Browning, “gaze on,” “grace on,” and “face on.”

“Come let us prepare,
 We Brothers that are
 Met together on merry occasion;
 Let’s drink, laugh and sing,
 Our wine has a spring -
 ‘Tis a health to an accepted Mason
 “The world is in pain
 Our secrets to gain,
 And still let them wander and gaze on ;
 They ne’er can divine
 The word or the sign
 Of a free and an accepted Mason.”

Birkhead died at Wych Street, Strand, on January 3rd, 1723, and was buried at St. Clement. Danes church, before the publication of his song in the “Book of the Constitutions,” which appeared in that year. He also appears to have been responsible for a play which was produced at Drury Lane Theatre a week after his death. It was performed by “His Majesty’s Company of Comedians,” and is described on the play-bills as “a comedy never acted before, called ‘Love in a Forest,’ altered from the comedy called ‘As You Like It,’ written by Shakespeare.” The play was also announced to appear in book form: “To-morrow will be published ‘Love in a Forest,’ as it was acted at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Dedicated to the worshipful and ancient Society of Freemasons.” It will be observed that no author’s name is given for a very obvious reason; and as no copy of the work is to be found in the British Museum, it is an open question whether the book was ever actually published.

It is not surprising to find that the newly revived Order had a period of ridicule to pass through from the press in the days of George L, and many witty paragraphs were inserted in the papers of the day.

Many pamphlets and broadsides also appeared, and the public does not appear to have minded paying sixpence for a paper-covered book running down the craft. One of these broadsides called “Puerile signs and wonders of a Freemason,” published in 1730, has been referred to in our chapter on the Grand Lodge. In 1724 another booklet was published, at the usual price (6d.) of such publications, entitled “The Grand Mystery of Freemasons

Discovered,” wherein are “the several questions put to them .at their meetings and installations; as also their oath, health, signs, and points to know each other by, as they were found in the custody of a Freemason, who died suddenly. And now published for the information of the publick.” This contained another version of the craft ritual, and an introduction with the story of a man who professed to have a great curiosity in his house; but when challenged could only produce a small irritating insect. The inference drawn from the secrets of Freemasonry was obvious.

The sixpenny booklet must have pleased the reading public of the day, for in January, 1726, was published another, at the same price. It was entitled, “The Freemasons’ Accusation and Defence, in six genuine letters between a gentleman in the country and his son and student in the Temple, wherein the whole affair of Masonry is fairly debated, and all the arguments for and against the Fraternity are curiously and impartially handled.”

A more ambitious effort to satirise Freemasonry was made in 1726 by the publication of “An Ode to the Grand Khaibar,” the author being anonymous. This work ridicules the alleged ancient foundation of the craft and its-supposed members.

“Wherever buildings Masons found,
To praise their art they picked occasion,
Hence Cain was for the craft renowned,
And mighty Nimrod was a Mason.
With empty names of Kings and Lords
The mystic lodge may soothe the fancy;
Words without meaning it affords,
And signs without significancy.
One only thing they plainly tell,
In prose and verse on this occasion;
A mole-hill to a mount to swell,
Is the true sign of a Freemason.”

Another poem - a sixpenny one - appeared in February, 1723, entitled “The Freemasons: an Hudibrastic Poem,” the author simply describing himself as “a Freemason,” and professing’ to divulge “their laws, ordinances, signs, works, messages, so long kept secret, faithfully discovered and made known.”

The title page contains the following: -

“All secrets, till they once are known,
Are wonderful all men must own;
But when found out we cease to wonder,
‘Tis equal then to wind and thunder.”

Legendary stories concerning Masonry arose in plenty, the favourite of which was that of the red-hot poker applied to the victim as a part of his initiation, which formed a staple topic for the caricaturist of the day.

That the compilers of the ritual were influenced by the literature of their ancestors is also evident from the fact that Bacon’s Essays, which had been published in 1620, were drawn

upon in after years for parts of the stately ritual which was composed, revised, and improved upon from time to time. In this ritual the phrase “a citizen of the world” occurs, and we find it taken from Bacon’s essay “On Nobility,” where it reads : “If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers it shows he is a citizen of the world.”

Another happy phrase is “the bark of this life,” the idea being again borrowed from Bacon’s essay “Of Adversity,” which talks of “Christian resolution that saileth in the frail bark of the flesh through the waves of the world.”

In one of the old addresses a mason was adjured “not to be an enthusiast, persecutor, or reviler of religion,” and the word “enthusiast” seems to be in direct conflict to the drift of the whole passage. The compilers were, however, justified by a passage from a well-known work, “The Divine Legation of Moses,” written in 1738, by Dr. Warburton, Bishop of Gloucester, who said “enthusiasm is that temper of mind in which the imagination has got the better of the judgment. In this disordered state of things, enthusiasm, when it happens to turn upon religious matters, becomes fanaticism.”

Addison, the essayist, was not a Freemason, but in the pages of “The Spectator,” in 1712, appeared an essay written by him, “On the Glory of Heaven,” in which are passages that reflect the thoughts of the thinking men of that day who were compiling the new ritual of Freemasonry, if the passage itself did not set them thinking of the subject. Addison says, “As in Solomon’s Temple there was the Sanctum Sanctorum, in which a visible glory appeared among the figures of the cherubims, and into which none but the high-priest himself was permitted to enter after having made an atonement for the sins of the people; so if we consider the whole creation as one great temple, there is in it this Holy of Holies into which the High Priest of our salvation entered.

“With how much skill must the Throne of God be erected, with what glorious designs is that habitation beautified, which is contrived and built by Him who inspired Hiram with wisdom! How great must be the majesty of that place, where the whole art of creation has been employed, and where God has chosen to show himself in the most magnificent manner! What must be the architecture of infinite power under the direction of infinite wisdom?”

In 1730 appeared a treatise called “Masonry Dissected,” written by Samuel Pritchard, who was a Freemason, giving the catechism of the Masonic ritual. In his introduction, the author, following the old legends of the ancient charges, says, “The original institution of Masonry consisted in the foundation of the liberal arts and sciences, but more especially of geometry, for at the building of the Tower of Babel, the art and mystery of masonry was first introduced, and from thence handed down by Euclid, a worthy and excellent mathematician of the Egyptians; and he communicated it to Hiram, the master mason concerned in building Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem.” Readers in those days must have been very gullible, as Hiram lived 1,000 years before Christ, and had been dead 700 years before Euclid, the mathematician, was born; but possibly the author, if faced with this fact, would have sought refuge in the old device of imagining two Euclids to have existed, each of them equally famous in Geometry. Pritchard made a declaration on oath before the Lord Mayor, verifying his book, which was answered in another work by “W. Smith, a Freemason,” entitled “The Freemasons’ Pocket Companion.”

Pope’s references to Freemasonry in his “Dunciad,” published in 1742, are dealt with in the chapter on “The Gregorians.”

Goldsmith, as a member of the public, had obviously heard of the Gregorians, who were presided over by an officer called the “Grand,” and when Goldsmith wished to picture the chairman of a convivial meeting, holding a hammer in his hand, the writer’s thoughts went to

the Gregorians, and he described such a chairman as a "Grand." In 1759 he published his volume of essays under the title of "The Bee," in which is an account of "a club of choice spirits'." "The first club I entered upon coming to town was that of the choice spirits. The Grand, with a mallet in his hand, presided at the head of the table. My speculations were soon interrupted by the Grand, who had knocked down Mr. Spriggins for a song." The Gregorians would probably find this an accurate description of part of their proceedings at Norwich in 1761, when, attended by a band of music, in barges and boats, they went by the river Yare to their annual venison feast, which we are told "concluded with great harmony."

Another reference to Masonry occurs in 1765, when Tobias Smollett wrote his "Travels through France and Italy." He saw in the streets of Nice a procession at Easter-time of members of Roman Catholic confraternities, -concerning whom he says: "The confraires are fraternities of devotees, who enlist themselves under the banners of particular saints. On days of procession they appear in a body dressed as penitents and masked, and distinguished by crosses on their habits. There is scarce an individual, whether noble or plebeian, who does not belong to one of these associations, which may be compared to the Freemasons, Gregorians, and Antigallicans of England."

Both Fielding, in his novel of "Tom Jones," and Sterne, in his "Tristram Shandy," written in the eighteenth century, introduce the word "Freemason" into the conversation of their characters, showing that the craft was not unknown to them in those days.

About the same period Lord Halifax writes: "The lawyers, like the Freemasons, may be supposed to take an oath not to tell the secret," referring to some political matter of his day. Gray also has the newly established craft in his mind when he writes humorously to Horace Walpole, saying, "I reckon next week we shall hear you are a Freemason."

Charles Dibdin, the author of the immortal "Tom Bowling," in 1780, left his songs, and wrote for the stage, producing at Drury Lane Theatre a pantomime called "Harlequin Freemason." Dibdin was a Mason, and the so-named pantomime consisted of a dialogue with songs, followed by a pageant. The first part comprised the Phoenecian architect, who assisted King Solomon in building the Temple, with choruses of skaters and of lawyers. A masonic song in introduced, which was not written by Dibdin, but taken from the first "Book of the Constitutions," published in 1723, where it is attributed to Charles Dalefaye.

"Hail masonry, thou craft divine,
 Glory of earth from heaven revealed,
 Which does with jewels precious shine,
 From all but mason's eyes concealed."

The pageant consisted of a procession of the principal Grand Masters from the Creation to the then century, and the characters were drawn from the long catalogue of them contained in the "Book of the Constitutions." There were no less than twenty banners representing different epochs, after each of which marched the performers. They began with Enoch and Nimrod; then followed the King of Egypt, who was named Mitzraim - which happened to be the Hebrew word for Egypt - and he was accompanied by two men carrying a property Pyramid; Solomon with the two Hiram's followed; and, naturally enough, the Queen of Sheba succeeded- Persia entered now with Darius and Zoroaster, and then came Rome, personified by Augustus Caesar, celebrated for his rhetorical flourish. "I found Rome built of brick, but I have left it built of marble," and to point the moral, two men carried a model of the Pantheon of Rome. Titus Vespasian and Constantine were the predecessors of William the Conqueror, and the Tower of London borne aloft by two assistants, who were followed by Queen

Elizabeth, Pope Julius II., Michael Angelo, Raphael, and a model of St. Peter's, at Rome. The fourteenth banner took in James I., with Inigo Jones, and a representation of Whitehall, while Charles II. with William and Mary succeeded them, and for some reason they were followed by a man bearing an obelisk. Sir Christopher Wren wound up the list of memorable builders and patrons of architecture, and he was accompanied by two men carrying St. Paul's. The last three banners were followed by representatives of the Orders of Knights Templars, members of the Royal Arch degree, and of modern masons, the latter bearing one of Solomon's pillars.

The pageant was well thought out, and obviously gave much pleasure, for it was performed at intervals until the following Christmas, and was adopted for the Lord Mayor's Show on November 9th, 1781.

A society professing the principles of Freemasons may be expected to be in close touch with religion, and this is borne out by the number of sermons which we find to have been preached before them, and prominent amongst these may be mentioned that of John Wesley, who writes in 1772, "I preached in the Masons' Lodge."

That jovial soul, Robert Burns, the poet, was initiated into Masonry at the St. David's Lodge at Tarbolton, Ayrshire, on July 4th, 1781, and he subsequently became a member of several other Lodges. In June, 1786, as the St. John's Day was approaching, he wrote a poem by way of invitation to a brother Mason, Mr. Mackenzie, the surgeon at Mauchline, to attend the Lodge, which was held in a little back room in a tavern, kept by a publican named Manson, in Tarbolton.

"Friday first's the day appointed
 By our Right Worshipful anointed,
 To hold our grand procession;
 To get a blade of Johnnies morals
 And taste a swatch of Manson's barrels,
 I' the way of our profession.
 Our Master and the Brotherhood
 Wad a' be glad to see you,
 For me, I would be mair than proud
 To share the mercies wi' you."

For the benefit of those living south of the Tweed, we may perhaps be allowed to explain that "Friday first" is the Scotch method of saying "Friday next," while "Right Worshipful" is the Scots equivalent of the English "Worshipful" Master.

The "grand procession" Burns talks about has been pictured in a print of the period, which shows a body of Masons marching along the street of Tarbolton, past the church, with a man bearing a flag in front bearing the legend, "St. James' Lodge," the members following after in their regalia, and being welcomed by the children of the town as they passed. In November, 1786, Burns meditated emigrating to Jamaica, and he wrote a poem intended as a "Farewell to the Brethren of St. James' Lodge, Tarbolton," which begins -

"Adieu! a heart warm fond adieu!
 Dear brothers of the mystic tie!
 Ye favoured, ye enlightened few,

Companions of my social joy!”

He then refers to the fact that he had been Master of the Lodge -

“Oft honoured with supreme command,

Presiding o’er the sons of light

And by the hieroglyphic bright,

Which none but craftsmen ever saw!

Strong memory of my heart shall write

Those happy scenes when far awa!”

“May freedom, harmony and love

Unite you in the grand design,

Beneath the Omniscient Eye above

The glorious Architect divine.

That you may keep the unerring line,

Still rising by the plummets law,

Till order bright completely shine

Shall be my prayer, when far awa.”

Burns did not go abroad after all, and in July, 1787, he was in the chair of the Lodge, and initiated Dugald Stewart, the professor of philosophy at Edinburgh University, into Masonry.

Capt. George Smith, Provincial Grand Master for Kent, published in 1783 a work entitled “The Use and Abuse of Freemasonry.” He is another author who goes to the creation of the world for the origin of his subject, and remarks that at that time “the sovereign architect raised on Masonic principles the beauteous globe, and commanded that master science, geometry, to lay the planetary world, and to regulate by its laws the whole stupendous system, in just, unerring proportion, rolling round the central sun. But I am not at liberty publicly to undraw the curtain, and thereby to descant on this head: it is sacred, and will ever remain so: those who are honoured with the trust will not reveal it, and those who are ignorant of it cannot betray it.”

It has been said of the poet Crabbe that he was a “miniature” writer, for in his poems of country life, if he describes a labourer’s cottage he never forgets the smallest details of the furniture of the house, and the clock and plates and knives do not escape his searching eye. One cannot, therefore, expect him to leave out a reference to the Masonry of his day, when describing “The Borough” in his poem written in 1810, which we have quoted in Chapter XX.

Thomas Paine, the author of “The Age of Reason,” which criticised Christianity, wrote “An Essay on the Origin of • Freemasonry,” which was not published till after his death in 1809, and was reprinted in 1818 by the publisher, R. Carlile, 183, Fleet Street.

A man with the historical and antiquarian tastes of Sir Walter Scott could hardly avoid becoming a Mason, even if his father had not been one before him. Scott was initiated into Masonry in 1801, and his son-in-law and biographer, Lockhart, and Scott’s son and grandson also became members of the craft. Scott was imbued with information on all historical subjects, and founded his novel of “Anne of Geierstein” on the records of a secret society,

while his Masonic knowledge helped him to picture the scene where a solemn oath, usual in such societies, was administered, and also helped him to describe the ceremonies, and he says in Chapter XX. of that novel, “everything about the institution, its proceedings, and its officers, were preserved in as much obscurity as is now practised in Freemasonry.”

To come down to the nineteenth century, Douglas Jerrold in 1845 touched on this subject in the eighth chapter of “Mrs. Caudle’s Curtain Lectures,” where the intrepid but fallible Caudle has been made a Mason, and the termagant heroine remarks: “Do you suppose I’d ever suffered you to go and be made a Mason if I didn’t suppose I was to know the secrets? Not that its anything to know, I dare say; and that’s why I’m determined to know it.”

Thomas De Quincey, the essayist, has already been referred to as to the author of several papers on the “Rosicrucians and Freemasons,” but although he dived as deeply as was possible into the secrets and history of the Rosicrucians, his conclusions as to the history of Freemasons are useless in the light of the fresh facts and documents which have been found since he wrote upon the subject. In fact he makes the errors which all make who form their conclusions before they get the facts.

In 1835 there appeared in the papers of a periodical called “The Republican,” a series of papers from Richard Carlile, who was formerly a publisher in Fleet Street, and gave his address as Dorchester Gaol, containing the whole ritual of Freemasonry of his time. Its only interest at the present day is to show how many intellects have been at work since that time to improve and elevate it, without destroying its old-world flavour. A second writer, who somewhat injudiciously attempted to give away some of the details of Masonry, was a Frenchman, named Alphonse Karr, who in 1850 published a work entitled, “Un voyage autour ma jardin,” which was widely read at the time. In his delightful account of the flowers and trees in his garden, he comes upon the acacia, which reminds him that it forms part of a Masonic legend, which he then proceeds to tell, but whether from the fact that it is of French origin, or because of changes due to the lapse of time, it is difficult to reconcile it with the authorised version.

In his society novel, “Lothair,” written in 1870, Lord Beaconsfield makes many references to the secret societies both of France and Italy, which had so much influence on the Italian revolution in 1867. Concerning the French ones he makes one of his characters say, “There are more secret societies in France at this moment than in any period since 1785.” For his account of the Italian societies, in which he mentions Freemasonry, see our chapter on that subject.

Any reference to Freemasonry and literature would be incomplete without reference to the great work of Bro. Freke Gould on “The History of Freemasonry,” published in 3 volumes, which is a storehouse of information for the student.

Turning from literature to art, the most prominent delineator of the craft was Hogarth, whose grasp of the human nature of his day was too wide for so entertaining a subject as Freemasonry to escape him. It must be borne in mind that however much of secrecy there was in the Lodge, there was no attempt on the part of the Masons in the early days of George I. to hide themselves when out of the Lodge, and they felt proud to dress themselves in the regalia, and parade the streets, sometimes with a band of music. This had been done in the former days of the *Campagnonage* in France, and there is an old print of these French worthies parading the streets of a village on their way to a Masonic feast. Accordingly, we are not surprised to find Hogarth picturing Masons in regalia out of doors. One work of his was that of “The Gormogons and Freemasons,” referred to in Chapter XXL, while another is called “Night,” which is the fourth of a series of “Hours of the Day,” the first

three being entitled “Morning,” “Noon,” and “Evening.” In “Night” Hogarth pictures a street, whose rough cobbles have brought to grief the Salisbury Coach, which is lying on its side unattended, while from a window opposite peeps out a slatternly woman. The foreground is occupied by an elderly man in knee-breeches, wearing a Masonic apron and collar, who is the Master of a Lodge returning home after an evening’s carouse. Attending him is the Tyler of the Lodge, who bears a lantern and a pair of snuffers, such as were used by Tylers of those days to trim the wax candles burnt in the Lodges. The picture is not meant to illustrate Masonry, but to depict scenes such as Hogarth saw around him every day, and it affords a sidelight on the manners of Freemasons of the time.

We cannot dismiss the subject of art in connection with Masonry without touching upon the outward adornment of Masons in what is termed their “clothing.” It is a goodly sight to watch the proceedings of Grand Lodge, and to contrast the collars of the grand officers, of deep blue adorned with golden lilies, against the scarlet of the stewards, and the pale blue of the rest of the craft. The apron as we know it now, is an article of a stereotyped pattern, supplied by the Masonic jeweller, but in 1717 it was of white leather. We find that when that material was supplanted by kid, some latitude was allowed to masons to exert the artistic fancies of themselves and their lady friends in producing an elaborately wrought article. Some aprons had designs on them drawn with Indian ink; some were printed from engraved plates; some were hand-coloured; while others were beautiful specimens of art needlework, worked in silks or sequins. The representation of a temple in the centre of the apron is a favourite device, especially on French aprons, which are smaller than the English, and are rounded at the corners.

The aprons of Masons in Belgium and America are of the circular type, and shades of green, rather than blue, are observed in them. Germany keeps the full square of the English apron, but the blue colour is darker, and the apron is supported by a red silk sash tied round the waist.

The badges attached to the collars of the master and officers in a Lodge are known as jewels, and there are many old types of these in existence of varying degrees of art, ornamented with various Masonic emblems. A wide field of art was also opened to the craft in the designing of medals for various occasions in the history of Lodges and their officers.

Firing glasses for toasts, and glass goblets engraved with the names and arms of Lodges were other forms of Masonic art, and are now highly prized by collectors.

There are some old and quaint “tracing boards” of Lodges, but the majority of those used at the present day are, in our opinion, very crude, and as all of them vary considerably, there is obviously here a fresh field for the labours of the Masonic artist to produce a work which shall satisfy the most rigorous preceptor of a Lodge of Instruction, and delight the eyes of the lover of the fine arts.

XXVII. Freemasonry And The Law

It is a curious fact that by 1771 the security of all secret societies was felt to be menaced by the political upheavals of those days; and to secure to Freemasonry a safe anchorage, a Bill was introduced into the House of Commons by the Hon. Charles Dillon, Deputy Grand Master of the "Moderns," "for incorporating and well governing the society of Free and Accepted Masons," thus giving it a Parliamentary sanction. The Bill was read a first time, but Freemasons were not unanimous in its favour, and on the second reading it was opposed by Mr. Onslow, in a speech in which he contended that "granting the Freemasons a charter was, in fact, to pass a general Bill of Naturalisation for foreign Papists, and in all probability giving the Pretender himself the citizenship of a country where he was proscribed under the penalties of high treason." Thus it will be seen that the old character of Jacobites given to the Freemasons, like the odour of an old time scent, still clung to them.

To avoid a defeat, Mr. Dillon moved the adjournment of the debate, which was carried, and the Bill was never heard of again. The idea of the official recognition of Freemasonry by Parliament was not, however, dead, and Masonry found other means to be recognised by statute law.

Two important Acts of Parliament, affecting Freemasons and members of other secret societies, were passed in the reign of George III., just after the time of the activity of Napoleon Buonaparte. The first was the "Unlawful Societies Act, 1799" (39 Geo. III. c. 79), sometimes called the "Corresponding Societies-Act," which prohibited secret societies which took oaths, but excepted Freemasons on their registering their Lodges with the Clerk of the Peace of the County in which they met. The other was the "Seditious Meetings Act, 1817" (57 Geo. III. c. 19), which forbade meetings of societies of more than fifty members, but added "nothing in this Act shall extend to any society or societies holden under the denomination of Lodges of Freemasons in conformity with rules, provided such Lodges shall comply with the rules and regulations in the Act 39 Geo. III. c. 79, by a declaration before two Justices of the Peace, and confirmed by the major part of the justices at quarter sessions."

In a few years after its new foundation, Freemasonry found itself in the Law Courts, for Bro. Pritchard had been grossly annoyed by one Barrett, who had made insulting observations touching the craft. The former, finding that arguments were of no use in keeping up the character of the Institution, at last lost his temper, and forcibly impressed his arguments on the head and nose of the insulting Barrett. The latter went to his attorney, who brought an action of Barrett v. Pritchard in the Court of Common Pleas at Westminster for assault and battery. The case was tried before a judge and jury, who, in consideration of the provocation the defendant had received, awarded the plaintiff a verdict of only twenty shillings damages. This, however, carried costs with it, and Bro. Pritchard had to pay the expenses of both sides. Here was the first opportunity for the craft to afford support to its brother members, and accordingly on November 25th, 1723, Grand Lodge minutes record that "Mr. Henry Pritchard's case was recommended by the Grand Master to the Grand Lodge that he should not be a sufferer." On February 19th, 1724, a subscription was got up in Grand Lodge "for the relief of Bro. Pritchard," which realised £28 17s. 6d., the Grand Master, the Earl of Dalkeith, heading the list with two guineas. It must not be forgotten that, in order to get at present day values, one must multiply these figures by six, which would make the total amount about £175, which was probably enough to pay the whole expense of the litigation.

Another curious law case concerning Masons, was tried in 1815 at the old Palace Court at Westminster, which is now abolished. The plaintiff was a printer named Smith, who sued Finch for the price of work done. Finch admitted the debt, but claimed to have a set-off for £16 19s. 6d. for making the plaintiff a Mason, and giving him instruction in the various degrees. This sounds as odd a claim as could be made, and its strangeness is nowise lessened when we hear that the so-called Lodge was a private one, conducted at Finch's private house, near Westminster Bridge. Expert witnesses were called from Grand Lodge, who proved that Finch was not authorised to make Masons, and that it was against the rules of the craft to make private gain out of such work. We are happy to add that the jury promptly found against Finch, who had to pay the plaintiff's account in full.

In Scotland Freemasons also took their part in the Law Courts, for in July 1810, a case of Lawson v. Gordon was heard in the Court of Session in Edinburgh, in which the plaintiff - or pursuer, as he is there called - claimed that a Masonic Lodge could be treated as an incorporated body, but this was disallowed by the Court.

In another Scotch case, to which we have no reference, in the same court, a question arose as to whether Masonic Lodges, in order to obtain the protection of the Act of 1799, must be certified by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, or whether outside Lodges were also protected. The Court' decided that the Act applied to all Lodges whether certified or not.

Conclusion

To summarise our results, we may point out briefly that we have thus tried, without overloading our work with detail, to trace from earliest times the succession of changes in the minds of men who founded secret societies. We have pointed out the transactions of the Essenes written by Josephus, and copied at Alexandria by Philo and the Greek Jews, from whom in turn they were learned by Pythagoras, who left behind him writings in which references were made to these earlier mysteries. These Greek writings remained dead for many years till they were unearthed at the end of the 15th century, when the study of the classics revived, and were learned by the students - clerical and lay - both on the Continent and in England. The Norman invasion of England meant not only the incursion of soldiers into the land, but also of an army of foreign ecclesiastics and builders, who set to work to erect cathedrals and churches. Thus, as we have shown, came about the establishment of the operative Masonic Lodges, with their passwords and obligations, all of which may well have been taught them by the priests, who in turn may have got them from tradition, if they could not then read them from the original Greek. This is sufficient to account for the early ritual of the transition days from 1536, when the lesser monasteries began to be suppressed, and church building ceased for a time until the beginning of St. Paul's Cathedral in 1675.

It is difficult to speculate as to when those parts of the ritual which seem to be taken from the Sun worshippers were introduced, for we find no trace of them among the operative Masons, and possibly it was in the transition period of the 17th century that some scholar came upon them in his studies and worked them into the Masons' ritual.

It is important in tracing the history of Freemasonry to bear in mind that the ritual consists of two sharply defined parts - the first being what is known as the entered apprentice and Fellow craft degrees, which are clearly derived from the old Operative Masons. The second, or Master Masons' part, which was established in England at some time between 1717 and 1730, has an entirely different history, though there is no direct evidence as to who wrote it, or whence it was derived. Perhaps it came directly from the Scotch Masons; perhaps it was written by some learned Hebrew scholars, like Dr. Anderson, for the man who wrote it knew his Hebrew Bible well; perhaps such a man was assisted by scholars who had in their minds some of the old Egyptian legends. Perhaps time may throw its limelight upon the subject; but, in the meantime, we can only hold out our candle in the darkness to show up the facts that are apparent to-day, and which must be of the greatest interest to all who are interested in the craft, its noble designs, and its beneficent work.

THE END