

The Holy Bible

Freemasonry's Faith, Strength and Hope

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FREEMASONRY AND THE BIBLE

By

H. L. HAYWOOD

THE MASONIC HISTORY COMPANY
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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THE PEOPLE AND THE BOOK

At a remote period in ancient times which may be represented by the year 2000 B.C. a number of tribes of Semitic peoples who lived in the Arabian peninsula and who came to be called Hebrews, began to edge westward, stage by stage, until a large number of them were settled in Egypt. At about 1190 B.C. some twelve of these tribes moved back eastward again to settle in a land which they called Canaan, where for a half century they continued to live independently under the rulership of leaders whom they called Judges. During the years from 1040 B.C. to 937 B.C., under the leadership of Saul, David, and Solomon, they united themselves in a single nation, with Jerusalem as their capital city. In the latter year they divided into two kingdoms: one in the south, consisting of two tribes, which maintained its existence until 586 B.C. and was called Judah; and one in the north, called Israel, consisting of ten tribes, which continued until 722 B.C.

In 722 B.C. Samaria was overthrown by Sargon; twenty years later Judah was devastated by Sennacherib; and in 597 B.C. Jerusalem was occupied by Nebuchadnezzar. In 586 B.C. the people were led away into exile in Babylonia where for half a century they were cut off from their homeland. In 520 B.C. a number of them were permitted to return to Jerusalem where between that date and 516 B.C. they restored their city and rebuilt their Temple. Between 332 B.C. and 186 B.C. they lived under Greek rule as a province in the empire founded by Alexander, and with Alexandria, a city built by the Greeks in Egypt, as their capital and center. Between 168 B.C. and 63 B.C., a period during which so little occurred that it became almost forgotten by history, they made shift under leaders of their own called Maccabees. In 63 B.C. they were conquered by the Romans and until 135 A.D. continued to be a Roman province governed by a Proconsul; it was during this period, and in the year 70 A.D. that Jerusalem was again destroyed, and the Temple was demolished a third time, never to be rebuilt. Within this Roman period fell the life-time of Jesus, from about 4 B.C. until about 30 A.D.

During the first thousand years of this long history the Hebrews had no written language of their own. News from the outside world was brought by caravans; messages were carried from camp to camp by post-riders; the history, legends, stories, songs, and beliefs of a tribe were stored in cycles of tradition, and professional story-tellers learned these by heart and taught them word by word to their apprentices. When at about 950 B.C. a way was found to reduce the Hebrew language to its written form, these story-tellers were among the first to learn the new art, and began to set down on parchment or papyrus the traditions which in the past they had transmitted from mouth to ear.

The larger number of these many thousands of writings were lost or destroyed, but a few of them were preserved, perhaps because they were circulated most widely or because they were most highly valued; in the course of time these few, some thirty-nine in all, came to form a well-defined collection (or canon) which is now called the Old Testament. The best portions of these writings (or rolls) were fragments of history of the tribes of Judah and Ephraim; some of these may have originated as early as 950 B.C. The writings of the early prophets (teachers, leaders, statesmen) named Amos, Hosea, Micah, and First Isaiah were set down between 750 B.C. and 700 B.C. The most important of the Writings to



Assyrian King.

the peoples at the time was Deuteronomy, which is believed to have been written between 686 B.C. to 621 B.C., and became the Constitution, or Law of the Land. The prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel and the records called Judges, Samuel, and Kings were written between 626 B.C. and 570 B.C. The prophecies of Second Isaiah, the "Wisdom literature" of the Psalms and Proverbs, and Job, and the Hexateuch were compiled between 550 B.C. and 400 B.C. These were followed between 500 B.C. and 300 B.C. by Ruth, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Chronicles, Nehemiah, and the Song of Songs. At about 200 B.C. were written Daniel, and a series of books which have always stood outside the Canon, or official collection, and are called the Apocrypha. The New Testament, a collection of short writings by Hebrews who had become Christians, was written between about 50 A.D. and 150 A.D.

The Old Testament consists of 39 books in 919 chapters. In the New Testament are 27 books in 260 chapters. The Apocrypha consists of I and II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Esther (second part), Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch (and Jeremy), Song of Three Children, Story of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manassas, and I and II Maccabees. In addition there are some 17 principal works which comprise what would now be called profane literature, because they never had a place, even temporarily, in the Canon of sacred writings; they are called Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, and are so named because their authorship was falsely attributed to famous names. Some twenty others, of still lesser importance, have been preserved but have never proved of importance except to scholars. A large number of apocryphal and pseudepigraphical New Testament writings also are in existence; among which the most important are the Epistles of Clement, Barnabas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, the Shepherd of Hermas, and the Didache, or Teachings of the Twelve Apostles.

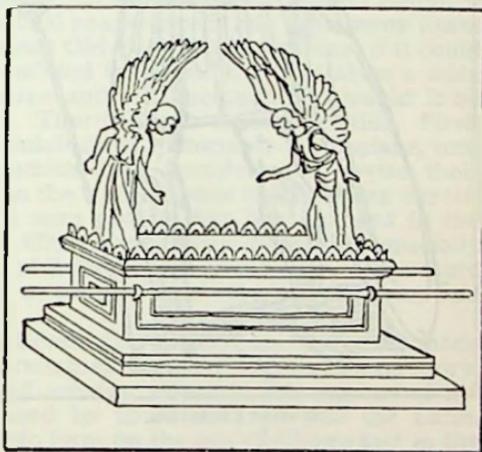
It is believed that the Jews first began to attribute a higher authority to certain books than to others as early as 300 B.C.; there was always an almost universal agreement about the larger number of these, but about others (such as the Song of Songs, Daniel, Ecclesiasticus, etc.) there was some disagreement until about 100 A.D. when, in the period of the Council of Jamnia the Canon was closed; and though in after years the Talmud came to have almost as much sanctity as the Old Testament itself no new scripture was ever admitted to the official Canon after the Book of Daniel; non-Canonical books were valued in proportion to the degree in which they reached the spirit and excellence of the Canonical books, or else as being sound commentaries upon them. The Canon of

the New Testament was almost as slow in forming, because though the last book to be written was compiled not later than 150 A.D. and probably earlier, the final list was not permanently fixed until the Fourth Century, and the date usually is attributed to an Easter epistle issued by Athanasius in 367 A.D.; since the Christians had already adopted the official Jewish Canon of the Old Testament the latter date also marks the completion of the Canon of the Bible as a whole.

Hebrew was never an easy language to read or to write. For centuries it did not replace oral transmissions or the storing of history in the trained memories of professional story-tellers but was used as a mnemonic aid, like a speaker's notes. It was written from right to left. There were no letters for the vowels, so the alphabet consisted of consonants only; there was no punctuation, and no space between words, so a reader had to select the group of consonants which formed a word by his own eye; he was able to do this from the context, and oftentime because he knew the general contents of a writing beforehand. A book consisted of a strip of parchment or papyrus, covered solidly by consonants, pasted

to small rollers at top and bottom; as the reader followed it down with his eye he rolled it from the top while he was unrolling it from the bottom; when finished he placed it in a case. The whole was called a roll or scroll. Since the manuscript, containing the history, stories, and songs, belonged to the scribe, or to the man for whom he copied it, the writer of a roll was not an author but only an amanuensis; a roll therefore carried no author's name; no date; was not divided into chapters; and did not use the device later invented of writing "beginning" and "end" in order to distinguish the contents of the original from notes, and

additions, written in later by owners or students of the scroll. Americans have named cities after Washington, Franklin, Lafayette, not because those heroes built or owned them but for monumental purposes, to celebrate or honor an illustrious memory, and this has often been done centuries after a hero had died; early Semitic writers would similarly attribute a roll, or even a collection of rolls, to some great name such as Moses or Joshua or David not in order to deceive readers about authorship but as tokens of respect and reverence—as when a church is dedicated to the memory of a saint. To complicate the problem of authorship still further proper names often were used as common names, as when a singer was called a david or a judge was called a solomon. After Hebrew had become a dead language, and after the old culture had become completely altered by Persian, Greek, and Roman influences, and with nothing more to go on than copies of old manuscripts which were nothing but blocks of consonants, translators and exegetes found it almost insuperably difficult to translate, and to discover such facts as authorship, dates of writing, and the place of composition; many of those difficulties have not yet been overcome and it is to be feared that they never will be; it is doubtful if any other great book owes as much to



Ark of the Covenant.



Roman Centurion.

the intrinsic value of its contents and so little to facts and circumstances outside its text.

Once a book was written ancient peoples had no means to produce a second copy of it except to have it copied out by hand by a scribe; scribes made errors, sometimes through carelessness or ignorance, sometimes because they had to guess their way through portions of a manuscript which had been worn off by use; oftentimes a scribe had not an original to work from but only a copy and therefore incorporated in his own text errors made by his predecessor; he in turn left errors of his own to succeeding scribes, and thus by an unavoidable compounding the further a copy was removed from its original the more a version differed from it. In addition, scribes wrote notes or corrections into a text, considering the manuscript to be their own property, and having nothing of a modern man's feeling for the sanctity of authorship, they might even add glosses or compositions of their own.

Manuscripts were fragile objects. They were easy to lose, were easily destroyed by fire, dampness, insects; were often destroyed in war or in fires; a manuscript might be stored away in a chest or in a vault and be forgotten for years. This explains why no originals of any of the Books of the Old or the New Testaments are in existence, and why in their translations scholars collect as many different copies or versions as they can in order to compare one with another and thereby rule out copyists' errors.

THE EARLY TRANSLATIONS

After Palestine had come under the Macedonian (or Greek) Empire the Jews continued to look upon Jerusalem as their religious capital, but otherwise their capital and center was Alexandria, which was to the Mediterranean world in that period what Rome was later to become to Western Europe. The Jews had a very large settlement there and in its suburban towns; they set up schools and universities and established libraries; this was the workshop of their rabbis and scribes and other learned men, and it meant that they were learned men indeed because in no other city known to history has scholarship been so venerated nor has it

been carried out to such lengths of erudition. As soon as Hebrew began to die out of daily use, and the Jews had begun to use Greek for everything except religious services, Hebrew scholars began to translate Hebrew manuscripts into Greek, and not only such books as had been recently written but also the Canonical books. Since these translations of the Old Testament differed in accuracy it came to be felt that the Rabbis should find a way to organize an official and complete translation. According to tradition a board (sanhedrin) of seventy of the most venerated of them began a concerted effort at translation about 280 B.C. and continued to work at it until about 130 B.C. This great work came to be called the Septuagint, in honour of the seventy, and is the greatest work of Hebrew scholarship; it preserved writings which would otherwise have been lost; rescued for use words in the living Greek which had long been obsolete in Hebrew itself; furnished a standard by which subsequently discovered manuscripts could be tested; and has been ever since a guide to translators working in more than 500 languages.

Also, the Septuagint exhibited and typified a fact which oftentimes troubles the minds of religious men; scarcely was it completed before it had to be revised, and during the 2000 years since it has been many times re-edited or revised, and a Septuagint Old Testament of to-day, if it could be compared with the version completed in 130 B.C., would show a wide departure from the ancient language and arrangement. So would it be with each of the great translations. There are two reasons for this. First, the never-ending researches of philologists, historians, theologians, and archeologists discover new facts which force translators to revise their work. Second, the language used in the translation is itself a living speech and therefore a changing one. A man notices but few changes in the language which he uses during the fifty or sixty years of his life, especially if he has a small vocabulary, but philologists and historians of literature know that a language alters itself as rapidly as politics and customs and the ways of work.

During the years in which the Septuagint translation was being made the Roman Republic was slowly strengthening itself, and adding territory, until by 200 B.C. it was the second greatest power in the regions of the Mediterranean. The language used by those Romans was the Latin, which was to receive its most classic form on the lips of Cicero and in the poems of Horace. Many of the Old Testament books, perhaps the whole of them, were translated into this Latin long before the Christian Era, but there was no official translation; and after the beginning of their Era the Christians debated for many years whether to accept the Old Testament as sacred writings, or to confine themselves to their own writings.

By the latter half of the Fourth Century A.D. the Roman Republic had long since become the Roman Empire, of which Greece, Palestine, and Egypt were provinces. Among the polyglot populations, who became Roman citizens, the old Latin began to undergo the same transformation which classical Greek had undergone in the Alexandrian period, when the clear, perfect sentences of Plato and Euripides became the vulgarized Greek *Koine* of traders and peasants in a score of countries; classical Latin gave way to a Latin *Koine*, or vulgar, or common speech, more different from the language of Cicero than our colloquial English is from the essays of Addison. During the same period Rome had become Christianized; with the western half of the Church centered in Rome, there came about a need to have both Testaments in the Vulgar, or common language. Eusebius Hieronymus, whose Latin name was Jerome, who was to become a bishop and the most learned man in the Church, was the head of a small monastery in Bethlehem. After he had spent years collecting manuscripts in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin he gathered about

him a circle of learned Jewish rabbis and Christian scholars and with their collaboration translated the Old and New Testaments into a language which any literate Latin-speaking man could understand.

This was as great an achievement in scholarship as had been the Septuagint translation. Throughout the whole of the Middle Ages it was the Bible of the Church in Western Europe and Great Britain, and continues through many revisions to be the official version used by the Roman Catholic Church. It is still called The Vulgate. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth a number of Roman Catholic English-speaking scholars who left England to escape persecution became convinced that the Roman Church needed a new Bible in English, annotated and translated to counteract Protestant theology; their work was little more than a translation into English of the Vulgate Bible in Latin. They published their New Testament at Rheims in 1582 A.D., and their Old Testament in Douay in 1609-10 A.D. It is called the Douay Version.

The earliest existing fragments of translations, into English were written in the Eighth Century, and in some instances possibly as early as the Seventh; like other Anglo-Saxon writings in the period they were in verse and according to Bede a few of these free paraphrases were written by Caedmon. The first full text and translation properly so called was made by John Wyclif, a Master of Oxford and the nation's most learned man who began the movement of popular preaching and Bible teaching called Lollardism; but though he had encompassed almost the whole of the knowledge then available he had the misfortune to live at a time when the English language was in an unformed state, and his translation was almost unintelligible within less than a hundred years after he died. He issued his "free," or loose, translation in manuscript form in 1382 A.D.; his "literal translation" was issued in 1395 A.D., eleven years after his death.

England had to wait two centuries after Wyclif for the great age of translation into English to begin. William Tyndale, a martyr of scholarship (c.1494 A.D.—1536 A.D.), made the first complete translation based on the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts instead of on the Vulgate Latin. Miles Coverdale issued the first complete printed version in 1535 A.D., based on Tyndale and from other previous translations. The great translation, possibly the supreme classic among translations in any language, was the Authorised, or King James Version, completed in 1611 A.D. This project was first broached in a conference at Hampton Court in 1604 A.D., and immediately received the support of the King. Forty-seven scholars, supreme among men of Elizabethan piety and learning, began the work in 1607 A.D., co-operatively analyzing the oldest original manuscript versions and studying translations in Greek, Latin, Syrian, Hebrew, Chaldean. For two and one-half centuries it was almost the only Bible used among English-speaking Protestants. Slight revisions were made from time to time, but no general and official revision was attempted until action was taken by the Convocation of Canterbury in 1870, when a circle of British and American scholars were selected; their Revised New Testament was published in 1881; the Revised Old Testament in 1885.

This along with the preceding revisions was made in order to keep an English translation in the main stream of living, contemporary speech. Although it is now spoken by more men and women than any other tongue, and has mothered a larger literature than any other tongue of the present or past times, English is a surprisingly young language. Anglo-Saxon is a dead language. Chaucer's English is so nearly dead that his works can be read only after special study. Even as late as Shakespeare's immediate predecessors the vocabulary of books and plays is two-thirds obsolete,

and in Shakespeare's writings are so many obsolete words and archaic constructions that the text must be accompanied by a battery of explanatory notes; and the fact also holds of the Authorised Version which was composed in the English which Shakespeare used, an heroic idiom, powerful in music, but no longer a language "understanded by the people." World-English, the complete tongue, adequate for the Arts and Sciences as well as for home and street and office, the most flexible and amplitudinous and living language which the world has ever possessed, did not come into its full form until the Seventeenth Century; and that direct, straightforward, unpedantic speech which is called Modern English was perfected, scholars agree, by John Dryden.

From the Authorised Version of 1611 A.D. to the official Revised Version begun in 1870 A.D. the work of revision was designed to keep pace with the growing and changing speech. But after that latter date a new motive began to operate in scholarship when archeology made one discovery after another, of increasing tempo and magnitude, about the worlds in which the Testaments were first written, and thus gave scholars a new knowledge of the facts and therefore a better understanding of words and phrases which were obscure to earlier translators. It was to report and utilize these findings of archeology that the Twentieth Century New Testament, Moulton's The Reader's Bible, Smith and Goodspeed's American Translation, and Moffat's New Translation were made.

THE PEOPLE'S BIBLE

In ancient times when the Old Testament first began to be written on parchment, which was prepared from the skins of lambs, and papyrus (or paper), manufactured from the pith of a plant, were expensive. Few people could read; fewer still could write. The synagogue, or church-school, was a means for groups to hear the Writings read aloud; and, after time had passed, and old facts had become dim and old words had fallen out of use, to hear learned men, scribes, and rabbis give explanations of the texts. After Rome became an empire with the capitals and ports and outposts from Scotland to Egypt, the need for written reports and letters became so pressing that schools were organized for training secretaries (*man uenses*), and the more expert were also taught the ancient art of shorthand. Out of this developed publishing houses (*scriptoria*) for the publication of books in which copyists sat in rows of desks making identical copies while a reader on a platform at one end of the room read aloud from the original. There came a time when every home of the well-to-do contained a library, and in some of the cities public libraries were installed in a room in the temple. It is doubtful, however, if either the Old or the New Testaments were ever thus published; at first the Old Testament was of interest only to the Jews—certainly there are few traces of it in either Greek or Latin literature; the New Testament for many generations was the sacred writing of a small and unnoted sect, and did not begin to become widely circulated until the beginning of the Fourth Century. During the 1200 years which had passed between that date and the writing of the first Old Testament books less than one man in a hundred could read or write, but among them fewer still ever saw a Bible, and among those few ever owned one; the rank and file of ordinary men learned from the Sacred Writings by having portions of them read and expounded at synagogue or church.

After the Barbarian conquests of Europe (Rome was taken in 476 A.D.) even those small centers of enlightenment were obliterated. The invaders

destroyed universities, schools, and literature, and the Dark Ages which lasted into the Tenth Century were given their name because of that fact. Few churches survived the destruction; among these only a small number possessed more than fragments of the gospels and one or two books of the Old Testament; complete copies of the Bible were almost non-existent; and millions never heard of the Bible as a whole.

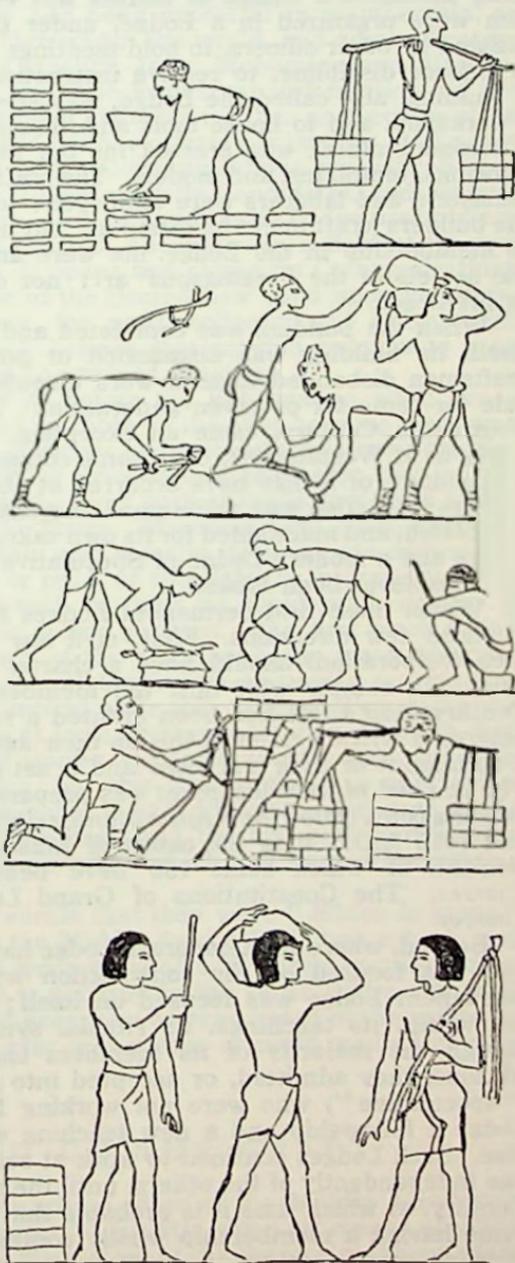
When Europe emerged from the Dark Ages, as it began slowly to do in the Eleventh Century, religion had become sacerdotal and liturgical, consisting of celebrations of the mass, the confessional, worship of saints and relics, pilgrimages, and miracle-working. A church might have a manuscript copy of the Gospels, along with its Prayer Book, its Psalter and its Book of Hours; one priest in a hundred might be able to read them; but the majority of priests were as illiterate as the people, and the Bible was an almost unknown book. After the art of writing began to be rediscovered, and when monasteries and a few schools were established, manuscript copies of Bible books began to increase, and the great churches, and perhaps a king or a rich noble, might purchase a complete Bible in manuscript; but since it took a copyist three to five years to transcribe the whole Bible by hand the cost of a copy was more than the value of a farm, and few men could have afforded the money even if they could have read the pages. Also, as time passed, and as church rules became more strict and its doctrines began to harden, the Bible was declared to be a monopoly of the church to be read and expounded by its priests only, and laymen were forbidden either to own or to read it for themselves. This imprisoning of the Book continued until the invention of printing set it free; and it came into the hands of the people only after the invention of a rapid printing press enabled copies to be sold for small sums.

THE EARLY FREEMASONS

In the Middle Ages the word Mason was used to denote a builder. This in theory included men engaged in any one of the many crafts and trades connected with architectural construction, but in daily usage it was narrowed to mean only such men as worked in stone, bricks, and tiles. Of these there were many grades, or classes, or specialists: quarrymen, stone-cutters, workers in rough stone, workers in free-stone sculpture, tilers, wallers, glaziers, engineers, and servants or helpers. In accordance with the Medieval custom followed in every form of work each of these types of Masons was organized as a gild or fraternity, and therefore came under the general laws which applied everywhere to gilds. This meant that in any given community or district the men in any branch of the builders' craft had an organization of their own, with rules, regulations, and officers, admitted members on oath, tried members guilty of violating the rules, and punished them by fines or expulsion, trained apprentices, and held a monopoly of their own kind of Masonry. There was no one organization to federate the various local gilds, nor was there a national organization; but since the civil laws which governed them were everywhere the same, and since the training of apprentices and the methods of work followed everywhere the same pattern, Masonry throughout England and Europe was a single craft, and a workman could move from one country to another or from one town to another in expectation of becoming a member in its gild; also, at a period when there were no written or printed cards and documents, he could identify himself as a regular Mason in good standing by means of secret modes of identification which had been entrusted to him at the completion of his apprenticeship.

Among the six or seven organized groups of Masons one gild (or ternity) stood above and apart from the others, with its members more honored, with higher wages, and with certain peculiar privileges to themselves. These were called Freemasons. Whether they were called so because they worked in free-stone (which could be carved), or because they were free to move about without regard to local restrictions or because they possessed a Royal Charter which empowered them to work anywhere in the kingdom, is a question which historians are unable to answer; it is probable that "free" has many connotations. These Freemasons were highly skilled and educated men; it is not an exaggeration to say that they were the ablest men of the Middle Ages produced during a period of some 500 years. They designed and constructed between 1500 and 1600 cathedrals, thousands of castles, monasteries, castles, palaces, presses, and halls; they were architects, sculptors, engineers, artists, and were versed in geometry, chemistry, physics, and mechanics.

Many of them could read and write, but their own apprenticeship in the greatest of the arts was so long and so thorough, and they together passed among themselves a body of knowledge, that a Master Freemason was a better educated man than a pope or a prince. In the great cathedral, the principles of which were their monopoly, they produced a building which was unequalled in the past by no architecture except the Greek. This has never since been surpassed. It was among those Freemasons of the Middle Ages that the modern fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons had its origin. Since the first Gothic building was a monastery church of St. Denis, erected near Paris in 1140 A.D., the Fraternity were then eight centuries



Hebrews making bricks, from Tomb at Thebes.

The building of a cathedral or any other great work of architecture followed a set procedure in England. A foundation, or administration authority was set up to furnish the money and to act as employer. It chose a chief Master Mason, or superintendent, in present-day nomenclature, a Grand Master. The latter sent out a call for craftsmen. When these latter arrived, houses were found for them and their families; in many instances a village of houses was especially built for them. The men were organized in a Lodge, under the leadership of the Master, assisted by other officers, to hold meetings as often as the work required, to enforce discipline, to receive instructions, and to admit apprentices. A building, also called the Lodge, was erected for their headquarters as a workshop, and to house tools and supplies; in a number of instances a second building was erected for the men engaged in making plans, drawings, templates, and models. The craftsmen had helpers or servants; teamsters and laborers were employed; local guilds of other branches of the builders' craft might be called in; but none of the latter were admitted to membership in the Lodge, nor were any of them permitted to learn the secrets of the Freemasons' art; nor did they receive the same pay or privileges.

When the building was completed and accepted the Lodge dissolved itself, its building was dismantled or put to other purposes, and the craftsmen disbanded to seek work elsewhere. This disbanding was the rule for some six or seven generations. Then, about the middle of the Fourteenth Century, came an exception, and it may have occurred at York, or at Westminster, or in some community forty or fifty miles south of London; or it may have occurred at about the same time in all three centers: a Lodge was maintained in permanence after the building was completed, and maintained for its own sake. Between that first permanent lodge and a modern Lodge of Speculative Masons is a line of continuity that has never been broken.

Within those first permanent Lodges Freemasonry began to develop in three new directions. First, civil law required that such a body of men (corporation) should have a charter empowering it to work or to exist. To comply with this, the members declared that in the Tenth Century their Craft had been granted a royal charter at York, and they entered a written claim to this as their authorization, and appended it to a statement of their purposes and a set of their rules and regulations. The original of that document was prepared about 1350 A.D.; the oldest existing copy, called the *Regius Manuscript*, was written between 1350 A.D. and 1410 A.D.; it is the oldest of Masonic documents. Copies of the original, of which some 150 have been found, are called the *Old Charges*. The Constitutions of Grand Lodges are based on these *Old Charges*.

Second, where the temporary Lodge had existed as a means to an end, and was focused on the construction work that was to be done, the permanent Lodge was focused on itself; men joined it for sake of its fellowship, its teachings, its rituals, symbols, and philosophy. Third, though the majority of its members long continued to be Operative Masons, they admitted, or accepted into membership a number of men ("speculative") who were not working Masons, but who found in the Lodge a fellowship and a new teaching which they could find nowhere else. Such Lodges continued to work at centers throughout England, each one independently of the others, until the early decades of the Eighteenth Century, at which time it is probable that there were some 200 of them, some having a membership wholly composed of working ("operative") Masons, some composed wholly of speculatives, and some of mixed membership. In 1717 a few of them set up a Grand Lodge at London to

a center of union; from it each and every regular and duly-constituted and Lodge in the world has descended.

From the beginning until the Sixteenth Century Freemasons were men of religion, and therefore belonged to the Catholic Church, which then was not the name of a denomination as it is now but denoted Christianity in general; from the Reformation until the erection of the Grand Lodge in 1717 they were both Protestants and Roman Catholics; from that date until the present the Fraternity has been universal in membership, as fits a Fraternity with Lodges throughout the world, and admits Protestants, Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Jews, Mohammedans, Hindus, Infucianists, Parsees, Theists, etc. The Protestant Reformation did not divide it, nor does denominationalism disturb it; it has no theology of its own, is not a house of worship, has neither priests nor pastors, its Lodges are not ecclesiastical circles, its Lodge Communications are not religious services, it imposes no theological tests upon its Candidates, and permits discussion of religion, theology, sect, or creed in its Lodge assemblies; it is neither for nor against any religion, but works in a field of its own in which theology is irrelevant. It opens and closes its Communications with prayer and keeps a Volume of the Sacred Law open upon its altars, but so also do courts, the army, the navy, colleges, and many other organizations and societies which believe that religion belongs to men everywhere and is free for them to use and practise.

During the four centuries or so before the Reformation when Freemasons were Operatives they had no Bible on the altar because there was no Bible for them to have. Few churches had complete manuscript copies of the Book. The great majority of Freemasons, like other men of the Middle Ages, could not read or write; and among such as could, few could afford to own even a portion of the Bible books. Moreover the Church kept the Bible chained to itself, figuratively and literally, as a private monopoly. Men were forbidden to own, or read, or translate, or interpret it; and among the priests themselves, such of them as could read, it was almost unknown book except for a few portions. The first place in the Church was held by the practices of the priesthood, the mass, the confessional, the chanting of hymns, the celebration of ceremonies, processions, the care of church properties; second after this sacerdotalism came the worship of the saints, devotions at local shrines, adoration of relics, and hagiology, which was a mass of stories and tales about saints and their miracles. Third came the Bible; but this was confined to only a few portions of the Book, and principally to the miracles; and men made no distinction between the Bible itself and the half-oral, half-written legend traditions and stories of the saints which had been accumulating since the Dark Ages.

It has been said of the cathedrals that they were "Bibles in stone." This is true in the sense that in the Middle Ages a Bible was a book, and the men who could not read or write were able to puzzle out old stories from pictures and carvings; but it is not true in the sense that a cathedral is a stone Bible. Few men had ever seen or even heard of the existence of such a Book; fewer still had ever seen a copy or could read a line of it.

THE LEGEND OF THE CRAFT

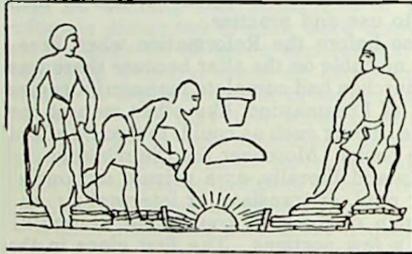
The real "bible" of the Operative Lodges of the Middle Ages was a copy of the *Old Charges*; they are the Rosetta stone by means of which scholars are enabled to decipher the history of the Fraternity, about which little was known until late in the Nineteenth Century; and they continue

to be the key to the mysteries and symbolisms of the Ritual of the Three Degrees, in which are enacted in a somewhat changed and elaborated form what was first written down in those documents. By means of them it is possible to explain how and why the Holy Bible became a Great Light in a Lodge composed of architects and craftsmen of the building trades, and why a Volume of the Sacred Law came to be opened on the altars of a Fraternity of Speculative (or Accepted) Masons.

As stated in a paragraph above a body of men in the Middle Ages could not legally exist or work unmolested unless it had a charter or some similar document of authorization given and signed and sealed by the authorities of the borough or else by the King or one of his officers. The Freemasons claimed that they belonged to a Fraternity which had received a royal charter from a Prince Edwin at York in Athelstan's time, and held that this was sufficient authorization for their holding a permanent Lodge. This claim was made in the middle of the Fourteenth Century; historians and critics doubt that a Prince Edwin ever in strict fact issued such a charter because no evidence exists, and the documents themselves have in them a number of self-contradictions; but that historical dubiousness is of no importance because the fact remains that the Fourteenth Century Freemasons sincerely believed in their tradition, and the civil authorities

accepted their claim.

It may be that the original version of the *Old Charges* was written by one Freemason; it may be that the document was a composite one prepared by a committee or other body of Craftsmen; or it may be that the first permanent Lodge employed a learned clerk on the outside to write it for them. It is most likely that the early portion was written by one man, and that the remainder



Egyptian operations in metals.

was a written form of rules and customs established by long usage. In substance the *Old Charges* consist of three parts: first, a statement of the grounds on which a charter had originally been issued; second, the claim to a written charter from a Prince Edwin, said to have been a son of King Athelstan; third, a set of the rules and regulations, called "points," under which Lodge members were governed.

In his statement of the grounds on which the royal charter had been granted the author of the opening portion asserts that Masonry was an old name for the art and craft of the builder, and that Freemasons therefore belonged to one of the most ancient and well-established and honored of the crafts, and that hence Masons were honorable and lawful men, and therefore could be trusted to engage in no illicit or subversive undertakings and not hold illegal covines or assemblies. Like an ancient family of the nobility this Mason craft had a high and honorable ancestry, for it had been practised or honored or established by such men as David, Solomon, Euclid, and Pythagoras; it had not been introduced into France and England as an alien and illegal black art or heathen cult but had been accepted by the Emperor Charlemange and his sons, had been honored by the Popes and other high lords of the Church and State, and had been loved and practised by such Kings as Athelstan. In setting forth these grounds the author was not writing a history, nor was he setting down a long-established legend; rather he was setting forth an argument, and he used only such data as were required for his purpose.

He was not compelled to mention Solomon, Euclid, Pythagorus, Charlemange (or Carolus, probably a son of Charlemange) nor the Tower of Babel, nor Solomon's Temple, but, if he had preferred, could have named other ancient builders and other famous buildings; that this is true is proved by the fact that the authors of subsequent versions, notably of the version adopted by the first Grand Lodge in 1723, did not hesitate to revise or alter or add to or subtract from the data given by the original author.



Mount Ararat.

There were no histories or scholarly encyclopedias in the Middle Ages, nor were books written and classified as they now are under the heads of separate subjects. A learned man collected writings of any sort, where he could find them, ancient or contemporaneous, usually of unknown date and authorship, and seldom submitted them to the tests of authenticity. Out of this there developed a type of book which was called a *polychronicon*, a name which meant "a large number or variety of chronicles or writings." Such a *polychronicon* consisted of a collection (*ana*) of paragraphs, quotations, stories, scraps of lore, bits of science and mathematics, songs, formulae, fables, plays, etc., in a kind of scrapbook, or loose encyclopedia, although the majority of items were of an historical kind. The author of the original version of the *Old Charges* drew his own data from such a *polychronicon*; we know this to be true because he told us so. This means that his paragraphs about Noah, Cain, Abel, Tubalcain, the Tower of Babel, David, Solomon, and the Temple, were copied not from the Bible but from that *polychronicon*. This fact is all-important to a student of Freemasonry because it explains why the Bible came in time to occupy so large a place in the work of a fraternity not devoted to any theology or religion, and yet why so many of the Biblical elements in the Ritual are not found in the Bible itself. The Biblical elements came into the Craft at second-hand and along a roundabout route, not directly; and they were employed not as history or as theology but as data to show that the great art of architecture had been known and practised by the ancients, among whom were the patriarchs, prophets, and kings of the Old Testament. The same data also make it clear that the first Freemasons did not belong to any of the circles of occultism or mysticism which flourished here and there during the Middle Ages; authors of the *Old Charges* identified Freemasonry solely with the art of the builder; they named architects, engineers, and geometricians as its founders, and they nowhere indicated that Freemasons had any interest in either occultism or mysticism.

ORIGIN OF THE RITUAL

A modern play in three to five acts with a score of characters and many changes of scene may be conceived and written from beginning to end by one man, and usually it is. The Ritual of the Three Degrees might similarly have been written by some unknown Chaucer or Shakespeare of the Fourteenth Century, and for an analogous purpose; a number of Masonic writers of a half-century or a century ago believed that it had been, and more than one of them ventured to name the author as Dr. Theophilus Desaguliers, and to aver that he had "invented" the degrees between the years 1717 A.D. and 1725 A.D. We know now that the Ritual was in use generations before Dr. Desaguliers, and that it came into existence in a manner wholly unlike the authorship of a play, that it was never a play or drama and is not now, was not a set of ceremonies, was not "composed" or "invented" and had no author. It was the perpetuation of activities, practices, and usages of the daily work and customs of Operative Freemasons. It was not even called "ritual," which continues to be a misnomer, but was called "work"; it is still a form of work, and should be called by that term.

Every skilled craft had to recruit new members and had to train them; the Freemasons did the same. The civil law required that each member of an incorporated or chartered body of men, whether gild, company, or fraternity, had to take an oath; in conformity with that law the Freemasons administered an oath or obligation to their own apprentices and accepted members. The beginner was given tools to work with, was instructed in their use, was shown where to keep them, and was fined if he did not keep them in good condition. A body of workmen was supervised and presided over by a Master and his assistant officers, and his Master also gave them instructions and orders for their work. Such a body developed its own nomenclature, titles for its officers, names for its tools, and various terms for its forms of work; it also furnished each member with private modes of communication to identify or prove himself when abroad or among strangers. Like workmen in other crafts Masons had their own characteristic garb, called their clothing or livery, and the leather apron which they wore to protect their clothes identified them to the eyes of men outside their craft and became their badge. They paid dues, assessments, and fines, and contributed to a box for the relief of distressed members, received wages, and kept a record of their work and hours, and this required that they have a treasurer and secretary. Every organized body of craftsmen was ordered by church and civil law to have a Patron Saint, to keep that Saint's Day as a holiday, and to go in procession to a chapel; the Freemasons observed that custom. A written copy of the *Old Charges* was kept in the Lodge room where the Masons assembled as a legal warrant for their right to assemble; it was not thought of as a book, as something to read, but was a *written instrument*, and was in daily use because in it were a list of a Mason's duties and of the rules and regulations (by-laws) according to which they were governed. These are but a few of the elements in the daily practices of working Freemasons in the middle of the Fourteenth Century in England when the first permanent Lodges were established; the same usages had in substance belonged to their practice for centuries before, and they were preserved, with necessary modifications, in the centuries afterwards; the Work of the Three Degrees of the present time is the same perpetuation, and whatever elements have been added in times recent, or in times comparatively recent, were not innovations adopted for the sake of something new but are elaborations or explanations of that which is old.

It is an extraordinary fact, this projection of a body of practices through six or eight centuries and over the whole world, but it is as true as it is extraordinary, and it explains what the Ritual is, and what it means, and why Freemasonry alone out of a hundred or so guilds and fraternities in the Middle Ages was preserved and became a fraternity with Lodges and members in almost every community in the world.

This projection and perpetuation of the practices and thought of a body of Medieval working men could not have occurred had it not possessed something uniquely its own of great worth and interest to men. Freemasonry is not the consequence of a miracle; it has perpetuated itself like mathematics, or the Christian religion, or such states as Britain, or France or Rome only because like them it had in its possession something men were in want of, and would go to lengths of labor and sacrifice to obtain. It is this possession which is the true (or "royal") secret of Freemasonry. What is that "secret"? The answer is plain, because it is written large over the whole Ritual and over the history of the Fraternity. It is a true, and sound, and genuine *philosophy of work*, and the Medieval Freemasons were the first men ever to find out such a philosophy; they found it out not from theory, or tradition, or books, but from what their own daily work of building cathedrals and other fabrics of architecture forced upon their minds. Why it was architecture, or the art of the builder, which led to this discovery rather than some other craft, is too long a story to tell in this space; it can only be hinted at, namely, that for two centuries the Freemasons were the best and ablest minds in Europe; were, thanks to historical causes, relatively free within their own circles to think for themselves; and because their art included a whole bod of arts and sciences, the designing of buildings, geometry, engineerin chemistry, carving, statuary, painting, stained glass, and a knowledge such special sciences as perspective and proportion.

In their philosophy of work the Freemasons stood in sharpest contrast, and even in contradiction, to the Medieval world in which they lived, and probably they surrounded themselves with secrecy for that reason. England was stratified by a system of castes. At the top was a hierarchy of the king and his nobles, the pope and his prelates, the lords of the army, and the great landlords, a ruling class which in theory owned the whole of England, including the men and women in it. At the bottom was a caste of slaves, next above them was one of cotters; above the latter was one of serfs; above them was one of freedmen and yeomen; above them were skilled workmen and small merchants; next above them, and closest to the unapproachable hem of the aristocracy, were the professional men, country squires, and holders of small public offices. This feudal scheme rested on the doctrine that God had created man in these castes and therefore it was impious for any man to rebel against his position, and this doctrine was a cornerstone of the dogmas of the church and was presupposed and supported by the law; a man in one caste could not marry or associate with the caste above him and he disdained the caste beneath him. The Freemasons, being working men, were held to belong to what were called the lower classes.

Binding this whole barbaric system into a unit with bands tougher than cement was the dogma that work is degrading and disgraceful; a lady was expected to have lily-white hands and a gentleman would prefer to catch the plague rather than be found doing a piece of labor; priests idled, the aristocracy busied itself with games, war was not waged but was played at like a sport; Adam delved and Eve span and the "upper classes" spent the money they earned or consumed it in conspicuous waste. Work was a curse; a penalty for the Fall of Man; and it was for the workers to bear that curse in their own bodies.



Costume of High Priest.

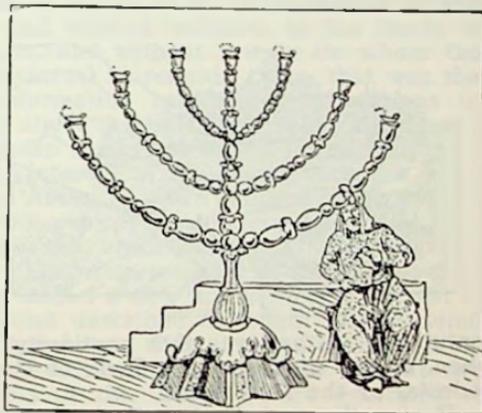
The Freemasons themselves knew otherwise. Where did work come from? It came, they said, from God; and He himself is a worker, and is the Sovereign Grand Architect of the Universe. What is work? It is, they said, a *man's use of himself* as a means to make or to produce something which men and women must have in order to continue to be. Why? Because, they said, God so made the world that food does not grow on plants ready to eat, and clothing is not made by sheep or raised in flax fields, and leather is not shoes, and herbs not medicines, and houses do not grow of themselves out of quarries or trees. Work, they said, is therefore everlasting and universal because of the way the world is made; it is for that reason not a curse but is the way of life. To be a worker is to be a man; to be a drone or a parasite is to be less than a man; and where idleness is praised and respected men deteriorate and a people degenerate; the leather apron is in strict and literal fact more ancient and more honorable than the Golden Fleece or the Star and Garter. It is in work that a man discovers himself, reaches his stature, finds the satisfaction of life, and becomes that for which the virtues are only names or labels. The world is therefore like a temple, a thing thought out and built with much labor; and men are therefore fellow workmen with God. It is this philosophy which Freemasonry was and continues to be, and it was because of the discovery and transmitting of it that Freemasonry survived when the Middle Ages vanished, and grew though feudalism died, and continued for centuries to draw men to it like a magnet. Never before, in no system of philosophy and in no school of theology, had men discovered the truth about work, or even glimpsed it from afar; the Masonic discovery and promulgation of it was one of the great achievements of history, and gives the fathers of the Craft a place among the founders of religion, states, civilizations, and sciences. Nor is the work of Freemasonry itself yet accomplished because even now the superstition lingers that a man in a Sunday suit on a week day ranks above a man in overalls, and that a man has wit or intelligence in proportion as he can seize money without working for it, so that the infantile utopia of "a workless society" continues to be a haunting dream. The philosophy of work, which is the body and burden of The Work of the Three Degrees, which is ever new and fresh and exciting because it is eternal, was not something apart from the practices and daily thought of the Freemasons like a theory or a creed, but was immanent in them, and those practices and teachings were preserved and perpetuated because of the meaning with which they were saturated.

THE OLD CHARGES AND THE RITUAL

The *Old Charges*, as was stated above, were themselves an integral part of these practices, and were in actual use wherever Freemasons assembled. It is in them that much in the system of Masonic symbolism had its origin. A half-century ago it was almost impossible for the most thorough specialist in Masonic research even to guess what the rites and symbols of the early Lodges may have been, because they had been preserved in secrecy and transmitted by mouth to ear, and therefore left no records behind. Since that date a large number of early Lodge histories, minutes, and other records have been discovered and published, and in consequence it is not now too difficult to see what it was that the early Eighteenth Century Lodges inherited. A Candidate was admitted; he was given an Obligation; he was furnished with the Modes of Recognition; and the Master gave him an oral explanation ("lecture") of the history and work of the Craft; to assist in making his explanation clear the Master might use an oil cloth on the floor with figures drawn or painted on it, called a floor cloth; or a board, with the same figures drawn or painted on it, called a tracing board; or he might set out a number of objects (the tools, etc.) on a table supported by trestles, called a trestle-board. From drawings and description in the early records we know what those figures were, and whence they came.

They illustrated the first portion of the *Old Charges*. Two pillars represented the pillars in which the secrets of the Liberal Arts and Sciences were preserved through Noah's flood. An ark represented the flood. A geometrical diagram, the 47th Proposition, stood for Euclid, or geometry. An outline of a building represented Solomon's Temple, which in turn stood for any fine building, or the art of architecture. This was the *Biblical* element in the earliest Ritual. Along with the symbolic designs drawn from the *Old Charges* were others to represent the daily work and practice of the craft, the Apron, the Tools, a Ladder, an Ashlar, etc. The Master's station and function was represented by G, the initial of Geometry, the Masonic science par excellence, and the ubiquity of Masonic law was symbolized by the All-Seeing Eye. Thus were the *Old Charges* and the work and customs of the old Operative Craft transported bodily into a Speculative Lodge, and with no fundamental change except that members were no longer required to be working Masons, and except for a few symbols or emblems to expound or to explain what thus had been inherited. The *Old Charges* themselves, lighted by candles ("lights"), rested on a pedestal in front of the Master; a Candidate took his Obligation on them.

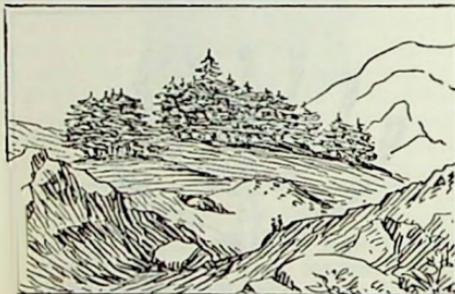
From 1350 A.D. (*circa*) until the founding of the first Grand Lodge (at London) in 1717 A.D. the Lodges worked independently of each other without a national body or any central authority yet they nevertheless comprised a single fraternity because each Lodge used a copy of the *Old Charges* as its guide and warrant; and while each copy was made by



The Golden Candlestick.

hand, thereby giving the scribes an opportunity to introduce small changes in the text, and while occasionally a Lodge would revise the paragraphs of the Rules and Regulations to conform to some local regulation of its own, the original version had become altered but little by the time of the first Grand Lodge. There are between 150 and 200 copies now in existence; this means that since so many have survived loss and destruction hundreds of copies must have been made during the centuries before 1717 A.D.

The Grand Lodge itself collected as many of those copies as it could, and turned them over to a Committee to collate and study in order that it could have a version suitable for its own purpose; the result was the Book of Constitutions, of which the first edition was published in 1723 A.D. and a second (and revised) edition in 1738 A.D. As each new Grand Lodge came into existence it prepared a Book of Constitutions of its own based on the Book issued in 1723 A.D. which in turn had been a version—or, rather, a conversion—of the original version of about 1350 A.D., and which in its own turn had been a writing down of rules, regulations, principles, and usages which had been in practice for centuries before. As the *Old Charges* had maintained the Craft in unity over the width of



Cedars of Lebanon.

England at a time when there was no Grand Lodge, so have they maintained its unity through centuries of time, in spite of changing circumstances in Lodges and revolutionary alterations in the world outside the Lodges. The replacement of the hand-written manuscript of the Lodge copy of the *Old Charges* by the printed Book of Constitutions of the Grand Lodge was therefore not a violation of the principle of continuity; neither was that continuity broken, in fact or in principle, when, as we shall see, the Book of Constitutions was replaced on the pedestal by the Holy Bible.

During the period when Freemasons were builders of structures in the Gothic style the Cathedral was their type or symbol of any fine building; they even pictured Solomon's Temple, when they pictured it at all which was seldom, as having been of Gothic design. In the reign of Henry VII the use of this style came abruptly to an end, and it was replaced in England by a new style which was called by a number of names, such as Italian, Palladian (after the famous architect), classical, neo-classical; this style was a revival of Greek literature, the monuments and memorials of which had been recovered by the Renaissance. Palladio was its great master in Italy; Inigo Jones introduced it into England, and Christopher Wren, Master of a Masonic Lodge, perfected it in England. The Greek temple replaced the Jerusalem shrine and the Medieval cathedral as the type and symbol of building. The principles of this style, so its teachers and practitioners believed, were embodied in the Greek columns, of which five became standardized. These columns, or "Five Orders of Architecture," were of such absorbing interest to Freemasons for some two centuries that they were given a place in the Lodge ritual, and are still preserved in that portion of it which is now organized as the Fellow Craft Degree.

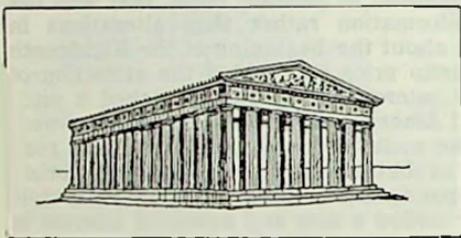
THE BIBLE AND THE LODGE

One hundred years after the first permanent Lodge placed the first written version of the *Old Charges* on its pedestal, Gutenberg and Fust published the first printed complete Bible (between 1450 A.D. and 1455 A.D.), a date, it is significant to note, almost one-half century before Columbus discovered America. Other printed Bibles followed in rapid succession, but for many generations these books, though they were a godsend to scholars, continued to be a luxury of the rich, because paper and printing were so costly. The real introduction of the Book to the people at large, its freedom from the monopoly of the priests, its possession as a whole and not in small portions, its real unchaining, did not come until the Seventeenth Century, two centuries later than Gutenberg and Fust, after scientists and inventors had devised machinery for cheap paper and rapid printing and binding. The Book ceased to cost as much as a farm; its price came within reach of clerks, and small merchants, and working men, and those who had been so long the unprivileged classes in religion began to buy millions of copies of it. This placing of the Scripture of Christianity, freely and without restraint, in the hands of the rank and file of ordinary men, and without priests (to whom the Church had become a form of business) to restrain them, that was the core and inwardness of the Reformation rather than alterations in the theological dogma. When, and at about the beginning of the Eighteenth Century, to the attraction of a cheap price was added the attraction hundreds of illustrations, popular interest in the Book reached a pit of enthusiasm in both England and America; even children began to pe over it because they could read the pictures long before they could re the text. The Freemasons shared in that enthusiasm; to their memoria of Gothic architecture and their passionate interest in the Greek style with its temple and columns they added a new and powerful interest in Solomon's Temple which they found described at length and in detail in the Books of Kings and of Chronicles. This interest was for them further intensified when, during the Grand Lodge period and at two different times, large-scale models of the Temple were exhibited to throngs of visitors in the City of London.

If the Work with its rites and symbols be thought of as a perpetuation of the practices and usages of the early Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages its history is found to fall naturally into what may be described as Periods of Revision. There was the Period when Lodges were as yet temporary bodies, formed when a new building was begun and dissolved when it was completed; this was revised when Lodges became permanent, and the *Old Charges* became the rule and guide of Masons' faith. This second Period was in itself revised when Freemasons became absorbed by "the new style," the Neo-Classical, or Italian; and Greek culture, with its great love for the Liberal Arts and Sciences, represented by Euclid and Pythagorus, replaced Medieval Gothic. This Period was itself revised when, in the early Grand Lodge period, and in consequence of the new enthusiasm for the Bible, Solomon's Temple was added to the Greek Temple and the Medieval Cathedral. This last-named revision is the final one; the work that is now practised by more than three million Freemasons throughout the world is its achievement, and the High Grades of the other four Rites of the Royal Arch, the Council, Templarism, and the Scottish Rite are expansions, commentaries, elaborations of it. The history of the Bible in Freemasonry, albeit a greatly simplified one, can be given in the terms of those Periods of Revision. Before 1350 A.D. the Craft had a body of rules, regulations, and principles, which it preserved

unwritten. At about that date the substance of this body was written in the form called *Old Charges*. In 1723 A.D. the *Old Charges* were replaced on the Master's pedestal by the printed Book of Constitutions. A half century later the Book of Constitutions was replaced by the Holy Bible, called, in Masonic nomenclature, the Volume of the Sacred Law.

That same history can also be translated into the terms of the long process by which what began as a fraternity of builders working by the day at a trade in a few centers in England made a transition from Operative to Speculative, and from a comparatively small number of English Lodges into a world-wide Fraternity. That in Freemasonry which is represented by the Bible accompanied that same transformation from "Operative" to "Speculative," and from localism to universalism. In the beginning the philosophy of the work which the Freemasons had found out, and which they themselves could grasp only one step at a time, they kept to themselves as a private possession, and even as a secret. After a time they came to see that what was true of their own work was true of work in the other crafts and guilds. Next they came to see that it was true of the many forms of work that artists, scholars, thinkers, teachers used as much as workers with tools. Finally they came to see that it was true for workers not in England only but for the whole world. It is easy to see that as the Freemasons came to understand more and more of their own philosophy they would inevitably find the *Old Charges* to be too small and too narrow as a rule and guide of their faith, and to see why they replaced it by the Holy Bible.



The Parthenon. Athens.

which cannot tolerate localism, parochialism, provincialism, sectarianism, or racial or religious prejudices; no fewer than three major religions and a hundred or more minor religions have been erected upon its pages. In the Bible men are not divided into separate species, eternally separated from each other, and one above the other; it is man, not men, to whom it is addressed, and man is a single family, descended from a common ancestry, made of one blood; God is the Father of each and every one of them; one race is in His eyes the equal of any other; and as for nobilities, titles, aristocracies, and privileged classes they mean nothing. The story that work was a curse upon Adam and Eve was an old Oriental pessimistic tale so soon forgotten that in the next chapters after it the writers of the books glorified the men who worked great things for their people, built cities and found out the arts; and the Man in whom the Bible reaches its climax, who is set forth as the very type and model, who in himself has embodied what God wished men everywhere to be, not a king, or a pope, or a noble, or a privileged person, but a carpenter, and was one for eighteen years. Men of the world comprise one large Lodge, which in the old metaphorical language of the builders means an organized body of workmen; the world is a Lodge room, because it is in work that men everywhere spend their years. In the Bible one man does not own another man, nor does he prey upon him; its virtues are those of men who are working together in harmony, peaceableness, kindness, charity, pity, and good fellowship. It was these same truths, and others consonant with them,

which the first Freemasons saw at a time when other men saw them not at all, which they wrote into their *Old Charges*, established in the Landmarks, and taught in the Work; when they adopted the Bible as their own Volume of the Sacred Law in place of the *Old Charges* they were guilty of no innovation because in doing so they were doing what they at first had begun; they needed a large book as the rule and guide of their faith because they had a large faith.

THE LODGE AND RELIGION

The Masonic historian labors under a handicap which does not weigh upon the general historian because unlike the latter he has not the use of abundant records, documents, and books. He finds his data in widely separated places, and usually in small quantity, and he must thresh a mountain of straw to find a grain of wheat; even the early Lodge Secretaries and historians kept scant records because they were under a rule of secrecy. But if he is patient, and if he assembles as many small data as he can, and thinks much, he will begin to see clearly after a time what must have occurred in the unrecorded secrecies of Lodge meetings. Also, he can make use of many facts which had no connection with Freemasonry, because they held for all men and therefore held for Masons—gild laws would here be a case in point. A catena of such facts, even if they appear to be unrelated, may help to draw a picture of religion in the Lodge, and to explain why things are as they are in the Fraternity.

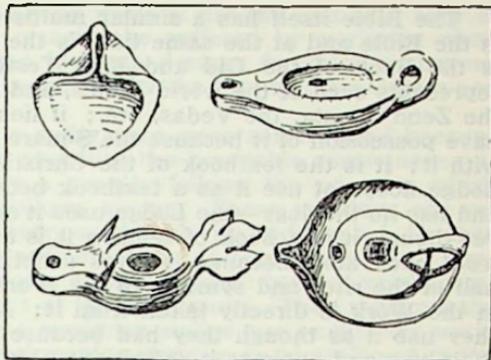
The statement made above to the effect that the Bible replaced the *Old Charges* was an over-simplification, and is in want of more detail because what occurred was much more complex. Certain of the principles and teachings of the *Old Charges* became refined into a body of laws ubiquitous and so completely taken for granted that they are not even written down; they are called Ancient Landmarks. Except for some revision and enlargements the *Old Charges* were embodied very much as they stood in the first Grand Lodge Book of Constitutions; but that Book itself was subject to amendment, once it began to function as a legal code for a large organization, and those amendments and re-writings became so numerous as one Grand Lodge after another was erected that in the Constitutions of a Grand Lodge to-day it is as if the *Old Charges* had disappeared out of them; but they have not done so because they survive in a new nomenclature and lie at the root of many statutes. Before the first Grand Lodge was formed in 1717 A.D. any body of Masons could form a Lodge at will; not many years after it was formed it ordained that no new Lodge could be authorized or could continue to work without a written Charter. Thus in this new system the Charter fulfills one of the functions of the *Old Charges* in the old system. Before the Bible came into common use members and officers in a fraternity, gild or society were required by law to take an oath, and in many instances the form of the oath was embodied in the charter; and in a borough of sufficient size a collection of oaths was kept in an official oath book; in the early Masonic Lodges Candidates and affiliating members received oaths from (or "on") the *Old Charges*, a copy of which served as a legal instrument; but after the Bible came to be used to sanction oaths for public office and in the courts it similarly came to replace the *Old Charges* for that purpose in the Lodges.

Civil Laws and Religious Ordinances required that every chartered body of men should have a Patron Saint; that its Saint's Day should be observed as a holiday; and that on the holiday (and on certain other

times as well) the members were to march in procession as a body to a chapel devoted to their Saint, dressed in their ceremonial clothing and carrying a banner. This rule was so rigorously enforced that in the old borough records of the City Companies the Patron Saint of each Company was written into the official books. The Freemasons conformed to this requirement; the records are scant but it appears that a local body of them could choose their own saint, though the histories of Freemasons in the City Companies show that they preferred St. Thomas a Becket above any other. There is even some reason to believe that the Tragedy of the Third Degree began as a symbolic representation of the death of that martyr; if so, the rite was in keeping with the practices of other guilds and fraternities of which the majority had ceremonies commemorative of their Patron. This dedication to a Saint, and the custom of going abroad in procession to worship at his shrine, meant that the religion of a Lodge was external to the Lodge, and that its religious ceremonies were not chosen or controlled by itself but conformed to the ceremonies established for the Saint and his chapel or shrine. After Roman Catholicism was brought to an end in England and was replaced by Protestantism the worship of Saints was forbidden by law; Henry VIII enforced that law with especial thoroughness against Thomas a Becket and even went so far as to order the City Companies never to use his name or to keep it anywhere inscribed in their buildings; one of the consequences of this prohibition of Saint worship among Masons was to remove its own religious practices from a chapel away from the Lodge room back into the Lodge room itself; another was to make it necessary for Masons to have their own prayers, their own chaplains, their own altar; where they had before lighted the candles at the Saints' shrine they now lighted them at a shrine of their own, the Bible took the place of the chapel, and became itself the Great Light of the Fraternity.

In the oldest Minute books it is made plain that a pedestal was kept in front of the Worshipful Master, and belonged to his station. They also indicate that a copy of the *Old Charges* was kept on this pedestal, and that a Candidate stood before it when he took the oath, or obligation (it should be called "oath of obligation"); this was taken on his honor as a man, in submission to the Master, and under the sanction of the *Old Charges*. The same records indicate that soon after the Grand Lodge system was adopted, and not long after 1723 A.D., the printed Book of Constitutions replaced the *Old Charges*. This in turn was replaced by the Bible. The custom of using the Bible must have been begun not many years after 1723 A.D. because as early as 1760 A.D. the Grand Lodge officially declared it to be a Great Light in Masonry. Thus what had begun in the earliest period of the craft as a short and single frankpledge, or pledge of obedience to rules, had developed from that very narrow commitment into a man's obliging, or obligating himself, to a living out of the Masonic philosophy; in the former instance a few Craft rules were his sanction; in the latter, the whole of the Bible, or Volume of the Sacred Law. Coincidentally with this the simple pedestal, illuminated by three small candles ("lesser lights"), developed into an altar; the pledge to the Master had become a pledge to God. The altar as it now stands at the center of the Room thus embodies a long and complex history; it is an altar, and yet it is more, and other, than an altar, is many things in one; it is a part of the required equipment of the Lodge, it is a fixed place or station, it is the *locus* or site, of the Greater and Lesser Lights, it is sacred ground where the obligation is taken, on it the Bible is placed along with the Square and Compasses, it is the pivot of the Rite of circumambulation, the place of acceptance into membership, the threshold at which visitors are received, and is at the same time a complex of many symbols and emblems.

In the Middle Ages candles were almost the only means for illuminating public buildings; and since they give out a feeble light at best it always was a problem to illuminate churches and chapels because of their size, and it was more of a problem to illuminate cathedrals; and the problem was complicated by the fact that wax candles were costly. The custom was to use as many small candles as possible, in holders or carried by hand; these were called Lesser (or small) Lights. For important



Lamps.

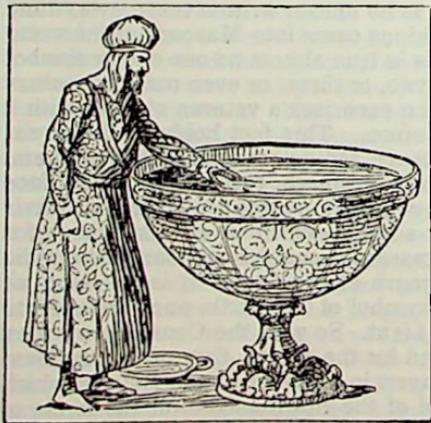
occasions, and in the larger churches, there also were floor stands for large candles, sometimes single ones, sometimes in groups; these were called Great Lights. The same method was used in Lodge rooms where small candles, three of them, were placed on the Master's pedestal; a floor stand of large candles illuminated the room. Out of this usage came the symbol of the Lesser Lights and the Great Lights. The Sun and the Moon together represented the Mason's working day from sunrise to sunset, for which he received his wages, and the Master represented the Craft as a whole its supervision, its rules and regulations; these were "Lesser" in the sense of immediate, of here and now, of what was done in the Lodge room itself. The Square, Compasses and Volume of the Sacred Law represent the great teachings, tenets, and philosophy of Freemasonry; they were "Greater" in the sense of holding everywhere, throughout the world, outside the Room as well as in; they are the philosophy of Freemasonry, and if the Square and Compasses embodied between them the whole idea of a Mason's work, their being placed on the open Bible meant that work is an attribute of God, and that man is a worker with God, and is a co-operator with Him who creates and rules the world.

It is characteristic of the actions, rites, and symbols of the Three Degrees that they have the appearance of not having been planned but came to be what they are as a field or a stream has come to be what it is, by nature and not by design; the Ritual is not a text-book, the symbols are not arranged in schedules, there is no official written text; everything is the result of history, and no two things came into Masonry at the same time or the same place. Because this is true almost no one rite or symbol has a single meaning, but possesses two, or three, or even many meanings or uses, is complex in itself, and often surprises a veteran student with a new facet which he has not seen before. This fact holds of the Great Lights, and it is of especial importance for an understanding of them. The Square is in Freemasonry merely a square, to be taken at its face value; it is a representative of the complete square; a figure with four sides and four right angles; a try-square, which is an instrument for testing a right angle; with the Compasses it comprises a sort of heraldic device, as already stated, or trade-mark of the Craft; it is a symbol of rightness, of righteousness; it is a symbol of the earth, once believed to be a square in shape; it is a Great Light. So with the Compasses: they are an instrument for use; they stand for the circle; they are an emblem of the sky, and hence stand for heaven in contrast to the Square which stands for earth; they are a symbol of the Spiritual life, of the circle of brotherhood; and they are a Great Light.

The Bible itself has a similar multiplicity of uses and meanings; it is the Bible and at the same time is the Volume of the Sacred Law; it is the Book of the Old and New Testaments and at the same time represents each of the world Bibles, and may be replaced by the Koran, the Zend Avesta, the Vedas, etc.; it lies on the Altar and yet does not have possession of it because the Square and Compasses lie on the Altar with it; it is the textbook of the Christian and Jewish religions yet the Lodge does not use it as a textbook because the Lodge is not a church and has no theology—the Lodge uses it as the *literature* of religion; and yet though it is a book of religion it is at the same time for Masonry a *legal* book also, because it gives sanction to the Obligations; a good half of the rites and symbols of the Work refer to it, yet almost nothing in the Work is directly taken from it; Masons did not write it and yet they use it as though they had because they employ it for purposes of their own and apply to it definitions peculiar to themselves; as it lies on the Altar it is many things at once, is inwardly multiordinal, is filled with mysteries, and owns many meanings, therefore the Craft has no dogmas about it, does not use it as a theological test, and leaves each Mason to read and to interpret it according to such light as he has, which is symbolized by the fact that as it lies on the Altar it lies *open*.

The setting of the First Degree is a Lodge of Freemasons of the Middle Ages; the Candidate is an apprentice throughout, is presented with his tools, and is given his place in the Craft as a beginner or learner. The setting of the Second Degree, at least for the large part of it, is Solomon's Temple, and yet by one of those paradoxes which are so numerous in the Work it also is the Greek Temple with its Five Orders and its Liberal Arts and Sciences; also, and to increase the paradox, the Medieval Cathedral is present by implication because the Lodge is neither Jewish council nor a Greek *collegium* but is an assembly of Medieval workmen, continued over from the First Degree. The setting of the Third Degree is Solomon's Temple, yet it is not the Temple but the builder of the Temple who is at the center of the Degree, and it is in his tragedy that the whole of the Work, as well as the Third Degree itself, finds its climax and its completion. The tragedy of Hiram Abif which is there enacted is in itself, and once again, one of the principal paradoxes of the Work because it is so Biblical and yet is not found in the Bible; also, and like the Bible itself as it is used in the Lodge, the tragedy is a complex, or synthesis, or mosaic, which is the result of gathering together a number

of elements from many sources, is the merging of a set of many historical developments; for while the setting and characters in it are ancient Jewish, the spirit and thought in it are Medieval, and the Lectures which comment upon it are modern. And yet again, as if to increase the appearance of paradox, while the setting is Biblical, and the characters and language are religious, the subject matter of the Rite is neither Biblical nor theological, but belongs to work and to the worker, for it consists not of the Temple as a building but of the work of building it, and Hiram Abif was neither priest nor prophet but a



Supposed form of the Laver.

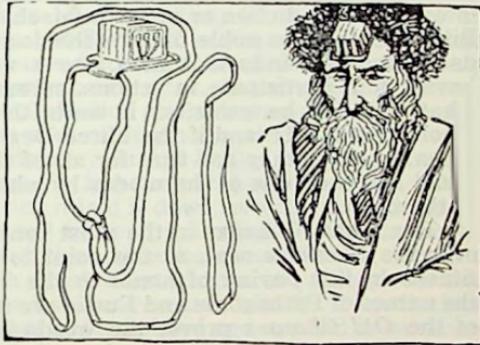
Master of workmen, and the tragedy itself is not the loss of a soul or the death of a man, but is the catastrophe suffered by workmen when their work is stopped, when they have no designs for work tomorrow, and when they are thrown into confusion by the loss of their Officer and of their rules and regulations.

The penalties invoked by the guilty men were self-invoked because men in guilt always recognize in penalties the inevitable consequence of their unlawful act, and therefore a penalty follows the crime to which it belongs as a man's shadow follows a man. These penalties are yet another instance of the many-sidedness of each rite and symbol, for they belong to the enactment of the tragedy of Hiram Abif and at the same time are also separated from it to become an independent body of symbolism; and they also are an integral part of the obligations. They rehearse the consequences which ensue when a workman makes war on his own work, and it is therefore a part of a workman's obligation to himself and to the Craft to keep them ever before his mind. In their form they reproduce the typical methods of punishments used almost universally in the Middle Ages, hanging with various accompaniments for the crime of treason, and burning at the stake, with another set of accompaniments, for the crime of heresy. They are thus a

symbolic representation of the general idea of penalty, and the form given by that representation is borrowed from general history; in actual practice Freemasons never used any penalties except fines, reprimands, suspension, and expulsion; there is no record to show that they ever used anything else, still less that they ever used cruel or inhuman punishment; they were artists, makers, builders, and like such workmen everywhere hated destruction and barbarism and never stooped to atrocities.

The oldest known record of the modern symbolic form as used in the Third Degree is dated at 1700 A.D. Since they are an integral part of the Rite of Hiram Abif the fact would indicate that the Rite must have been in use at least as early as that date, and presumably must have been in use much earlier.

The Third Degree as a whole and the Rite of Hiram Abif in particular are thus an assembly of elements or materials drawn from many sources, from the Books of Kings and of Chronicles, from the practice of Medieval Freemasons, from Medieval law, from the history of architecture, from the Renaissance and the era of Enlightenment, from the *Old Charges* and the Book of Constitutions; they appear to have been drawn at random, according to no plan or principle, and in disregard of chronology. If the Rite had been intended to be a history of something which had occurred three thousand years ago historians would dismiss it as an impossible farrago; if it had been intended as a presentation of some given scheme of theological or philosophical teachings scholars would be impatient with the jumbling and juxtapositions of doctrines and themes and ideas drawn from so many systems of thought. No Freemason is disturbed by these anomalies; he does not see them because they are not there; they are not there because the Rite is neither a history nor a theological or philosophical system but is a *Ritual*, and it belongs to Ritual



Phylacteries.

to make use of any suitable materials which lie at hand, without regard to history, theology, or philosophy; it is undisturbed by anachronisms, anomalies, and solecisms, and the fact that a Rite may say "Such and such a thing happened" when everybody knows that no such thing ever occurred or ever could occur has nothing to do with it. The art of ritualism is very old and is completely universal; many scholars believe that it is the oldest of the arts, and a number of them believe that it was the mother of the arts; and always it has not been history, or science, or a system of thought, and they who have searched for either history or a system of theory in the Masonic Ritual have come away disappointed. In Freemasonry the Temple, Solomon, Hiram Abif, the Ruffians, the Tragedy, the Great Pillars, the Fords of the Jordan, the Tower of Babel, the Winding Stairs, the Holy of Holies have never been historical personages, objects or events; they have been a Solomon, a Temple, a Hiram of *Ritual*. Once that fact is grasped any difficulty any Freemason has ever had about the Ritual and the Bible vanishes; the Fraternity leaves the Bible as a text-book of theology to the church, and the Bible as a work of history it leaves to the historians, and commits no member to any doctrine either of history or theology; its own use of the Bible has been for Ritualistic purposes, and in the carrying out of those purposes it has nowhere fallen into self-contradiction or error or falsehood. Nor is a ritualistic use of the Bible any the less noble than its theological, or ecclesiastical, or historical use; ritualism inducts a man into a world of experience and truth by having him participate in actions, ceremonies, rites, experiences, so that what he gains he gains, as it were, through his skin, by means of the whole of himself; and if the Three Degrees are not true either as history or as theology they are true for all of that, because from the beginning, Ritual has been one of the modes by which man has come into possession of the truth.

The Letter G hangs in the most conspicuous place in the Lodge room. Over the Master's seat, at the point to which all eyes turn. There is a fitness in this paying of honor to the "science of geometry" for which the names of Pythagoras and Euclid are synonyms, because as the versions of the *Old Charges* prove, the words geometry and Freemasonry were used synonymously for centuries. A cathedral was geometry in stone; a Freemason carried geometry into practice; his Apprentice had to master the Forty-Seventh Proposition because from it the other theorems could be deduced; and understanding of geometry was doubtless the greatest single secret which the early Freemasons preserved behind the locked doors of their Lodge rooms. The Letter G is therefore the title of one of the longest and most essential chapters in the eight centuries of Masonic history.

It is also a key to an understanding of a chapter on the Craft's relation to the Church and religion. In the Fifth and Sixth centuries the Church set out to destroy the culture and civilization which had been won and built up in Greece, Italy, and Egypt, and it burned books and libraries, turned museums to rubble, closed schools and universities, ordained a general illiteracy, and threatened to burn at the stake any man who would learn or teach what it described as "the forbidden sciences." Geometry was one of these. A knowledge of it was condemned as black magic. It had been perfected by the Greeks, and therefore was pagan. If a man was determined to learn it in spite of that ban he kept it a secret, or else went off to Spain to learn it from the Arabs. Nevertheless when the famous Abbot Suger designed and supervised the building of the first Gothic building, the Chapel of St. Denis, at Paris in about 1140 A.D. both he and the Masons had to understand and use geometry at each step. This Chapel was so wonderful that immediately the Bishops insisted that each

new church should be Gothic, and before long the Freemasons began their work of building cathedrals to which they were to devote themselves for two hundred years. The Church continued to condemn the science even though the Gothic buildings it demanded could not be made without it; they condemned the Masons for forming their Lodges because the Church forbade free associations; they also condemned the Masons for having "secrets," geometry among them, because "secrets" also were forbidden. As long as the Church had to have the Masons it had to tolerate the Masons' practices, but as soon as the guilds were broken up and architecture was no longer a trade secret, the Church (now become the *Roman Church*) officially condemned Freemasonry, making its first declaration in the form of a Bull issued by Pope Clement XII in 1738 A.D.; it has been followed by a succession of similar Bulls and Encyclicals ever since. But the Masonic Fraternity, and this is the crux of the matter in the present connection, has never retaliated; in no Book of Constitutions and in the statutes of no Grand Lodge have regular Freemasons ever condemned that Church, because it holds that theological and ecclesiastical questions are outside its province. As far as a Lodge's rules and regulations are concerned a Roman Catholic is as eligible to membership as any other man.

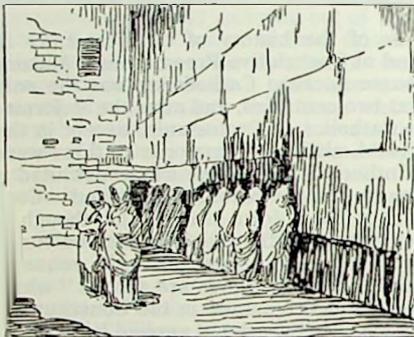
During the first four centuries of the history of the Fraternity in England, which was the motherland of Speculative Freemasonry, Masons were Catholics as a matter of course because Catholicism was the religion of the Church there was. During the next two centuries, and after the Reformation, Masons were either Roman Catholics or Protestants, except in that period when Romanism was outlawed, although a majority of them were Protestants. After the first (or Mother) Grand Lodge was constituted and wrote into its Book of Constitutions a famous paragraph entitled "Concerning God and Religion," in which it laid it down as a law that though in ancient times Masons were expected to be of the religion which belonged to the country in which they lived they were henceforth to be required only to belong to that religion "in which all good men are agreed" which is to be good men and true. This law has remained in the Constitutions of Grand Lodges ever since, and has been defined and applied in numberless statutes; and not in theory but in practice also, so that there are in the membership of the Fraternity throughout the world Christians, Jews, Theists, Mohammedans, Parsees, Hindus, Confucianists, and many men who believe in God but are not identified with any one religion or Church.

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

The first eleven chapters of I Kings are a literary unit which if published separately would comprise a book on Solomon, his biography, his reign for forty years, and a history of his times. That portion of this record which is divided into chapters six to eight inclusive is entitled in the Authorised Version "The building of Solomon's Temple," but it should be more accurately entitled as "The building of the Jewish capital" because the Temple proper was but one unit in a large cluster of buildings and grounds which included palaces, administration buildings, residences, gardens, and walls. The Book of Chronicles, which was written much later than the Book of Kings, contains a second account of the building of the "house for the name of the Lord, and an house for his Kingdom" in which the author doubtless followed the narrative of the Book of Kings but also drew on other sources of his own. The building of the second temple, two generations after the first was destroyed by the Babylonians,

is recorded in full in Ezra; and a description of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, an achievement of Masonic construction of even greater magnitude than the rebuilding of the Temple, is given at length in Nehemiah. A third description of the Temple, in the form of a vision, and differing at many points from the other two, comprises Chapter 40 of the Book of Ezekiel, a work of peculiar interest to Freemasons because it contains the picture of a Master Mason testing the walls of a city by a plumb-line, and is one of the few instances in which the art of architecture is the subject matter of a prophetic vision. A history of the dramatic Third rebuilding of the Temple, which in turn was destroyed by the Romans in so short a time, is contained in the Apocryphal Book of Maccabees and in *The History of the Jews* by Philo Judaeus.

The two Great Pillars with their chapters, the Holy of Holies, and the Winding Stairs, which are used in the Ritual for important purposes, are described in detail here and there in the chapters given above belonging to the Books of Kings and of Chronicles. Ezra is a source of much in the work of the Holy Royal Arch; so also is Ezekiel, in which the form and meaning of the cherubim are described at length.



Jews' Wailing Place.

The Scripture Reading in the Entered Apprentice Degree comprises the whole of Psalm 133. The Plumb-line Scripture reading of the Fellowcraft Degree is Amos VII, verses seven and eight. The Scripture reading of the Master Mason Degree includes the first eight verses of the last, or twelfth, chapter of the Book of Ecclesiastes. This Book, so unlike other Books in the Old Testament except Proverbs, belongs to a type of ancient Jewish writings called Wisdom Literature, and should be read in conjunction with the Apocryphal

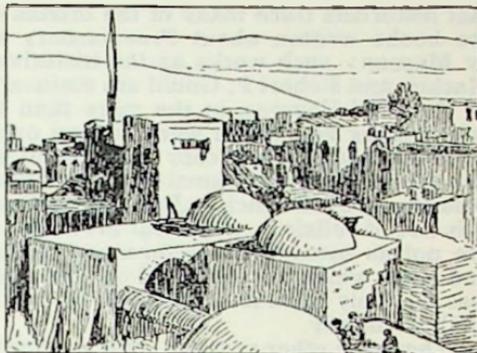
Book of Ecclesiasticus. Ezekiel and Daniel belong to a type which scholars have named Apocalyptic Writings, because they consist of visions; the same writings contain also much of what scholars know as Eschatological literature, meaning that they describe the beginning and end of the world. The Book of Revelation is a New Testament book of eschatology and apocalypics; it also belongs to the cycle of Scriptures upon which the Ritual draws, because it contains a picture of the New Jerusalem and its Temple, "whose builder and maker is God," which reminds a Mason that his own description of God as The Sovereign Grand Architect of the Universe is as old as the Bible in its meaning even though the Bible nowhere uses those words.

The brief recitation in the Entered Apprentice Degree which begins, "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth" is composed of the first three verses of the first Chapter of Genesis. The Hebrew word *bara* which is translated as "created" could have been more accurately translated as "made" or even as "built."

The Monitorial section on the Apron contains no Scripture quotation but it is reminiscent of the tenth chapter of the Gospel of John, and of the fifth chapter of the Book of Revelation, which is also attributed to John.

The two Great Pillars described in the Fellowcraft Degree have a

reference to the Second Book of Kings, chapter fifteen, verses fifteen and sixteen; the two Globes, however, are not in the Old Testament and are not to be confused with the chapters on Solomon's Pillars but are an addition to the Work made in the Eighteenth Century to symbolize the universality of the Craft throughout the world, and for many years stood on Lodge room floors apart from the Pillars. There are a number of other pillars and columns; the column representing the Five Orders of Architecture;



Joppa, now Jaffa.

the two pillars described in the *Old Charges*; the three columns at the officers' stations which symbolize Wisdom, Strength and Beauty.

The chant which is used in many Lodges in the Master Mason Degree beginning, "In thee O Lord, have I put my trust," is the Seventy-first Psalm, and is one of a group of four of similar wording, the others being Psalms Seven, Eleven, and Thirty-One. Such Psalms were sung, or chanted, or recited during Temple services, and were composed at different periods as needs or occasions called for something new and appropriate; the Book of Psalms is a collection of them and is therefore similar to a modern hymn book; the psalms differed among themselves in substance and may be described as psalms, chants, hymns, or poems; they are roughly divided into groups, those having the same general theme being grouped together, as Psalms of Praise, Worship, Trust, Thanksgiving and Rejoicing.

The story of the Fords (or passages) of the Jordan in which occurs for the first time the famous test-word "shibboleth" is in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Judges; this same chapter is one of the points of departure for the Book of Ruth.

The episode of the seafaring man and of Joppa is not found in the Old Testament, but Joppa is frequently mentioned, because it was the most convenient sea port for Jerusalem, which stood many miles inland. Joppa became one of the most familiar names to Europeans in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, remote as it was, because it was a point of rendezvous for Crusaders setting out from their countries and one of the favorite ports of the Genoese and Venetian merchants who supplied the Crusaders from Italy. It was to Joppa that Hiram, King of Tyre, sent his ships with materials for the Temple, some of them with treasures in their holds brought from as far away as Spain and Ethiopia, and even, it is believed, from India. The city has an important place in the Mark Master Degree.

In writing the history of a fraternity as old and as large as Freemasonry—large geographically as well as in numbers—and in which there are five separate Rites with more than forty Degrees, one must go far back and far afield and seek his references and materials in many places. Scholars divide these references into two classes; primary sources; and secondary sources. The primary sources are books, documents, writings, records, chronicles, out of which the original materials were quarried; from them came many of the elements out of which Freemasonry was made. Those books and records were not written by Masons, except in two or three instances, but they were used by Masons, and it is to them

that historians trace many of the origins of the Craft. Secondary sources are books written about Freemasonry and about the primary sources by Masons; such works as the histories of the Fraternity by Albert G. Mackey and Robert F. Gould are eminent examples of secondary sources.

The *Old Charges*, in the more than 150 versions of them which are still existing and which were written over a period of four centuries and in many places (one copy was found in Philadelphia), stand first in importance among original sources. Freemasonry was not founded by Solomon or by the ancient Jews; it was not born out of the Old Testament; it is not of religious origin but grew up among Medieval builders; there are not as many direct references to the Bible as may at first appear, and much which has a Biblical quality came from other origins; nevertheless the Holy Bible is second only to the *Old Charges* as a primary source of Craft history.

There are other primary sources, some in single books, some in bodies of literature, which need to be studied along with the Bible and the *Old Charges* by any student who seeks to understand the relationship between Freemasonry and religion and the Bible. Chief among these are:

The Elements of Geometry, by Euclid. The Books of Apocrypha. The History of the Jews, by Josephus. Medieval *polychronicons*, such as the one written by Ranulf Higden. Fabric Rolls and Borough Records. Early Lodge Minutes and Histories. The Records of the City Companies of England. Published diaries and books in which some of the data of Masonic history were first published. The two earliest editions of the Book of Constitutions. Source materials on the history of architecture such as the writings of Vitruvius, Palladio, Inigo Jones. Records and histories of the Medieval guilds, fraternities and societies.

Much in the history of the place of religion in Freemasonry will remain obscure to a Masonic student who has not firmly grasped the wide and almost abysmic differences which separate the periods of religion from Solomon until now.