

Virginia Text Book

THE
Virginia Text Book
OF
Royal Arch Masonry
CONTAINING

THE MONITORIAL PARTS OF THE DEGREES OF MARK
MASTER, PAST MASTER, SELECT MASTER, ROYAL
MASTER, MOST EXCELLENT MASTER AND ROYAL
ARCH, AND THE SEVERAL CHARGES PER-
TAINING THERETO, AS WERE ADOPTED BY
THE GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER OF
VIRGINIA, AND PUBLISHED IN THE
BOOK KNOWN AS

“DOVE’S ROYAL ARCH TEXT-BOOK,”
1853

RE WRITTEN
by

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of Virginia, in 1949.

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RICHMOND:
1949

PREFACE

Since the edition of the Text-Book has been exhausted, the Grand High Priest has directed me to prepare a new edition. I have found in my active experience of more than 20 years that the Text Book is a valuable acquisition and a constant incentive to the "worker" to perfect himself in the Ritual.

I have, therefore, endeavored to make this issue complete in each degree, and trust that the Companions will approve the same.

Faithfully and fraternally yours,

P. M. SHIREY,
Grand Lecturer.

THE BALLOT

H. P.—Companions, we are about to ballot upon the petition of Brother....., for the degrees as conferred in the Chapter. The whites elect, the blacks reject; a unanimous ballot is necessary to elect. Companion C. O. H., prepare the ballot and present it in the East.

C. O. H.—M. Ex. H. P., the ballot is collected.

H. P.—Companion C. O. H., close the ballot and present it in the East.

H. P.—Accordingly, I declare Brother.....
duly (elected)
(rejected) to receive the degrees as conferred
in the Chapter.

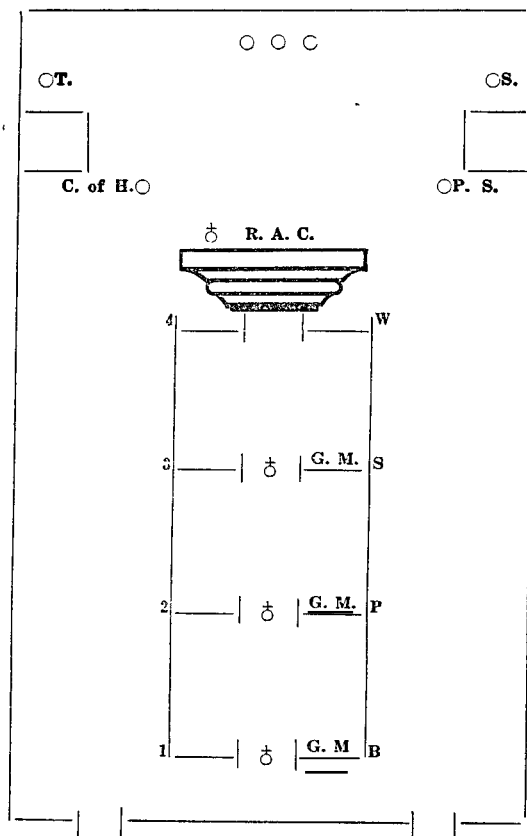
SECTION I.

OF THE WORK AND CEREMONIES OF A ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER.

As the purity of our Ritual depends in a very great degree upon the accuracy and fidelity with which the officers perform their various duties, it may not be amiss to inform those officers, in the first place, of the stations they are expected to occupy in conferring the several degrees, when they are elected officers of a Chapter, and then to remind them that each is expected to possess, or immediately acquire, an intimate and perfect knowledge of the part he is called on to perform in the Ritual of each degree:

The officers rank thus:

1	2	3	4	5
R. A. Chap.	M. M.	P. M.	S. & R. M.,	M. E. M.,
H. Priest,	R. Wor. M.	R. Wor. M.	T Ill. K S	M. E. M.,
King,	Sr. Warden,	S. W.,	H K. of T.	S. W.,
Scribe,	Jr. Warden,	J. W.,	P. Con.,	J. W.,
Treasurer,	Same,	Same,	Same,	Same,
Secretary	Same,	Same,	Same,	Same,
Capt of H.,	M. of Cer.			M. of C.,
P. Soj ,	Sr. Deacon,	S D.,	Cap. of G.,	S. D.,
R. A. Cap ,	Jr. Deacon,	J. D.,	In'r G'd.,	J. D.,
M. of 3, }	Mas. Over,			
" 2, }	Sr. Over.,			
" 1, }	Jr. Over.,			
Steward,	Same,	Same,	Same,	Same,
Tiler.	Same.	Same.	Same.	Same.



The members of the Chapter being assembled, in obedience to due notice at a signal from the High Priest, or Companion, whose duty it is to exercise that office in his absence, each Officer repairs promptly to his station and assumes his duties; vacancies are then filled *pro tempore*, and, after appropriate ceremonies, a Royal Arch Chapter is opened in solemn form. All business relating to the interest of the Chapter or the Royal Craft in general is then dispatched.

If there is work to be done in the degrees below, the Chapter is then *dispensed* with and the Lodge opened with appropriate ceremonies, the candidate introduced, and the degree conferred. The Lodge is then closed and another Lodge is opened, and the work and lectures therein given, and so in succession, until all is done, or the Chapter resumes its labors. The minutes are read and approved, and then the Chapter is closed in solemn form.

Mark Master's Degree

By the influence of this degree, each operative Mason at the erection of King Solomon's Temple was known and distinguished by the Grand Senior Warden. If defects were found, by the help of this degree the Overseers were enabled without difficulty to ascertain who was the faulty workman, so that deficiencies might be remedied without injuring the credit or diminishing the reward of the industrious and faithful of the Craft.

CHARGE AT OPENING A LODGE OF MARK MASTERS.

"Wherefore, brethren, lay aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also as living stones be ye built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices acceptable to God.

"Brethren, this is the will of God, that with well doing ye put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God: Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God."

SECTION I.

The first section explains the manner of opening a Mark Master's Lodge, and recapitulates the mystic ceremony of the preparatory circumstances of introducing a candidate. The number of artists employed in building the Temple are enumerated, and the progress they made in architecture is specified; and it ends with a beautiful display of the manner in which one of the principal events originated which characterizes this degree.

SECTION II.

In the second section is recited the mode of advancing a candidate to this degree. Herein, the Mark Master is instructed in the origin and history of this degree and the indispensable obliga-

tion he is under to stretch forth his assisting hand to the relief of an indigent and worthy brother to a certain and specified extent. We are here taught to ascribe praise to the meritorious and dispense rewards to the diligent and industrious.

During the ceremonies, the following passages of Scripture are read:

Ezekiel xliv: 1, 2, 3, 5.

"Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the East; and it was shut.

Then said the Lord unto me, This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut.

It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord; he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same.

And the Lord said unto me, Son of man, *mark well*, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with

thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, and all the laws thereof; and *mark well* the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary."

The use of the mark is here exemplified :

The ancient city Joppa, where many of the materials for King Solomon's Temple were landed, and Masonic tradition informs us that the sea-coast at that place was so nearly perpendicular that it was with difficulty the workmen could ascend without assistance, which was afforded them from above by guards placed there with this strong grip.

* * * * *

Son of man * * * * *

The following texts of Scripture are introduced and explained :

"This is the stone which was set at naught by you builders which is become the head of the corner.

"The stone which the builders rejected is become the head stone of the corner.*

"Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner?*"

"And have ye not read this Scripture, The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner?" * * *

"What is this, then, which is written, The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner?" * * * *

Here follows a full explanation of the Degree.

* * * * *

"To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden manna; and I will give him a *white stone*, and in the stone a *new name* written, which no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it."

* * * * *

The working tools of a Mark Master are the Chisel and Mallet.

The *Chisel* morally demonstrates the advantages of discipline and education. The mind, like the diamond, in its original state is rude and unpolished; but as the effect of the chisel on the ex-

ternal coat soon presents to view the latent beauties of the diamond, so education discovers the latent virtues of the mind, and draws them forth to range the large field of matter and space, to display the summit of human knowledge—our duty to God and man.

The *Mallet* teaches to correct irregularities and to reduce man to a proper level, so that by quiet deportment he may, in the school of discipline, learn to be content. What the mallet is to the workman, enlightened reason is to the passions; it curbs ambition, it depresses envy, it moderates anger, and it encourages good dispositions; whence arises among all good Masons that comely order,

“Which nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
The soul's calm sunshine, and the heartfelt joy.

The following song is sung, accompanied with appropriate ceremonies:

Mark Masters all appear
Before the Chief O'erseer;
In concert move;
Let him your work inspect
For the Chief Architect;
If there is no defect,
He will approve.

You who have passed the Square,
For your reward prepare—
Join heart and hand;
Each with his mark in view—
March with the just and true—
Wages to you are due,
At your command.

[FOLLOW ME]

Now to the Westward move,
Where, full of Strength and Love,
Hiram doth stand;
But if imposters are
Mixed with the worthy there,
Caution them to beware
Of the right hand.

Previous to completing the ceremonies, the following Parable is recited:

“For the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place, and said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again

he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the Lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good? So the last

shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."

Now to the praise of those
Who triumphed o'er the foes
Of Mason's Art,
To the praiseworthy three,
Who founded this degree,
May all their virtues be
Deep in our hearts.

CHARGE TO BE DELIVERED TO A CANDIDATE
WHO IS ADVANCED TO THE HONORARY
DEGREE OF MARK MASTER.

Brother A. B., I congratulate you on having been thought worthy of being advanced to this honorable degree of Masonry. Permit me to impress it on your mind, that your assiduity should ever be commensurate with your duties, which become more and more extensive as you advance in Masonry.

In the honorable character of Mark Master Mason, it is more particularly your duty to endeavor to let your conduct in the Lodge, and among your brethren, be such as may stand the test of the Grand Overseer's Square, that you may not, like

the unfinished and imperfect work of the negligent and unfaithful of former times, be rejected and thrown aside, as unfit for "that spiritual building, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

While such is your conduct, should misfortune assail you, should friends forsake you, should envy traduce your good name, and malice persecute you, yet may you have confidence that among Mark Master Masons you will find friends, who will administer relief to your distresses, and comfort your afflictions—ever bearing in mind, as a consolation under all the frowns of fortune, and as an encouragement to hope for better prospects, that the stone which the builders rejected, possessing merits to them unknown, became the chief stone of the corner.

Past Master's Degree

This is purely an honorary degree, and its ceremonies, when properly conducted, impress the candidate very seriously and teach a lesson of diffidence in assuming the responsibilities of an office without due preparation for the performance of its duties.

It treats of the government of a Lodge, the disposition of its rulers, and illustrates their requisite qualifications. By order of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, it is made the duty of every Warden of a Lodge, upon his election to office, and previous to entering upon its duties, to qualify himself for occasional discharge of the duties of the Chair by receiving the degree of Past Master as it was given previous to the year 1797, up to which time all the degrees of Masonry were given under the authority of a Master's Warrant or Charter.

"But," says Mackey, in his excellent Lexicon, "the degree is also conferred in Royal Arch Chapters, where it succeeds the Mark Master's degree.

The conferring of this degree, which has no historical connection with the rest of the degrees in a Chapter, arises from the following circumstances: Originally, when Chapters of Royal Arch Masons were 'under the government' of Lodges, in which the degree was then always conferred, it was a part of the regulations that no one should receive the Royal Arch degree unless he had previously presided in the Lodge as Master. When the Chapters became independent, the regulation could not be abolished, for that would have been an innovation. The difficulty has, therefore, been obviated by making every candidate for the degree of Royal Arch a Past Master before his exaltation."

Previous to Investiture, the candidate is required to give his unqualified assent to the following charges:

1. You agree to be a good man and true, and strictly to obey the moral law.
2. You agree to be a peaceable citizen, and cheerfully to conform to the laws of the country in which you may reside.

3. You promise not to be concerned in plots and conspiracies against Government, but patiently to submit to the decisions of the Supreme Legislature.

4. You agree to pay a proper respect to the civil Magistrate, to work diligently, live creditably, and act honorably by all men.

5. You agree to hold in veneration the original rulers and patrons of the Order of Masonry, and their regular successors, supreme and subordinate, according to their stations, and to submit to the awards of your brethren, when convened, in every case consistent with the constitutions of the Order.

6. You agree to avoid private piques and quarrels, and to guard against intemperance and excess.

7. You agree to be cautious in carriage and behavior, courteous to your brethren, and faithful to your Lodge.

8. You promise to respect genuine brethren, and to discountenance imposters and all dissenters from the original plan of Masonry.

9. You agree to promote the general good of society, to cultivate the social virtues, and to propagate the knowledge of the art.

10. You promise to pay homage to the Grand Master for the time being and to his officers when duly installed, and strictly to conform to every edict of the Grand Lodge or General Assembly of Masters that is not subversive of the principles and ground-work of Masonry.

11. You admit that it is not in the power of any man, or body of men, to make innovations in the body of Masonry.

12. You admit that no new Lodge shall be formed without permission from the Grand Lodge, and that no countenance be given to any irregular Lodge, or to any person clandestinely initiated therein, being contrary to the ancient charges of the Order.

13. You admit that no person can be regularly made a Mason, or admitted a member of any regular Lodge, without previous notice and due inquiry into his character.

14. You agree that no visitors shall be received into your Lodge without due examination, and producing proper vouchers of their having been initiated in a regular Lodge.

Do you submit to these charges, and promise to support these regulations, as Masters have done in all ages before you?

I now invest you with the badge of your office, the Square, which will silently admonish you to do justice to the cause of Masonry; give due commendation to the worthy members of the Order, and rebuke those who act contrary to its laws.

The *Holy Writings*, that great light in Masonry, will guide you to all truth; it will direct your path to the temple of happiness, and point out to you the whole duty of man.

The *Square* teaches to regulate our actions by rule and line, and to harmonize our conduct by the principles of morality and virtue.

The *Compasses* teaches to limit our desires in every station, that, rising to eminence by merit, we may live respected and die regretted.

The *Rule* directs that we should punctually observe our duty, press forward in the path to virtue, and, neither inclining to the right nor to the left, in all our actions have eternity in view.

The *Line* teaches the criterion of moral rectitude, to avoid dissimulation in conversation and action, and to direct our steps to the path which leads to a glorious *immortality*.

The *Book of Constitutions* you are to search at all times—cause it to be read in your Lodge, that none may pretend ignorance of the excellent precepts it enjoins.

Lastly, you receive in charge the *By-Laws* of your Lodge, which you are to see carefully and punctually executed.

CHARGE.

The honor, reputation, and usefulness of your Lodge will materially depend on the skill and assiduity with which you manage its concerns, whilst the happiness of its members will be generally promoted in proportion to the zeal and ability with which you propagate the genuine principles of our institution.

Select Master's Degree

This beautiful degree is of comparatively modern origin, having been, with the degree of Royal Master, in the possession and practice of a distinguished Chief in the State of Maryland as a purely honorary degree, elucidatory of, and appendant to, Royal Arch Masonry, and by him conferred without fee; he delegated authority to others to use them in the same way until the year 1824, when the Grand Chapter of Maryland, with his consent, took charge of the degrees and ordered them to be given before the Most Excellent Master, where all intelligent workers in the Royal Art must at once perceive the propriety of their location. (See Proceedings of the G. Chapter of Maryland, pages 16 and 17, of the year 1824.)

In the spread of Masonry over our happy country, this degree has been everywhere hailed with enthusiasm and warmly adopted. It rationally accounts for the necessary concealment and preservation of those essentials of the Craft which were

brought to light at the rebuilding of the second Temple, and which lay concealed from the Masonic eye for the space of four hundred and seventy years; and displays in an eminent degree the consummate prudence, wisdom, and foresight of our illustrious patrons in Masonry.

Many particulars, relative to those few who were selected for their skill, virtue, and inflexible fidelity, to complete an important part of King Solomon's Temple, are explained; and here, too, is exemplified an instance of Justice and Mercy by an ancient patron towards one of the Craft who was led to disobey his commands by an over zealous attachment for the institution. It ends with a description of a particular circumstance which characterizes the degree.

The following Psalm is read at opening the Council, as all meetings of Select Masters are called:

Psalm lxxxvii.

"His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken

of thee, O city of God. Selah. I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philisti, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there. And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah. As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee."

The following passages of Scripture are explained:

I Kings, iv: 1, 5 and 6.

"So King Solomon was King over all Israel, Azariah, the son of Nathan, was over the officers: and Zabud the son of Nathan was principal officer, and the King's friend: and Ahishar was over the household: and Adoniram the son of Abda was over the tribute."

I Kings, v: 17, 18.

"And the King commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house. And Solomon's

builders and Hiram's builders did hew them, and the stone-squarers: so they prepared timber and stones to build the house."

I Kings, vii: 13, 14.

"And King Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtalia, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass.

Ezekiel, xxvii: 9.

"The ancients of Gebal, and the wise men thereof, were in thee thy calkers; all the ships of the sea, with their mariners, were in thee, to occupy thy merchandise."

CHARGE TO A SELECT MASTER.

COMPANION:

Having attained to the degree of Select Master, you must be sensible that your obligations are increased in proportion to your privileges. Let it be your constant care to prove yourself worthy of the confidence reposed in you, and of the high

honor conferred upon you, in admitting you to this Select degree. Let uprightness and integrity attend your steps; let Justice and Mercy mark your conduct; let fervency and zeal stimulate you in the discharge of the various duties incumbent on you; but suffer not an idle or impertinent curiosity to lead you astray, or betray you into danger. Be deaf to every insinuation which would have a tendency to weaken your resolution, or tempt you to an act of disobedience; be voluntarily dumb and blind, when the exercise of those faculties would endanger the peace of your mind, or the probity of your conduct; and let silence and secrecy, those cardinal virtues of a Select Master, on all necessary occasions, be scrupulously observed.

By a steady adherence to the important instructions contained in this degree, you will merit the approbation of the Select number with whom you are associated, and will enjoy the high satisfaction of having acted well your part in the important enterprise in which you are engaged; and, after having wrought your regular hours, may you be permitted to participate in all the privileges of a Select Master.

Royal Master's Degree

This degree, though short, contains some valuable information preparatory to the Royal Arch degree, with which it is intimately connected. It enables us with ease and facility to examine the privileges of others to this degree, while, at the same time, it proves ourselves.

It is based upon the following passages of Scripture :

I Kings, vii : 48-50.

"And Solomon made all the vessels that pertained unto the house of the Lord : the altar of gold, and the table of gold, whereupon the shewbread was, and the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right side, and five on the left, before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs of gold, and the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and the censers, of pure gold, and the hinges of gold, both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the house, to wit, of the tem-

ple. So Hiram made an end of doing all the work, that he had made King Solomon, for the house of the Lord.

Revelation, xxii : 12-14.

"And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the City."

I Kings, vi : 27.

READ.

"And he set the cherubims within the inner house : and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall ; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house. The Ark, called the glory of Israel, which was seated in the midst of the holy place, under the wings of the cherubims, was a small chest, or coffer, three

feet nine inches long, two feet three inches wide, and three feet three inches high. It was made of wood, excepting only the mercy seat, but overlaid with pure gold both inside and out. It had a ledge of gold surrounding it at the top, into which the cover, called the mercy seat, was let in. The mercy seat was of pure gold, the thickness of an hand's breadth; at the two ends of it were two cherubims, looking inwards toward each other, with their wings expanded, which, embracing the whole circumference of the mercy seat, they met on each side in the middle; all of which the Rabbins say was made out of the same mass, without any soldering of parts. Here the Shekinah, or Divine Presence, rested, and was visible in the appearance of a cloud over it. From hence the Bathkoll issued, and gave answers when God was consulted. And hence it is that God is said in the Scriptures to dwell between the cherubims, that is, between the cherubims on the mercy seat, because there was the seat or throne of the visible appearance of His glory among them.

Most Excellent Master's Degree

None but the meritorious and praiseworthy, none but those who by diligence and industry have progressed far toward perfection, none but those who have been seated in the Oriental chair by the unanimous suffrages of their brethren, can be admitted to this degree of Masonry.

In its original establishment, when the temple at Jerusalem was finished, and the fraternity celebrated the capstone with great joy, it is demonstrable that none but those who had proved themselves complete masters of their profession were admitted to this honor; and, indeed, the duties incumbent on every Mason who is accepted and acknowledged as a Most Excellent Master, are such as render it indispensable that he should have a perfect knowledge of all the preceding degrees.

The following Psalm is read at opening :

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein; for He

hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek him that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory. Selah."

The following Psalm is read during the ceremony of receiving one to this degree:

Psalm xxiii.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters.

"He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

A part of this Degree is here explained, and also some words, signs, etc.

* * * * *

"The whole Temple shined, and dazzled the eyes of such as entered it, by the splendor of the gold that was on every side of them." The multitude, on beholding it, were struck with bewildering amazement, and "*thus involuntarily*" raised their hands in astonishment and admiration at its wondrous magnificence, as well as to protect their eyes from the effects of its exceeding brilliancy. Whence originated. * * * * *

* * * * *

This is the day set apart * * * *

The following song is then sung, with solemn ceremonies:

All hail to the morning
That bids us rejoice;
The Temple's completed,
Exalt high each voice;
The cap stone is finished;
Our labor is o'er;
The sound of the gavel
Shall hail us no more.

To the Power Almighty, who ever has guided
The Tribes of old Israel, exalting their fame;
To Him who hath governed our hearts undivided,
Let's send forth our voices to praise His great name.

[FOLLOW ME]

Companions, assemble
On this joyful day;
The occasion in glorious,
The Key-stone to lay;
Fulfilled is the promise,
By the Ancient of Days;
To bring forth the cap stone,
With shouting and praise.

All that remains to be done is * * * *

(CEREMONIES.)

There is no more occasion for level or plumb line,
For trowel, for gavel, for compass, or square;
Our works are completed, the ark safely seated,
And we shall be greeted as workmen most rare.

We accept and receive them, Most Excellent Masters,
Invested with honors, and power to preside;
Among worthy Craftsmen, wherever assembled,
The knowledge of Masons to spread far and wide.

The following passages of Scripture are here introduced:

II Chronicles, vi.

"Then said Solomon, The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. But I have built a house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling forever. And the King turned his face, and blessed the whole congregation of Israel: "And he stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands: for Solomon had made a brazen scaffold, of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the

congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward Heaven, and said, O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee in Heaven, nor in the earth; which keepest covenant, and showest mercy unto thy servants, that walk before thee with all their hearts: Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall make toward this place: hear thou from thy dwelling-place, even from Heaven; and when thou hearest, forgive. Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. O Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David, thy servant. Now, when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from Heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices: and the glory of the Lord filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire

came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever." * * * *

CHARGE.

BROTHER:

Your admittance to this degree of Masonry is a proof of the good opinion the brethren of this Lodge entertain of your Masonic abilities. Let this consideration induce you to be careful of forfeiting, by misconduct and inattention to our rules, that esteem which has raised you to the rank you now possess.

It is one of your great duties, as a Most Excellent Master, to dispense light and truth to the uninformed Mason, and I need not remind you of the impossibility of complying with this obligation without possessing an accurate acquaintance with the lectures of each degree.

If you are not already completely conversant with all the degrees heretofore conferred on you,

remember that an indulgence, prompted by a belief that you will apply yourself with double diligence to make yourself so, has induced the brethren to accept you.

Let it, therefore, be your unremitting study to acquire such a degree of knowledge and information as shall enable you to discharge with propriety the various duties incumbent on you, and to preserve unsullied the title now conferred upon you, that of a Most Excellent Master.

When the temple was completed * * * *

The organization of a Lodge of Most Excellent Master is here explained, and labor resumed in the Degree.

Royal Arch Degree

This degree is indescribably more august, sublime, and important than all which precede it, and is the summit and perfection of ancient Masonry. It impresses on our minds a belief of the being and existence of a Supreme Deity, without beginning of days or end of years, and reminds us of the reverence due to His holy name.

Hutchinson, in his excellent treatise on Masonry, says: "As Moses was commanded to pull his shoes from off his feet on Mount Horeb, because the ground whereon he trod was sanctified by the presence of the Divinity, so the Mason who would prepare himself for this exalted stage of Masonry should advance in the naked paths of truth, be divested of every degree of arrogance, and approach with steps of innocence, humility, and virtue to challenge the ensigns of an Order whose institutions arise on the most solemn and sacred principles of religion." And Lawrence Dermott, in his edition of Ahiman Rezon, says: "This de-

gree I firmly believe to be the root, heart and marrow of Masonry. It brings to light many essentials of the Craft which were buried in darkness for the space of four hundred and seventy years, and without a knowledge of which the Masonic character cannot be complete."

SECTION I.

This section explains the mode of government in this degree; it designates the appellation, number, and situation of the several officers, and points out the purpose and duty of their respective stations. The various colors of their banners are designated and the morals to which they allude are introduced and explained.

The following passage of Scripture is read at opening:

"Now, we command you, brethren, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us, for we behaved ourselves not disorderly among you. Neither did we eat any man's

bread for nought, but wrought with labor and travail day and night that we might not be chargeable to any of you. Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us; for even when we were with you this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat; for we hear that there are some who walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies. Now, them that are such, we command and exhort that with quietness they work and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be ye not weary in well doing. And if any man obey not our word, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. Now, the Lord of peace himself give you peace always."

SECTION II.

This section contains much valuable historical information, and proves, beyond the power of contradiction, and in the most striking colors, that prosperity and happiness are ever the ultimate consequences of virtue and justice, while disgrace and ruin invariably follow the practices of vice and im-

morality. A willing and hearty obedience to law, whence results harmony and concord in all earthly institutions, but in a more especial degree, obedience to Divine Law, the true source of all human happiness, is here forcibly demonstrated as indispensably necessary to procure and perpetuate that inestimable Masonic blessing, Brotherly Love.

The following charges and passages of Scripture are introduced during the ceremony of exaltation, a proper arrangement of which is essentially necessary to be observed in every Chapter, and their application should be familiar to every Royal Arch Mason.

* * * * *

PRAYER.

"Supreme Architect of Universal Nature! Thou eternal and omnipotent Jehovah! The glorious and everlasting I AM, permit us, thy frail, dependent, and needy creatures, in the name of our Most Excellent and Supreme High Priest, to approach thy Divine Majesty. And do Thou, who sittest *between the cherubim*, incline thine ear to the voice of our praises and of our supplication, and vouchsafe to commune with us from off thy *mercy seat*.

We humbly adore and worship Thy unspeakable perfections and Thy unbounded goodness and benevolence. We bless Thee that when man had sinned and fallen from his innocence and happiness, Thou didst still leave unto him the power of reasoning, and the capacity of improvement and pleasure. We adore Thee, that amidst the pain and calamities of our present state, so many means of refreshment and satisfaction are afforded to us while traveling the *rugged paths* of life. And oh! Thou who didst aforetime appear unto Thy servant Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, enkindle, we beseech Thee, in each of our hearts a flame of devotion to Thee, of love to each other, and of benevolence and charity to all mankind. May the veils of ignorance and blindness be removed from the eyes of our understanding, that we may behold and adore thy mighty and wondrous works. May the *rod* and staff of Thy grace and power continually support us, and defend us from the rage of all our enemies, and especially from the subtlety and malice of that old *serpent*, who with cruel vigilance seeketh our ruin. May the *leprosy* of sin be eradicated from our *bosoms*, and may *holiness to the Lord* be en-

graven upon all our thoughts, words, and actions. May the *incense* of piety continually ascend unto Thee from off the *altar* of our hearts, and *burn day and night* as a sweet-smelling savor unto Thee. May we daily *search* the records of *truth*, that we may be more and more instructed in our duty, and may we share the blessedness of those who hear the *sacred word and keep it*. And finally, O merciful Father, when we shall have passed through the outer *veils* of these earthly *courts*, when the earthly house of this *tabernacle* shall be dissolved, may we be admitted into the *Holy of Holies*, above, into the presence of the *Grand Council* of Heaven, where the Supreme High Priest forever presides, forever reigns. Amen ! So mote it be."

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The candidate is here informed in the peculiar language of Royal Arch Masonry that as he progresses in the Royal Art, his obligations to the fraternity become more forcibly impressed upon his mind, and the faithful discharge of them more rigidly exacted.

* * * * *

Exodus iii: 1:6.

"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And He said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover He said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

II Chronicles xxxvi: 11-20.

"Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in

Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord. And he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel.

"Moreover, all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen: and polluted the house of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place; but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.

(OUTSIDE)

"Therefore he brought upon them the King of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old

man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the King, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon: where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the Kingdom of Persia:

P. S.:

Companions, you now represent three of our ancient brethren in their Babylonish captivity. Agreeably to an ancient prophecy, when Cyrus ascends the throne of Persia, you will be liberated.

Huzza! Huzza!! Huzza!!!

P. S.:

That must be the exultation of the people on the ascent of Cyrus to the throne of Persia, and you will shortly be liberated.

Ezra i: 2-3.

C. O. H.:

"Thus saith Cyrus, King of Persia, The Lord God of Heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, which is in Jerusalem."

Exodus iii: 13, 14.

P. S.:

We are willing to go up but are doubtful of the reception we will meet with at the hands of our ancient brethren, for, when we shall go unto them, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent us unto you; and they shall say unto us, What is his name? What shall we say unto them?

C. O. H.:

I AM THAT I AM; Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

P. S.:

Companions let us remember this, it may be of service to us. I AM THAT I AM. Let us go up.

Well, we are once more without the walls of yon city of abomination, where we have been kept as captives, not without hope, for fifty and two years. Our course will be up the Euphrates, and a beautiful day it is for starting. The Syrian sun shines brightly, filling the great heart of nature with joy and gladness; then let us, with thankful and hopeful hearts, pursue our journey. But what have we here! This is that vast ditch, dug by order of King Cyrus for the purpose of draining the waters of the river. You remember how the Babylonians and their wicked king, Belshazzar, looking from their city walls, laughed at what they called his folly, but Cyrus knew their weakness and his own strength. He drained the waters and entered the

city by the bed of the river, and found an easy conquest. Gratitude to that Exalted Being who, as he supposed, had given him possession of all the Kingdoms of the Earth, caused him to issue that Royal Proclamation by which we are now made free.

Glory to the Lord God of Israel, who hath manifested His power, even unto the heathen in the return of his captive and repented people to the land of their fathers. Let us cross this ditch on this beautiful bridge, and on our way up the river; the first place we will come to will be the ruins of the City of Preth, destroyed by King Cyrus on his way to Babylon. The rubbish, however, has all been removed for the purpose of rebuilding, so we shall have no difficulty in passing. There are the ruins, and beyond the river is the City of Accad. When we come to old Rabbah we may expect trouble—it will be difficult, even dangerous to pass. The ruins are now in full view. What heaps of rubbish, stones, and timber in grand confusion!—Towers toppling, columns leaning and ready to fall, timbers scarred and seeming scarcely able to bear their own weight. Let us make our way through these ruins. (**Rough Road.**) This is a

rough road, but what have we here?—An altar left uninjured. Let us kneel before it and look to Him who alone is able to save.

FIRST PRAYER.

Psalm cxli.

“Lord, I cry unto thee, make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice; let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of hands as the evening sacrifice. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips. Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men that work in iniquity. Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil. Mine eyes are unto thee, O God, my Lord; in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute. Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity. Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while that I withal escape.”

* * * * *

FIRST ARCH.

Isaiah xlii: 16.

“I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not

known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

* * * * *

We ought to feel thankful for our safe progress through so many dangers. We will soon leave the Euphrates and go out upon the desert. That country on the opposite side of the river is Meso-potamia, where our father Abraham once dwelt. We are now entering upon the desert. The first place we will come to will be the ruins of Tadmah, the city of Palm Trees, built by our King, the wise and mighty Solomon, about fifteen years after the completion of the Temple. It was destroyed by the Chaldeans before they besieged Jerusalem. We are now among the ruins of Tadmah. What magnificence! Aye, what desolation! Stupendous rows of columns and obelisks, all of the most exquisite workmanship, lie scattered among the sand. Let us see if we can make our way through these ruins.

* * *Second Rough Road.*

Solomon built Tadmah in the Wilderness, as a place of rest and protection to the caravans, and

provided them safe escorts to Jerusalem, thence to Tyre, where the ships of Tarsus received their rich merchandise and conveyed it to all the known parts of the world. The tribute levied by our Grand Master for the protection thus afforded was worth kingdoms, and enabled him to beautify and adorn our glorious city until she became the centre of attraction for all nations and a resort for the wise and good. But here is an altar which has escaped the eye of the ruthless foe. Let us again kneel and look to Him who is able to sustain us in all our trials and difficulties.

SECOND PRAYER.

Psalm cxlii.

"I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make supplication. I poured out my complaint before Him; I showed before Him my trouble. When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me. I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.

I cried unto Thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. Attend unto my cry: for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I. Bring my soul out of prison that I may praise Thy name."

Second Arch, I will bring * * * * *

We have now passed these scenes of grandeur and desolation and are once more out upon the desert. The next place of historical importance to us is Riblah, a little place this side of Damascus. It was there that Nebuchadnezzar had his headquarters while Jerusalem was being besieged. It was there that King Zedekiah was taken and his eyes put out, and he was conveyed thence to Babylon, where was fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah. We have now passed this little city and are now approaching Damascus, the City of Delights, pleasant groves, and crystal fountains, delicious fruits, and flowers, and noble scenery! We will leave Damascus, cross the river Jordan, and pass the old quarries of Zeradatha, where the marble was prepared for the Temple. Our pathway lies directly through these quarries and is rough and

rugged, and we will have trouble in crossing some of these old dilapidated bridges, which from their architectural beauty, once added to the rich natural scenery. Let us see if we can make our way through these quarries and over these bridges, *Third Rough Road*. This is indeed a rough and rugged road, but I begin to see signs of habitation. Yonder in the northwest, rising like a blue cloud in distant, dreamy grandeur, I see the outlines of those noble mountains where the hewers under Adoniram prepared the timbers for the Temple of our God. Oh! Glorious associations! God-like scenery and God-like men for God-like purposes! But here's an altar, let us again kneel and thank the Eternal One for His safe protection during our weary journey, and humbly pray for its continuance during its short remainder.

THIRD PRAYER.

Psalm cxliii.

"Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear to my supplication: In thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness. And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man

living be justified. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath made me to dwell in darkness. Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate. Hear me speedily, O Lord, my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like them that go down into the pit. Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning, for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: bring my soul out of trouble and of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, for I am thy servant."

Third Arch, I will bring * * * * *

We have now passed the most of our difficulties, except a few passes and deep gorges in our own Lebanon range. From yonder rocky peak which caps the hill, at the base of which we are now standing, I have been told that Jerusalem can be distinctly seen. If you will remain here, I will climb this steep and see if this is so. Oh! There it is gloriously sleeping in the evening sunlight. Nestling among her everlasting hills I see the Valleys of Gihon and Hinnon, and glistening in the sunlight, as it merrily murmurs on its way to the

Jordan, sparkles the bright waters of the Brook Kedron. Yonder, sweeping up from the slumbering pool of Siloam, is Mount Moriah, whose summit is crowned with fragments of our glorious Temple, and where, mouldering in the dust, lies scattered the mighty works of Solomon and the matchless conceptions of H. B. There, too, are thy walls and thy bulwarks, oh! Jerusalem, torn and scattered on the hill side! Aye, which Jewish valor could not preserve. Oh, Jerusalem! Jerusalem!! If I forget thee, may my right hand forget its cunning! And if I prefer not Jerusalem above all things, then may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. But see! There seems to be a new building on Mount Moriah. It may be that the Grand Council are there holding their meetings. Let us repair thither and offer our humble services to aid and assist in the great and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the house of the Lord without the hope of fee or reward.

FIRST VAIL.

* * * * *

Exodus iv: 1-10.

"And Moses answered and said, But behold they will not believe me, nor harken unto my voice;

for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee. And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thy hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground—and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thy hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

SECOND VAIL.

* * * * *

“And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thy hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And he said, Put thy hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again, and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

THIRD VAIL.

* * * * *

“And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.”

* * * * *

LECTURE.

You have now, my Companions, received all the instruction that pertains to our noble Craft. You have ascended by regular gradation to the summit of Ancient Masonry. You have been conducted around the outer courts of the Temple, and viewed its beautiful proportions, its massive pillars, its starry-decked canopy, its Mosaic Pavement, its Lights, Jewels, and Furniture. You have been introduced into the Middle Chamber, and by the example of our ancient brethren, learned to reverence the Sabbath Day and keep it holy. You have entered the Sanctum Sanctorum, and in the integrity and inflexible fidelity of the illustrious Tyrian, have witnessed a degree of firmness and fortitude never surpassed in the history of man.

You have wrought in the quarries and exhibited a specimen of skill which stood the test of the overseers' squares. You have been seated in the Oriental Chair of King Solomon, and there learned important duties, a knowledge of which can alone qualify you to preside over the "Sons of Light." You have, with a faithful few, been admitted into the Secret vault, and learned the means by which the sacred volume of God's Law was deposited safe from the destructive rage of the enemies of Truth. You have once more entered the Most Holy Place, and been informed in what manner the Omnific Word was preserved through centuries of moral darkness by the wise suggestion of the Widow's Son. You have assisted at the completion and dedication of our Mystic Temple, and for your skill and fidelity to the Craft have received the congratulatory title of M.E.M. And you have now witnessed the mournful desolation of Zion—the sack and destruction of the City and Temple of our God, and the utter loss, as the world supposed, of those sacred articles contained in the Holy of Holies. You have seen the chosen people of God forced by a foreign despot from the pleasant groves and peaceful vineyards of their native Israel, and

dragged into captivity on the banks of the far-off Euphrates. But you have seen those afflicted Sons of Zion visited in the darkest night of their adversity by a precious light from Heaven, which guided them safely over "rough and rugged paths" to the scenes of their former glory. You have seen them enabled by the Signet of Eternal Truth, to pass the Vails that interposed between them and the object of their fondest hopes. You have seen them engaged, successfully, in the great and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the House of the Lord without the hope of fee or reward; and finally, you have seen the sacred treasures of the former Temple brought to light, and the Blessed Book restored to the longing eyes of the devout Israelites, to be the rule and guide, the comfort and support, of the people of God through all future time.

And now, my Companions, if in all these things you have seen only a series of unmeaning rites—if the spirit of Truth has not applied the moral of these ceremonies to your hearts, then indeed have we "labored in vain," and you "have spent your strength for naught." But I am persuaded to believe better things of you. I hope that you have entered into the spirit of these solemn rites,

and learned the full import of these interesting symbols; that all the forms and ceremonies through which you have passed, from the moment you first trod the outer courts, till your final reception within the Vails, have impressed deeply on your minds the great and fundamental principles of our time-honored Institution; for then, and then only, can you justly claim the noble name of Mason—then, and then only, can you feel that “Friendship,” that “Union,” that “Fervency” and “Zeal,” that “Purity of Heart,” which should characterize every one who would appropriate to himself the proud title, of a “workman that needeth not to be ashamed.”

CHARGE TO A NEWLY-EXALTED COMPANION.

WORTHY COMPANION.

By the consent and assistance of the members of this Chapter, you are now exalted to the sublime and honorable degree of Royal Arch Mason. The rites and mysteries developed in this degree have been handed down through a chosen few, unchanged by time and uncontrolled by prejudice; and we expect and trust that they will be regarded by you with the same veneration, and transmitted

by you with the same scrupulous purity to your successors.

No one can reflect on the ceremonies of gaining admission into this place without being forcibly struck with the important lessons which they teach. Here we are necessarily led to contemplate with gratitude and admiration the sacred source whence all earthly comforts flow. Here we find additional inducements to continue steadfast and immovable in the discharge of our respective duties; and here we are bound by the most solemn ties to promote each other's welfare, and correct each other's failings by advice, admonition, and reproof. As it is our earnest desire, and a duty we owe to our companions of this order, that the admission of every candidate into this Chapter should be attended by the approbation of the most scrutinizing eye, we hope always to possess the satisfaction of finding none among us but such as will promote to the utmost of their power the great end of our institution. By paying due attention to this determination, we expect you will never recommend any candidate to this Chapter whose abilities and knowledge of the preceding degrees you cannot freely vouch for, and who you

do not firmly and confidently believe will fully conform to the principles of our order and fulfill the obligations of a Royal Arch Mason. While such are our members, we may expect to be united in one object without luke-warmness, inattention, or neglect; but zeal, fidelity, and affection will be the distinguishing characteristics of our society, and that satisfaction, harmony, and peace may be enjoyed at our meetings which no other society can afford.

LECTURE

And now, my Companions, although you have received all the instruction that pertains to our noble Craft, your labors are not yet ended. For should God, in his all-wise providence, extend to you length of days (and we hope and trust He may,) you should spend them in His service and that of the Craft. And when old age renders you unfit for the active duties of the Order, you should, like the leaf in falling, which serves but to nourish the root of the tree upon which it had been sustained, render your declining years serviceable to the Order and beneficial to all mankind.

Men in all ages have sought to erect monuments to perpetuate their own greatness, but as yet in vain. They have daubed with untempered mortar, and admitted into their structures the base and discordant materials of pride and ambition. Hence their edifices have toppled from their foundations, or been torn asunder by internal violence. And where are they now? The weeping voice of history answers, "fallen." The meteors of an age, they blazed on high, the gaze of one-half the world, but they have sunk beneath the horizon, where their pale ghosts now flit about in sad lamentation of their former grandeur.

But the proud and lofty superstructure of our institution, supported and sustained by its author, the great High Priest, will stand until the sun shall cease to rise to gild its cloud-capped towers, or the moon lead on the night to illuminate its starry-decked canopy.

The tide of time and chance may roll at its base; the heavy waves of calumny may beat about its walls; the gusts and storms of malice may assault its lofty battlements; the fierce rains of persecution may descend upon its spacious roof, but all in vain.

Thus sustained and supported, it will stand until the pillars of the universe are shaken, and all things have passed away as the baseless fabric of a vision.

Then, and not till then, will Masonry cease to revel in Charity, and riot in nobleness of soul.

* * * * *

PRAYER AT CLOSING.

By the *wisdom* of the Supreme High Priest may we be directed, by his *strength* may we be enabled, and by the *beauty* of his Holiness may we be incited to perform the obligations here enjoined on us, to keep inviolably the mysteries here unfolded to us, and invariably to practice all those duties out of the Chapter which are inculcated in it. So mote it be. Amen.

“Take off your jewels and aprons.”