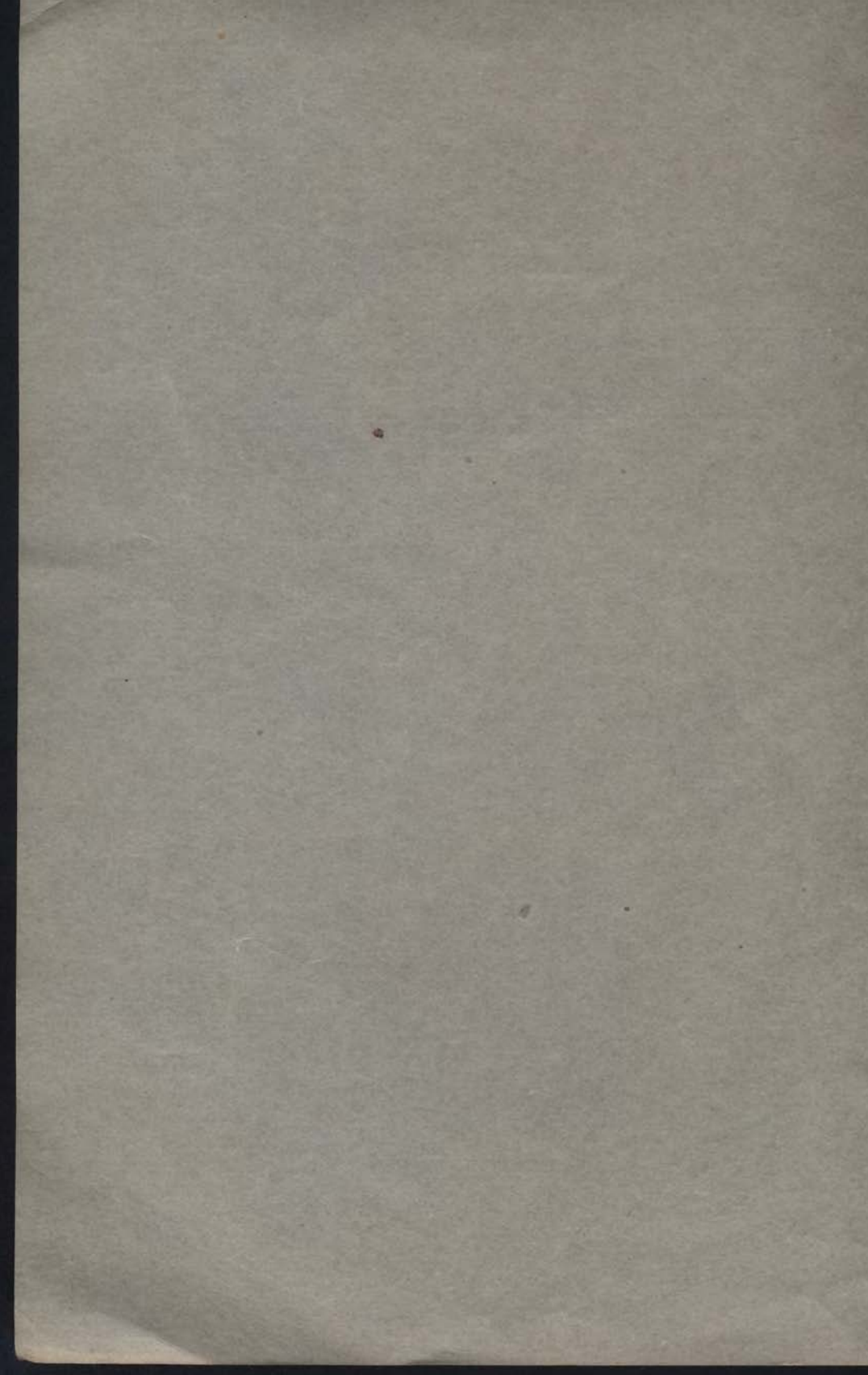
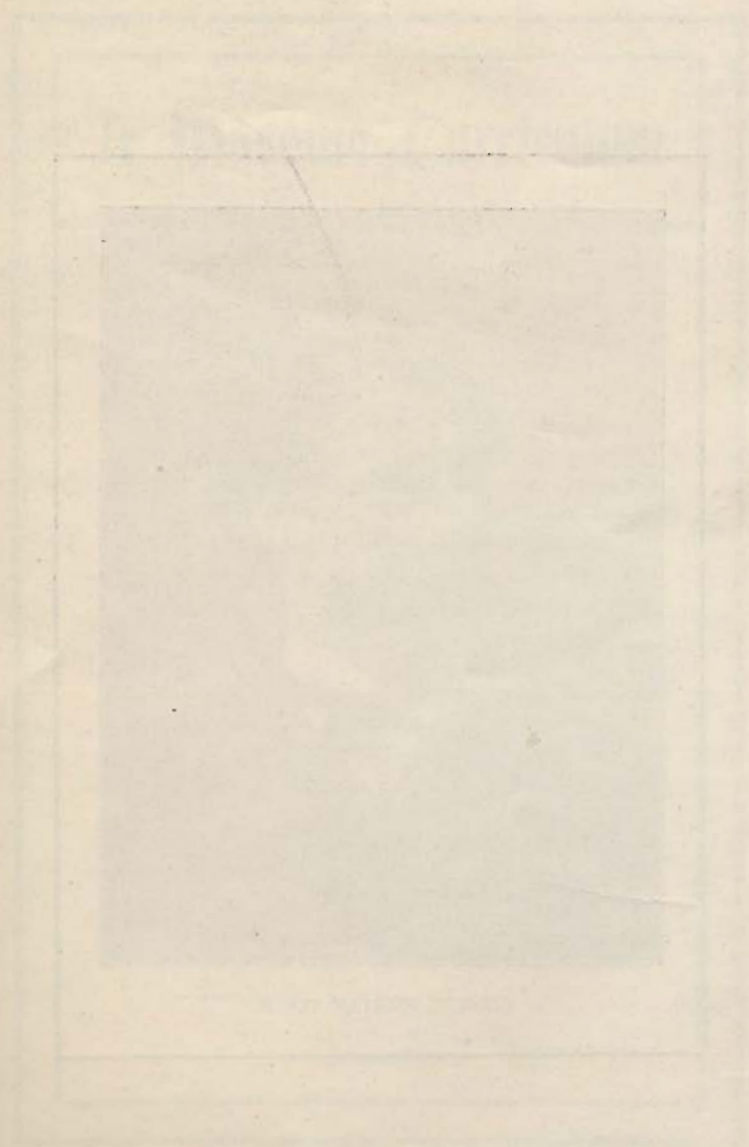




A MASONIC CURRICULUM

BY G. W. SPETH.







GEORGE WILLIAM SPETH.

A Masonic Curriculum

A GUIDE TO A COURSE OF
STUDY IN FREEMASONRY.

BY

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Many years ago, in response to a wish repeatedly expressed in quarters widely apart, I ventured to draw up a Masonic Curriculum for the benefit of English Students. I have now been asked to revise this, bringing it up to date and keeping in view more especially the requirements of the brethren in the United States of America. The invitation is of too flattering a nature to be lightly rejected, but I confess that I approach the task set me with unusual diffidence.

In the study of Masonry there are two ways, as in most matters. The student may read anything and everything which comes within his reach, without order or method and, whether he seek knowledge or merely relaxation, his paths will be pleasant albeit somewhat bewildering. The majority of Masonic authors have a great gift of eloquence and plausibility, and unless our reader be exceptionally clear headed and cautious, I might almost say unless he be of a phenomenally unreceptive disposition, he will infallibly credit each authority in turn, until in due course he wakens up to the conviction that they are, in many cases, contradicting each other in the most deplorable fashion. Then will succeed either that state of helpless exasperation when, like the inimitable Lord Dundreary, he will "give it up" as being "what no feller can understand," or, if he have more grit in him, he will endeavour to worry it out by comparing one author with the other. In this latter case he may ultimately succeed in forming a just conclusion, but at a fearful expenditure of time and

study, or he may be led away by some unusually specious writer just because he has failed to light upon the one book which confutes him. I speak feelingly on this subject, because I have gone through a similar experience. I remember wasting, or almost so, six whole months of daily reading in the British Museum because I read indiscriminately and without method. I had no one at hand to guide me, I did the best I could for myself, but whenever I felt most "cocksure" on any one subject as the result of one day's reading, I was certain to have to revise my opinions within a week or so, owing to some other work which had fallen into my hands.

But, as the cookery books say, there is a better way. This is to form a definite plan of the course of study to be pursued, and to follow it unswervingly, relegating all side issues to a time when the preliminary grounding shall be complete. To map out such a course is the object of these pages.

When the navigator, greatly daring, embarks upon a voyage of discovery in seas with which he is imperfectly acquainted, his first care is to procure and study the best possible chart to be obtained of that particular region. The chart is imperfect in the very nature of things, however good it may be, and the navigator starts with this presumption ever present in his mind. But it gives him the general trend and bearings of the coasts, and where no soundings or currents are marked he knows that extra caution is needed. Even wrong indications will be brought to his knowledge during the voyage, and these he will carefully note and correct. In like manner the Masonic student must first acquire and study some one chart, or book, which shall present to him a general view of the subject, in order that he may know how to lay his course from day to day, so as to make a methodical progress in his study and feel that he is gradually filling in the blanks in his mind. The mistakes in the book,—no book on Masonry yet written is without some—will only mislead him, if at all, until the moment when he is able to compare the particular passage in question with the accounts of other writers, and he will then be able to mark them as doubtful, or possibly even to rectify them. This preliminary study should not be too deep or prolonged, and the student should try to keep his mind open throughout and unfettered by the arguments and statements of his author; his

endeavour should be merely to obtain a comprehensive idea of the questions to be solved, the path to be travelled, the region to be surveyed. Later on, if the book be a good one,—it ought to be the best obtainable—he will revert to it again and again, studying its every statement and carefully correcting it by the light of acquired knowledge. It should, in fact, be used as the navigator's chart, cherished because it gives valuable indications and suggestions, but not trusted implicitly until proved correct. It is the only book which we shall treat in this fashion, suspending our judgment until the end: each succeeding book must be weighed and tested carefully as we proceed by comparison with our standard chart.

Many books would answer this purpose more or less well, but the best of all, in my opinion, I think I may even say in the opinion of all those best capable of judging is, R. F. Gould's *History of Freemasonry*.* Let this book be perused carefully but not too minutely at first, our object now is simply to gain general impressions, not to acquire settled convictions. That will come later, and we shall return to our chart over and over again as we proceed, in order to correct the indications or to take fresh bearings. It was finished twelve years ago, and fresh voyages of discovery have since been made: it is not an infallible guide and shares the fate of the latest Admiralty Chart issued, in being subject to improvement. But it is far and away the best we have.

We rise from the perusal of this book with one fact tolerably well impressed upon our mind, viz., that in the middle of our ocean lies an island, A. D. 1717, the period at which our Craft underwent a reorganization of some sort; and we are conscious that between this island and our own shores lies a tract which is fairly well mapped out, but that beyond it extends a waste with scarcely a sounding more than approximately indicated, stretching away into the distant past. Our first effort must be to gain a clear insight into this past: we shall not altogether succeed, and we shall possibly never even approach the shore at the other side, although we may be able to fill up many blanks, to discover solid ground here and there, mark the probable flow of a current and take some additional soundings.

*The History of Freemasonry, Its Antiquities, Symbols, Constitutions, Customs, etc. Embracing an investigation of the Records of the Organizations of the Fraternity in England, Scotland, Ireland, British Colonies, France, Germany, and the United States. Derived from Official Sources. . . . London: Thomas C. Jack, 45 Ludgate Hill, 1883-87.

ANCIENT HISTORY.

We find then that something occurred in 1717 which in some way modified something which previously existed, viz., the organization of the Freemasons' Lodges, and that, in some indefinable way, these lodges were obviously connected with the gild system of the middle ages. Most writers would now-a-days derive these lodges directly from the City Companies of stonemasons or masons.

Our task must therefore be to acquire a comprehensive conception of the gild system in general and of some special gilds in particular. The following list of books will be found useful for that purpose: it is not necessary to read them all, but will do no harm.

Toulmin Smith. "English Gilds. The original Ordinances of more than one hundred early English Gilds: . . . from original MSS. of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. 1870." Especially instructive is the Introductory Essay prefixed to this collection "On the History and Development of Gilds and the Origin of Trade-Unions," by Dr. Brentano, which has also been issued in separate form.

Henry Thomas Riley. "Liber Albus: The White Book of the City of London. Compiled A. D. 1419, by John Carpenter, Common Clerk, Richard Whittington, Mayor. Translated from the Original Latin and Anglo-Norman . . . 1861."

William Herbert. "The History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies of London . . . London, 1834 & 1836."

W. Carew Hazlitt. "The Livery Companies of the City of London, their Origin, Character, Development, and Social and Political Importance . . . London, 1892."

Rev. J. Mallet Lambert. "Two thousand Years of Gild Life; or an Outline of the History and Development of the Gild System from Early Times . . . Hull, 1891."

Edward Conder, Jun. "Records of the Hole Crafte and Fellowship of Masons, with a Chronicle of the History of the Worshipful Company of Masons of the City of London . . . 1894."

Ebenezer Bain. "Merchant and Craft Guilds, a History of the Aberdeen Incorporated Trades . . . Aberdeen, 1887."

James Colston. "The Incorporated Trades of Edinburgh, with an Introductory Chapter on the Rise and Progress of Municipal Government in Scotland . . . Edinburgh, 1891."

Of the above list, which might be greatly extended, the works of Smith, Riley and Conder are especially recommended: the last named is almost indispensable, although its place may in part be supplied by a paper read by him in the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, to be cited later on.

Having carefully studied these books, we shall probably feel that the connection with the City Companies or Gilds of masons, although it apparently did exist, is not altogether sufficient to warrant the inference that they gave rise to or were the immediate progenitors of the Freemason Lodges of the 17th and 18th centuries. I believe I was the first to revert in recent times to the older but somewhat discredited theory that our real ancestors were, not the City Companies but a universal gild of masons, and to show good reasons for my suggestion. I shall therefore not allow myself to be swayed by false modesty, but recommend next a perusal of two papers read by me before my Lodge, entitled respectively, "Free and Freemason," in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*,* Vol. X., and "Leicester Masonry, 1103-1327," in vol. XII.

Our next step is therefore to try and find out all we can about these Freemasons or Church Builders. This brings us back to Gould's *History*, where his chapters on Medieval Masonry should be attentively studied, as also his chapter dealing with that remarkable series of documents formerly in possession of the Lodges, of which some 60-70 manuscript versions are still extant, variously known as the "Old Charges," and "Manuscript Rolls," or "Constitutions." The following works will be of the greatest assistance in studying these MS. Rolls.

William James Hughan. "The Old Charges of British Freemasons, . . . illustrated with portions of fac-similes. . . ."
A Preface by the Rev. A. F. A. Woodford, . . . London, 1872."
Bro. Woodford's introduction will ever hold its own as a charming literary effort, and the first attempt to prove the inestimable value of these documents.

William James Hughan. "The Old Charges of British Freemasons, including a Reproduction of the Haddon MS . . . Second Edition . . . London, 1895." Although modestly called a "second edition," this is an entirely new arrangement and both books should be consulted.

"Quatuor Coronatorum Antigrapha," vols. I, II, III, IV, V and VI. These are some of the famous Reprints of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, and the volumes cited contain complete and beautiful fac-similes and transcripts of 17 of these curious documents, besides partial fac-similes and full transcripts of 4 others, with careful commentaries in every case.

Dr. W. Begemann. "An attempt to classify the Old Charges of British Masons." *Transactions*, I.

Wyatt Papworth. "Naymus Graecus." *Ibid*, III.

*In future I shall allude to this series simply as "Transactions."

C. C. Howard. "A Critical Examination of the Alban and Athelstan Legends." *Ibid*, IV.

C. C. Howard. "Naymus Grecus identified." *Ibid*.

Dr. S. Russell Forbes. "Who was Naymus of the Greeks?" *Ibid*, V.

Dr. W. Begemann. "Remarks on the Craft Legend of the old British Masons." *Ibid*.

C. C. Howard. "The Evidential Value of the Regius, the Cooke, and the W. Watson MSS." *Ibid*, VI.

John Yarker. "The Nismesian Theory and French Legend." *Ibid*.

W. H. Upton. "The True Text of the Book of Constitutions." *Ibid*, VII.

But that the universal gild of Freemasons did, in the time of its decadence and when it was losing its operative character, fuse in some measure with the City Companies or Gilds is indisputable, and valuable information as regards the *modus operandi*, so far at least as concerns the London Company, should be sought in Brother Conder's paper, "The Masons' Company of the City of London." *Transactions*, IX.

We shall next be tempted to enquire into the probable origin of this universal gild, a subject of deep interest about which the most contradictory theories have been and are even now hotly maintained. As I do not wish to bias my readers in any way and am only endeavouring to afford them the opportunity of forming their own opinion, I shall, in this connection as in all others, recommend any books likely to aid our investigation, whether they are opposed to my own convictions or not.

A theory respecting the origin of Medieval English masonry which has been advocated by ultra-patriotic German writers with more passionate enthusiasm than literary candour, and was at one time accepted by many English students is, that the whole system was brought into England by the German Stonemasons' Fraternities, the *Steinmetzen*. Indications of the trend of German opinion may be found in many books which appeared after the publication of the letters of the Abbé Grandidier in various French journals in 1779 and 1782. J. A. Schneider in 1803, F. Heldmann in 1819, C. L. Stieglitz in 1827, Heideloff in 1844, all contributed to the gradual evolution of the Steinmetz theory, but it was first insisted upon in its entirety by Fallou, in *Die Mysterien der Freimaurer*, 1848. Unfortunately none of these books has ever been translated into English. There are, however, two works in our mother tongue, well within the reach of all readers, which sustain this theory and should be consulted. Bro. J. G. Findel's *History of Freemasonry* (German) has been translated into almost all European languages, and

there have been more than one English edition. Then we have the *Origin and Early History of Masonry*, by G. W. Steinbrenner,* and the subject should also be looked up in the *Cyclopaedia of Masonry*, by Mackey, another supporter of the theory. For the arguments against this view we must now turn back to Gould's *History*, Chapter III, and to my paper in *Transactions* I., "The Steinmetz Theory Critically Examined," wherein I show the gradual evolution of the theory and the foundation of quicksand on which, in my opinion, it is erected.

A theory of origin which long held its ground and is even now advocated by prominent students is, that the early Norman builders inherited their traditions directly from the *Collegia* which the Romans undoubtedly introduced into Britain. I am not able to point to any book which has treated this theory at any length, the arguments in its favour are to be found dispersed here and there in Masonic literature, but never, to my knowledge, focussed. Gould has a few words on the general question in the first volume of his *History*. The possibility, or otherwise, of this suggested origin must however be sought for in works on history in general, and it may at least be confessed that it is rather a difficult matter to bridge over the long period of relapse into comparative ignorance, which followed the withdrawal of the Roman legions from Britain and continued for a considerable time after the occupation of the land by the Saxons. None the less, it must be admitted that there are striking analogies between the Roman Colleges of Artificers and our Medieval Masonry.

The first Masonic writer to show a possibility of the reintroduction of the usages and traditions of the Colleges into Medieval Masonry was Dr. George F. Fort, *The Early History and Antiquities of Freemasonry*,† He ascribed this service to the Comacine Masters, a building fraternity which had its centre on Lake Como in North Italy. Bro. Fort's surmises were not sufficiently supported by evidence and evoked little comment at the time. He was looked upon as an ingenious visionary. But quite recently a charming book has been published by a lady long resident in Italy, *The Cathedral Builders, The Story of a Great Guild*,‡ in which

*New York, Masonic Publishing Company, 1868.

†London, Sampson, Low & Co., 1876. I am not quite sure whether an American edition was ever published, but Dr. Fort is (or was) an American and resided at Camden, New Jersey.

‡Leader Scott,—Sampson, Low & Co., London, 1899, 218.

she adduces good reason for holding that the Comacine Masters were originally a Roman College which fled to Lake Como from the barbarian invasion of Rome, and subsequently, under the Lombards, made use of their long cherished and preserved technical skill in the building art, gradually spreading all over Italy and throwing out individual branches into Europe in general. This book should undoubtedly be in the possession of every Masonic student. It has not yet been before us long enough to produce that deep impression upon our minds which I think it is destined to create, but it supplies the evidence which was lacking in Fort's work, and is a brilliant vindication of our Brother's intuition, which I trust he has been spared to enjoy. Now that the clue has been furnished I hope that further research may discover traces of Comacine influence in English Masonry, and I believe that corroboration has already been found in Ireland and will shortly be submitted to us in the Quatuor Coronati Lodge by Bro. Sir Thomas Drew of Dublin. Leader Scott has undoubtedly built a bridge between Roman and Medieval Masonry, whether it will prove sufficiently substantial for our purpose remains to be seen.

Our German brethren have been prolific in suggestions of origin. A favourite general idea is that there is nothing medieval in Freemasonry except its external organisation; that in or about 1700 the Craft was taken possession of by individuals filled with the new ideas in religion and culture then prevalent, who revived an expiring society to propagate their tenets. But this main idea immediately branches out in divergent directions. The great mass of the literature on this subject is unfortunately not procurable in an English garb. While some hold the Free-thinkers and Deists as the prime movers in the new direction given to the Craft, others, like Nicolai last century, ascribe our modern Freemasonry entirely to an attempt to realise Bacon's *Nova Atlantis*. Others look more to the general philosophical and literary movement of the time, and their views are well expressed in a translation of an essay by the late Bro. Cramer, which may be consulted in *Transactions*, vol. II. Still another section points to the influence of the Rosicrucian and Hermetic societies. All these various lines of thought will be found discussed in Gould's *History*, vol. I., and as regards Hermeticism, one or two valuable papers in our own *Transactions* should be studied. For instance: Rev. A. F. A. Woodford, *Freemasonry and Hermeticism* in vol. I.; Dr. W. Wynn Westcott, *The Religion of Freemasonry illum-*

inated by the *Kabbala* in vol. I., and *Rosicrucians, their History and Aims*, in vol. VII.

A very favourite contention of Masonic writers is that we derive somehow from the old Classical Mysteries of Egypt, Greece and Rome. Hitherto it has seemed impossible to imagine a sufficient connecting link, but if the Comacine theory already alluded to can be sustained this view will acquire renewed force. That some similarity is apparent between our ceremonies, and those of the Mysteries seems to me almost incontestible, but great care must be taken not to accept as proven all the assertions of imaginative writers. Take, for instance, such a brilliant effort, based upon the spurious *Legend of Sethos*,* as Brother Clavel's *Histoire Pittoresque de la Franc-Maçonnerie*. Even the accounts of the Fathers of the Church must be looked upon with suspicion, for they seem based rather upon imagination than true knowledge. How little is really known of this subject may be gathered by one illustration. Much has been written upon the mysteries of the Cabiri; a perusal of certain writers would lead us to conclude that the Cabiri were the sole and undoubted Masons. But what are the facts? Every mention of them, however trivial, made by the really classic writers, those who had a chance of writing from knowledge gained by actual contact with, or initiation into, the rites, has been collected by Bro. FitzGibbon into less than three pages of our *Transactions*, vol. VIII. And they tell us practically nothing. Our Brother has promised to continue his investigations by taking each Mystery in turn, a Herculean labour, as it involves reading all the classics for the sake of a miserable little extract here and there. But we shall have at least a firm foundation of ascertained fact on which to build, instead of the plausible allegations which at present do duty.

Various learned societies and "Academies" of the 17th century have been tentatively connected by more than one student with a possible origin of the Craft. But I frankly hold that their claims are so slight and nebulous as to permit us to refrain from examining them at this time. When we have learnt all that we can about more pertinent matters we may profitably deviate into the curious by-paths of these societies, they will provide interesting occupation for our leisure hours. But there is one association which will repay minute study at this stage, the

*See the paper by the late Sir Benjamin W. Richardson in *Transactions* IV.

French Compagnonnage, or unions of French journeymen of all handicrafts. Bro. R. F. Gould devotes a long chapter to its consideration in vol. I. of his *History*, which should certainly be carefully digested: after which the two papers entitled *A Few Words on the Compagnonnage*, in vols. I. and II. of the *Transactions*, from the pen of Bro. W. H. Rylands, will throw increased light on the question.

The student should now be in a position to form some idea of his own as to the origin and status of our British forefathers, and although he has already turned more than once to Gould's chapter VII. on *Medieval Operative Masonry*, I should advise him to now restudy it in the light of all he has read, in order to finally settle his convictions and clear up doubtful points. In itself it is one of the finest chapters of the book, and will give him all the information on architecture he is likely to want; but, if he feels inclined to pursue that branch of research further, the references given by Gould will enable him to do so. And in connection with this chapter he must not omit to study the succeeding one, "The Statutes (of the realm) relating to Freemasons," a comprehension of which is absolutely necessary in order to acquire clear conceptions of our subject. Doubts may thence arise as to how far certain usages of the Craft alluded to in the Rolls of Constitution were compatible with the laws of the land. One of these alleged usages, the Annual Assembly, has been the subject of three papers in our *Transactions* embodying opposing views, which should be studied. "The Assembly": in vol. V., is treated by Bro. R. F. Gould: and in vol. VI., by Dr. Begemann and G. W. Speth.

At this point the student may possibly be tempted to take up the question of the ceremonial and ritual of the Craft, but I strongly advise him to leave this on one side until a later period. My endeavour has been hitherto to lay a sure foundation of accurate historical knowledge,—that is, accurate so far as our means will permit. Our foundations are just now showing above ground, and we shall in the next section commence to raise the superstructure of *comparatively* modern and ascertained history. It will be better to complete the carcass of the building before we turn our attention to its decoration or furniture. We need a sound acquaintance with the history of the last 200 years before we can profitably attempt to solve the many questions of ritual which must already be presenting themselves to our mind.

MODERN HISTORY.

We are thus arrived at our midway point, A. D. 1717, when the first Grand Lodge that ever existed, the Grand Lodge at London, claiming at first only authority over the Lodges of its own creation in London and Westminster, was established. The earliest history of this movement is given by Dr. James Anderson in the 1738, or second, edition of his *Book of Constitutions*. The book is difficult and costly to procure, but a facsimile reproduction of it is given in Vol. VII. of the Quatuor Coronati Reprints. Even without this aid the chapters in Gould's *History*, treating the matter should be sufficient for most purposes. As all Freemasonry, as we now know it, is undoubtedly derived directly or indirectly from this premier Grand Lodge, the study of its history is indispensable. Without that knowledge we can form no just conclusions on many of the topics constantly agitating Masonic circles. We must not only study its history up to 1813 at least, but also that of the sister Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland.

For the history of the premier Grand Lodge we have in the first place to resort to Gould and Anderson. But in 1751 a rival Grand Lodge arose, the self named "Antients" or "Athol" Masons, and the rivalry lasted until 1813, when the union of the rivals constituted our present United Grand Lodge of England. In studying this question we must call to our aid a writer who takes a diametrically opposite view to that of Bro. Gould, viz., Bro. Henry Sadler, sub-librarian to the Grand Lodge. His epoch making book, *Masonic Facts and Fictions*,* is an absolute necessity to a due comprehension of the matter, and his arguments must be carefully weighed against those of Brother Gould.

For the American Mason a knowledge of the history of the "Time Immemorial" Lodge at York, which developed into a Grand Lodge, not in rivalry but co-existent with the Grand Lodges in London, is all the more necessary, as so many American writers still commit daily the careless blunder of confusing this Grand Lodge at York with the Grand Lodge of the "Antients" at London. Nine out of ten American Masons to this day claim to belong to the York Rite, apparently unaware of the fact that there is no distinguishable shred of the York Rite in existence anywhere, and that no one knows what it was. What they really mean,

*George Kenning, Great Queen St., London, 1887.

although they do not know it, and should say, is, that their Lodges follow the rite of the "Antient" or Athol Masons, as many of the early American Lodges were created by this body. With the Grand Lodge at York no American Mason was ever connected in any way: it never planted a Lodge outside of England, and not more than ten in all there, not one of which survived the 18th century. Gould gives a very good chapter on this body, and further details may be studied in the following books and papers:

W. J. Hughan. "Masonic Sketches and Reprints, . . . New York, Masonic Publishing Company, 1871."

T. B. Whytehead. "The Grand Lodge at York." *Transactions*, vol. II.

W. J. Hughan. "The York Grand Lodge," *Ibid*, XIII.

T. B. Whytehead. "Relics of the Grand Lodge of All England." *Ibid*, XIII.

There was one more Grand Lodge in England which took its rise in a quarrel between the Grand Lodge (original) and the Lodge of Antiquity in London, and was for a few short years connected with the Grand Lodge at York: but its transitory influence and ephemeral existence are curious rather than important, and the information supplied by Gould will be quite sufficient. Further views may, however, be sought in some of the many editions of Preston's *Illustrations of Freemasonry*.

For the history of the United Grand Lodge of England, from 1813 to the present date, Gould will amply suffice.

The second Grand Lodge to be established was that of Ireland. At the time when Brother Gould wrote his *History* comparatively little was known about the early days of this body, and his account must therefore be supplemented and amended by a study of the writings of Dr. W. J. Chetwode Crawley, who has done so much in recent years to lift the veil. The history of this Grand Lodge is important, not only because Irish Military Lodges have been so prominent in diffusing light throughout the globe, but because of its intimate connection with the rival Grand Lodge at London. I append a list of Bro. Chetwode Crawley's works.

Caementaria Hibernica, being the Public Constitutions that have served to hold together the Freemasons of Ireland. Re-issued with introductions by : Wm. McGee, 18 Nassau St., Dublin: G. W. Speth, Bromley, Kent." Vol. I., 1895, Vol. II., 1896, Vol. III., 1900.

Introduction to H. Sadler's "Masonic Reprints and Historical Revelations. . . . George Kenning, London, 1896."

"Notes on Irish Freemasonry," Nos. I. to IV., in the *Transactions*, Vol. VIII., pp. 53, 79, 110, and vol. IX., p. 4.

The history of the Grand Lodge of Scotland is of importance because we have in that country a long series of minutes of Scottish Lodges before ever a Grand Lodge was thought of. The only pre-Grand Lodge minutes in existence are the Scottish. It will, however, be necessary for us to determine how far we may consider that these minutes reflect the early usages of English and Irish Lodges, a most important factor in the question. Our only guide in this matter will be some of the papers and the discussions ensuing thereon printed in the *Transactions*, first carefully studying the book of the Grand Secretary of Scotland, placed at the head of the following list. If this is not procurable, Gould's *History* supplies us with a valuable summary of it.

David Murray Lyon. "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel) No. 1. Embracing an account of the Rise and Progress of Freemasonry in Scotland by : William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1873." A second edition is announced for issue soon.

R. F. Gould. "On some Old Scottish Customs." *Transactions*, I.

G. W. Speth. "Scottish Freemasonry before the Era of Grand Lodges." *Ibid.*

E. Macbean. "Formation of the Grand Lodge of Scotland." *Ibid.*, III.

Also some of the arguments used in the discussion of papers which I shall cite when we come to consider the ritual.

As regards the history of the Craft on the continent of Europe and in British possessions, I expect that American students will be satisfied with the summary given by Bro. Gould. If more be desired it must be searched for in the literature of the countries in question.

But as regards the United States of America and the Dominion of Canada, Americans are likely to be interested in a higher degree, and Gould's necessarily brief account will scarcely content them. I refrain, however, from pointing out any particular histories to supplement Gould's, because they are many and valuable and will be at least as well known to every intelligent American as to myself. Several of the American jurisdictions have been treated separately in compendious works. Yet, even at the risk of appearing invidious, I must mention the last work of this class issued on your side of the water, the *History of Freemasonry in Canada*, by Bro. J. Ross Robertson. It is a monument of patient and arduous research, covering much more ground than

its title would imply, and throwing more than one important sidelight on the history of the Craft in general.

We have now laid our foundation of history and may advance to the consideration of Rites, Ceremonial and Symbolism. Good arguments might perhaps be advanced for taking these allied branches of investigation in inverse order, but I have thought the matter out carefully and, although I am not prepared to maintain that my scheme of rotation is unquestionably the best possible, it appeals to me as the most conducive to the orderly understanding of the whole subject.

RITES.

Scarcely was our universal and present system of three degrees well established than further degrees and extended rites appeared on the scene in bewildering profusion. Some are dead, others moribund; some, like the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, are widely practised; and even now, before our eyes, new ones are springing into existence. It would be no exaggeration to affirm that on each separate one a goodly sized volume might be written, and in fact some of them have received a considerable amount of literary attention. Yet to devote much time to their study at this stage would be to unduly hinder our progress. I think that all that is necessary now is a careful study of Gould's Chapter XXIV. He describes the rise and fall of most of the various additions to pure and ancient Freemasonry, and all the really important ones are treated with more than sufficient detail for our present purposes. But, if the American reader desires to know more of the influence of these rites on the Masonry of his own country, and the subsequent history of those which still hold the field there, he will easily find numerous short histories and pamphlets, often in the shape of printed Lodge Addresses, written by American Masons, which will supply his want. A great deal of detailed information on this subject will be found, for instance, in the *History of the Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons and Concordant Orders*.*

*Boston and New York, The Fraternity Publishing Company, 1891.

CEREMONIAL.

It is now time to enquire into the ceremonial of ancient Freemasonry as at first developed. The chief, but not the only, questions to be considered are: Of how many degrees did the Craft consist immediately before and shortly after the events of 1717? What was the nature of these degrees? What share had the Royal Arch in these degrees? When did the latter first acquire its present aspect? It is well known, at least in England, that I hold views on these matters which are not shared by some of our foremost authorities, for instance, by Bro. W. J. Hughan and the late Bro. John Lane. As I must scrupulously avoid biasing my readers I will content myself with giving a list of books and papers, for and against, which should certainly be carefully studied. The first cited in the following list will serve as the initial step in our research: the others are given in the order of their publication and may well be read in the same order, culminating, as they do, in the friendly pitched battle between myself and Bro. Hughan.

W. J. Hughan. "Origin of the English Rite of Freemasonry." London, Kenning, 1884.

R. F. Gould. "On some Scottish Masonic Customs." *Transactions*, I.

J. Yarker. "The unrecognized Lodges and Degrees of Freemasonry before and after 1717." *Ibid.*

G. W. Speth. "Scottish Freemasonry before the Era of Grand Lodges." *Ibid.*

H. Sadler. "Notes on the Ceremony of Installation." Kenning, 1889.

R. F. Gould. "On the Antiquity of Masonic Symbolism." *Transactions*, III.

William Dixon. "The Old Lodge at Lincoln." *Ibid.*, IV.

W. J. Hughan. "English Royal Arch Masonry." *Ibid.*

W. J. Hughan. "The Ancient Stirling Lodge." *Ibid.*, VI.

W. J. Hughan. "The Masters' Lodge at Exeter." *Ibid.*, VII.

W. J. Hughan. "The Three Degrees of Masonry." *Ibid.*, X.

G. W. Speth. "The Two Degrees Theory." *Ibid.*, XI.

Some of the above papers only touch our enquiry incidentally, but they are all more or less pertinent to it. The last two, as already stated, present the facts and arguments in battle array.

SYMBOLISM.

The subject of Masonic Symbolism may next be taken up. Although I strongly advise postponing its study to this, nearly the final stage of our enquiry, it is a curious fact that most writers on Freemasonry seem to begin with it, and think themselves competent to discuss its many

involved problems without any historical knowledge worth speaking of. In no other branch of archaeology would they be so venturesome. No man would attempt to discuss, say, Hindu symbols, without knowing something of the history of the races of Hindustan and of their religions. But in Masonry, as difficult a study as any in the world, the slightest smattering of knowledge is considered sufficient to warrant a brother setting up in business as a teacher.

Masonic symbology cannot be studied by itself; we cannot begin to understand it until we are fairly acquainted with the symbology of past and present civilisations. The books which may profitably be consulted are infinite in number and written in every tongue, from the Sanscrit of the East, the Chinese of Confucius, the Hebrew of the Kabala, the Arabic of the Koran, to the German of a Grimm, the French of a Goblet d'Alviella, and the English of a Simpson or Albert Pike. To make any selection among profane writers is simply impossible, I do not wish to convert this article into a *catalogue raisonne* of universal symbology. I confine myself therefore to mentioning several papers read before my lodge and printed in our *Transactions*, which will be found helpful, suggestive and far-reaching. Some of them have already been cited as bearing upon other subjects.

Prof. T. Hayter Lewis. "On an early version of the Hiramic Legend." Vol. I.

Rev. A. F. A. Woodford. "Freemasonry and Hermeticism." *Ibid.*

Gen. Sir Charles Warren. "On the Orientation of Temples." *Ibid.*

Dr. W. Wynn Westcott. "The Religion of Freemasonry illuminated by the Kabbalah." *Ibid.*

W. Simpson. "The Threefold Division of Temples." *Ibid.*

J. M. Spainhour. "Indian Relics." *Ibid.*

W. Simpson. "The Worship of Death." Vol. II.

R. F. Gould. "On the Antiquity of Masonic Symbolism." Vol. III.

F. F. Schnitger. "Evidence of Steinmetz Esoterics." *Ibid.*

W. Simpson. "Mummers or Guisers." *Ibid.*

W. Simpson. "Brahminical Initiation." *Ibid.*

Rev. Haskett Smith. "The Druses of Syria." Vol. IV.

Mrs. Murray-Aynsley. "The Swastika." *Ibid.*

Rev. P. J. Oliver Minos. "Masonic Landmarks among the Hindus."

Ibid.

Dr. S. Russell Forbes. "A Masonic Built City." *Ibid.*

W. Simpson. "The Noose Symbol." Vol. V.

Mrs. Murray-Aynsley. "The Tau or Cross." *Ibid.*

Rev. C. J. Ball. "The Proper Names of Masonic Tradition." *Ibid.*

W. H. Rylands. "The Masonic Apron." *Ibid.*

Dr. W. Wynn Westcott. "The Symbolism of the Tabernacle," Vol. VI.

- Mrs. Murray-Aynsley. "Some Hammer Legends." *Ibid.*
 W. Simpson. "Sikh Initiation." *Ibid.*
 C. Purdon Clarke. "The Tracing Board in Modern Oriental and Medieval Operative Masonry." *Ibid.*
 W. H. Rylands. "Remarks on Bro. Purdon Clarke's Paper on the Tracing Board." *Ibid.*
 W. Simpson. "Consecration of a Parsee Priest." *Ibid.*
 W. H. Rylands. "Notes on some Masonic Symbols." Vol. VIII.
 S. T. Klein. "The Law of Dakheil." Vol. IX.
 Sir J. A. Cockburn. "The Letter G." Vol. X.
 Rev. J. W. Horsley. "Masonic Symbolism in the Rationale of Durendus." *Ibid.*
 S. T. Klein. "The Great Symbol." *Ibid.*
 H. P. Fitz-Gerald Marriott. "The Secret Tribal Societies of West Africa." Vol. XII.
 W. H. Rylands. "Symbolism of the Square." Vol. XIII.
 A. J. Cooper Oakley. "Hindoo Temples." *Ibid.*

I have by no means exhausted the references to our own series of thirteen volumes, but I have perhaps given enough to show over how wide a field we must range before we can begin to understand the signification of our symbols and their teaching. Was I not right to decide that we had better learn our history first, before venturing on so fascinating but dangerous a subject for those of restricted historical knowledge? Even when provided with the most intimate acquaintance possible with our past and present history, and assisted by a tolerable knowledge of all past national and religious history, we shall still infallibly make mistakes in the discussion of our symbology, draw wrong inferences, and assert connections which cannot be established. But if we have none of these things,—what then?

JURISPRUDENCE.

There now only remains the question of Masonic Jurisprudence. Many writers have discussed it, and, I am sorry to say, all are unsatisfactory. A great work on Masonic Jurisprudence, conceived on right lines, is sadly wanted. No effort at all worthy of the name has been published in the British Isles. I am not forgetful of the writings of Dr. G. Oliver, nor of C. J. Paton's *Freemasonry and its Jurisprudence*, but I can recommend neither. Our own Books of Constitutions contain simply our laws, without comment or argument. In America there are works enough and to spare, but not one is quite satisfactory. The annual

Reports on Foreign Correspondence published in some 50 American jurisdictions furnish a wealth of legal pronouncement and argument. Some of these fail because their writers are obviously ignorant of Masonic history, and naturally fancy that what is good law in their own jurisdiction is also consonant with the inherent rights of the whole Masonic body. This reason cannot be alleged for the shortcomings of such eminent Masons as Bros. Drummond or Mackey; they both know their history well enough, but it would seem as though, the moment they begin to write on jurisprudence, they force themselves to forget the lessons of the past. How else shall we account for the absurdity of tabulating 25 Landmarks, most of which are merely local Grand Lodge regulations? Or the inclusion therein of the American doctrine, none too old in itself, of Sole and Sovereign Jurisdiction? I have not one word to say against it. If our American brethren find it useful to themselves let them by all means apply it among themselves, but there its use ends. It cannot be a Landmark. Or how can they justify our fundamental Masonic principles their intemperate temperance legislation? What we want is a book on Masonic jurisprudence, based on inherent Masonic rights, inalienable Masonic privileges, which shall draw a sharp distinction between the unwritten, the time immemorial, usage of the Craft and more recent Grand Lodge Statute Law.

I hold strongly that in any case we are suffering from over legislation, both in Britain and in America: our Lodges are deprived of their initiative, our members are restricted in the enjoyment of their heritage. Our rulers insist upon providing a cut-and-dry regulation for every imaginable case, with the natural consequence that they overshoot the mark. But we must take Masonry as we find it, and therefore I can only advise every student to make a particular study of his own Book of Constitutions and follow it as the guide for his own conduct. But let him not accept it too readily as the standard of Masonic principles, let him test every provision by the lessons which I hope he will have learnt from the study of Masonic history, and he will find that some regulations are consonant with our inherent rights, that others are perhaps not quite so, but are justified by the circumstances and the consensus of opinion, that others again can only be applicable in his own jurisdiction, while finally not a few are egregiously unmasonic. I only know of one Book of Constitutions which frankly discusses, in a running commentary and with strict regard to the landmarks and immutable principles of the

Craft, the provisions of its own Grand Lodge: but of course there may be others unknown to me. I refer to Bro. W. H. Upton's "Constitutions, By-laws and Regulations of the Grand Lodge of Washington," Tacoma, 1897. He, the Code Commissioner, appointed by his Grand Lodge to set out its laws, has the admirable temerity to view these regulations from an outside point of view, and to dissent in more than one instance from the supreme legislative body of his own jurisdiction, basing his observations and strictures on the Landmarks. To the student, pure and simple, who merely seeks absolute truth and the preservation of inherent privilege, the perusal of this code and commentary is most refreshing. But as a general jurisprudence the book does not go far enough, it was never intended to. If only Bro. Upton would thus group and annotate in one work the constitutions of Grand Lodges in general, then we should indeed have a Masonic Jurisprudence worthy of the Craft.

I fear that in the foregoing pages I have considerably overstepped the limits of the space I contemplated occupying. Nevertheless, I am shamelessly unrepentant, because I feel that the interest of the subject matter warrants the excess. I trust that the stress which I have laid upon method in our studies and the large number of books which I have cited, may not frighten some Brother who had previously thought of devoting his leisure to a better appreciation of our beloved Craft. Such a result, even were it but an isolated case, would grieve me sincerely. Let me assure the doubter, in his moment of hesitation, that there is no need for alarm. The whole subject, when once begun and seriously attacked, is so absorbing, and its fascination increases so quickly with every fresh book perused, we are brought into contact with so many new facts, so many unsuspected factors in civilisation and culture, we touch so many diverse subjects, we acquire so many new views, that we proceed breathlessly from one book to another, and, when we have arrived at the last on our list, we are fain, like Alexander, to sigh for more worlds to conquer, and, unlike him, we shall readily find them in the thousand and one books which I have not even mentioned. The study of Masonry has

no end: when we have learnt all that others have found out we shall want to discover something ourselves, and it will be a hard fate if we are disappointed. I say nothing about "Knowledge is power," because events daily prove that ignorant reiteration is even mightier; I prefer to point out that knowledge is the solace of the intellect as religion is the comfort of the soul. And its acquisition is not a toil, but an indescribable delight.



