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AN EXPLANATION
OF THE
Old Banner
OF
Harmonic Lodge No. 252

Given in Lodge by
Wor. Bro. Josiah E. Cartwright,
Rev. S. C. D. in the year 1930.

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OF THE

Old Banner of Harmonic

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Given in Lodge by

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in the year 1930.



29513
E. BLOCKSIDE, PRINTER
DUDLEY

FIRST let me correct an error which has unfortunately crept into our annals. On the back of our new Banner it is recorded that it was provided to replace the Ancient Banner of 1784: This is not the case, for in our second old Minute Book there occur the following entries: November 2nd, 1847, "It was proposed by Bro. Badger, and seconded by Bro. Bolton, that a proper Banner be got for the use of the Lodge." May 2nd, 1848, "Proposed and seconded that Mr. Evans's bill for Masonic Banner, amounting to £10. 10s. 0d. be paid." This, I feel sure, is the Ancient Banner now framed and hanging in the Lodge Room of which we are all justifiably proud.

Our Ancient Banner is very similar to what may be described as the General Standard of Freemasonry. This is a banner belonging peculiarly to the Order and which may be borne in all processions of the Craft, to distinguish it from any other association of men. The whole represents the Armonial bearings of the United Grand Lodge of England, as blazoned by the late Sir Albert Woods, then Garter King of Arms, the Head of the Heralds' College and are as follows (the word blazon, I may say, is the technical word used for describing a coat of arms):—

Arms.—Per pale the dexter gules on a chevron between three castles, against a pair of com-

passes extended proper; sinister, quarterly, azure, and or, a cross quarterly of the second, *i.e.*, (argent) and vert between. In the first quarter a lion rampant of the fifth (or): in the second an ox passant sable; in the third a man with hands elevated vested of the sixth (vert) robed crimson lined with ermine: and in the fourth an eagle displayed or. The whole within an ear of corn and a sprig of acacia tied by a ribbon at the base.

Crest.—A representation of an ark supported on either side by a cherubim proper with the motto over it in Hebrew characters (sable) "Holiness to the Lord." Supporters.—On either side a cherubim proper.

Motto Under the Arms, "Audi, Vide, Tace." This is the official technical description in the language of Heraldry. The Escutcheon or shield on the banner, is divided into four quarters by a cross: each of the quarters is occupied by a different device; in the first quarter is placed a lion to represent the tribe of Judah, the second, an ox to represent Ephraim, the third, a man to represent Reuben, and in the fourth, an eagle to represent Dan. These were the banners of the four principal tribes, for when the Israelites marched through the Wilderness, we are told that the twelve tribes had between them four principal banners with a distinct sign upon each. They en-

camped round the tabernacle, and on the east side were three tribes under the banner of Judah, on the west were three tribes under the standard of Ephraim, on the South, were three tribes under the banner of Reuben, and on the north, three tribes under the banner of Dan. Ancient Jewish writers state that the man signified religion and reason, the lion denoted power ; the ox, patience and labour ; and the eagle, wisdom, agility and sublimity. But although these may have been the emblematic meaning of those devices amongst the Israelites, the combination of them in the Masonic banner is only intended to indicate the Jewish origin of our institution from King Solomon, who was the last King of Israel under whom the twelve tribes were united.

The Arms granted to the Guild or Company of Masons of the City of London, in the reign of Edward IV., 1472, were the three castles, displayed as we now see them with the Compasses extended on the chevron. When Grand Lodge was formed in 1717 these arms were adopted with the addition of a crest, a dove on a helmet and the motto, " Relief and Truth," with beavers as supporters and are so found on a Grand Lodge seal of 1734. These Arms continued to be used by the original Grand Lodge (later stigmatized as Moderns) until the Union in 1813. The Arms used by the other Grand Lodge, styled the Ancients, were

as found in the other half of the Shield, *i.e.*, a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle, which they adopted from a Grand Lodge or Chapter which had a short existence in York. At the Union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813 both side arms were adopted, the beavers, the emblem of Industry, being dropped and the cherubims put in their place. The only other point that may be mentioned is that the chevron which in Heraldry was adopted from the goats' horns, in Masonry no doubt represents the Square. The Ark of the Covenant, above the escutcheon, was a chest originally constructed at God's command by the instructions of Moses (*see* Exodus xxv., verse 1 onwards) in which were kept the two tables of stone, on which were engraved the Ten Commandments. It contained, likewise, a golden pot filled with manna, Aaron's rod, and the tables of the Covenant. It was made of shittim wood, overlaid, within and without, with pure gold. It was about 3 feet 9 inches long, two feet three inches wide, and of the same extent deep. It had on each side two rings of gold, through which were placed staves of shittim wood, by which, when necessary, it was borne by the Levites. Its covering was of pure gold, over which were placed two figures called Cherubim, with expanded wings. The covering of the Ark was called Kaphirel, from Kaphar, to forgive sin, hence its English name of "Mercy Seat," as being the place where the intercession for sin

was made. It was at first deposited in the most sacred place in the Tabernacle, and afterward placed by King Solomon in the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Temple, and was lost at the destruction of that building by the Babylonians under Nebuzaradan, the Captain of their host. The Divine Presence, referred to as "Shekinah," was manifested by a visible cloud resting over the "Mercy Seat" in the Holy of Holies. It first appeared over the Ark when Moses consecrated the Tabernacle, and was afterwards, upon the consecration of the Temple by King Solomon translated thither, where it remained until the destruction of that building. On each side of the escutcheon stand Cherubim with one wing upraised as if guarding the whole banner.

The Ark was made by Bezaleel according to the Command of God given to Moses upon the Mount of God, a full description of this being given in Exodus xxv. and of the manner in which that command was carried out in Chapter xxxvii. When the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land, the Ark, carried by the Levites was conveyed to the Jordan, and as soon as the feet of the priests entered the River it rolled back, so that the Israelites passed over on dry land to Camp at Gilgal. At the siege of Jericho, Joshua received instructions from God that the Ark should be carried round the walls with blowing of horns by the priests, this obtained for 7 days and on the last of these, they passed

seven times round the city, and at the seventh circuit the priests blew with their trumpets, the people shouted, and the wall fell down flat so that the Israelites entered every man straight before him and took the city. When Eli was High Priest, at the battle of Aphek against the Philistines, the Ark was taken into the fight, and Israel being defeated, it was captured by the enemy, carried to Ashdod and placed in the house of their god Dagon; you will remember that the god was found face downward before the Ark next day, and on being replaced, fell a second time and was broken to pieces. So heavily were the Philistines oppressed and punished by God during the seven months they retained the Ark, that they made a trespass offering to Him and sent the Ark to Bethshemesh, but God smote the men of Bethshemesh because they looked into the Ark and 50,070 of them were slain for this act of impiety. It was then fetched by the men of Kirgath Jearim and retained by them for 30 years, until it was recovered by David, but on the journey Uzzah stretched forth his hand to steady it, for the oxen shook it, and God smote him so that David turned aside in fear and left the Ark in the house of Obed Edom the Gittite, whence after a time he removed it, set it once more in the midst of the Tabernacle and made sacrifices before the Lord for its safe return. The words beneath in the scroll are Audi, Vide, Tace, and should be borne in mind at

all times and in all places by good and earnest
Masons.

I am indebted to Wor. Bro. J. F. Underwood,
Prov. S.G.W. for the information as to the
Castles on the Banner and much of my other
knowledge is derived from "A Lexicon of
Freemasonry," by Albert G. Mackey, M.E.
and revised by Donald Campbell, compiler
of the "Scottish Masonic Calendar", it is
the third edition of this work and was published
in 1867.



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