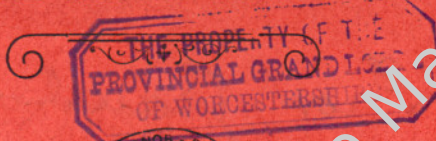


ROYAL ARCH MASONRY.



A LECTURE

GIVEN BY

EX. COMP. J. E. TURNER, P.Z.,

at the

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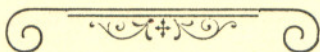
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# ROYAL ARCH MASONRY.



*M.E.Z., E.C., and Companions:—*



ON numerous occasions have we met to conduct a newly made Brother or Companion through the intricate windings of our Masonic ceremonies, and I now ask you to allow me to conduct you all—in imagination—away from this, our R. A. Chapter, back through the avenues of time, into King Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem, into the original R. A. when it was at its prime glory. The grand luminary of Nature is darting, with meridional splendour, his rays into the entrance to the Sacred Shrine, enabling us to observe and admire the exquisite design and workmanship of the beautiful Pillars on either hand leading to the vaulted Chamber, and therein we can picture those three Grand Personages to whom alone, of all the world, its secrets were known. Solomon, King of Israel, and his companions, we will suppose with the serenity which knowledge imparts, are contemplating a Problem depicted on the top of the P....., a problem which was destined in this dispensation of ours, for many centuries to foil the intellectual endeavours and calculations of men of learning and science. Let us

also study afresh these marvellous squares, circles and triangles, and endeavour to ascertain at what period, and by what means, our ancient Brethren first obtained a knowledge of that problem which afterwards became the long lost secret of the squaring of the circle.

Tradition points to Egypt as being the parent of the ancient rites, and our ceremonies demonstrate that the Hebrews were our ancient Brethren. With the mysteries known as Egyptian we have no concern, they were pagan in character and not worthy of our consideration. The locality for our search being thus defined, we set out on an imaginary journey for the land of Egypt and, on arriving, are accorded a hearty welcome from the Hebrew bondsmen and Brethren of our Order, who are one and the same people. We are soon presented to their Ex's., Moses, Aholiab and Bezaleel, and from them we learn that thus far we have come in the right direction and feel confident that, with the blessing and guidance of T. G. A. O. T. U. and by the Light of His Holy Word, we shall be enabled to succeed in the fulfilment of our desires. With true companionship and courtesy the Masonic Temple and contents are placed at our disposal and, by a further slight effort of imagination, we will suppose that we are now here assembled in that ancient edifice in Egypt, and that above and around us can be very faintly distinguished the busy hum of the people of God's choice in the act of escaping from their Egyptian bondage. We are thus left to study the Sacred Word and endeavour to find the knowledge of God. In accordance with our established usages and customs the heads of our enquiries are first planned out systematically and in due order, thus:— The Hebrew people, the land of Egypt, the cause and object of their sojourn in the land, and the results.

The head and father of the Hebrew race was Abram, the name meaning "high father," this name was afterwards changed by the Most High to Abraham, meaning "father of a multitude," and may be depicted as a multitudinous and eminent nation. As R. A. Masons we are acquainted with the history of the Patriarchs and the Children of Israel, the vessel chosen by the Most High for His service. Suffice it to say that the Masonic Brotherhood formed a portion of that Nation on

whom devolved the execution of certain especial services which it is now our study to delineate. We identify our ancient Brethren with Israel, and therefore must remember in our explorations that what concerns one concerns the other, and when we are in touch with one we are in touch with the other. Before leaving this section of our work I must claim your attention to some portions of Holy Writ which declare the duration of Israel's service to the Most High, in order that we may know that whatever superstructure we may succeed in raising shall rest on the sure foundation of God's Word:—

And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, . . . For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever.

*1 Sam. vii, 23 and 24.*

O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

Be ye mindful always of his covenant: the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;

Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac;

And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant.

Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.

*1 Chron., xvi, 13—18.*

With these assurances from the Scriptures that the Divine covenant of labour and refreshment is secured to Israel to this day, and in the future for one hundred and fifty centuries yet to run, we will again turn our attention to the land of Egypt, the land of mysteries:—

In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.

*Genesis, xv, 18.*

From Jerusalem the situation of Egypt is in the S.W., and we learn from this passage of Scripture that the most important part of the

country was by the ordinance of the Most High included in the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession to His people Israel. This ray of light, important as it undoubtedly is, does not serve to dispel the existing obscurity, yet it enables us to perceive that the house of bondage of the children of Israel was situated in their own land, although the divinely appointed time for them to take possession lay in the far-off future of another dispensation; Pharaoh and the Egyptians were merely the occupiers and not the owners of the country.

As free and accepted or speculative Masons it is within our province to estimate the wonderful works of T. G. A. O. T. U., and therefore we may conjecture that He led His people into Egypt for some wise purpose which we are unable to discern, relative to their future destiny to be a blessing to all the families of the earth. We will again apply to the Scriptures for light and understanding:—

In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord.

And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt. *Isaiah, xix, 19 and 20.*

Ah Lord God! . . . which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, even unto this day. *Jeremiah, xxxii, 17 and 20.*

We thus learn that in the days of Jeremiah the prophet there were existing in the land of Egypt signs and wonders which the Lord God had established there, and Isaiah the prophet speaks of a future time when there shall be a monument which was equally to serve the purpose of an altar and a pillar, "and it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts." What is the situation of this monument? In the midst and at the same time on the border of the land of Egypt. Companions, let us endeavour to strike the circle or circumference of the land of Egypt, so that with the centre we may be enabled to find this divine monument and learn the mysteries of those signs and wonders. Let me now invite you to a study of the Tracing Beard of the land of Egypt. The coast line border to the North, from Alexandria to Port Said, forms an arc the complete circle of which approximately

encompasses the ancient land of Egypt; the centre of this circle is situated in a bend of the River Nile above the apex of the delta, the Nile forming the natural border between Egypt proper and the Great Desert. The position therefore agrees with what must have appeared to us to be the complex and contradictory description of the prophet Isaiah and, M. E., E. C's. and Companions, what a marvel is this! The centre is occupied by the most stupendous Pillar the world contains. "And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts."

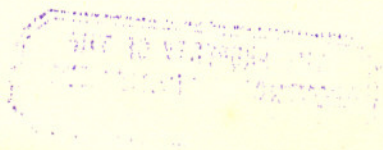
Having completed another section of our undertaking, we are now at liberty to retire from the Egyptian habitation of our ancient brethren, and—still in imagination—to take a short journey to what has ever ranked among the wonders of the world. As we approach the Great Pyramid of Gizeh we are amazed at the magnificent spectacle presented by that majestic triangle as it reflects the rays of the noon-day sun in a sheen of glory: its exquisite polished surface of white stone, rising from the sands of the desert in enchanting contrast with the ethereal blue of the firmament: and we are enabled to discover that the base of the Pillar forms a square, and the sides four triangles. Measurements demonstrate that the dimensions are based on calculations which, with the testimony of the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah in our minds, can only be ascribed to divine wisdom and knowledge, for the squaring of the circle is obtained by taking the vertical height of the Pyramid as the radius of a circle the circumference of which is equal to the length of the four sides of the square base of the structure and, further, the area of the Pyramid's base is represented by a circle whose diameter equals the height and half the square base. The relative proportions of the Pyramid's base to its height are governed by the square, circle and triangle in accomplished perfection, which we are taught is not vouchsafed to human nature. Truly may the Pyramid be depicted as a diadem in form of a square, circle and triangle set on gold in a casket of blue.

M. E., E. C's. and Companions, the object of our retrospection is attained, we divest ourselves of the robes of imagination on the sands of the desert; in a breath the scroll of antiquity rolls up over 3,000 years of springtime and harvest and, as Free and Accepted, or Speculative,

Masons we resume our R. A. Chapter, and present day associations, to prosecute our enquiries with the assistance of the M. H., the united aid of the Circle and Triangle, and the benefit of the Holy Word of Scripture.

Companions, the Pillar of Witness in the midst and on the border of the land of Egypt has survived the wreck of mighty Empires, and resisted the destroying hand of Time, and you will, I trust, have already observed that here we have it represented in our Chapter in the form of an Altar of Incense and Pillar of Witness, depicted by the square summit, two circles—one on the inner and the other on the outer edge of the plate of gold—and the triangle; and as the exterior of that mighty structure applied to our Masonic art is represented by emblems on which are engraved the S..... and M..... with various attributes of ... D....., may we not assume that the Great Original has, enshrined in its interior, signs and wonders of a similar character, and which at the appointed time will form a witness to the truth and existence of the Eternal Ruler of the Universe.

The nature of our enquiry indicates the Prophetic dispensation to be our next study but, for the purpose of keeping in touch with the Brethren of our Order, we must first refer to the history of the Children of Israel during the period between the building of the first and second Temples. After the death of King Solomon came the great rebellion, then the nation became divided by the M. H. into two kingdoms unto this day, the House of Israel and the House of Judah, for they have never yet been re-united. In the year 721 B.C. the House of Israel was banished into captivity to Assyria, divorced and cast out of the Divine Covenant. In process of time they made their escape and became lost, swallowed up among the nations. In the year 606 B.C. the House of Judah was sent into captivity to Babylon. We are acquainted with the manner of their return 70 years later under the name of Jews. We commemorate the building of the second Temple by the Jews, but the other House, the House of Israel, appears to have no part or lot in our R. A. Degree, except that each of the twelve tribes is represented by his banner. Let us, with the help of the Prophets, endeavour to find in





our ceremonies some signs or indications which may lead to fresh discoveries. At the commencement we are confronted with the P... W..., and they require elucidation.

And the Lord said to Hosea, . . . Call her name Lo-ruhamah: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away. But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah. *Hosea, i, 2, 6 and 7.*

And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, . . . and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God. *Hosea, ii, 21, 23.*

And these are the words of the Lord by the prophet Isaiah:—

O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

*Isaiah, xliv, 21 and 22.*

By having obtained mercy the House of Israel were re-admitted into the covenant of the Lord of Hosts; by having obtained mercy God's people are admitted into our Chapter.

I now ask your attention to the portion of the writings of the prophet Haggai, ii, 1 to 9, contained in the Exaltation Ceremony; also verse 23:—

In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the Lord, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts.

The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts.

The accomplishment is certain, but is the interpretation thereof



sure? What is the designation of this latter house? Is it the second Temple, or the House of Israel, the House of Judah, or the Royal House of David, represented by Zerubbabel, to whom the proclamation is addressed?

BRO. ALBERT G. MACKEY, of the United States Constitution, writes in his Lexicon on Freemasonry, "This second Temple did not equal the first in the glory and splendour of its decorations. The Ark of the Covenant was lost. Both the Shekinah, the glory of God, and the Bathcol, or oracle, were departed for ever." There can hardly be a doubt that the structure raised by Zerubbabel and his people was not the house of Glory spoken of by the prophet; the House of Israel being at the time outside the pale of the Covenant were not God's people; the Jews, or House of Judah, are scripturally and historically precluded from adopting the distinction of glorious; *their* glory has departed. There remains the House of David, as indicated by a Prince of that Royal race being chosen by the Lord of Hosts.

While preserving the continuity of our whole system and the relative dependency of its several parts, we have to trace the House of David through its latter-day development, on a line running parallel with the merciful redemption of the House of Israel, to ascertain and determine whether, in these latter days, its glory is greater, and at the same time in harmony and identity with that former house which was established by the M. A. & stand firm for ever.

The word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David . . . Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house. . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee : thy throne shall be established for ever.  
*II Samuel, vii, 4, 5, 11 and 16.*

The House : the Kingdom : the Throne : are the constituents of David by divine establishment for ever.

After the death of Solomon the Kingdom of Israel was rent away

from his son :—

So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day. . . there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only. *I Kings, xii, 19 and 20.*

For a time Judah continued in the enjoyment of the privileges appertaining to the Birthright, but (says I Chron., v, 2) the Birthright was Joseph's. Of the two tribes of Joseph, the Birthright was Ephraim's. For thus saith the Lord, by the prophet Jeremiah :—

I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. *Jeremiah, xxxi, 9.*

A... R..... was the signal for the merciful redemption of Ephraim-Israel, and also for the withdrawal of Judah's temporary seniority, and there has never again been a king of Judah.

Our Order was originally composed of genuine Masons with g..... s..... ; in the days of our Grand Master King Solomon the g..... s..... of a M. M. were lost, and the proper method whereby they might have been regained was "with *the* centre." It is of importance to notice that it was not with *a* centre or any centre ; the import of *the* centre is, with one particular centre ; not necessarily at or in the centre, but with or with the assistance of the centre, therefore the natural inference is that our Brethren failed to regain those s..... because they were unable first to find the centre. Now here we have a remarkable parallel: as the g..... s..... of a M. M. became lost, so the genuine Masons of the House of Ephraim-Israel, together with their monarch of the House of David, have become lost ; we now have substituted Speculative Masons, and we must endeavour to regain the genuine with the centre, that being a point from which a M. M. cannot err.

When the patriarch Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph, he said :  
Let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

*Genesis, xlviii, 16.*

It has been calculated that, on carefully summing up the areas of all the dry land inhabited by man the wide world over, the centre falls within the Great Pyramid's special territory of Lower Egypt. Thus twice have we found the centre to be in that locality, and again we are led to the Pillar of Witness to the Lord of Hosts; there are, however, other witnesses and we must consider, with the assistance of the prophet Isaiah, what relation they bear to one another.

But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: . . . therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.

*Isaiah, xliii, 1, 10 and 12.*

In that day when there shall be a pillar of witness, we read that the Lord shall send the Egyptians a Saviour, and a great one, who shall deliver them. And the Lord shall smite Egypt and heal it. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

That day will be recognized when Israel shall be revealed as a blessing in the land of Egypt, witnessing to the Lord of Hosts in conjunction with the signs and wonders of the Great Pyramid.

Come therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days. . . and Israel shall do valiantly.

*Numbers, xxiv, 14 and 18.*

Israel is the rod of his inheritance: the Lord of hosts is his name.

Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms.

*Jeremiah, li, 19 and 20.*

And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth

not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.

And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. *Micah, v, 7 and 8*

As in the day when Joshua fought the battles of the Lord, so it is now, and will be in the future; Israel is commissioned to fight, to heal and to bless, and before "that day" spoken of by Isaiah can be recognized, Egypt must have been conquered, then saved from a previous condition of wretchedness, her conquerors remaining as a blessing in the land; then the witness of the altar-pillar in the midst and at the border of Egypt may be expected to become manifest.

Companions, what are the signs in this day of ours, are our Masonic Brethren about to be revealed among the people of God's choice, taking a leading part in the great affairs of the world?

We hold in high esteem the honourable privilege of being Royal Arch Masons, guardians of divinely placed signs, wonders and mysteries; if the duties of our sacred trust are worthily discharged, nothing will deprive us of the honour. The gathering of God's witnesses, the people of His choice, the genuine Brethren of Israel is inevitable; these natural Princes and Rulers of our Order will be the rightful owners of those banners and staffs of office, which we are now entitled to bear, as sceptres denoting power and royalty. We may be required both to deliver up our sacred trust and also those ensigns of our rank in the presence of 72 of those elders; then will be our great opportunity as Masons to show ourselves worthy to associate with God's witnesses in a subordinate position, not to envy them their preferment, but to remain firm and unshaken in the faithful discharge of whatever duties may devolve on us under their leadership. If happily, on the contrary, the heritage of true and genuine Masons shall remain ours, then let us remember that peculiar moment when we were admitted into M....., p... and p....., and cheerfully evince to our less fortunate brethren, speculative Masons, by every mark of consideration and good fellowship which, under similar

circumstances, we should wish to be accorded to ourselves; that we are worthy of, as well as entitled to, the exalted rank of Elders of the Order.

A large portion of the Pyramid has been laid open by the hand of the M. H., the rest remains sealed, waiting His appointed time and pleasure; the harbingers have already been there, they have accomplished their work. Dr. C. PIAZZI-SMYTH, late Astronomer Royal for Scotland, with his wife, spent four months in study and investigations, taking measurements, making plans and designs of both exterior and interior, so that, with his writings and those of Dr. J. A. SEISS, of Philadelphia, U.S.A., and other scientific students, we are enabled to discern that this Pillar of Witness is indeed a miracle in stone; the constructional work is in itself a marvel. What stupendous materials! what exquisite stone-squaring! But mighty and excellent as it is, it becomes insignificant in contrast with the pre-eminently supreme plans, designs, details and dimensions evolved from the master-mind of T. G. A. O. T. U.

In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord.

And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt. *Isaiah, xix, 19 and 20.*

In conclusion, from the writings of H. DE ST. DALMAS:—

“This revelation in stone—corresponding so closely with the revelation of Holy Writ on the one hand, and with the revelation of Nature on the other, as interpreted by the leading men of science at the present day—declares that in them both (i.e., in the Bible and in Nature) we have the word and the work of the same Divine author.”

“That the manifest purpose in Nature, as well as in Holy Writ, is to reveal to us that Divine Author of them both, that the creature may know the great Creator, who is before and above all science, for by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.”

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M. E. Z. TO ORDER, COMPANIONS: G. AND R. S.

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