

THE MASONIC CHAIN.

BRO. YOU MAY, IN THE PAST, HAVE WONDERED " WHAT IS FREEMASONRY ?" YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION BEFORE YOU PROCEED FURTHER IN THE CRAFT. THE ANSWER IS:- "A PECULAR SYSTEM OF MORALITY, VEILED IN ALLEGORY AND ILLUSTRATED BY SYMBOLS".

WE ARE NOW FORMED IN A "MASONIC CHAIN", WHICH IS ITSELF AN ALLEGORY. I WILL NOW EXPLAIN IT'S SYMBOLS.

IT IS WITH OPEN ARMS THAT YOU ARE RECIEVED INTO FREEMASONRY TO-NIGHT. INTO THIS LODGE AND INTO THE HEARTS OF THE BRETHREN.

YOU WILL OBSERVE THAT THE BRETHREN'S ARMS CROSS THE BREASTS OF THE BRETHREN TO EITHER SIDE OF THEM. THIS SYMBOLISES THE PROTECTION A BROTHER GIVES TO A BROTHER. FROM THE ATTACKS OF THE INSIDIOUS WHENEVER THE NEED ARISES.

THE CHAIN THUS FORMED IS SYMBOLIC OF OUR ORDER. IT IS A DOUBLE-LINKED CHAIN - THEREFORE DOUBLY STRONG AND HAS A DOUBLE MEANING.

FIRSTLY.

IT SHOWS THE MANNER IN WHICH AN INITIATE IS RECIEVED INTO FREEMASONRY - ALL THE BRETHREN RECIEVE YOU INTO THIS CIRCLE, A CIRCLE WHICH HAS NO END. WITH YOUR LEFT HAND YOU ARE GRASPING THE RIGHT HAND OF THE I.P.M. ACROSS THE BREAST OF THE W.M. THE I.P.M. REPRESENTS THE PAST - THE W.M. THE PRESENT AND YOU BROTHER THE FUTURE. THUS THE PAST LOOKE THROUGH THE PRESENT TO THE FUTURE.

SECONDLY.

THE CHAIN BEING A DOUBLE ONE SHOULD IT PLEASE THE G.A.O.T.U. TO CALL A BROTHER TO THE GRAND LODGE ABOVE (AND HERE YOU WILL SEE THAT BROTHER HAS LEFT THE CHAIN) THE CHAIN THOUGH WEAKER IS NOT BROKEN BUT REMAINS WEAKER UNTIL A NEW LINK IS ADDED.

BROTHER TONIGHT YOU ARE THAT NEW LINK. MAY YOU REMAIN A GOOD, STRONG AND USEFUL LINK UNTIL YOU RECIEVE A SUMMONS TO THE GRAND LODGE ABOVE.

PART OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF ALL CHAINS CONSISTS OF TESTING THEM FROM TIME TO TIME TO ENSURE THAT THEY WILL STAND THE STRAIN REQUIRED OF THEM. OUR MASONIC CHAIN IS ALSO TESTED - THIS WE DO SYMBOLICALLY BY A WENTLE SWAYING TO & PRO, THIS SHOULD NOT BE DONE WITH ANY "HORSE-PLAY" AS THAT MIGHT BREAK THE CHAIN AND THUS DEFEAT THE OBJECT OF THE EXERCISE. THIS SWAYING, WITHOUT BREAKING, ILLUSTRATES THE STRENGTH OF OUR BROTHERHOOD.

IN CONCLUSION BRO. I QUOTE :- "ON THE STRENGTH OF ONE LINK IN THE CABLE → DEPENDETH THE STRENGTH OF THE CHAIN → WHO KNOWS WHEN THOU MAYEST BE TESTED ? SO LIVE THAT THOU BEAREST THE STRAIN."

I WILL NOW LEAD THE BRETHREN IN THE LAST VERSE OF THE ENTERED APPRENTICE'S SONG : -

"THEN JOIN HAND IN HAND