

28th March, 1937.

Masonry - a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols.

Symbolism The V.S.L., S. and C's are pointed out as lights in masonry. S's, L's, and P.p's are true and proper signs (symbols) to know etc., etc.

Now we form a circle, which for many ages has been a recognised emblem of eternity. Like the deity, it is without beginning or end, and is used in the form of a gold ring in marriage. (Gold - emblem of love). Deity - without beginning of days or end of years. We form a human circle by joining hands.

"Then join hand in hand,

"By each other firm stand".

(No horseplay - no attempt to break the circle). Even as children in our play we joined hands to make "a ring of roses". Hand = power. By joining hand to hand, we join power to power, or we increase power.

We often say "Lend a hand" - "Unity is strength" etc. There are many scriptural references, especially in the Psalms.

We ask for the helping hand of the Lord, and for his (defending) arms.
(fighting)

As children, we were always glad of the hand of the parent or other elder, and thus felt safer, especially at night in the darkness.

Reception (a) At the door of the lodge was an indication of suspicion. We were taking no risks.

(b) Into the masonic circle was quite different. Now one of us. We invite him to join hand in hand with us - to share our work and our life. We offer him and all our brethren protection, as typified by covering both breasts (Theirs - not our own) with our arms. This is different from crossing our arms and thus protecting only our own breasts in a selfish manner. It is now all for each and each for all.

(c) Not merely into our own lodge, but into the universal body of masonry. There are brethren of other lodges present to represent the larger body.

Double link chain As strong only as its weakest link. Try not to be that link - but something better. As some links are lost by death, etc., those are replaced by new members.

The above was first used extemporaneously when J. R. Barlow was W.M.-No.2385 (1936/37) and C. T. Barlow was D.C.

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Given again to No. 2385 on 28 April 1948 at request of the W.M.

C.T.BARLOW.