

"From Antient times no Master or Fellow could be absent from his Lodge, especially when warned to appear at it, without incurring severe censure, unless it appeared to the Master and Wardens that pure necessity hindered them." (Antient Charge.)

DATE OF CHARTER

NOV. 14. 1890.

"Be very cautious whom you recommend as a Candidate for Initiation; one false step on this point may be fatal. If you introduce a dissipated person confusion will be produced, which may end in the dissolution of the Lodge. If you have a good Lodge, keep it select. Great numbers are not always beneficial."—Dr. Oliver.

Founders.

A. THOMPSON
W. WALDRON
E. WOOD
A. GREEN
T. SPENCER
C. SHOWELL
G. B. BUTTERY
H. MANLEY
F. A. JONES
C. MEIKLEJOHN
P. HOMES
J. ROUNDELL
W. H. PERRETT

Past Masters.

1891. A. THOMPSON
1892. W. WALDRON
1893. E. WOOD
1894. G. B. BUTTERY
1895. H. MANLEY
1896. J. ROUNDELL
1897. W. H. KENDRICK
1898. H. RICHARDSON
1899. F. RICHARDS
1900. W. T. DAVIES
1901. F. RICHARDS
1902. T. JONES
1903-4. W. H. HAND
1905. J. P. MOORE
1906. A. COOKE
1907. T. H. SHIPTON
1908. J. H. SPENCER
1909. J. B. PITT
1910. J. O. AMPHLETT
1911. J. DALLOW
1912. W. F. VERNON
1913. S. O. STEPHENSON
1914. D. G. LINE
1915. R. M. HADLEY
1916. A. G. UGLOW
1917. H. N. MILLS
1918. F. W. ALCOCK
1919. F. DAWES
1920. W. F. HADLEY
1921. E. PARKER
1922. E. H. PARKER
1923. C. T. BARLOW
1924. A. M. HARPER
1925. J. SUTTON
1926. W. J. MACCORMACK
1927. W. F. EDWARDS
1928. W. GALE
1929. S. H. STANTON
1930. T. W. HILL
1931. R. FLETCHER

Godson Lodge,
No. 2385.



155 MCKEAN ROAD,

OLDBURY,

9th Nov., 1932.

Dear Sir and Brother,

I am desired by the W.M. to request your punctual attendance at your Lodge, at the Talbot Hotel, Oldbury, on Wednesday, the 27th Nov., 1932, at 5-45 p.m., unless prevented by sickness or urgent business engagement.

Yours fraternally,

F. W. ALCOCK, P.P.A.G.P. (Staffs.), P.P.G.O.

Past Masters' Night.

LABOUR OF THE LODGE.

- To open the Lodge at 8.0 p.m. prompt.
- To read circular convening the meeting.
- To read and if approved, confirm the minutes of the last regular Lodge held on 20th October, 1932.
- The Chaplain will read Chapter 6 of the second book of Chronicles and will give an explanation thereon.
- To present Grand Lodge Certificates to Bros. Maurice Smith and Edward Harper.
- To read correspondence.
- To receive report of the Lodge of Instruction.
- To receive Subscriptions.
- To transact any business that may arise for the good of Free Masonry in general, or Godson Lodge, No. 2385, in particular.
- To close the Lodge

Dinner 7-50 p.m.

Evening Dress.

The Godson Chapter is held on the 2nd Friday in Oct., Dec., Feb. and April,
The Lodge of Instruction is held on the second Wednesday of the month, at 8 p.m.

Will those Brethren who intend staying to the Dinner please notify the Secretary not later than Friday, November 18th.

Treasurer: Wor. Bro. W. H. Hand, P.P.G.W., Pendene, West Hagley.

W.M.'s address: The Spire House, West Hagley, Stourbridge.

Subscription due March 1932, £

To Brother

1.
Paper to be given at the regular meeting of Godson Lodge
No. 2385 on Past Masters' night Wednesday 23rd November 1932.

Introduction.

As preceptor of the L.O.I. I invite members to ask questions, promising them that if any question cannot be answered off hand and with certainty, the matter shall be looked up promptly and dealt with at our next meeting.

On Wednesday 12th October this year, I was asked why the V.S.L. is opened at the II Chronicles, chapter 6. That floored me; but it also served as a reminder that long ago I also wanted to know, and that subsequently the same thought had arisen more than once. The point was looked up that same evening and later on was submitted to the

W.M. who was good enough to ask me to deal with it at this meeting. *According to Penetration working, there is no definite place of origin but surely a definite place is something better than a haphazard position. In copies of the records there is no mention of Chronicles.*

Although *oral with* fitting that the chaplain of the lodge should be called on to *I am told that* handle the matter, yet I feel that it is a great honor to be allowed to address the brethren in this way. A minister of religion, acting as chaplain, would be much better qualified; but let me do my best to put before you a few thoughts, on which ~~you~~ you will build up for yourselves a structure that will be useful and fitting to your own personal needs.

I cannot exhaust the possibilities of the subject in one evening. If you find the matter of general interest, and desire that I should pursue it, let me know, and with the consent of the W.M. I will endeavour to go further on somewhat similar lines.

It will be found that the chapters preceding the one in which we are interested, deal in much detail with the preparation of materials for and the actual building of Solomon's temple. ^(mentions progress from tents - tabernacles - temple) The sixth chapter contains a reference to the opening ceremony and in particular records the prayer of King Solomon. That prayer is as useful to us to-day as it was on that historical occasion, and no doubt you will agree that no more beautiful and appropriate portion of Holy Writ could have been selected by our ancient brethren for exposure on the Master's pedestal during the time that our lodge is open, and in particular, while we are engaged in any one of our three ceremonies. In our first ~~are~~ ^{ceremony} we are ~~laying~~ ^a "laying foundations; and ~~erecting~~ ^{erecting} a superstructure" which ~~we trust~~ will be perfect in its parts and honorable to the builder? ~~and~~ At other times, ~~do~~ we ~~not~~ seek to embellish the work ^{by the presentation of tokens - on which we moralize & spiritualize} by ~~the~~ ~~use~~ of ~~materially~~ love, relief, and truth. We are ~~dealing~~ ^{building} with human materials - some of it, perhaps rather frail - but it is human - and, in our very humble way, ^{and in respect of each of our ceremonies,} we ask a blessing on our work, just as King Solomon of old, amid surroundings of unexcelled beauty, riches, and dignity, kneeling before the Lord, all the people standing, gave voice to the words of wisdom, to which I will now ask you ~~to~~ ~~give~~ your attention.

[Handwritten scribble]

[Handwritten signature]

chapter 6, which we designate 'jewels', and take 15 minutes to read properly.

ix: Copy here the notes at foot of p. 6 (Jewels)

Before I read chapter 6 it will be helpful to you to get the sequence of events if I mention the fact that in chapter 5 there is recorded the installation of the ark of the covenant by the priests and Levites. The ark of the covenant was of course the most sacred possession of the children of Israel, and before the completion of the temple it could not be removed from its existing position, ^(within the tabernacle) nor could it find a place in the ^{unfinished} new building. ^{the record of} Following this installation of the ark of the covenant we come to verses 13 and 14, which conclude chapter 5, and I will read these so that we may have a fuller understanding of the opening verses of chapter 6, and in particular so that you may connect the reference to the clouds which filled the Holy place, with the subsequent reference of King Solomon to the thick darkness in which the Lord said he would dwell. I therefore commence to read at verse 13 of chapter 5. (Then follows the reading)

Better to take the opening phrase of verse 11 - cut out the remainder - and then carry on to verse 13.

Also, better to summarise chapter 6, because it is so lengthy, and should take 15 minutes to read properly.

After the reading.

I am quite sure that you will agree with me as to the impossibility of dealing anything like exhaustively with the subject this evening. There are in fact three questions and not one that merit our immediate attention, and in order these are -

1. Why do we have the V.S.L. in our lodges ?
2. Why is it opened while the lodge is engaged in Masonic work ?
3. Why do we expose the sixth chapter of the second book of Chronicles ?

Dealing with these questions in this order, we shall first admit that there can be no better evidence of our full acknowledgment of the Most High than by the adoption of the V.S.L. as our first great light or standard. We all remember the first question put to us after the invocation (in all cases of difficulty and danger etc.)

— and our answer

In the absence of a satisfactory declaration of our faith the ceremony could not proceed. On nothing more sacred and better known to us could we be obligated; and in the charge we are recommended to study the V.S.L. as a guide to our faith. Further than that, we shall not forget the admonition of the J.W. when he charged us "to regard it as the unerring standard of truth and justice and to regulate your actions by the divine precepts it contains. Therein you will be taught the important duties you owe to God, to your neighbour, and to yourself". The V.S.L.

MA

is as much our standard, as the Union Jack is the standard of the British people of the British Empire

not recognized... on... G.D.F. 2... V.S.L. ...

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Many of us have our own mottoes. Some have coats of arms, flags, or banners. In business we have our trade marks which in a sense are our standards there. It may not be inappropriate if I mention the motto of Rotary which is "Service - not self". Similarly, it will not be inappropriate to mention our own Godson banner. When we foregather to Provincial Grand Lodge each individual lodge carries its banner, but we then all hope under the standard of Provincial Grand Lodge. So as the V.S.L. is concerned we could probably say that it is the universal standard acknowledged by all.

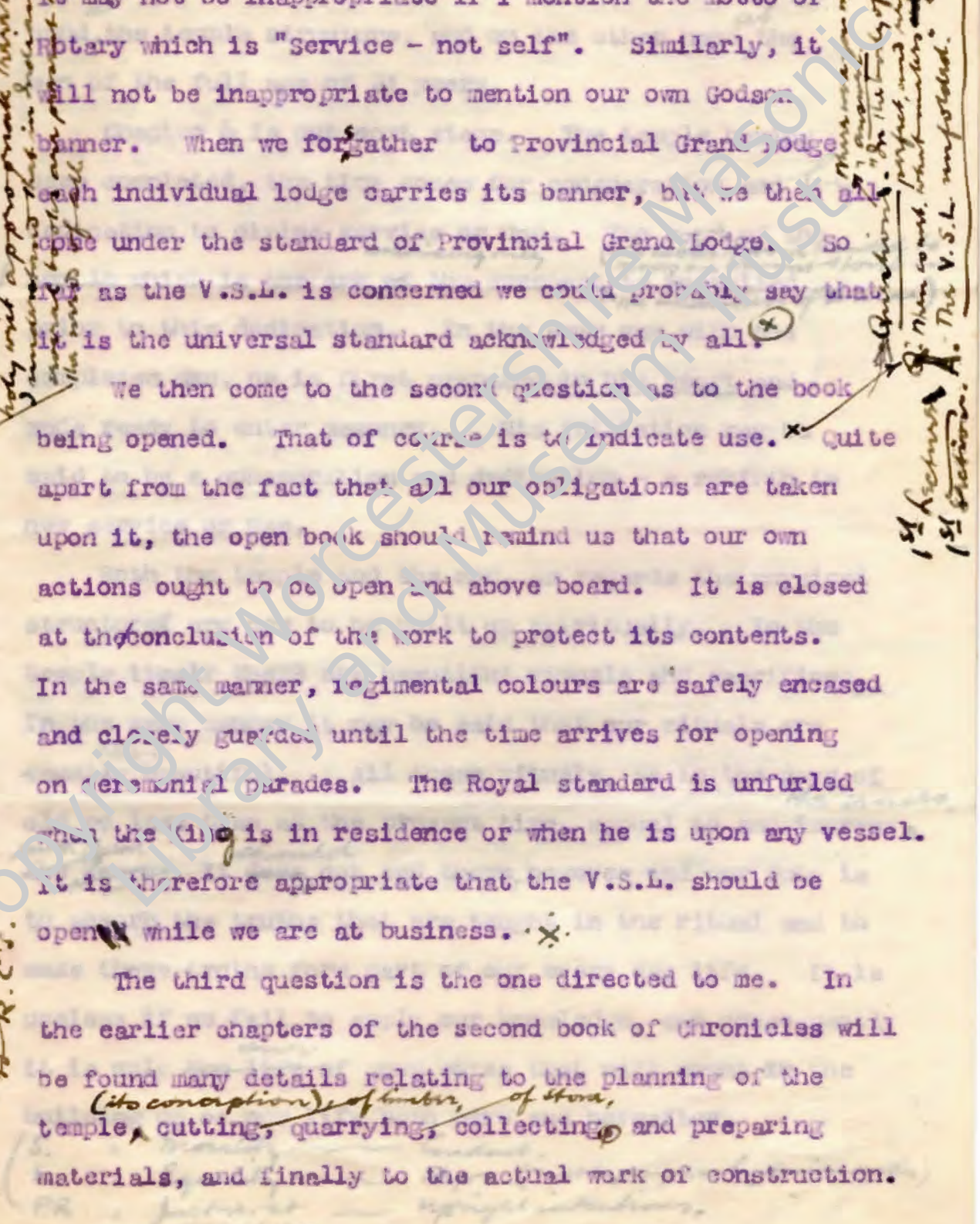
We then come to the second question as to the book being opened. That of course is to indicate use. Quite apart from the fact that all our obligations are taken upon it, the open book should remind us that our own actions ought to be open and above board. It is closed at the conclusion of the work to protect its contents. In the same manner, regimental colours are safely encased and closely guarded until the time arrives for opening on ceremonial parades. The Royal standard is unfurled when the King is in residence or when he is upon any vessel. It is therefore appropriate that the V.S.L. should be open while we are at business.

The third question is the one directed to me. In the earlier chapters of the second book of Chronicles will be found many details relating to the planning of the temple, cutting, quarrying, collecting, and preparing materials, and finally to the actual work of construction.

Altho' we must not forget the our Jewish brethren and only the Old Testament - our Mohammedan brethren the Koran - and our brethren profaning other creeds, the body with appropriate hints - e. g. monuments that in Indian temples several books are placed to the credit of all.

Programme of work to be not recognized (G.L. of England), our reasons being that G.O.F. do not recognize the V.S.L. The V.S.L. is not quite an open book to R.C.'s.

Questions: "This is a very good question?" "In the body of a Lodge, just?" "perfect, was regular?" "A. The V.S.L. unfolded." "1st Lecture" "1st Lecture"



... - youth - manhood. Temple

It will be seen that these may be said to correspond with the preparatory, ^{conception, the} and building up periods of the physical man through the stages of childhood, adolescence and youth. * We therefore ^{arrive} ~~have~~ on the one hand ^{at} the temple structure, and on the other hand ^{at} the man of the full age of 21 years.

Chapter 6 is our next stage. The temple having been completed, the time comes for consecration ^{and by} dedication to divine service or use. The heart of the temple which is the ark, ^{containing only} ~~the~~ covenant is installed ^(The tables of stone handed to Moses on Mount Sinai in the wilderness of Sinai) prior to this dedication. In the same way with the completed man, he is first prepared in his heart and made ready to enter masonry. His initiation may be said to be a consecration and dedication - a rebirth to new service or use.

... only ... to ... on Mount Sinai in wilderness of Sinai

Both the temple and the man, as regards the physical structure, are now to be built up spiritually. In the temple itself there are beautiful rituals and sacrifices. In the same manner it may be said that our rituals are ^{also} equally beautiful. All these rituals, as in the days of old no less than at the present time, appeal to and impress ^{the senses.} ~~the senses.~~ It ^{should} ~~can~~ not end there, however, and our duty is to absorb the truths that are taught in the ritual and to make these truths form part of our every day life. It is useless if we fail to apply our knowledge, and consequently it is only ^{our} ~~the~~ life of good works that will count in the building up of our life both here and hereafter.

- (S. = Morality ——— Conduct.
- (L. = Equality ——— Steps. (not to progress by devious paths)
- (P.R. = Justice + ——— upright intentions.

works.

In conclusion may I remind you that we perpetuate at the termination of our gatherings one of the petitions included in the prayer of King Solomon as recorded by this sixth chapter. Solomon asks that when a man who has been carried away captive to another country prays towards Jerusalem, the Lord will grant him a safe return. In this connection we shall all remember the Tyler's toast. (Give it.)

(This is not the only one but really interests us, but is taken now as an example and for the sake of brevity.)

Here again we can moralise and spiritualise. We are not taken as captives to a foreign land; but when a man confirms himself in some wrong, or sin, or idolatry, he becomes "a slave to the habit" as we say in every-day life. When he repents, he may be said to look towards Jerusalem, and this is his first step towards homeward ~~to~~ to his native land.)

(15 minutes travelling)

Recapitulation.

Since this paper was first delivered, I have been asked to summarise the points, and I feel that there is some reason for the request, indeed a necessity for enlarging and completing the subject.

Every person has a guiding principle -

good or bad or indifferent -

high or low or mediocre -

It is helpful to symbolise that principle.

The same can be said, more or less, of practically every community, whether it be church, chapel, household, society, village, town, county, or country.

To symbolise its tenacity of purpose, our country is represented by the British bulldog.

If we want to symbolise our warlike fighting powers we use the lion - the king of beasts - but to signify our peaceful intentions, the dove, (perhaps bearing an olive branch) is pictured.

The royal standard includes several lions.

The V.S.M. contains the most complete and varied collection of symbolisms and correspondences, and includes in the Masonic law the most perfect code dealing with civil and moral conduct. In the words of our own ritual dealing with the V.S.M. as a whole, we are told - "Therein you will be taught, etc."

So long as we conduct ourselves as men and as Masons in accordance with its teachings we are progressing by square conduct, level steps and upright intentions, and may hope to ascend, etc.

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We symbolise our acknowledgment of the V.S.L. by exposing it in our lodges. We declare that our lodges are made "just" when the V.S.L. is unfolded; and we take our sacred and solemn obligations upon it. If we adjourn from labor to refreshment, and when we have finally ceased from labor, we close the V.S.L. to protect its contents, and we symbolise the locking up or protection of our secrets at the conclusion of our work by _____

Hence the V.S.L. is an integral part of our lodge and of ourselves, and as such must appear in the lodge and must be open during all our transactions.

The next point is the place of opening.

Here we may have occasion for argument and for honest difference of opinion. I do not know the reason for Emulation working disregarding the rubric in our printed ritual and being content with the mere opening of the book at any position. One brother advanced the thought that we acknowledge the full contents of the V.S.L., and that should be true. I doubt, however, if the slightest objection would or could be raised to a brother selecting the 6th chapter of the second book of Chronicles; and the true Emulation worker would probably go no further than to say that no special point of opening was obligatory.

Nevertheless, if the selection be left to us, I can conceive of no better reference than the one to which our printed ritual directs us.

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We undergo or complete a change every seven years (or thereabouts) in our early life, and at the age of 21 are by law admitted men. Masonically, that is our minimum age limit. About then, we commence to exercise our free-will with less restraint, and we begin to think and act for ourselves. We have served our apprenticeship in more than one sense, and now, amongst other things, we are ready to enter masonry and to be developed spiritually.

Masonry is full of symbolism. We refer to it as "A peculiar system of morality, etc." Can we not agree that Solomon's temple and masonry are almost line for line equally symbolical of man. If we can so agree, no further argument is needed to commend our chapter as being the most appropriate one for exposure.

All the wonderful and minute details of the temple are not recorded for the purpose of our making a copy in physical materials. The record is not there for a vain purpose - No. Obviously there is a spiritual meaning for us to discover - every reference has a correspondence intended for our advancement, and that is true not only of the temple structure and its adornments, but also of the various sacrifices and other rituals ordered to be carried out by the priests and Levites.

Our masonic temples, adornments and jewels, and our rituals are also full of hidden meanings, hence our mysteries. We can feast our eyes on what we can see, and take delight in the real music and poetry of our rituals; but if we are content with that only we shall have missed

There is sufficient text for a full lecture on our three, five, and seven steps. We can profitably spend more than one evening on any one set of working tools.

I feel quite sure that we can now have in our minds the finished temple structure as the crowning termination to a progressive period, first of worship in tents, and afterwards in tabernacles. The time-worn shell of the past childhood and youthful periods has been replaced by a marvellous finished structure, comprising every good signification or symbolism of a perfect man. King Solomon himself, the wisest man of all time, is the central figure at the consecration ceremony, and he prostrates himself, and offers up a prayer which contains petitions that cover even our needs of today.

When we receive a candidate, who must first have passed through his childhood and youth to arrive at man's estate, can we possibly do better than follow the example of this Grand Master?

Invocation - 1st degree -

I repeat, therefore, that no more fitting place can be found in the V.S.L. than this sixth chapter of the second book of Chronicles for exposure in our lodges.

To summarise; I would ask you to bear in mind three points :-

First.

We have the V.S.L. in our lodges as a sign that we acknowledge it to be God's Word - the light and guide of life - the standard of right for all men.

Second.

We open the book to indicate use. We not only possess the law in our mind or memory, but we use it in our life.

Thirdly - (and this answers the question put to me at the beginning)

We open the V.S.L. at II Chronicles chapter six because here we find a record of the completed temple being dedicated to the glory of God and for the service of men ; while in our lodges we dedicate ourselves to the service of God and of our fellow men.

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- First. - knowledge V.S.L.
 - Second. - use V.S.L.
 - Third. - dedicate self to service.

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Draft notes for summary of paper to be given at
Godson Lodge number 2385 on Wednesday 22nd February 1933.

It will be remembered that at our meeting in November
last I had the pleasure and privilege to submit to you a
paper dealing with three questions, namely :-

1. Why do we have the V.S.L. in our lodges ?
2. Why is it opened while the lodge is engaged in
Masonic work ?
3. Why do we expose the sixth chapter of the second
book of Chronicles ?

We were reminded of the charge given by the J.W.,
who told us "to regard it - etc.

We then agreed that every man and every community,
including societies, churches, many other institutions,
many business houses, counties, and countries, had a
standard of their own and that Masonic lodges under the
English constitution had generally adopted the V.S.L.
which, when unfolded, was said to make each lodge "just".

We found that whereas the V.S.L. was reverentially
closed prior to and at the termination of our business,
it was laid open while the lodge is engaged in Masonic
work.

We then considered why the V.S.L. was opened at the
sixth chapter of the second book of Chronicles in
accordance with a rubric in our ritual.

With a view to an understanding as to the place of
opening we read the whole of the chapter and found that
it recorded the opening ceremony of Solomon's Temple,

and in particular that it included the prayer of King Solomon on that occasion. It was the culmination of a period of growth of a nation, first worshipping in tents, then in Tabernacles, and finally in the Temple. These periods corresponded with childhood, youth, and manhood.

Next we compared the conception and the planning of the Temple, then the cutting and preparations of the material, and finally the actual work of construction, with the three periods of man, that is childhood, youth, and manhood, again corresponding to the three periods of worship in tents, Tabernacles, and Temple. I hope that this will be sufficient to recall the details, but finally I want to remind you that we again considered ourselves as individuals as a Temple. That of course is not a new thought.

After reading my paper to you I was told that I had come to the end of it much too soon; that I had left you in the air, and that you would like to have a brief summary. I fully appreciate the truth of the remarks, but you will remember that I had to work to a schedule of time. Nevertheless here is the brief summary that has actually been prepared for me, but which I find it impossible to improve upon, namely :-

~~To summarize; I would ask you to bear in mind three points :~~

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First.

We have the V.S.L. in our lodges as a sign that we acknowledge it to be God's Word - the light and guide of life - the standard of right for all men.

Second.

We open the book to indicate use. We not only possess the law in our mind or memory, but we use it in our life.

Thirdly - (and this answers the question put to me at the beginning)

We open the V.S.L. at II Chronicles chapter six because here we find a record of the completed temple being dedicated to the glory of God and for the service of men; while in our lodges we dedicate ourselves to the service of God and of our fellow men.

First - acknowledge V.S.L.

Second - use V.S.L.

Third - dedicate self to service.

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