

A  
**MASONIC FORUM**

HAVING  
PARTICULAR REFERENCE  
TO SCOTTISH FREEMASONRY

COMPILED AND EDITED

BY

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## PREFACE

Many members of Lodge Ailsa from time to time have questions on Masonic History, Procedure, Laws, Ceremonies etc., which they would very much like to have answered but are unaware of any source to refer to.

In an endeavour to help members it was decided some time ago by the Lodge Management Committee to create A Masonic Forum to which members were encouraged to freely submit questions of a Masanic nature. Every effort was made to obtain authoritative answers to questions submitted and such answers were published monthly.

To make the "Forum" more lasting in value, as a reference for members and particularly for newly raised Brethren, the Lodge Committee decided to publish this booklet.

As Compiler it has given me much pleasure in calling the information contained in this booklet and I fervently hope it will be of material assistance to every member of the Lodge. I must record my sincere appreciation to the Brethren and Sources mentioned below.

*E.H.W.*

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0.1. Assuming one holds Grand Lodge or District Grand Lodge rank, alternatively, Honorary Grand Lodge or Honorary District Grand Lodge rank, when is it permissible to wear the appropriate Regalia?

A. Grand Lodge Proceedings 1950-51, page 138, states "All Grand Lodge Office-Bearers, Past Grand Office-Bearers, Brethren holding Honorary Grand Rank and Members of Grand Committee shall be entitled to wear the Regalia of their rank at any regularly constituted Masonic meetings."

However, custom and usage seem to be behind the fact that Provincial, District or Grand Lodge Regalia is never worn in Lodge at an ordinary meeting. A Provincial, or District, or Grand Lodge Officer attending a meeting of his own Lodge would wear the Regalia of the Lodge and never his Provincial or District or Grand Lodge Regalia. It just is not done. If he is invited to attend a meeting of another Lodge in his capacity as a Provincial or District or Grand Lodge Officer that is quite another matter. Then he would wear the appropriate Regalia. And, of course, it is worn when attending meetings of Provincial or District or Grand Lodge.

On no account should two collars be worn at the same time. It has been customary in Scotland for an Honorary Grand Lodge Officer to wear his collar jewel of his Honorary Office on a thistle-green ribbon, one and a half inches broad, with his Lodge Regalia.

It is the unwritten rule that no jewels are worn when wearing Provincial or District or Grand Lodge Regalia. There is one exception to this rule. If a Grand Lodge Officer is attending officially a meeting of a Lodge of which he is a member or honorary member he should wear the jewel of Lodge, or the Past Master's jewel, as a compliment to the Lodge. No other jewels would be worn.

Q.2. What is the origin of the words "So mote it be" which we use at the end at our Opening & Closing odes, etc?

A. From the Masonic point of view, they came into our usage in the 14th century, and our two earliest versions of the Old Charges both include the phrase in their closing words. which I render in modern spell. ing, as follows:

The Regius MS., c.1390, after a closing prayer adds,

"Amen, amen, so mote it be  
Say we so all, for charity."

The Cooke MS.. c.1410 has

"Amen so mote it be."

The phrase means literally "So be it" and it was used in the middle ages in England as a pious finale to prayers or blessings. It should be noted that the medieval formula began with the Hebrew word "Amen", nowadays omitted from Masonic usage. The word "Amen" has a range of meanings all related to fidelity, constancy, sureness, trust, and when used at the end of Hebrew prayers and blessings it was a formula of acquiescence and confirmation, as though to say "Truly we believe that it is (or will be) so."

Thus, although the "Amen" and the "So mote it be" do not have the same *original meanings*, they have virtually acquired the same meaning in the course of centuries, and that possibly explains the modern omission of the Amen. (Privately, I prefer to use the response" Amen" to "Grace" at table, and keep the SMIS for use in the lodge).

Q.3. What are the duties of the three Principal Officers?

A. The duties of the three Principal Officers within the Lodge are clearly and specifically laid down

in the opening ceremony of our Ritual which we hear at every meeting.

Their duties outwith the Lodge are the obvious ones of attending every practice meeting and, as senior members of the lodge, to take an active part in the management and running of the lodge by attending the Enquiry and Management Committee Meetings. It is also customary for the Junior Warden to propose the toast to the visitors, as it is his obligatory duty to arrange the Harmony and it is the Senior Warden's customary duty to propose the toast to returning and departing Brethren. It is the Right Worshipful Master's duty to propose all principal toasts including those to the candidates.

A Brother, on being installed into anyone of the three Principal Offices, automatically becomes a member of District Grand Lodge and consequently, it is his duty to attend all District Grand lodge meetings and to support District Grand lodge at any meeting to which they may be invited. In our own District, in practice this means attending all Installation Meetings of the three Constitutions which may be held in the town or city in which the Officer may reside. As our District is spread over such a vast area, not every Principal Office-Bearer has either the time or resources to travel outstation to attend meetings but nevertheless, if they can so arrange their affairs so to do they would be most welcomed.

The practice of Principal Office-Bearers attending the Installation Meetings of other lodges is extremely sound and, as has been said, is a duty. Firstly it promotes a closer understanding and harmony amongst Freemasonry in general and the various Constitutions in particular. Secondly very few lodges could assemble a Board of Installed Masters without the assistance of the Masters of other lodges who, of course, should be supported at all times by their Senior & Junior Wardens. Principal Office-Bearers who do not sup-

port their District Grand Lodge or do not support Installation Meetings of other Lodges can hardly expect support at their own Installation Meetings and could very well find themselves in an embarrassing position.

If any Brother being considered for a Principal Office cannot, or will not, carry out his duty in this respect, he is morally obliged to advise his Lodge before being elected.

0.4. What are the qualifications necessary for the Offices of Depute and Substitute Masters' or any other office and what are their Orders of Precedence?

A. Any Master Mason may be nominated for any office in a Lodge if he is in good standing with that Lodge. His eligibility is not affected by his being in arrear with his contribution to some other Lodge (Proceedings 1910-11, page 195).

The Charge in the McBride Third Degree advises the newly raised Master Mason, "You are now a full member of this Lodge, entitled to speak and to vote in its assemblies, and eligible for nomination to any office in it, in the District Grand Lodge and in the Grand Lodge of Scotland."

The fact that a Scottish Lodge elects all its Officers can probably be traced to the operative days and the subsequent influence of the operative Lodges when, by slow stages, they became non-operative and finally speculative. In such old Scottish Guilds and Trade Associations as still survive, it is customary to elect all the Officers and this practice is followed in the Scottish Lodges. In some Lodges (as in Ailsa) the Special Bye-Laws permit the Master to appoint his Depute Master and his Substitute Master.

There are two points about the Government of a Scottish Lodge which are not found in England or Ireland. The first is that it is not essential to have

served the office of Warden before becoming the Master of a Lodge. Any Master Mason in good standing is eligible for election to the Master's Chair. The second point is that there is no statutory time limit in the holding of office. A master of a Scottish Lodge can be re-elected as often as the Lodge cares to do so.

G.L. Law 59 states inter alia that "the Office Bearers of a Lodge shall take precedence according to their respective offices", and the precedence of offices' is as laid down for Grand Lodge in Law 57.

G.L. Law 174 states "In the absence of the Master and the Immediate Past Master of a Daughter Lodge, any Past Master thereof in order of precedence from the Immediate Past Master (i.e. the nearest to the Chair in date of holding office), shall officiate. In the absence of all these, the Depute or Substitute Master shall occupy the Chair. No other Office-Bearer or Brother of the Lodge can occupy the Chair.

0.5. Please explain the significance of the Due Guard.

A. In Scottish Lodges the Obligation in the First Degree is taken while the Candidate holds the V.S.L. in both hands in a particular manner which cannot be described here.

At the end of the Obligation the name of the T.G.A. O.T.U. is invoked and He is asked to "keep me steadfast in this my solemn Obligation" or "help me to keep and perform the same". Later at the "entrusting" or communication of the "Links", the candidate is told that the first part of the sign is called the "Dieu Garde" and the position of the hands is as they were when taking the Obligation, only now there is no V.S.L. Note that the name of the sign is made up of the French words which mean "God keep", i.e. "Dieu Garde" (or Due Guard) is a direct reference in French to the words of the Obligation.

It may also be noted that when the Lodge is opened in the First Degree, the Master, at the end of the opening, says, "I declare this Lodge open in the First or Entered Apprentice Degree and while at work, this shall be your Due Guard and this your Sign."

In some Scottish Lodges a Due Guard (hands in a different position) is given in all three degrees as a prelude to the Penal Sign. In others a Due Guard is given in only the First and Third Degrees while in still others (as in Lodge Ailsa) it is given only in the First Degree. This is one of the beauties of not having a Standard Ritual worked by all Lodges and one of the pleasures of visiting another Lodge is seeing how they do it.

0.6. What is the Tartan adopted by Lodge Ailsa and the reason for its adoption?

A. The Lodge gets its name from the Marquis of Ailsa whose permission was sought by and readily granted to the Founder Members when they petitioned for a new Lodge in 1918. The Marquis was a Proxy Master in Grand Lodge for some time. The family name of the Marquis of Ailsa is Kennedy, hence the Tartan adopted by the Lodge is the Kennedy Tartan. The Kennedy Clan has been associated with South West Scotland from the 12th century. The Kennedy's of Dunure acquired Cassillis and later one of the family married Mary, daughter of King Robert III. Their son was created Lord Kennedy in 1457 and in 1509 the third Lord Kennedy was created Earl of Cassillis. Archibald, 12th Earl of Cassillis was created Baron Ailsa in 1806 and in 1831 Marquis of Ailsa.

Culzean castle, overlooking the Firth of Clyde (and Ailsa Craig) was built for the 9th Earl of Cassillis between 1775 and 1790 incorporating the original Kennedy family stronghold. An apartment was reserved in the castle for General D. Eisenhower,

Supreme Commander of the Allied invasion of Europe in 1944 (later President of the U.S.A.).

0.7. Why is Freemasonry restricted to Males only?

A. Perhaps we should go back in history and see how it all began to try and better understand the answer to this question.

Freemasonry developed in Britain out of the building trades and fraternities, whose history goes back some 600 years. Social, economic, and industrial history from the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries is largely interwoven with the rise and development of gild organisation. The guilds in Europe generally began as voluntary associations of people in a particular locality, joined together for their common good. Primarily they were based on a strong "fraternity" element, and in their earliest forms they usually embraced some special objective, religious, social, benevolent, or defensive.

The next development of gild organisation in Britain was the rise of the craft guilds, which were associations of *men* engaged in a particular craft or trade, for the protection of their mutual interests and for rights of self-government.

Thus it can readily be seen that at the beginning the question of admitting females simply did not arise, there being no females employed in the craft in those days and the emancipation of women was over 550 years away.

For purely economic reasons, changes began to be seen in the character of the Lodges. The rapid growth of the towns, and the ability of craftsmen to find employment readily outside the jurisdiction of Lodge led to a decline in the trade-controlling powers of the Lodges, so that the Lodges began to pay more attention to social and charitable works than to their old functions of trade control. Feasting and drinking

was no novelty in masonic life, and the term "can. vlvial masonry" (for a lack of a better description) does not imply a decadent period in craft history. But here again it would, in those days, have been unseemly for women to take part in such activities.

In Scotland, where the Lodges were generally still exercising operative controls in the late 17th century the convivial phase seems to have begun about that time, but the whole business was a very gradual one. The Lodges, slowly bereft of their original purpose and functions, and having no specific aims, continued as social clubs throughout a period of decline, until the Speculative renaissance gave them a new sense of direction in about the 1730's.

During the past 600 years. under the play of industrial, social and economic influences, the craft has suffered enormous changes, and the Freemasonry of today bears no resemblance to the craft organisation of the 1300's.

However, Freemasonry has honoured the term "land-marks" as a name for one of the most important of all its basic laws, namely, that there are in the Craft certain principles, practices, traditions, usages or laws which cannot be changed by any Mason, Lodge or Grand Lodge. This is what we mean when we speak of "The Ancient Landmarks".

Freemasonry has an identity, a character of its own. Some things in it can be abolished, changed or modified, without destroying that identity — that is after the change is made Freemasonry continues to be what it was before. But there are other changes which, if they were made, would destroy Freemasonry itself — that is, it would cease to have its own identity and would become something else.

Ever since it began, as has been seen above, Masonry has admitted adult men only to membership. A boy

under age could not be held accountable to his obligations; and if women were admitted it would call for such a recasting of our system from top to bottom that little of it would remain.

Q.8. Can an affiliate member who is a Past Master under another Constitution wear his P.M.'s Jewel in a Scottish Lodge?

A. G.L. Law 275 states, "No regalia or jewels other than those appertaining to Craft Masonry shall be worn at meetings of Grand Lodge, Provincial or District Grand Lodges or Daughter Lodges."

G.L. Law 276 says "that the Regalia to be worn by members of the Scottish Constitution shall be that described in the Third Schedule of these laws." Part VI of the Third Schedule is a detailed list of jewels authorised by Grand Lodge. However, this list describes collar jewels for the various offices only and it is the custom in many Lodges to present to the retiring Master a Past Master's Jewel as a mark of appreciation for the work done by him while in the chair of the Lodge. These jewels always have a replica of the Master's jewel as laid down by Grand Lodge and invariably include the Badge and Tartan or Colour, of the particular Lodge, included. It is but fitting that Past Masters should wear the jewels when attending meetings of the Lodge which has awarded them.

There is nothing to prevent a Brother who is a Past Master of more than one Lodge wearing two or three P.M.'s jewels at the same time. Indeed a Brother may also be a Past Master of a Lodge under another Constitution and be entitled to wear a P.M.'s jewel of a Lodge under that Constitution. It too may be worn in a Scottish Lodge. It is entirely a matter for the Brother concerned, remembering that in the Lodge all are Brothers of equal standing and that as little distinction in regalia and jewels as is possible should

be the case. It is not, for example, the Scottish custom to wear Grand Lodge or Provincial or District Grand Lodge regalia except on official occasions.

0.9. Please give the origin and definition of Cowan.

A. We first hear of the Cowan in the (Scottish) Schaw Statute of 1598, and he had no exact counterpart in England or Ireland. He was a working Mason who had not properly joined the Fraternity - who had not, in fact, been admitted into a Lodge after serving his term under indentures. No doubt there were many such, capable of doing good work. But the official attitude to them is clearly indicated by the following regulation from the Schaw Statutes (wording modernised):-

"Item, that no master or fellow of craft receive a cowan to work in his society or company, nor send any of his servants to work with cowans, under pain of twenty pounds (Scots) so oft as any person offends in this respect".

According to a minute of the Mother Kilwinning Lodge in 1707, "No Meason shall employ no cowan which is to say without the word to work", which (by leaving out the last two important words) has given rise to the definition of a cowan as a "Mason without the word." Mention of him does not enter English Freemasonry until Anderson's second Book of Constitutions, 1738.

0.10. After the usual business of the Lodge, is it Scottish custom to have "risings" at the first of which the Master asks "I rise for the first time in the East to ask if anyone has aught to bring forward for the good of Freemasonry in general or Grand Lodge in particular"?

A. No, this is not Scottish custom. The usual formula in Scotland is:-

R.W.M. - Worshipful Junior Warden, have you any further business in the South?

W.J.W. - No further business in the South, Right Worshipful Master (or, if he has, he states this first.)

R.W.M. - Worshipful Senior Warden, have you any further business in the West?

W.S.W. - No further business in the West, Right Worshipful Master (or, if he has, he states this first.)

R.W.M. - Any further business in the East?  
(At this point, visiting dignitaries from Grand Lodge, District Grand Lodge or visiting Masters of other Lodges, sitting in the East can give Greetings. If none, the I.P.M. replies as above).

R.W.M. - Any further business on the floor of the Lodge? (waits and may receive Reports, Greetings, etc.)

R.W.M. - There being no further business, be upstanding Brethren and assist me to close the Lodge.

0.11. What actually is a Lewis?

A. In the Masonic Lectures (1st Lecture, 7th Section) a Lewis is described as: "Three pieces of metal dovetailed into a stone, forming a cramp." The Imperial Dictionary defines it as "An instrument of iron used in raising large stones to the upper part of a building". Webster's Dictionary combines both the foregoing definitions and says "an instrument of iron used in raising large stones by dovetailing one of its ends into an opening in the stone."

"Lewis" is also the term applied to the son of a Mason. Some authorities have claimed that, to be entitled to the term, the son must be born after his father has been made a Mason; others take a wider view and grant the designation to a son whose father becomes a Mason after the child's birth.

Only under the Scottish Constitution, as far as the writer knows, does a lewis have any privilege, i.e.

G.L. Law 181 states "Every candidate shall be at least twenty-one years of age at the date of his application, with the exception of sons of Master Masons under Grand Lodge, who may apply at any time after attaining eighteen years of age."

In the Lectures earlier referred to, a series of questions and answers lead up to the question "For this filial duty I presume he (the Lewis) claims a privilege?" and the answer "He does, that of being made a Mason before any other person however dignified by birth or fortune."

More should not be read into the words "made a Mason before any other person" than is intended. It of course means that a Lewis can be made a Mason before one who is not a Lewis, simply on grounds of age, eighteen years as against twenty-one years. It does not mean that once a Lewis has been accepted as a candidate for initiation he can precede non Lewis candidates already awaiting initiation.

0.12. What is the source and meaning of TYLER and what constitutes a lodge properly tyled?

A. Apparently a simple question but a number of curious problems arise, and the reason why that particular officers should bear that title is by no means the first of them.

The Oxford English Dictionary shows, beyond doubt, that the tiler's craft got its name from the actual work of making tiles, or from covering, or roofing of buildings with tiles. (Incidentally, this also applies to the corresponding title in French Freemasonry, le *tailleur*). The spelling "Tyler" appears to be a purely Masonic usage.

In Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary, "tile" in addition to "a slab of baked clay (or a substitute) for covering roofs and floors etc." is said to mean "to secure against intrusion by placing a person at the door" and also "to bind to secrecy". This dict-

ionary also gives the meaning of "tiler", "a free-masons' door-keeper - also tiler."

Early operative lodge records are virtually non-existent, and it is reasonably certain that the operative lodges never used a complete team of officers comparable with our present system. Even if they did, it is unlikely that they would have used a tiler as outer guard. Indeed, it is impossible to imagine that the masons on a large-scale building job would *continually* have the services of a tiler at their disposal to guard their lodge during meetings. The tilers only came on to the job at the end, when virtually all the structural work was finished; theirs was the final stage in the works.

This purely practical consideration leads to the conclusion that "Tyler" in speculative Masonry was simply the *name* of the office; it was not the trade of the man who held the office. Moreover the name "Tyler" was not universal.

Eventually the title "Tyler" did come into general use for that office, which comprised a variety of duties in the 18th century, including the "Drawing of the Floor Designs", delivering notice of meetings to members of the lodge and the preparation of the candidates. The Tyler was virtually a handyman or odd-job man for the Lodge, but I cannot trace the title being used in that sense, and the range of duties does not help at all in finding a reason why that Officer was called Tyler. In extensive reading I have not seen a completely satisfying explanation.

Instinctively I feel that the title of the Office had some more-or-less reasoned connection with the actual operative job of a tiler or tiler to roof or cover i.e. protection from the weather, or from eaves-droppers? Or it may be simply that as the tiler was the last man to work on a building job, so the Tyler, in a speculative Lodge, is the last man to

complete the team of officers; but this is pure speculation.

A Lodge properly tyled is of course one with the Tyler on duty and in his correct position.

Q.13. Please explain Scottish practice in regard to Signs and Salutations.

A. Grand Lodge has never legislated regarding signs, but there are some signs, or manner of giving signs, which might be regarded as intrinsically Scottish. For example, a great number of Lodges make use of the Due Guard as a prelude to the Penal sign. In Scottish Lodges, every Mason will automatically adopt the sign of Fidelity when he stands in the Lodge. In other Constitutions, the Brethren only use this sign when a prayer is being offered or a candidate is taking his obligation. If at the business part of a Meeting, a Brother addresses the Chair, he should rise, give the sign of the Degree, return to the sign of Fidelity, make his address and before sitting down give again the sign of the Degree. Finally, the Grand or Royal Sign with which is associated Grand Honours is always given three times. The manner of doing this is absolutely uniform throughout Scotland, and is always accompanied by the words "All Glory to The Most High."

How many salutes should be given to The Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason, Right Worshipful District Grand Master, etc., when entering a Lodge? The answer is *none*. The only occasion, when The Grand Master Mason is saluted - and once only as a Master Mason - is on the occasion of his Installation when he is proclaimed by the Grand Director of Ceremonies. This point is stressed because in some Constitutions there is a specified number of salutes for a Brother with "Most Worshipful", a lesser number for "Right Worshipful" rank and so on.

Q.14. Please explain the custom and usage of Scottish Regalia.

A. When the first Scottish Book of Constitutions was published in 1836, tradition, custom and usage were still strong and this was reflected in that book and has continued to be so reflected today. Perhaps the most striking example of the individuality of a Scottish Lodge is to be found in the Regalia. Every Scottish Lodge is entitled to choose such colour or colours as it may think fit. Within recent years there has been a tendency to avoid the use of the combination green and gold, as being the colour used by Grand Lodge and the Provincial and District Grand Lodges. Still, a Lodge may choose and use that colour combination if it so wishes. This arrangement of the Lodge having its own colour has some advantages and some disadvantages. The advantage is most readily observed when the Lodge has some close connection with an organisation, such as a school, which has a colour scheme, for that same colour scheme can be used as the Lodge colours. The disadvantage is purely financial - with so many possible colours it is impossible for the Makers of masonic regalia to keep a stock of even Master Mason's aprons. All Scottish aprons and sashes must be made to order with the additional cost that that involves.

Scottish Freemasons in common with the Irish, normally wear the Apron under the coat. Not so long ago this was actually the Law on the matter, but with the advent of double-breasted suits the Law now reads, "Aprons shall be fastened preferably under the coat and worn so that the flap is visible." Every Freemason should be encouraged to have a dress Apron of his own. With constant use an Apron naturally becomes soiled and it should be remembered that lambskin can easily be cleaned and kept in that condition for many years. Since the Apron is symbo-

lically representative of the life and conduct of the wearer it is naturally a sad reflection on the wearer if it is not kept in a spotless condition.

A sash of the Lodge colours may be worn by every Master Mason who is a member of the Lodge. They are a relic of the old days when all gentlemen of any standing wore a sword, frequently suspended from a cloth or leather sash worn over the right shoulder. Our ancient brethren were no exception. When they went to the meetings of their Lodge they wore their swords. On entering the Lodge they would take the swords out of the frog in the sash, but they kept the sash on and thus dressed went into the Lodge room. Bright coloured clothing for men was common two centuries ago and so it was quite usual to have one's sword-sash in the colour of the Lodge. These sashes are still worn by all Master Masons if they so desire. Sometimes the name of the Lodge is embroidered on the sash but no other ornamentation is allowed by Grand Lodge Laws.

Q.15. Can an affiliate member of a Lodge, being a Past Master of another Lodge, wear levels on the apron of his new Lodge?

A. There is a subtle distinction in a Scottish Lodge as between a Past Master *of* the Lodge and a Past Master *in* the Lodge. The levels on a Master's or Past Master's apron are, in Scotland, *badges of office* not *badges of rank*. This means that a Past Master of one Lodge who joins another Lodge may *not* wear levels on the apron of the Lodge he joins. He will wear an ordinary master mason's apron. He will, of course, receive all the courtesies due to a Past Master in the Craft but he is not accounted a Past Master of the Lodge and as such he cannot wear the levels on his new Lodge's apron. This distinction extends even to the Provincial, District and Grand Lodge. The only member of a Provincial or District

Grand Lodge who wears levels on his apron is the Provincial or the District Grand Master. That is true of Grand Lodge also. Only the Grand Master Mason, and Past Grand Masters, wear levels on their Grand Lodge regalia. All the Officers in Grand Lodge and Provincial or District Grand Lodge wear the three rosettes of a Master Mason on their regalia. As a general practice the third rosette on the flap (which is semi-circular not triangular on a Scottish apron) of the apron is replaced by the badge of office. The badge of office is not worn on the white lambskin as it is in England.

Q.16. Please explain the functions of the Ballot Box.

A. The Ballot Box is Freemasonry's sentinel. It stands guard at the portals of the Craft to keep off all those who are not qualified to enter; and there is peace and harmony inside those portals only so long as it remains faithful to its sentinel duties. It is important for you, therefore, to gain a clear understanding of all it means and of the duties of a Mason with regard to it.

First, the Ballot Box gives decisive and practical expression to the principle of qualification. Freemasonry does not solicit members. Petitioners must come of their own choice and free will. Of all those who thus come only such as have certain necessary qualifications are eligible for membership. The first use of the ballot is to decide whether in fact and truth a given petitioner possesses those qualifications.

Does a petitioner have, or does he not have, the necessary qualifications? This is the question to be decided by the Ballot, and it is the *only* question to be decided. A man may be upright and honourable, a good citizen, a patriot, a loyal friend, and yet not possess the required qualifications. A blackball is therefore not a mark of disgrace. It is not a judgement on a man's character or on his personality, but

is purely a technical method for deciding whether he is the type fitted for a place in the Fraternity.

For this same reason it is un-Masonic for any member of a Lodge to cast a blackball against a petitioner out of personal spite or private prejudice. When we cast a ballot we act in an official capacity as a spokesman, or sentinel, for the Fraternity. We are, so to speak, a member of a jury, and it is therefore unjust for us to permit our exercise of that function to be warped by purely private feelings.

Nevertheless, and here we come to the second point, the Ballot should be unanimous. The petition ought to be acceptable to every member of the Lodge. That is to say, when the question arises whether a given man should or should not be received into our fellowship, the Fraternity itself receives first consideration.

This is wise and just. The Fraternity has not solicited him; he is soliciting it. It is for him to prove his fitness. Consequently, if a member of a Lodge, not out of prejudice but out of positive and sure knowledge, is convinced that the petitioner would disturb the peace and harmony of the Lodge, it becomes a duty to exclude him. The good and welfare of the body of men already in membership takes precedence over the desires and ambitions of the petitioner.

The third point is that the Ballot must be secret. The Office-Bearers responsible for the Ballot are the Master and the Wardens. No other Brother has any right to interfere - the Brethren should neither be invited or permitted to inspect the voting as disclosed by the Ballot Box. It is a violation of the Grand Lodge Constitution for a member to tell how he voted, or to discuss a Ballot in open Lodge, or to discuss the petitioner. As a petitioner he stands in a confidential relationship to the Lodge; the facts he has given about himself are personal and private, and they must be kept sacred as such; the whole transaction is

private as between him and the Lodge, therefore nothing about it should ever go to the outside world. If he is rejected it is for purely masonic reasons and these should not prejudice him in the eyes of his fellows outside the Craft. The fourth point is that every member of the Lodge ought to vote if he is present when the Ballot is taken. This means that the Ballot Box is a duty rather than merely a privilege. Membership in the Fraternity is an office and carries official duties as much so as the occupation of one of the chairs; and one of the chief of these official duties is to exercise a watchful care over the quality and fitness of prospective members. When a Mason became a member he took an obligation to discharge the official duties incidental to membership, and for that reason it is as much his duty to cast an intelligent vote as it is for the Master to preside over the Lodge.

The fifth point is that the Ballot is inviolable. Once it is taken it is taken, and there is no appeal from its verdict. If a Master is convinced that some error was made while taking it he may order another Ballot to be taken at once, but when he has announced it to be completed and closed, the transaction stands finished beyond recall. Having said this, there is however an exception. Grand Committee has ruled - see G.L. Proceedings 1927-28, page 226, that "If the ballot on a candidate be favourable, but information, obtained later, makes it desirable that the initiation should not be proceeded with, the initiation should be postponed and the matter again referred to the Committee of Enquiry to make such further enquiry as may be considered necessary and to report afresh to the Lodge. If deemed expedient, a fresh ballot may be taken." Needless to say, the occasions on which this Ruling is adopted are indeed very rare.

The sixth point is that the Ballot is independent. This means that when in voting a member has exercised

his best judgement in the performance of a duty, he is not answerable to any man, to the Lodge, or to Grand Lodge for his action, whether it was favourable to the candidate or unfavourable. This is the necessary corollary to the principle that voting is a duty; for no man can be held responsible for a duty unless he is recognised to possess the power and authority to discharge it.

It would be a mistake to think of the Ballot Box only from the point of view of its power to exclude the unworthy; its positive power is far more impressive. A favourable Ballot is more than a mere grudging admission of a petitioner into membership. On the contrary, it has, at one stroke and for all time to come, decided that he is to be admitted into full and free fellowship with his Brethren. When you become a full member of the Lodge you will not be in a position to raise any question as to the fitness of another member. You cannot quarrel with him because he may belong to some race against which you may feel a prejudice, or because he adheres to some church or religious creed in which you do not believe, or because he votes with a political party you are opposed to, or because he may not possess the degree of social polish you consider necessary, or because he is not as learned as he ought to be, or is poor, or possesses traits and habits that may jar upon you. All questions as to the desirability or acceptability of such qualities or lack of qualities were decided with complete finality by the Ballot Box at the time his petition came before the Lodge; and that decision remains in force! It is un-Masonic to consider him under perpetual probation; his period of probation ended when he was elected to membership. He has been, ever since, a Brother, and it is the duty of every other member of the Lodge to treat him as such so long as his membership shall last.

0.17. What customs should be observed at Harmony?

- A. Even at "Harmony" or as it is called elsewhere "The Festive Board" there are certain masonic customs. When His Majesty King George VI was alive the first loyal toast within Scotland was "The King and the Craft". It is felt that it would now be appropriate to have two loyal toasts firstly "The Queen" and secondly "The Craft". As there are a great many Scottish Lodges overseas in different countries it is left to the individual Lodge to decide on the form of loyal toast most acceptable to the country concerned. In Scotland the third loyal toast is "The Grand Lodge of Scotland". It is noteworthy that the toast is to the corporate body and not to the Grand Master Mason. It naturally follows that as there is no specific toast to The Grand Master Mason there is likewise no toast to The Depute Grand Master, the Substitute Grand Master or to Grand Office Bearers.

Throughout Scotland it is common to have "Masonic Honours" following the proposal of a toast. In other Constitutions this is called "Masonic Fire". For example, following the proposal of the toast to The Grand Lodge of Scotland, the Master of the Lodge would say:-

"Masonic Honours, Brethren, for Grand Lodge,  
Count. Wardens, count one, two, three."  
Senior Warden says, "Once, twice, thrice."  
Junior Warden says, "One, two, three."

Thereupon, the Brethren give one of the many, "three times three" form of hand-clapping, followed each time by three hurrahs. If the toast is associated with the name of The Grand Master Mason or other senior member of Grand Lodge, the Brethren would then break into song "A worthy mason he", etc. It should be noted that the phrase "Point, left, right" is not used in Scotland for Masonic Honours. Of recent years a few Lodges in Scotland have adopted the custom of certain groups of Brethren in the South,

West, etc. "drinking wine with the Master." This is most certainly not Scottish usage and this practice is deprecated.

Finally, after the Tyler has given his toast "Here's to all poor and distressed masons," etc., masonic honours are not accorded but the Master says - "Happy to meet" (repeated by Brethren); "Sorry to part" (repeated by Brethren); "Hoping to meet again" (repeated by Brethren). Sometimes the last phrase is altered to "Happy to meet again."

0.18. What are the desirable qualities of an Installed Master?

A. To occupy the Chair of a Lodge is undoubtedly to fill the highest office to which one's brethren can elect you. But the office is one which demands and should get the highest degree of leadership from he who fills it. It is perhaps pertinent to take a long and thoughtful look at the names of the men who served our Lodges as Master a hundred, or even fifty years ago. Consider the positions of importance within the community that these men occupied, and then ask ourselves if our Masters today are of that quality. Very many are, and the Scottish Craft would be a poor thing if that were not so, but all too many Lodges elect the Master as his reward for filling the junior offices, regardless of his abilities as a leader. The Constitutions of the Grand Lodge of Scotland do not require that a Master shall have first served the office of Warden (as many other Grand Lodges do). The members of a Scottish Lodge are free to elect any qualified Brother as their Master and there have been many good Masters elected "straight from the floor".

A Master is expected to be *Master* of his Lodge, not someone to be pushed around. Theoretically he "sets the Lodge to work and gives good and wholesome instruction." Yet what do we require for election as

Master? There are no minimum requirements as to ritualistic proficiency; nothing with regard to the history, symbolism, ethics, law, philosophy and traditions of our Craft. We elect a Master and expect him somehow to be a leader. It rarely occurs to us to require some evidence even from an outside source of potential leadership.

There is far more to being Master of a Lodge than the mere recitation of the ritual. Some large Lodges are paying the penalty of years of "mass production". When the Masters of Lodges are so lacking in imagination, knowledge and vision that they cannot conceive of a masonic meeting unless a degree is to be conferred, then we need not expect to admit and retain as useful members of the Craft, the real leaders in our various communities be they village, burgh or city. The real Master of his Lodge is he who can provide real leadership, a man who can give "a good and wholesome instruction", a man who understands what Freemasonry is all about even if he could not confer a single degree. Suppose he cannot recite the ritual? There are always those who are willing and anxious to do this work and who can do it superbly. Let them have the charge of the Lodge's ritualistic work and let the Master "rule and govern his Lodge". Scotland, along with the Scandinavian Grand Lodges, allows the Master to remain in office as long as his Brethren care to elect him. This salutary arrangement is no longer exercised to the extent it once was. One hundred years ago it was not uncommon for a Master to occupy the Chair for seven or even ten years. The Lodges appreciated a good Master, and when they got one - they kept him. There is much to be said for this idea and much less to be said for erecting a Master as a reward for winning an endurance test.

0.19. Explain the background of the Ceremony of Installed Master.

A. It must be clearly understood that the Ceremony of Installed Master is *not*, under the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, a masonic degree. There is no such thing as the "Degree of Installed Master". The Grand Lodge of Scotland recognises a Ceremonial of Installed Master, and Law 85 states the conditions under which it may be conferred.

The installed Master Ceremonial, as presently authorised by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, is not an indigenous part of Scottish Freemasonry. This may come as a surprise to many, but the fact is that the ceremony was brought to Scotland from England in 1872 as the result of action on the part of Grand Lodge. It is for that reason that an official ritual for the proper working of the ceremony is published.

In his History of the lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel) No.1, Murray Lyon states that in the days of the operative lodges the installation into the principal office of the lodge was unmarked by any ceremonial other than the newly-elected Brother taking an oath of fealty to the lodge and his brethren. The next step, again according to Murray Lyon, was the introduction of the dogma "that no Brother could properly preside in a lodge until his reception of the Chair Degree". Note that Murray Lyon uses the word "degree". This came about, says Murray Lyon, with the spread of the so-called "High Degrees" at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. This ceremony which was termed variously "Past Master", "Master passed the Chair" and "Scottish Past Master" was worked clandestinely in a number of Scottish lodges and was an essential qualification for all who wished to become Royal Arch Masons in a Scottish Royal Arch Chapter. Indeed the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland authorised its conferring in their Chapters when the candidate had not attained it in his lodge.

It was abolished by the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland in 1887.

In 1858 the Grand lodge of Scotland approved a form of Ceremonial for the "Installation of the Chairman of a lodge". There is no mention in the minutes of Grand lodge of any details of the actual ceremony employed. That some form of ritual was approved is certain, because at a conference between Grand Lodge and Grand Chapter, held on 20th April, 1860, with reference to the Mark Degree, a joint recommendation was made "as to the Past Master's Degree — that the Chairman of a Lodge be installed according to the ceremonial approved by Grand Lodge in 1858".

On 30th April, 1872 the Grand Lodge of Scotland decided to import into Scottish Craft Masonry an "Installed Ceremonial for Masters or Certified Past Masters only, similar to that practised in England and Ireland".

It is clear that Grand Lodge, in 1872, made an innovation in Scottish Freemasonry. What was the reason behind this very unusual step? The principal reason seems to have been the difficulties met with by Scottish Masters and Past Masters when attending Installation meetings of English and Irish Lodges. Not having passed through the Ceremony of an Installed Master, they had to retire during the actual installation and during what is known as the "inner working". Within the confines of the British Isles, this disadvantage was not perhaps of very great moment but it was important overseas. It is often almost impossible, in an overseas lodge, to get three Past Masters of the lodge at a meeting at the same time. This is due to the nature of Government and Commercial work, involving the frequent, and often sudden, transfer of a Brother from one centre to another. Past Masters of Scottish lodges were unable to help their English or Irish Brethren for they had not been

installed. It now became possible for a Scottish Past Master to assist at the installation of an English or Irish Master, if he were called upon.

With the introduction of an officially approved Ceremonial for the Installation of a Master of a Lodge, the old clandestine, "Passed Master" fell into desuetude and was no longer worked. A very similar, but not quite identical, ceremonial ultimately became the Installed Mark Master Degree under the Grand Lodge of Mark Masons of England. Of the variants in current use in Scotland, the principal one is in the opening of the Board of Installed Masters. In the official ceremonial the opening is accomplished by the Installing Master calling all present to order and opening the Board "by declaration". As a variant the Board of Installed Masters is opened at length \_ with questions and answer \_ as if it were a degree and the Master Elect is *not* present at the opening. It is not possible to make further detailed comments here, but this variant might well be a carry-over from the opening of the old "Passed Master Degree". It seems possible that Lodges which were working it continued to do so, but substituted the new inner working while retaining the old opening and closing.

While the ceremony of the Installed Master Is not peculiar to the three British Grand Lodges, it must not be assumed by Masters and Past Masters that all brethren who have occupied the chair of a Lodge are, *ipso facto*, Installed Masters. The majority of the American Grand Lodges *do not* recognise any ceremony or degree of Installed Master. Visiting Masters and Past Masters from United States Grand Lodges must always be examined in detail as to their qualification to be present at a Board of Installed Masters. In the case of brethren from the Grand Lodges of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, no trouble will arise \_ these Grand "Lodges use the same Installation Ceremony as the British Grand Lodges - and

this is also true of the Grand Lodge of India. Visitors from the Grand Lodges of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Holland, Germany, Austria and Switzerland are a special case and Grand Secretary should always be consulted if they desire to attend a Board of Installed Masters. The National Grand Lodge of France, which Scotland recognises, works the same ceremony as Scotland and their brethren may be admitted on proof.

Q.20. Please explain the correct Style of Address in Scottish Freemasonry.

A. In the usage of the Scottish Craft "Brother" is neither a sentimental nor familiar form of address. It is a title \_ as much as Right Worshipful or Worshipful. A man does not attend his Lodge in his capacity as a private individual; he is not John Fraser or Robert Anderson. He is there in his capacity as a Master Mason \_ a Brother. For this reason he should always be addressed in open Lodge as "Brother Fraser" or "Brother Anderson". It cannot be too strongly stressed that all Scottish Freemasons are Brothers-irrespective of their rank in the Craft. At the same time it might be worth noting for our younger members that this style of address should not be used when non-masons are in the company and certainly not \_ as has been known \_ in any business dealings.

There is no such person in the Scottish Craft as a "Worshipful Brother" or a "Very Worshipful, or Right Worshipful or Most Worshipful Brother". AU are Brothers and the titles I have mentioned are attached to the office one holds. Thus it follows that the Grand Master Mason is referred to as "The Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason, Brother David Liddell-Grainger" or as "Brother David Uddell.Grainger, Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason", and *never* as "Most Worshipful Brother David Liddell-Grainger". The Master of

a Scottish Lodge is addressed as "Right Worshipful Master" and he can be referred to as "Right Worshipful Master, Brother Fraser". The Wardens are addressed as "Worshipful Warden". On quitting office it is Scottish custom to drop down one rank in respect of titles. I.e. a Past Grand Master in Scotland is a "Right Worshipful Past Grand Master" and the Master of a Lodge becomes a "Worshipful Past Master" when he leaves the chair.

0.21. What rights, if any, do visiting Brethren have?

- A. Visiting another Lodge is a privilege not a right. A Brother may ask to be admitted to a Lodge as a visitor and he will always be welcome, but he cannot demand to be admitted. That right belongs only to the Grand Master Mason and, in his own Province or District, the Provincial or District Grand Master. The Master of a Lodge is entitled to refuse to admit, as a visitor, any Brother whose presence may, in his opinion, disturb the harmony of the Lodge. He may also ask any visitors to retire if he thinks that the business before the Lodge is of a private nature. If any member objects to the presence of a visitor, the Master should politely ask the visitor to retire.

As a visitor, either alone or with a member of the Lodge, be sure to arrive in ample time before the Lodge is opened. It is very discourteous for a visitor to arrive late and if it is necessary to test him it will upset the Lodge business - for some Brother will have to be sent out of the Lodge to carry out this duty. No Brother should resent being tested at any time. Every Master has the duty of seeing that none but Freemasons are present in his Lodge when it is open. It is usual to ask a Past Master to undertake this duty and he should report to the Master that he is satisfied that the visitor is a member of the Craft, a member of a Regular Lodge and not under any masonic suspension or prohibition. A visitor should

be ready to produce his Grand Lodge Diploma if it is asked for. A visitor can only be vouched for if the Brother vouching for him can truthfully say that he has sat with him in open Lodge. A visiting Brother should, if possible, bring his own Regalia with him. Unfortunately, it has been known for a Brother to visit a Lodge whilst not in good standing with his own Lodge. This is contrary to the Constitution. Indeed it is the responsibility of the Lodge receiving the Brother to ensure that he is in good standing. For this reason all visitors should carry with them their receipt for the payment of the current year's test fees, or their Life Membership Cards. As Life Membership is unknown in many other Constitutions, a Brother visiting, say in England, should take with him (a) his Grand Lodge Diploma and (b) his current receipt for test fees or his Life Membership Card together with a letter from the Lodge Secretary stating that Life Membership means that he has commuted his Annual Test Fees in one single payment. It is not in order for a Scottish Brother visiting a Lodge to convey the greetings either of Grand Lodge or of the Grand Master Mason unless he has been specifically invited to do so.

0.22. What is the composition of Grand Lodge and a Provincial Grand Lodge?

- A. The composition of both Grand Lodge and a Provincial Grand Lodge is somewhat different to the arrangements which rule in England. In Scotland a Provincial Grand Lodge (and a District Grand Lodge Overseas) is composed of (1) The Master and Wardens of every Lodge in the Province or District; (2) The Past Masters of every Lodge in the Province or District; and (3) the Past Masters *in* every Lodge in the Province or District. The last qualification means, in effect, that a Brother who is a Past Master in a Lodge in Province "A" (and therefore a member at that Provincial Grand Lodge) and who moves to

a Lodge in Province "B" is automatically a member of the Provincial Grand Lodge in Province "B" although he has never gone through the Chair of the Lodge in Province "B" which he has joined as an affiliate. Thus a Brother may well be a member of two, or more, Provincial Grand Lodges and even hold office in both of them.

In so far as Grand Lodge is concerned Past Masters are somewhat at a discount! They are *not* members of Grand Lodge. Every Lodge under the Grand Lodge of Scotland is represented in Grand Lodge by three members - The Master and the two Wardens or a Proxy Master and two Proxy Wardens. The basic thinking behind this arrangement is that no Lodge shall have any greater say in the affairs of Grand Lodge than any other Lodge. An old Lodge with many Past Masters has three representatives in Grand Lodge - and so has the youngest Lodge.

Since the Grand Lodge of Scotland has a high proportion of Lodges overseas, it is clear that the overseas Lodges cannot be represented in Grand Lodge by their actual Master and Wardens. Thus it is that a Lodge may choose - and, of course, all Overseas Lodges do so choose - to be represented in Grand Lodge by either its Master and Wardens, or by a Proxy Master, and the two Wardens appointed by him. The Lodge must decide on the night of Installation of the Officers which course it will follow. In practice, Grand Secretary's office keeps a list of Brethren, almost invariably Past Masters, who wish to continue their interest in Grand Lodge after having served as a Master of a Lodge. From this list he will provide a Lodge with a Proxy Master and the Proxy Master will appoint two Proxy Wardens - generally from that same list in Grand Secretary's office. The Lodge is quite free to appoint any Brother as its Proxy Master. A somewhat similar arrangement applies to the District Grand Masters overseas, except that the

appointment of a Proxy District Grand Master is generally done by the Grand Master Mason.

Q.23. What are the Ancient Landmarks?

A. Before the development of modern surveying and of the present system of recording the position, shape and size of a piece of land by public authorities, how to establish the permanent boundaries of a farm, field, lot or other parcel of ground was a difficult and often a perplexing problem. Almost the only method men could devise was to fix upon some feature, such as a hill, stream, rock, or even a tree, and to draw a line from it to some other such feature, and so on, thus establishing the limits beyond which a man's property could not, or should not go. These more or less permanent markers were called landmarks - a word which explains itself. And it is easy to understand why the destruction or removal of a landmark was deemed a very serious offence. It meant robbing a man of his property - therefore the ancient saying, "Remove not thy neighbour's landmarks. ...

Freemasonry has honoured this term as a name for one of the most important of all its basic laws, namely, that there are in the Craft certain principles, practices, traditions, usages or laws which cannot be changed by any Mason, Lodge or Grand Lodge. This is what we mean when we speak of "The Ancient Landmarks", a phrase you will hear often during your Masonic career.

Freemasonry has an Identity, a character of its own. Some things in it can be abolished, changed or modified, without destroying that identity - that is, after the change is made Freemasonry continues to be what it was before. But there are other changes which, if they were made, would destroy Freemasonry itself - that is, it would cease to have its own identity and would become something else.

This is a picture of the idea of the landmarks. They signify that which in Masonry is essential to its identity. To do away with them is to do away with Masonry. Let us, therefore, in a rough way, define the doctrine of Landmarks as follows:-

"Whatever is found necessary to maintain the Identity and secure the perpetuity of Freemasonry has the property of a Landmark."

You see now why even a Grand Lodge, or the Fraternity itself as a whole, cannot change those Landmarks! If a Grand Lodge were to change them it would destroy itself because there would no longer be any Masonry left and there cannot be a Grand Lodge if there be no Masonry.

It is impossible to make up a list of the Landmarks, but there are a few examples which will help make the meaning clear. I shall call your attention to a number of examples of these, reminding you as I do that they are examples only and not intended to be exhaustive.

Many things in Masonry are kept secret from the outside world, being deemed sacred to its own membership. This secrecy is not a theatrical pose to gratify a desire for mystification, but is so essential to the very nature of the Craft that we would not even conceive of Masonry without it. Gone would be the ritual, initiation, the obligations, the modes of recognition and all that homelike privacy which makes the Lodge life so delightful. Secrecy therefore has the property of a Landmark.

Each petitioner is required to possess certain qualifications, must be well recommended, of good character, free born and of mature age. If these qualifications were removed, men of every sort would flock in, men not physically, mentally or morally capable of living the Masonic life. The result would be no Masonry to live. But it is not sufficient for a

petitioner to be well qualified in order to gain admittance to our mysteries. He must also pass through the ceremonies of initiation. This also has been an integral part of our Fraternity from the very beginning, and is so vital to it that the whole system presupposes it throughout. Eliminate initiation and it is possible that some kind of society would remain, but it would not be the society of Freemasonry.

Another equally essential factor is the secret ballot. Since it is the principal purpose of the Craft to bring men together into brotherly relations, it is necessary that such candidates as are admitted shall not disturb harmony among the members. The ballot is thus carefully designed to guard against this that if three members are convinced that a given petitioner will be a disturbing influence their votes have the power to exclude.

The Ritual, with its assemblage of symbols, emblems and allegories, is yet another character belonging to the nature of Masonry, and belongs so essentially to it that without it the Craft would be an empty house devoid of furnishing, life, light or warmth.

Every Mason must have respect for and obedience to the civil law; no Mason may engage in broils or rebellions; no political discussions can be brought into our assemblies. Were this abolished our organization would be taken captive by some political or social party and would perish at the first radical turnover of political power. While it lasted it would be the servant of some power outside itself without the ability to regulate and control its own existence.

To the same effect is the ancient law forbidding that a candidate or Brother shall be questioned as to his particular mode of religious faith and also that no sectarian matters shall intrude within a Lodge. Just as it would mean the ultimate destruction of Free-

masonry if it were to make itself over into the hands of a political party, so would it be its death sooner or later to surrender itself to some particular creed.

My last example might be described as the crowning Landmark of all. Belief in God, with the Altar at the centre of the Lodge and having the volume of The Sacred Law open upon it, belief in immortality - here is the religious basis of Freemasonry, and when I use the word "basis" I mean it in its most literal sense. If this spiritual life were destroyed our Fraternity would degenerate into a mere social club, a thing at the opposite pole from what it is or should be.

As I stated in the beginning, these are but a few examples of those characters which belong inalienably to Freemasonry as such. I have given you this explanation of the principle of the Landmarks through a series of examples for one purpose:-

The subject is of the utmost importance to all Masons, and that for this reason. It makes plain that Freemasonry is clearly conscious of what belongs to its own proper nature; against every possible influence it guards and cherishes that nature continually; the petitioner who comes into its membership must accept it as he finds it or not at all; there is no way to change Freemasonry to suit the tastes, foibles, prejudices or opinions of the candidate; it is the candidate who must change himself to conform to it. To become a Mason, therefore, you must stand ready with all sincerity to give whole-hearted assent to its teachings and principles, obedience to its laws and regulations and observance to its Ancient Landmarks.

Q.24. What are the principal tenets of Freemasonry?

A. The principal or chief tenets of Freemasonry are Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. It is necessary not

to overlook the word "principal", for it signifies that while it is on these three great teachings that the Craft lays the greatest emphasis, yet there are other teachings of almost equal importance. In any discussion of our subject those others must not be lost sight of.

By a "tenet" is meant some teaching so obviously true, so universally accepted, that we believe it without question and always take it for granted. Examples of such teachings lie about us everywhere.

When we turn to the Principal Tenets of Freemasonry we are at once struck by an interesting fact - Freemasonry considers Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth to be teachings of this kind! It holds them to be true in a sense that no man can question them. They are obvious, axiomatic, self-proving. Is it not only too common a thing for men to consider Brotherly Love, for example, to be such a thing that, while it might be highly desirable, it is not practicable, and is nothing therefore but a vision, to be dreamed of but never possessed? It is challenging for Freemasonry to call such things tenets, for it means that they are not only true, but plainly and obviously and necessarily true. Unless you can grasp this fact, unless you can see it yourself that the teachings of Freemasonry are realities and not visionary ideals, you will never be able to understand Masonic teachings. For Freemasonry does not tell us that Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth *ought* to be true, that it would be better for us all if they were true - it tells us that they are true. They are tremendous realities in human life, and it is as impossible to question their existence as it is to question the existence of the ground under our feet. The question is not whether we shall believe in them or not, for we cannot help but believe in them - the question is, what are we going to do about them?

Let us now reflect a moment upon the Principal Tenets, beginning with Brotherly Love. By love is meant the placing of the highest possible valuation upon another person. A man's mother or father, his wife or children, his intimate friends, he values for themselves — not for advantages he may gain from them, not for their usefulness to him, but solely each one in his own person and for his own sake. We work for such persons, we make sacrifices for them, we delight to be with them. That, in detail and practice, is what is meant by love.

What then is meant by Brotherly Love? Manifestly it means that we place on another man the highest possible valuation as a friend, a companion, an associate, a neighbour, a fellow. Merely to be with him, merely to spend hours in his company, to have the privilege of working at his side, is all we ask. We do not ask that from our relationship we shall make money, or further our business interests, or achieve some other form of selfish gain. Our relationship with such a one is its own excuse for being, its own justification, its own reward. All of us know that this Brotherly Love is one of the supreme things without which life is a lonely, unhappy, dreary kind of thing. This is not a hope or a dream, but a fact — as real as day and night, or as the law of gravity. Freemasonry builds on that fact, takes it for granted, provides opportunities for us to have such fellowship, encourages us to understand it and to practise it, and to make it one of the laws of our existence. It is in short, and in literal truth, one of its Principal Tenets.

Relief, which stands next in order, is one of the forms taken by the general principle of Charity. One must be careful to distinguish the one from the other especially Charity as it is most often interpreted.

When we think of Charity, we think of pauperism or chance poverty. We think of it as being a condition it is necessary for the community or the state to care

for. A man is crippled or chronically ill, or he is the victim of a wave of unemployment, or he is addicted to some vice, such as drink or gambling, with the result that his dependants are left in want. To care for such a man is usually deemed to be the responsibility of the public authorities, and as a rule the public discharges that responsibility through the form of organised effort financed by subscriptions or public funds. The Masonic conception of Relief is somewhat different from this. While it happens that now and then some Brother, through misfortune and no fault of his own becomes more or less incapacitated and unable to support himself and his family, and under such circumstances is cared for by his Lodge or the Masonic Home, such cases are the exception rather than the rule and are not what is meant by the tenet Relief. The qualifications required for our petitioners for entrance into the Craft are such as are likely to exclude the type of man, who through indolence or vice, may be expected to lapse into poverty.

Masonic Relief takes it for granted that any man, no matter how industrious or frugal he may be, may through sudden misfortune, or other conditions over which he has no control, find himself in temporary need of a helping hand. To extend to him such a helping hand is not what is generally described as Charity, but is one of the natural and inevitable acts of Brotherhood. Any possible conception of Brotherhood must, in the very nature of the case, include as part of itself this willingness to give help, aid and assistance. Thus Relief, as thus masonically understood is in strict truth a Tenet. If we are going to have Brotherhood at all, we shall expect this free and cordial spirit of helpfulness to be a part of it.

By Truth, the last of the Principal Tenets, is meant something more than the search for truths in the intellectual sense, though that is included necessarily,

and is one of the things meant by Freemasonry's motto "Let there be Light". By Truth is meant that if we are to have a permanent Brotherhood, its members must be truthful in character and habit, dependable, men of honour as well as of honesty, men on whom we can rely to be faithful fellows and loyal friends. No argument is needed to prove that Truth, as thus understood, is a necessity, that it is required in the nature of things if a Brotherhood is to exist. It is something that we must all take for granted as being beyond question.

Q.25. What are the various Volumes of the Sacred Law in use?

A. There are seven Volumes of the Sacred Law in common use in Lodges throughout the East and they are, in alphabetical order:

1. The Bible (O.T.) for the Jews
2. The Bible (O.T. & N.T.) for the Christians
3. The Dhammapada for the Mahayana Sect of the Buddhists
4. The Gita for the Hindus
5. The Granth Sahib for Sikhs
6. The Koran for Muslims
7. The Zend Avesta for Parsees and some Iranians (also called Khordeh Avesta in Singapore)

In so far as I know, Lodge Singapore No. 7178 E.C. is the only Lodge to have all of them. In this Lodge the S. & C are changed on the Holy Bible for the general purpose of opening and closing the Degrees, but if there is a non-Christian candidate the S & C are changed on the relevant volume of the Sacred Law.

In the G.L. of India, where there are 6 VSL's, the S & C are placed on the VSL of the faith of the presiding officer at all meetings except at Installation

Meetings when they are placed on the VSL of the faith of the Master Elect.

In Israel where there are 3 VSL's, the S & Care placed on the O.T. Bible and if Christians or Muslims are present, the N.T. or Holy Koran are added respectively and one large set of S & C covers them all.

Due to the differences in custom in various religions, certain modifications are required in the method of obligation. These will be discussed under the individual VSL's but in general, an obligation should be taken and sealed in such a way that:-

1. The candidate regards it as unconditionally binding
2. The customs and traditions of the religions of the other brethren are not offended
3. Masonic customs and traditions are retained as far as is consistent with 1 & 2.

In every case the obligation should be explained to the candidate. His religious views, customs and susceptibilities should be enquired into as well as the manner in which he was brought up to treat his VSL and the exact manner in which he would like to take his obligation and whether he is willing to take it on a VSL not of his faith.

1. The Old Testament

The Christian Bible is open at the O.T. and this is acceptable to Christians, who consider it as part of the Bible, and is also acceptable to Jews.

The Bible is hence used for obligating both Christians and Jews. Only in Israel, where the Jewish religion is the predominant faith of the people, is a separate O.T. used. If Christians are present then the Christian Bible is also open.

Jewish brethren in Israel cover their head and take the obligation standing, putting their hands on the O.T. and bending the head towards it. The obligation is sealed with the lips. Since the destruction of the Temple, Jews only kneel on the Day of Atonement.

## 2. The Christian Bible

In the E.C. the Bible is placed on the W.M.'s pedestal though in some Lodges in England it may be placed on a special altar in front of the pedestal. In the S.C. & I.C. it is placed on a separate altar in the centre of the Lodge. In the I.C. additional VSL's are placed one on each of the pedestals of the principal officers.

The Bible is opened at the Old Testament but there is no official ruling as to how it should be placed or to the page at which it should be opened although in some Lodges, however, the page is specified and is different for each degree. It is open in all Lodges and in Western countries, and many in the East, is the only VSL present.

The present-day method of obligating candidates on the Bible is well known. The posture is peculiar to Freemasonry kneeling on the bare knee(s) with the bare right hand on the VSL and the left in a position varying with the degree.

## 3. The Dhammapada

This is one of the 31 books that comprise the Tripitaka, the Three Baskets, which contain the essence of Buddha's teachings. It consists of 423 melodious Pali verses, set out in 26 Vargas or chapters and is generally considered to be one of the most perfect ethical manuals extant. There are two sects of Buddhists,

- (a) Hinayana Sect: mainly in India, Thailand, Sri Lanka. They do not believe in a Supreme Being and hence are not eligible to be Freemasons.
- (b) Mahayana Sect: mainly in China, Korea, Japan. They believe in a Supreme Being.

In Lodges in Burma a Buddhist candidate takes his obligation on a Burmese Book containing the extracts from the Tripitaka, or the Buddhist Scriptures but as these are in Burmese or Pali characters they may not be suitable for non Burmese.

In Lodges in Kuala Lumpur, the Holy Koran is used for Muslims and the Bible for all others (Christians and non-Christians) and apparently the Mahayana Sect have accepted the Bible as binding upon them if their VSL is not available.

However, it has been suggested that taking an obligation on the Holy Book of a religion to which the candidate does not subscribe would seem to reduce everything to the realm of mumbo jumbo. What then is the validity of such obligations?

Paragraph 4 of the "Aims & Relationship of the Craft" issued by the three British Grand Lodges states:-

"The Bible referred to by Freemasons as the VSL is always open in the Lodge. Every candidate is required to take his obligation on that Book or on the Volume which is held by his particular creed to impart sanctity to an oath or promise taken on it."

From this it would appear that a candidate may take his obligation either on the Bible or on his

own VSL, both being acceptable to Grand Lodge. This is, in fact, what is done in practice.

Perhaps even more important is the attitude of Buddhism and Buddhists to such an obligation and the advice of Malaysian Buddhist authorities is summarised as follows:

A Buddhist takes an obligation by going to the temple to pray, after which he makes his obligation. There is no Buddhist equivalent to the Christian method of taking an oath on the Sacred Writings. But it is not an offence against Buddhism for a Buddhist to take an obligation on the VSL of another faith. Buddhism is a very tolerant religion and has the greatest respect for the VSL's of all religions. Whether any obligation is binding or not depends entirely on the sincerity of the person making the obligation.

#### 4. The Holy Bhagvad Gita

The Gita dates back 200 B.C. and establishes a permanent compromise between the belief in a Personal God and the conception of an Impersonal and All Pervading Absolute. There are other Hindu Writings originating 1500-1200 B.C. but they do not acclaim the doctrine of a Single Deity.

The Gita may be opened and touched with the hands but *not* with the lips. Candidates should therefore be instructed to salute it in the manner customary to their faith, which is by placing the hands on the Gita, bringing them to the forehead and then to the chest with the palms together.

The Gita was only established as a representative Hindu VSL at the beginning of the present century. Formerly, the Shasters was used in Indian Lodges.

#### 5. The Sri Guru Granth Sahib

The Sikh religion was founded by Nanek Guru who was born in 1469 A.D. His tenth and last successor Govind, assassinated in 1708 declared the line of gurus extinct and the spiritual leadership vested in the Granth Sahib or Holy Book as God's representative on earth.

A Sikh religious leader in 1952 stated that there is no objection to touching the Book but sealing it in the accepted Masonic manner with the lips is *not* permitted. He suggested that a candidate could bow in obedience towards the Book.

Hence instead of "sealing it with your lips", he should be instructed to "salute it in the manner customary to your faith."

Prior to touching the Book, the candidate should undergo a ceremonial washing, preferably in his own Sikh temple, but on this occasion, a basin and towel could be placed inside the Lodge as in this case the action would be symbolical only.

As with the Jews, the head should be covered - with a handkerchief if he is not wearing a turban.

#### 6. The Holy Koran

The Holy Book of the Muslims is the Holy Koran. but as regards touching and sealing it, the overall picture is rather difficult as customs vary in different countries.

A Muslim may only touch the Holy Koran with his bare hands after he has undergone a full ceremonial washing. Advice was sought from the Iman of Kedah in 1952 and he recommended that the candidate should be obligated with the

Koran held above his head by another Muslim brother. If he is afterwards required to seal it with his lips, the Book should be wrapped up so that the lips do not actually touch it. The words, "hereby and hereon" should be changed to "hereby and hereunder".

This is the usual method of obligating Muslims in Malaysia \_ the Koran is always wrapped up.

Another method is to place the wrapped Koran on the pedestal and the candidate places his hand on it as with the Bible; the only difference is that the bare hand does not touch the Koran directly.

It should be noted that the Koran, being wrapped up, is not open in the Lodge.

A third method allows the candidate to touch the Koran with his bare hands but only provided he has purified himself previous to entering the Lodge after the manner of his religion.

## 7. The Zend Avesta

This may be treated in the same way as the Bible.