

KNIGHT SAGE OF TRUTH.

16th Degree.

The Senate should be hung with black, having a brazier of spirits to light it in the centre. The officers should be clothed in black gowns. The sash is black. The jewel is a flat circular ring, having on one side the names of the twelve Egyptian Months and on the other the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

OPENING.

S. G. C.—(*Strikes* ☸.) Most Learned Senior Knight Interpreter, the first duty of an Illustrious Knight Sage of Truth?

SENIOR KNIGHT.—To guard our mysteries from the profane.

S. G. C.—Let it be done.

S. Kt.—Illustrious Knight Guardian of the Sanctuary, ascertain if we are secure.

Guardian of Sanctuary opens door and ascertains, closing door reports to Senior Knight, who says—

S. Kt.—Sublime Grand Commander, we are in security.

S. G. C.—Are you an Illustrious Knight Sage of Truth?

S. Kt.—I have been enlightened.

S. G. C.—To what purpose?

S. Kt.—That I might benefit humanity.

S. G. C.—What is your Pass Word (*S. Kt. gives it.*)

What does it denote?

S. Kt.—One who knows the written law.

S. G. C.—(*Strikes* ☸.) To order, illustrious Knights. Observe the Orient and attend to giving the S.*16*. Accordingly, in the name of T.S.A.O.T.U., and under the auspices of the Sovereign Sanctuary of Antient and Primitive Masonry, in and for Great Britain and Ireland, I declare the labours of this Senate in activity on the

Sixteenth Degree of Masonry, Knight Sage of Truth, for the propagation of Wisdom, Science, and Truth. Illustrious Knight of Eloquence, attend at the altar and unfold the sacred book of laws. Illustrious Knight Guardian of the Sanctuary, inform the Sentinel, and if there are any visiting Knights, invite them to participate in our labours.

RECEPTION.

The Senate should be in darkness, the Plainspheres on the floor, a brazier with spirits is placed ready to be ignited when required. The Neophyte is prepared in the last degree by the Knight of Introduction, who makes the alarm on the inner door of the Senate by the Battery.

GUARDIAN OF SANCTUARY.—Sublime Grand Commander, there is an alarm at the gate of our Sanctuary.

S. G. C.—Illustrious Knight Marshal, demand the cause.

KNIGHT MARSHAL—(*Goes to inner door, opens it and asks*) Who disturbs this Senate?

KNIGHT OF INTRODUCTION.—One to whom the sacred mysteries have been revealed in the several grades which this Senate has thought him worthy to be invested with, and now desires to make further progress in our Antient and Primitive Rite.

Kt. M.—What proof of his worthiness to receive promotion can he give to this Senate?

Kt. of Int.—He is a Knight of the Serpent, and as such, is willing to give signs, which will prove him in possession of the fifteenth Degree of the Rite.

Kt. M.—Give the Signs. (*Done.*)

You will await the orders of the Sublime Grand Commander.

Closes door and approaches the centre of the Senate.

Sublime Grand Commander, there is in the Peristyle of the Senate, a Neophyte, to whom the sacred mysteries of our Rite have been revealed in the several grades which this Senate has thought him worthy to be invested with; he now desires to make further progress in our Antient and Primitive Rite.

S. G. C.—What proof of his worthiness to receive promotion can he give to this Senate?

Kt. M.—He is a Knight of the Serpent, and as such has given the Sign, Token, and Sacred Word, of the fifteenth Degree of the Rite.

S. G. C.—Illustrious Knight Marshal, it is my order that he be admitted. *Opens door.*

Kt. M.—Illustrious Knight of Introduction, admit the Neophyte.

Music. The Knight of Introduction brings the Neophyte in and places him between the columns.

ODE.

Almighty God, as on thy shrine,
The mystic Myrtle branch we twine;
Emblem of Light's eternal ray,
And Truth that fadeth not away.
Father, we feel the emblem true;
Thy mercy is Eternal too.
This Sprig's a type of Thee above,
Eternal life, and peace and love.

Kt. M.—Here is ignored the frivolous distinctions of birth and fortune, of opinion and belief. The only superiority acknowledged is that of talent, and that must be accompanied with modesty.

SENIOR KNIGHT.—Frail man, in life thou art the slave of necessity, the sport of events; console thyself, death awaits thee, and in the bosom of the earth is repose.

Listen to the voice of Nature which cries to thee: All men are equal, all are members of one family; be tolerant, just and good, and thou wilt be happy. Let all thy actions be directed to utility and goodness, judge them beforehand, and if any which thou meditates be of doubtful character, abstain therefrom.

Kt. M.—(*Leads Neophyte once round to Junior Knight.*)

Be the father of the poor; each sigh thy hardness of heart draws forth will increase the curse that falls upon thy head. True liberality does not consist in the gift, but in the manner in which it is made.

JUNIOR KNIGHT.—Death is not so terrible as it is said to be; from a distance it is imperfectly comprehended. It is a spectre whose terrors vanish as we approach it. Death is sleep; man passes from life to death as he passes from nothing into life; his last sigh is the termination of movement and sensation. Forget not thy soul is immaterial, and cannot perish like the body, which dissolves itself into its component elements. Beware of staining it with vice! The wicked undergo punishment without cessation. No Lethean waters can extinguish the fires of remorse.

Kt. M.—(*Leading Neophyte to Orator.*)

The moral law is universal, let its sacred text be graven on the hearts of men; whosoever transgresses it shall be unfailingly punished.

KNIGHT OF ELOQUENCE.—If thou fearest to be told of thy faults come not among us. Truth is God. Adore the Supreme Being, who created the Universe. Practice virtue, it is the charm of existence; it consists in mutual benefits. The just man, strong in his approving

conscience, is beyond the reach of misfortune and persecution; trust in the justice of the Supreme Being. Know that thy felicity is inseparable from that of thy fellow beings; do unto them as thou wouldst wish them to do unto thee; let thy devotion to humanity involve, if necessary, even the sacrifice of thy life? Remember unceasingly that thy happiness is of thy own creation, and that thy place is at the head of all created beings. Hate superstition; adore God, who, in creating thee a being, free, intelligent and capable of virtue has made thee the arbiter of thine own destiny.

Marshal leads Neophyte to the West between the columns.

Kt. of Elo.—"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters; and God said, Let there be light, and there was light."

The spirits are ignited.

S. G. C.—My Brother, in the previous degree you were tried by the four elements, of which our bodies are formed. Earth is the basis of all matter, from it man was active menstrum of the world, without it the blood would not flow in our veins, nor sap in those of the vegetable world; fire is one of the constituent elements of all beings, and according to the presence of holy *lux*, all things wither or flourish. Man's body is formed from the elementary, his soul from the ethereal, and his spirit from the celestial world.

Illustrious Knight Marshal lead to the Altar our brother, that he may renew his oath of fidelity to our Antient and Primitive Bite.

Neophyte is led to the Altar; he stands with his left hand thereon, and his right forefinger pointing to heaven.

To the Glory of the Sublime Architect of the Universe. In the name of the Sovereign Sanctuary of Antient and Primitive Masonry, in and for Great Britain and Ireland. Salutation on all points of the Triangle. Respect to the Order.

I hereby renew all my previous bonds, under penalty of being held in scorn and disgust as a false Mason and a perjured man.

S. G. C.—I now invest you with the insignia, and will explain to you the secrets of an Illustrious Knight of this degree. (*Done.*)

Illustrious Knight Captain of the Guard, make the usual proclamation.

CAPTAIN OF GUARD.—(*Gives the accolade, saying*) To the Glory of the Sublime Architect of the Universe. In the name of the Sovereign Sanctuary of Antient and Primitive Masonry, in and for Great Britain and Ireland. Salutation on all points of the Triangle. Respect to the Order.

Arise, Illustrious Knight Sage of Truth, which I now proclaim you, and I call upon all present to recognise you in your quality, as such, and to render you aid and protection in case of need.

S. G. C.—Join me, Illustrious Knights, in saluting our now made Knight. (*Together: battery* )

You will now make yourself known to the Senior and Junior Knights.

Neophyte is led to the Senior and Junior Knights, gives the Word, and returns to the Orient.

S. G. C.—The ancient initiates have transmitted the science of calculation and measurement, so closely connected with Geometry, and which has been so frequently pointed out as a necessary study. It begins with the knowledge of figures, the key to which we derive from the Egyptians. This Key consists of a perfect square divided into four square parts by a perpendicular line, and a horizontal one; then by two diagonal lines from angle to angle, by which the square is divided into triangles. Here we find the cyphers from one to ten. The **ONE** is a perpendicular line. The **TWO** is formed by the two horizontal lines, and one of the diagonal. The **THREE** is formed by the two horizontal lines of the great square, and by the right half of the diagonal ones. The **FOUR** is formed by the right perpendicular side of the great square, half the diagonal and half the central horizontal lines. The **FIVE** is formed by the north-east half of the diagonal line, the right side of the central horizontal, the lower half of the right hand perpendicular of the great square, and the right hand side of the lower horizontal side of the square. The **SIX** is formed by a line extending from the right superior angle to the left inferior one, thence horizontally to the right inferior angle, thence diagonally to the centre. The **SEVEN** is formed by a line drawn horizontally from the summit of the middle, perpendicularly to the right superior angle, thence horizontally to the left inferior angle. The **EIGHT** is formed by two diagonal lines, making a cross of St. Andrew, and uniting them above below by two horizontal lines. The **NINE** is formed by a line drawn

perpendicularly upwards from the centre of the square, thence horizontally to the right superior angle, thence diagonally to the left inferior angle. The AUGHT is the square itself. The ancient figures were angular; but as nations became refined they gave their characters a more agreeable form, curving the lines, which were originally straight; and thus formed what we improperly denominate Arabic characters. Geometrical studies led our forefathers to that of the inhabitable world, and they soon learned to fathom the ocean of immensity, and to pierce the azure vault. Man devoted himself to mathematics; a noble science, known then but to the initiates of the Order. This science almost enabled him to develope the organization of nature, noting the Solar and Lunar causes, the Astral periods, and the changes of the seasons. The ancient astronomical system is represented by the square; the four compartments of which are the four presumed regions of the world. By observing the sun's course, the four cardinal points were fixed East, West, North and South. The four squares served as angles of division for the seasons, making ninety-one days for each nearly, or three hundred and sixty-four days for the whole, one or two days being added at determined periods.

The Magi studied every department of nature with attention, with a view to arrive at a knowledge of its essence. The immensity of the aerial fluid filled those fires, which they regarded as so many small Suns, and afterwards as Stars. The power of the atmosphere upon all things, and the harmony of the organic laws, caused

them to admire the wonders of nature; and sharpened their energies to inquire, and to discover the vivifying principle, the soul of the Universe.

They recognized by their work, the Deity, as the sole origin of organization; the husband and wife and first principle of all things. They adored the Supreme Being in all the productions of the earth. They concealed their discoveries from the people, and gave fictitious significance to those emblems which they made known to the public. They decomposed light and air and matter; salt, sulphur and mercury appeared to be its constituent elements. The first was the spirit, the second the basis, and the third the soul; the last was the woman, wife, queen, moon, the first the man, husband, king, sun. Man has within him a microcosmical sun and moon, that has sympathy with the celestial bodies, which affect it, and in the centre thereof shines the divine light. These three substances were figured as a triangle, which form became, for this reason, more intimately blended with their religious worship, as an emblem of God, the great motive, whom the Hebrews named Jehovah, or the soul of nature. The Triangle was placed in the centre of divers circles and squares, to denote the vivifying principle which stretched its ramifications over all things. The Magi foretold eclipses and comets, thereby extending the influence of religious ideas, and leading to those of a metaphysical nature. The several planets, which are represented as making their course round the common centre, announce the antiquity of those great

personages who were said to govern the earth, and were deified by admiring mortals.

Apollo, the God of Light, was synonymous with the sun; this deity also presided over the arts and sciences of antiquity. The Moon represented the Goddess Diana, the sister of Apollo; she was the nocturnal luminary, or light of the second order. Mars presided over the battles, and was styled the God of Heroes and Patriots. Mercury, the interpreter of Divine Light, was also the patron deity of Eloquence and Virtue. Jupiter was chief among the Gods, and the personification of divine intelligence and power. Venus, the Goddess of Beauty, and the Mother of Love, are names which the genius of Greece and Rome have transmitted imperishably, in a language which will be preserved by the polished and the educated of mankind through all time. So, also, these classic pages preserve the renown of the God, who, personating Time, was said to have devoured his children, even as time consumes all to whom it gives birth—Saturn.

The two semi-circles are emblematical of Divinity and Nature, which to the true Mason are synonymous terms; everything in nature being governed by fixed laws, and consequently, periodical in its movements, announces the existence of a Grand Master, who attracts our veneration, and convinces us that nothing can be superior to Him. The Flaming Star is a symbol of Divine Providence, of that great and good Being whom Masons adore as the Sublime Architect of the Universe.

DISCOURSE.

The teachings of this degree, my brother, are of the highest antiquity. There was in the ancient city of Hipparenum, a celebrated school, worthy of the concentration of all human virtues, forming Chapters, which heaven designed to become the instructors of the world. But it was particularly in Media that the Magi celebrated their mysteries and doctrines, which spread through the world those floods of light and truth which T.S.A.O.T.U. had placed in the hearts of the learned Hierophants of Egypt.

Plato attributes to the word Magi a mystic meaning, which signifies “the most perfect culture of all things.” The principle object of this degree is to render man perfect, and to draw him nearer to the Divinity, from whom he emanated; that is to say, his re-habilitation and re-integration in his primitive rights and rank. There is within us two natures, the animal and the angel, and our labour is to combat the one that the other may denominate, until that moment, when disengaged of its heavy envelope, it shall take flight to better and higher regions. It is perhaps in this sense that the universal dogma of the redemption of mankind should be explained. In the mysteries of this degree it was said that when man, by a new and exemplary life, and by useful work, has reinstated himself in his primitive dignity, he approaches his Creator, is animated by a Divine breath and is initiated. In the instruction, the occult sciences are taught; the secrets of this grade can only be acquired after the prescribed studies, and severe trials, which are in reality but a course of religious and moral ideas, divested

of all superstition. To gain admission to this venerated institution, it is necessary to add to elevation of soul and of intelligence, a great moral purity; and also to bind ourselves by a most solemn vow, to follow the precepts of the most severe virtue in the new life on which we enter.

The forms of this grade are few and simple, and recall the origin and arrangement of the Universe. The object is to render to T.S.A.O.T.U., the homage which is due to him; to elevate man above his fellow creatures, and to place him beyond those passions which so often trouble his existence.

In the Spring of every year a festival was celebrated termed “the regeneration of Light,” to represent the primitive equality and connection of mankind. Kings exchanged their vain pomp, and freely mingled with the humblest of their subjects, who were seated at the same table with their kings and princes, a custom calculated to imprint a salutary lesson on the minds of the young princes.

These doctrines, adopted long before by the Chaldeans, were perfected in Persia by the sage King Darius Hystaspes, who, having penetrated into most of the regions of India, found the Gymnosophists in the solitary forests, where deep tranquility favoured their profound labours. It was from them he learned the laws which govern the Universe, and the journey of the stars. They revealed to him their Sacred Rites, which he recognised as identical with the doctrine of the Magi. During several centuries these were transmitted to posterity through their descendants; and from time to time men of vast and profound genius, in penetrating the sanctuary of

science, have dissipated the clouds which hid the truth from the eyes of the profane, and taught them how, by the force of perseverance, they might raise temples to virtue, and dig graves for vice.

This ends the degree of Sage of Truth, and I admonish you to ponder well upon that which we have taught you, for upon your examination depends your advancement to the sublime grade of a Knight Hermetic Philosopher.

CLOSING SAME AS OPENING.