

PATRIARCH OF THE PLANISPHERES

25th Degree.

OPENING.

As given in the preceding degree.

RECEPTION.

In this degree the Planispheres are depicted on the floor. Neophyte is prepared as a Patriarch of Truth, by the Grand Expert, who then strikes WWW-WWWW-WW, on the door.

SUBLIME DAI.—Illustrious Brother Messenger of Science, see who disturbs us?

MESSANGER OF SCIENCE.—(*Opening the door*) Who alarms the Sublime Council?

GRAND EXPERT.—It is a Patriarch of Truth, who is desirous of finishing his probation and anxious to receive the knowledge of a Patriarch of the Planispheres.

M. of Sci.—The prayer of the Neophyte shall be carried to the Throne of Truth. (*Closes door.*) Sublime Dai, the alarm was caused by the Grand Expert, who reports in waiting a Patriarch of Truth, desirous of finishing his probation and receiving the knowledge of a Patriarch of the Planispheres.

S. D.—Let him enter.

M. of Sci.—(*Opening door.*) Let him enter.

S. D.—Let the Patriarch be led thrice round in the course of those heavenly bodies by which we are enlightened.

Music. Expert leads Neophyte between the columns.

FIRST MYSTAGOGUE.—My dear Brother, in the degree of a Fellow Craft Freemason your attention was particularly drawn to two columns and the globes surmounting them. Since your advancement in philosophical Masonry, your intellectuality must have convinced you that this is a modern innovation, and we will now instruct you in the correct application. In our Antient Rite, the circles were depicted upon the floor, as you now behold them, containing the plan of the celestial hemisphere, and the signs of the zodiac, as originally designed by our ancient High Priests, on the banks of the Nile. The duty of a true Mason is to contemplate the works of T.S.A.O.T.U.

Expert leads Neophyte round to the North West.

SECOND MYSTAGOGUE.—The most ancient of the Egyptians were acquainted with the signs of the zodiac, as well as with the correct system of the revolution of the heavenly bodies. Their earliest monuments, bear on them numerous figures, amongst which those of the crab, the wild goat, the balance, the scorpion, the ram, the bull, the kid, the lion, and the virgin, are frequently found. The twelve symbolical names, which signify the twelve portions both of the year and the heavens, were among that primitive people, a prodigious assistance towards regulating the beginning of sowing, mowing, harvesting and other agricultural pursuits of man. It was found convenient to publicly expose in certain places one of these signs, to designate the period when general works were to be commenced and popular celebrations and feasts held. The use of these figures

were so convenient that in time they extended to more things besides the order of the calender. This method amongst the Masons of Egypt and Israel produced the taste for allegories with which our Rite is so often embellished.

Expert leads Neophyte round, and stops in front of Altar.

S. D.—Man, thou hast two ears to hear the same sound, two eyes to perceive the same objects, two hands to execute the same purpose; so the Masonic science, above all others is exoteric and esoteric. Exoterism constitutes the power, esoterism the thought. Exoterism is taught, is learned, is given, esoterism is not taught, learned, or given; it comes from above.

What is the object of Masonry?

1st. Mys.—To render man better; its means are to dissipate the darkness of ignorance, to give birth to all the virtues which flow from instruction, and the love of our fellow-creatures.

The following questions are similarly put by the Sublime Dai and answered by the First Mystagogue.

Q.—Is it useful for man to know the order of beings and things, whether material, spiritual, visible, or invisible, as God, Nature, Man, Truth, Justice, Virtue?

A.—Yes, for the highest degree of intelligence that man can attain must be to know the nature of beings and their relation to us, the essence of things and the qualities of the objects destined for our instruction, for the development and perfecting of our own nature. Man should observe all nature, submit all to the examination of reason, experience, and analysis, and direct all towards his perfection.

Q.—Why does philosophy form an essential part of Masonry?

A.—Because all doctrine, moral, religious or scientific, which is not enlightened by philosophy is false; and would mislead more than ignorance.

Q.—What is Sabeism?

A.—The worship and adoration of the stars and elements—idolatry; which though an error, was a natural one to man before he was enlightened, either by revelation or by that intuition which is called the exaltation of his intelligence.

Q.—In what did the primitive religion consist?

A.—In adoring God in spirit and truth; that is to say, in thought, and knowledge of the heart, and also loving his neighbour as himself.

Q.—By what means may the true Mason convince himself of the existence of God?

A.—By the observation and contemplation of the masterpieces which our Almighty Hand has produced in nature.

Q.—How can we be initiated into the first principles of human knowledge?

A.—In carrying the primitive truths to the highest degree of evidence; the theory of being, its possibility, its existence, its essence, its attributes, modifications, strength, duration, principles, causes, effects, its truth and perfection.

S. D.—If you feel the slightest repugnance to subscribe to our principles now is the time to declare it. This is no vain question. Reflect there is yet time for you to

withdraw, if you feel so inclined. Or, are you content to proceed? (*Neophyte replies affirmatively.*)

You will then approach the Altar of Obligation, where you will take upon yourself the obligation of this grade, according to the formalities of our Antient and Primitive Rite.

Illustrious Brethren, let the Triangle be formed.

Strikes www. Brethren form the Triangle.

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, A.B., hereby renew all my previous bonds, to which I promise faithful allegiance, under penalty of being held in scorn and disgust as a false Mason and a perjured man. Amen.

My Brother, Egyptian and Hebrew Masonry were so closely connected in the earlier ages, that deep research has been made to discover where and when they were dissevered. Moses, as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, and destined for the priesthood, had been early initiated into the Egyptian Mysteries, and taught his followers that it was an egregious error to represent the Deity under the form of animals, as the Egyptians did, or in the shape of man, as was the practice of many, including the Greeks in later times.

That is the Deity, said he, which made heaven, earth, and every living thing, that which we call the world, the sum of all things, Nature. For this reason,

Moses wished the Deity to be worshipped without emblems, and according to His proper nature; and he accordingly ordered a Temple, worthy of Him, to be erected, emblematical of the three worlds,—the terrestrial, the celestial, and the angelical, it was constructed on the plan of the Egyptian Temples, and consisted of three parts, the Court, the Holy Place, and the Sanctum Sanctorum. The first contained the altar of earthy matter, surrounded by water, exposed to the air, and having on it a continual fire, the four elements of the terrestrial world. The second was in the middle, and represented the firmament. The third was the dwelling of the Most High, who, by the medium of angels, condescended to communicate with man. But in vain could Moses try to efface from his religion whatever could bring to remembrance the worship of the stars; a multiplicity of allusions, in spite of his exertions, remained to point it out.

The twelve signs of the Zodiac, are represented by the twelve stones of the Essene of the High Priest, and are arranged in the same order as the precious stones by which the Arabian Astrologers represent the twelve astrological houses of the sun. The seven lamps of the great candlestick, the feast of the two equinoxes, each of which at that period formed a year, the ceremony of the Lamb or Celestial Ram, then at its fifteenth degree; lastly, the name of Osiris or Heseri, even preserved in his song—"The words of Isour are perfect"—Isour, to give, forming one of Plutarch's definitions of Osiris,—and the ark, or coffer,

an imitation of the tomb in which that god was enclosed, remain to bear record of the domination of his ideas, and their derivations from the common source.

The divulging of the first degree, by Moses to his countrymen; the initiation of the Levites into the other degrees; explains the flight into the desert of the whole people, and their constancy in remaining, rather than return into Egypt. A whole people initiated was an anomaly. The initiator was a perjurer, and consequently, by the laws of initiation, condemned to death. In the present day we should call them irregular Masons, but in those days that was sufficient crime, and explains the rigour of Pharaoh.

I now, my Illustrious Brother, receive you a Patriarch of the Planispheres, and will explain to you the Sign, Token, and Word of the degree. (*Done.*)

The sign of this degree is significant of the Pass Word [...], which signifies, Abode of the Lord. (*Strikes w.*) You will now take your seat and listen to the instruction of our Illustrious Brother Orator.

CHARGE.

When the first men began to unite in society, they found it necessary to apply themselves to agriculture, the practice of which required the observation of the heavens. It was requisite to regulate the duration and the succession of the seasons, the months and years. In order to do this, it was imperative to become acquainted with the course of the sun, which, in its Zodiacal revolution, appears to be itself the first and supreme agent of all creation; then the moon, by its

changes and returns, regulated time; lastly the course of stars, and even the planets; in a word to establish an entire system of astronomy. Then, observing that the productions of the earth bore a regular connection with the phenomena of the heavens, men conceived an idea of power in these bodies and they became to them Genii, Gods—authors of good and evil. By the more learned it was noticed that the sun originated fertility, and that the moon had its effects upon the tides, whilst generally the bodily health was influenced by the heavens. Records were made of eclipses, comets, the varying positions of the heavenly bodies, and the effects of these upon animate and inanimate matter. Hence, by comparison of these careful enquiries, arose the belief in astrology as a science in which man's destiny was influenced chemically and magnetically.

The Sun became the first symbol of God; the Moon his consort; the Planets, servants; and the multitude of Stars an array of heroes to govern the world. It was thus, on the shores of the Nile, that the complex system of Star-worship, as connected with agriculture, was constructed. The Thebans called stars of Inundation, or of Aquarius, those under which the river began to overflow. Stars of the Ox or Bull, those under which it was convenient to plough the earth. Stars of the Lion, those under which that animal, driven by thirst from the desert, made his appearance on the banks of the Nile. Stars of the Sheaf, or the Harvestmaid, those under which the harvest was gathered. Stars of the Lamb and of the Goat, those under which these animals brought forth their young.

Having observed that the return of the inundation of the Nile was always preceded by the appearance of a very beautiful star, towards the source of the Nile, which seemed to warn the peasants against surprise by the waters, they compared it to the animal, which by its barking gives notice of danger, and called it Sirius or the dog-star. They called others, Stars of the Crab, which shewed themselves when the sun having reached the bounds of the tropics, returned backwards and sideways, like the Crab or Cancer. Stars of the Wild goat, those which—the sun having arrived at its greatest altitude—imitated the action of that animal who delights in climbing the highest rocks. Stars of the Balance, those which—the days and night being of the same length—seem to observe an equilibrium like that instrument. Stars of the Scorpion, those which were perceptible when certain regular winds brought a burning vapour like the poison of the Scorpion.

From these things it resulted that, by a very natural metaphor, men said—“the bull spreads upon the earth the germs of fecundity (spring), and brings back the revival of vegetation. The Ram, or Lamb as it was of old called, delivers the heavens from the evil genii of winter, and saves the world from the serpent (emblem of the wet season); the Scorpion pours out its venom upon the earth, and spreads disease and death.” In process of time, man lost sight of the motive which led to the adoption of these expressions; and the allegory remaining, the people saw their gods before them and offered up their prayers to them. They demanded of the Ram of their flock, the influence which they expected from their celestial Ram. They prayed the Scorpion not to pour out its venom

upon nature. They revered the fish of the river, the crab and the scarabeus of the slime; and by a series of corrupt, but inseparable analogies, lost themselves in a labyrinth of absurdities. Moreover, the hieroglyphical sculptures of the priests were similarly misinterpreted; for as the Sages taught that God was found in all forms, through which spirit transmigrated in becoming man, so the ignorant worshipped these creations as deities, whilst they were but emblems representing some of His attributes.

Such was the origin of this ancient and singular worship of animals; and thus was formed the vast system of theology, which, from the banks of the Nile, spread over the world.

A more elaborate allegory was developed in Persia, out of the solar system, to which also we find allusions both in India and Egypt. With the Zoroastrians there were six periods or months under the dominion of Ahrimanes—darkness, and six periods or months under the dominion of Aura-mazda—light. It was when the sun entered Virgo that the serpent or dragon of the constellation was crushed, and a new sun born.

The allegorical narrative of the *Boundesh* thus represents each month as a thousand years and reads as follows. The Supreme God created at first the man, and bull, in an elevated place, and they remained 3000 years without evil,—the lamb, bull, and twins. After this 3,000 years transpired without further trouble,—the crab, lion, virgin. After this, at the 7th thousand, evil appeared,—the balance. Man was named Caimorah, and cultivated the earth. The stars began their career in the month Farvardim, which is the new year; and by the revolution of the sky the day was distinguished from the night, such

is man. The balance is the turning, or point of evil. Another passage says—Ahriman, the principle of evil and darkness, by whom evil entered the world, penetrates into the sky in the form of a serpent ;— or again, made himself a road between the sky and the earth.

Macrobius thus speaks of the Mysteries of Bacchus, who was Dionysos, and Osiris. “The images or statues of Bacchus, represent him sometimes under the form of a young man, at other times with the beard of a mature man, and lastly, with the wrinkles of old age. These differences relate to the sun, a tender child at the winter solstice, such as the Egyptians represent him at a certain day, when they bring forth from an obscure nook of their Sanctuary, his infantine image, because the sun, being then at the shortest, seems to be but a feeble infant gradually growing from this moment.”

The equinoctial points of spring and autumn at 4,500 and 2,500 years before the common era were the bull and the scorpion, and the constellations of the lamb and balance then replaced them. Mithra no longer triumphed under the sign of the Bull, but the Christian Lamb, from whose rising to that of the Pleiades, or 40 days, there was a ceremonial rejoicing. It was at the two points, Aries and Libra, that the astrologers fixed the exaltation of light and its degradation. The Egyptian Sphynx unites Leo and Virgo. Virgo gives birth to the new sun upon the 25th December, who becomes revived in splendour, when he enters the sign of the Lamb on the 26th March.

CLOSING SAME AS LAST DEGREE.

