SHAKESPEARE
CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Being a Remarkable Examination of the Plays and Poems, which proves incontestably that these works were saturated in Masonry, that Shakespeare was a Freemason and the Founder of the Fraternity

By

ALFRED DODD, P.M.

EDITOR OF
THE "ALFRED DODD EDITION OF 'SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS,'" ETC.

LONDON: RIDER & CO.
PATERNOSTER HOUSE, E.C.
SHAKESPEARE
CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Was William Shakespeare a Mason? Was he, in actual fact, the unknown “culprit” who was responsible for inventing Speculative Freemasonry? If so, then one of the world’s greatest mysteries has been solved and the year 1717 has been robbed of a great deal of its illustrious fame.

The author of this book, after profound labour and research, has produced from the writings of William Shakespeare astonishing evidences of his knowledge of Craft secrets. His conclusions are simple—Shakespeare must have been a Mason, and Freemasonry must have existed in Shakespeare’s day. From this point he proceeds to build up a case designed to prove that Shakespeare had at least a hand in devising—if he was not the sole author of—the Craft mysteries.

This is a fascinating theory, and one which must commend itself to many members of the Brotherhood. The addition of so great and illustrious a figure to the ranks of Freemasonry would be of tremendous significance. The author confidently asserts that he was a Mason, and describes the Great Shakespeare Folio of 1623 as “the greatest Masonic Book in the world.”
TO
MY FRIEND
BRO. T. E. WALLER, B.A.,
THE MEMBERS OF THE
ELLESMERE LODGE, 758,
AND THE
RUNCORN LODGE, 4214;
AS A LITTLE REMEMBRANCE OF
QUIET MEMORIES
AND
HAPPY HOURS
SPENT IN THE LODGE
AND IN THE ELUCIDATION OF
THE GREATEST OF ALL MASONIC PROBLEMS—
THE GENESIS
OF THE CRAFT

Made and Printed in Great Britain at
The Mayflower Press, Plymouth. William Brember & Son, Ltd.
PREFACE

THIS book is a straightforward compilation of specific statements from the pen of the Author of the Shakespeare Plays.

They constitute definite evidence that Modern Freemasonry was known to him and that he employed Masonic imagery and symbolism in his Works. Circumstantial evidence is brought to show that he must have sat in many a Speculative Lodge and participated in its Rites.

Many learned Brethren believe that Freemasonry with its Three Degrees was created by Bros. Anderson and Desaguliers out of a crude operative Rite of One Degree from 1717–23–38. "The 1717-Theory" is no longer tenable in view of the evidence that the Elizabethan Brethren "moralised on Tools and spiritualised Temples" in 1589.

The business of the 1717-Brethren was not the creation of Symbolic Masonry, but the introduction of an Ethical Cult to the open world by a new type of Combine, the federation of all secret independent Lodges under a Central Head, the Grand Lodge, that had hitherto practised their Rites hidden from the eyes of all men. The Brethren of that era had had bequeathed to them a precious heritage handed to them by their Fathers—no less than an ascending Pyramid of Degrees, based on a Three Craft Rite, the Royal Arch, through Knighthly and Sovereign Orders to the "Thirty-Three Degree."

Speculative Freemasonry was born in the Elizabethan era. Shakespeare took an active part in its genesis.
PREFACE

The story is told in the Great Shakespeare Folio of 1623... the greatest Masonic Book in the world. The System was buried in secret and left to grow and root itself, like a bulb, in the dark for a hundred years. The emergence of the Masons in 1723 was a planned emergence... the Centenary of the 1623 Folio.

William Shakespeare was not only a Freemason, he was the father and founder of the Fraternity, the Writer of the Rituals.

ALFRED DODD.

CONTENTS

I. THE MYSTERY OF MODERN FREEMASONRY. 21
II. THE MYSTERY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. 36
III. FREEMASONRY IN THE FOLIO. 46
IV. THE HIRAM LEGEND. 62
V. "LOVE'S LABOURS LOST," THE COMEDY IN WHICH IS HIDDEN THE GENESIS OF THE CRAFT. 74
VI. "THE TEMPEST," SHAKESPEARE'S LAST MASONIC PLAY. 119
VII. THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE. 150
VIII. THE DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: "SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS". 174
IX. THE SCHOOL OF THE ROSICROSSE, THE SECRET ELIZABETHAN LITERARY SOCIETY. 193
X. THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RITUAL AND THE AGE WHICH PRODUCED SUCH CHARACTERISTICS. 203
XI. CONCLUSION: "SO WORTHY A FELLOW AS WAS OUR SHAKESPEARE". 239
NOTES AND FACTS OF IMPORTANCE. 252
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLATE</th>
<th>LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>The Prefatory Verse of the 1623 Shakespeare Folio</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>The Folio Portrait of Shakespeare</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>The Epistle Dedicatory</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>&quot;The Names of the Principall Actors&quot;</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>Ben Jonson to the Author</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>The First Page of the Comedies: &quot;The Tempest&quot;</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>The Last Page of the Comedies: &quot;The Winter's Tale&quot;</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>Shakespeare's Portrait in the &quot;Poems of Wil. Shakespeare, Gent,&quot; the 1640 Edition of Shakespeare's Sonnets</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX.</td>
<td>The Head Plate in &quot;Shakespeare's Sonnets,&quot; 1609 Quarto</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X.</td>
<td>The Last Page of &quot;Shakespeare's Sonnets,&quot; 1609 Quarto</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI.</td>
<td>The Stratford Monument, erected in 1748</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII.</td>
<td>The Latin Inscription and Verse under the Stratford Bust</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE PAGING
XIII. The Shakespeare Monument at Westminster Abbey...   202
XIV. The Lower Part of the Shakespeare Monument...   203
XV. The Shakespeare Scroll...   238
XVI. The Jewel of the Holy Royal Arch of 1805 which carries the Rosicr...   239

IN THE TEXT

Masonic Watermarks in Old Books...   199
The Pillars of Masonry...   200
A Rosicr...osse Emblem, The Invisible Mind...   276

THE WORKING TOOLS OF AN OPERATIVE CRAFT

"And the Meanest of Things are made more precious when they are dedicated to Temples."

The Shakespeare Folio, 1623.

THE FIRST FREEMASON

"So worthy a... fellow as was our Shakespeare."

The Folio.

THE ETHICAL SYSTEM

BEQUEATHED TO POSTERITY

"To My Beloved the Author
Mr William Shakespeare
And
What he hath left us."

Ben Jonson, The Folio.

THE MASONIC MEETINGS AT "THE MERMAID"

"What Things have we seen, Dorie at the Mermaid! Heard words that have been, So Nimble and so full of subtle flame. . . . One had resolved to live a F... the rest of his dull Life."

A Letter to Ben Jonson from F. B.

THE INJUNCTION

"Reade him. . . . To your Divers Capacities, you will finde enough, both to draw, and Hold you: for his wit can no more lie hid, then it could be lost. Reade him therefore; and againe, and againe: And if then you doe not like him, surely you are in some Manifest Danger, not to understand him. And so we leave you to other of his Friends, whom if you need, can bee your guides: if you neede them not you can lead Yourselves and others. And such Readers we wish him."

The Editors of the Folio.
TO THE CONCEALED CREATOR—SHAKESPEARE

"Such is the Power of a Grand and Capacious Aspiration of philosophic benevolence to EMBALM even the idler LEVITIES as amber enshrines straws and insects."

Bro. De Quincey, Rosicrucians and Freemasons.

"Oh! Mighty Poet! Thy Works are not as those of other men simply and merely great works of Art; but are like the phenomena of Nature, like the sun and the stars... to be studied with entire submission of our own faculties, and in the perfect FAITH that in them there can be no too much or too little, nothing useless or inert—but that the further we press in our DISCOVERIES, the more we shall see proofs of DESIGN and SELF-SUPPORTING ARRANGEMENT where the CARELESS EYE had seen nothing but ACCIDENT."

Bro. De Quincey, The Three Knocks in Macbeth.

THE HIDDEN MASTER

"To be hidden amidst crowds is sublime; to come down hidden amongst the crowds from distant generations is doubly sublime."

Bro. De Quincey (1823).

FOREWORD

A n eminent literary critic has stated that the authorship of the Shakespeare Plays is the greatest problem in English literature. Certainly an equally fascinating problem in English sociology is the fons et origo of the Fraternity of Freemasons. Did Freemasonry originate with old Mus' Hobden, the medieval builder's man; did it derive from Noah who made the Ark or from King Solomon who planned the Temple and somehow foisted all those tiresome measurements, fatiguing as a surveyor's report, into the Bible; did it come from the East—the lands of mystery and wisdom, and so reach us by way of insolent Greece and haughty Rome? Authorities differ widely on these matters. Writing on Freemasonry in the Encyclopædia Britannica (13th edition), Mr. William James Hughan, author of the Origin of the English Rite of Freemasonry, states that "the precise origin of the Society has yet to be ascertained."

I believe it is because I am not a Freemason even of the First Degree but have tried to cultivate an independent and open habit of mind that Mr. Alfred Dodd has asked me to write this Foreword. But though not a Mason I have read The Perfect Ceremony of Craft Masonry many times, that delightful little book so like a Prayer Book in appearance and yet so free of political or ecclesiastical dogma. I find it full of a grave comfort and sober solace though disquieting at times by reason of its cold and lofty idealism.

The ideal of Freemasonry is certainly a very high one. I can think of none higher or more practical.
FOREWORD

"When anyone is said to be a member of it the world may know that he is one to whom the Burdened Heart may pour forth its Sorrow, to whom the Distressed may prefer their Suit, whose hand is guided by Justice, and whose Heart is expanded by Benevolence." Mediocrum Firma—the Golden Mean is to be the guiding Light of the Mason.

Whence then came this searching and creative ritual? Not, I think, from any guild of masons and carpenters. I cannot quite picture Bottom the weaver and Snug the joiner rising to these ethical heights. Pondering on the nobility of mind and exaltation of soul revealed everywhere in the Masonic Ritual, I am haunted by a passage of magnificent intuition in one of Virginia Woolf’s books in which she sums up her feelings about Shakespeare: “The reason perhaps why we know so little of Shakespeare compared with Donne or Ben Jonson or Milton is that his grudges and spites and antipathies are hidden from us. We are not held up by some ‘revelation’ which reminds us of the writer. All desire to protest, to proclaim an injury, to pay off a score, to make the world the witness of some hardship or grievance was fired out of him and consumed. Therefore his poetry flows from him free and unimpeded. If ever a human being got his work expressed completely it was Shakespeare. If ever a mind was incandescent, unimpeded, it was Shakespeare’s mind.”¹

The reason why we know so little of the origin of the Society of Freemasons is probably similar. The mind that conceived that wonderful Society was large, constructive and entirely self-effacing, the object being to lead men away from destructive folly to constructive Wisdom; to teach them to be simpler, kinder, more gentle; of a greater courage and hardness in fighting the evil principle in their own hearts. A Society of this nature does not grow of itself. We do not gather figs from thistles. It can only come of a full and mature mind. Whose was that mind?

Mr. Alfred Dodd believes that he has found that fertile and creative mind in the author of the Shakespeare Plays. His theme is a fascinating one, his Elizabethan and Masonic learning immense and his zeal of the intensity that makes mountains tremble.

He is one of those anomalous Englishmen who will not accept what they are told like good little boys. He always wants to question, to know, to make sure. He is scholarly in the best sense of the word.

Was Shakespeare then the Founder of Freemasonry? It is not for me to say a word about that. Study Mr. Dodd’s book and then turn the subject over in your mind having first swept it clean of prejudice and inherited ideas. You will find a fascinating theory and a rich storehouse of stimulating thought. And when you have read it, persuade your friends to read it. You will find it instructive to watch their reactions to the New Idea. The balanced man can entertain the pros and cons of any question with unruffled serenity. If they begin to show signs of excitement, remind them of this fact. If you thereby increase their irritation, that is their affair. Know Thyself is one of the imperative commands of Freemasonry, and a true knowledge of the Self leads a man at last to that complete detachment which can encounter all opinions and all fortunes with unshaken equanimity.

Marley Common,
Haslemere.

Richard INCE.

¹ Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own (p. 86). These words bring to mind Charles Lamb’s reference to the Shakespeare Plays as “enrichers of the fancy, strengtheners of virtue, a withdrawing from all selfish and mercenary thoughts, a lesson of all sweet and honourable thoughts and actions, to teach courtesy, benignity, generosity, humanity; for of examples teaching these virtues his pages are full.”
To the Reader.

This Figure, that thou here seest put,
It was for gentle Shakespeare cut;
Wherein the Grauer had a strife
with Nature, to out-do the life:
O, could he but have dravne his wit
As well in brasse, as he hath hit
His face; the Print would then surpass
All, that was ever writ in brasse.
But, since he cannot, Reader, looke
Nor on his Picture, but his Booke.

B. I. 

Reproduced from Secret Shakesperian Seals, by Frater Rosas Crucis (H. Jenkins, 7 James' St., Nottingham).

It will be noted that the Seal Mark of 287 is made up by a count of Letters, and that in line 8, in order to make up the number, the letters "w" have been printed with two "v's" thus "vv." This is a very clear mark of design because it indicates that the printer must have been instructed to do this.

An equally significant Signal is the "B.I." at the end of the verse. The character "i" was used to indicate "j" in the Elizabethan Alphabet, and so we get the initials for the Two Pillars of Masonry on the first page, "B. I..." as though on guard before a secret shrine of esoteric knowledge.

This Illustrate and all the subsequent Plates should be studied in conjunction with Chapter IX, page 101, "The School of the Rosicrucians," in which the significance of the "Number-Counts" of Letters and Words is explained.

Plate I
SHAKESPEARE,
CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

I

THE MYSTERY OF MODERN FREEMASONRY

“I will find Truth though Truth were hid indeed
within the centre.” HAMLET

Among the many first-class problems still to be solved is the Problem of Freemasonry.
History is silent respecting its genesis. Learned Masonic historians are equally dumb respecting the Ethical Sphinx which crouches 'neath the shadow of the Temple of Mystery. Whence it came? ... Why it was born? ... How it came into being? ... are questions which have never been solved by the wisest and most scholarly of modern researchers.

At the background of the Speculative System are the Sacred Mysteries of forgotten civilizations. The Ancient Wisdom, the principles of the Roman Collegia, the working tools of a medieval craft, the ceremonies of the Knights Templar, are, apparently, all interwoven in our Masonic Rites. The Mysteries were swept away by a triumphant Catholic theology. There is a break between the Roman Collegia (with the fall of the Roman Empire) and the early operative medieval gilds. There is a further break between the working masons of feudalism and the Speculative Freemasons.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

who in 1723 emerged from their hiding-places carrying their new Book of Constitutions edited by Bro. Anderson, D.D. (The "break" occurred through State legislation from 1350 onwards which ruthlessly smashed all gild organization.)

What human mind or minds ransacked the archives of antiquity and framed a Rite out of the Myths and Symbols of a vanished past, joining our Modern Mystery to the Ancient one? Couching that Rite in modern language, with major penal signs based on the barbaric customs of our greatest historic era, the Elizabethan? No one seems to know. The Higher Degrees are likewise silent on the origin of the Ethical Cult—at all events up to and including the Thirty-second Degree.

Bro. Woodford asks: "Where did the Freemasonry of 1717 come from? To accept the suggestion that so complex a system... could have been the creation of a pious fraud or ingenious conviviality presses heavily on our powers of belief."

Prof. Robson says: "No man can give a tolerable account of the origin, history or object of the Order, and it appears to all a lost or forgotten mystery."

Bro. Castells declares that "the world has produced many wise men but as yet none of them has succeeded in finding the culprit who founded Freemasonry."

From 1723, when the Freemasons boldly announced their existence to the world as an organized Fraternity, learned and unlearned men have tried to pierce the veil which hides the birthplace of Modern Speculative Masonry.

"I would give another ten years to research... could I find at the end the root of the matter.

THE MYSTERY OF MODERN FREEMASONRY

... I have prayed to be delivered from the 'Goose and Gridiron,' the 'Crown Alehouse' and the other House Mystical which was called 'The Rummer and the Grapes.'"

(Emblematic Freemasonry, p. 52.)

Such is the cry of a learned Brother, A. E. Waite, after a lifetime of arduous research. He believes that Freemasonry was born in a 1717 tavern and passed off as a "pious fraud"—between bouts of "ingenious conviviality"—by Dr. Anderson and the 1717 Grand Lodge who actually created the System but pretended they had received it from a previous generation of Masons. As Dr. Anderson did not disclose openly in his book, the Constitutions, the source where the preceding generation of Masons had derived their Emblematic Faith, it has been concluded by numerous writers that Freemasonry was fabricated in the early part of the eighteenth century and falsely ascribed to a genesis dating "from Time Immemorial."

The facts are that in 1717 "Four Old Lodges" united to form a "Grand Lodge." They were in the habit of meeting at the taverns mentioned. Modern scholars declare that out of a crude, operative masonic rite practised by such Lodges in 1717, there was created our Modern Speculative Rite of Three Degrees out of a purely trade union ideal. It is said that in these taverns or Dr. Anderson's study the Brethren evolved the concept of "moralisising on Tools and spiritualising Temples" between 1717-23-38. The Royal Arch Chapter was created a little later: later still the Higher Degrees... many being alleged to have been imported from France, everyone being agreed that Modern Craft Freemasonry was created in England.

"The Modern System is the direct descendant and successor in an unbroken line of the operative fraternity of the Middle Ages" (p. 48).
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

"Between 1720 and 1730 the Three Degrees were made" (p. 6).

"There was but one Degree of Initiation in 1717" (p. 150).

(Hist. of F.M., F. C. Findel.)

"The whole of the Ritual of the Craft as we now understand it developed during the 18th Century."

(Apron Men, p. 132, Col. Blackham.)

"Under the ægis of the Grand Lodge there grew up between 1723 and 1738 a Rite of Three Degrees which moralized on the Art of Building and the Tools used in that Art."

(Emb. Masonry, p. 14, A. E. Waite.)

"The greater part of our Ritual is Modern ... particularly the Third Degree. ... It has not yet been traced before the early days of Grand Lodge" (p. 115).

"There is no known reference to the Temple or to the Hiramic Legend ... before 1723 ... only one allusion to the Pillars in a doggerel rhyme, 1713. Says Bro. Rylands, 'no satisfactory reason has so far been offered why the Temple of Solomon and its Builders have been selected to play an important part in one division of our legendary history'" (pp. 135, 132).

(F.M. before Grand Lodge, L. Vibert.)

Now it cannot be too clearly emphasized that there are no direct proofs anywhere in printed books, MSS., minutes or statements by the 1717–23–38 Brethren that Ethical Freemasonry actually did arise in the Apple Tree Tavern, or Dr. Anderson's study or in any other place in that era; or that Freemasonry at some particular period became telescoped into the operative craft and that such Lodges changed their

THE MYSTERY OF MODERN FREEMASONRY

operative ideals—which centred round wages, working hours and conditions of labour—for Ethical ones which could never have been understood by illiterate navvies and masons; or that the ethics of Freemasonry evolved out of the creedal crudities of the medieval operatives; or that a 1717 Grand Lodge Committee in London ever imposed a Ritual in a state of flux upon the widely spread Lodges of the 1717–38 era when conditions of communication were bad. The impossibility of memorizing a London Ritual (that was chopping and changing) by Brethren of far-flung Lodges—Ireland, Scotland, Cheshire, Staffordshire, York, etc.—is a decisive objection to 1717–38 evolution theory.

The fact is that the 1717–23–38 Brethren dropped a very thick curtain behind them when they stepped on the open stage of the world. They took the most careful and elaborate precautions to let no one know what they were doing in the years immediately preceding 1717. They destroyed, virtually, all records prior to this date, save "Old Operative Charges" (!) which seemed to link them to an operative past, and which were more or less embodied in the Book of Constitutions as a History of Architecture, full of chronological and historical inexactitudes. The world took this grave (!) recital at its face value and so were sent on a wild goose chase for "Origins" among an illiterate craft that had certainly ceased to exist by the passing of a 1425 Act which definitely forbade working masons to assemble in chapters. Bro. Anderson confused the era in which the operative trade union craft died and the era in which Freemasonry arose. He had the soundest of Masonic reasons for so doing. The 1717 Speculatives burned all their ancient records that could be of assistance in tracing the exact era in which their Cult arose or the identity of the person or persons who created the Royal Art. As the 1717 generation passed away, the Brethren
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

carried with them all traces of their esoteric activities: and the Curtain of Life again fell.

As it is admitted we do not know what the pre-1717 Masons were doing, the modernist a priori assumption that they were not practicing a rite of Three Degrees is as likely to be wrong as right.

“There are no records or evidence to let us know what they were doing during the immediately preceding years” (p. 1).

(Emb. Masonry, A. E. Waite.)

“It stands to reason that at one period of our history we have borrowed Hermeticist symbols. In no single instance can we indicate our own earliest possession of any symbol” (p. 142).

“When our Ritual achieved its present trigradal form cannot be stated with precision” (p. 126).

(F.M. before Grand Lodge, L. Vibert.)

We can be, at least, historically certain of this: that the 1717 Lodges were not operative ones and did not practise an operative rite.

The 1425 Parliament Act begins:

“Masons shall not congregate in Chapters or Congregations,” and goes on to say that “they who cause such Chapters to be holden . . . shall be judged as felons and shall be punished by the imprisonment of their bodies and make fine and ransom.”

An authority like Bro. G. F. Fort says that the operative craft “ceased to have an existence . . . neither were they allowed to meet in secret convocation” (Early Hist. of F.M., p. 131). Bro. Pownall, too, says that “this Statue of 1425 put an end to this body and all its illegal Chapters and pretences” (Hist., Vol. 1, p. 353; Gould).

THE MYSTERY OF MODERN FREEMASONRY

These repressive Acts were never repealed. They were re-affirmed when Queen Elizabeth ascended the Throne in 1558. A few years later Elizabeth's Statute of Labourers (5 Eliz. 4) was passed. All individual or collective right of expression by workingmen was absolutely repressed, says Stanley Jevons. The workman was directly responsible to the Government who regulated his wages, hours of labour, his residence, etc. Owing to peasant risings, the various Governments from 1350 had refused to tolerate any form of workman's combine. The edicts had ruthlessly smashed the operative trade guild. Individual masons persisted but not in the form of a trade lodge. There is not a scintilla of evidence that in the teeth of the State Laws one solitary lodge of working masons ever survived the 1425 Decree, the Tudor enactments, persisted through Elizabeth's reign, the civil wars of Cromwell, the tumults of the Restoration, to change its Trade Union nature, but not the name of Mason in 1717.

“After the Reformation, the operative craft would necessarily die out.”

(F.M., p. 93, L. Vibert.)

There were, therefore, no operative lodges in England in 1717 that were “successors in an unbroken line” of the Middle Age operatives. They had ceased to exist three hundred years previously: “Indeed . . .” admits Bro. Vibert, “they could not have survived Edward VI Statute” (see F.M., p. 43). Their places had somehow been taken by a Fraternity of scattered Lodges of “Gentlemen” that in 1717 were practising an Ethical Symbolism called Freemasonry, the modern representative of the Ancient Wisdom.

There had been a Death and a Resurrection; the Death of a common building trade, in 1350 to 1425, its Resurrection as a Royal Art, in 1723–38 or prior
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY
to that period. Some person or persons with the
magic wand of a "Prosper-O" had cried "Prosper the
Art," and had breathed into the dead bones of the
operative past a new spirit and had made them live
in a new form. Concerned only with moral philosophy,
Freemasonry was outside the scope of State legislation
which forbade agitations re wages, etc.

The 1717 Masons did not therefore practise an
operative Rite but a Speculative one. It was one
which they did not create out of a Trinitarian operative
belief, but was a Ceremonial handed to them secretly
by a preceding generation. Their duty was to organize
the existing Lodges scattered over the Kingdom into
a closely knit Fraternity with a Central Head ... the
Grand Lodge. That was the business of Drs.
Anderson and Desaguliers, not the creation of a
System of Ethics.

It has been alleged that we do not know what the
pre-1717 Masons practised in their Lodges. This is
not exactly correct. They practised a Rite of Three
Degrees (at least) according to Bro. W. Preston, the
second private historian of Grand Lodge. It is
obvious that as an official historian he speaks with
authority in matters Masonic. He stands in a
different category (his work having been passed by
Grand Lodge) from later historians like Bros. Findel
or Gould, Vibert or Waite, who simply voice their
individual opinions.

Bro. Preston was a Past Master of the famous
"Lodge of Antiquity," one of the "Four Old Lodges"

1 William Preston was of wealthy parents and an early lover of
ancient literature. He went to London in 1760 and was connected
with the printing trade. He was a member of several Lodges and
a Founder. He lectured on Masonry to the Brethren. His official
work, The Illustrations of F.M., was written for public consumption.
He cleverly confuses varying portions of the Ritual. The book went
through many editions. He was a very shrewd intellectual,
transparently honest and sincere.

THE MYSTERY OF MODERN FREEMASONRY
which formed Grand Lodge. He declares that this
Lodge had:

"Always preserved their Original Power of
MAKING, PASSING and RAISING Masons"
(p. 239).

"This Lodge has existed as a Lodge in the
Metropolis long before the existence of Grand
Lodge, almost as far back as the middle of the
last century" (i.e. 1650) ... consisting of
"Gentlemen of Quality and Consideration who
are scattered abroad in the most distant parts of
the Globe" (p. 312).

The Fraternity pre-1717 "then had a dis-
cretionary power vested in themselves to meet as
Masons," and "a Lodge could be fixed at any
particular place for a certain time, an attestation
from the Brethren present being sufficient proof
of its regular constitution" (p. 314).

The Brethren of the (1788) Lodge of Antiquity
"continue to practise the Rites in conformity with the ORIGINAL CONSTITUTIONS" (in
existence before 1717) (p. 315) and "he hopes
ever to stain his character by VIOLATING
them" (p. 315).

The Lodge had "derived its AUTHORITY from
ANOTHER CHANNEL long before the estab-
lishment of Grand Lodge, which Authority had
been repeatedly admitted and acknowledged.
Their Immemorial Constitution was sacred to
themselves ... as sacred, inviolable LANDMARKS
not to be removed" (p. 312).

"Every Annual Grand Lodge had also pro-
vided that the OLD LANDMARKS be carefully
preserved ... for were there no standard fixed ...
the fluctuating state of its members might
subject Masonry to ... VARIATION" (p. 215).

(The Illustrations of F.M., 1788 Ed.)
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

It is thus self-evident that there had been no “variation” in the Ethical Rites of Masonry from 1717 to 1788. The members of the Lodge of Antiquity would not have suffered such “variation.” It is equally unthinkable that there could have been any change from 1650 to 1717. The Lodge of Antiquity had preserved an unbroken ceremonial from “the middle of the last century” to 1788. The London Grand Lodge consequently practised the same Ceremonial derived from the same unknown authority, i.e. a Craft Rite of Three Degrees, “Making, Passing, Raising.” In 1705 there was a York Lodge of Gentlemen” who were practising a similar Ethical Rite derived from the same unknown “Authority” whose source lay far back along the secret “Channel” mentioned by Bro. Preston. York Masonry never obtained its Ethical Symbolism from the London Grand Lodge. Both the North and South Centres of Freemasonry derived their Symbolism from a common source, a common origin which must be looked for many decades prior to the 1717 Emergence.

The “Making, Passing and Raising” of Bro. Preston is more than confirmed by the so-called printed “Exposures” of the Craft’s Mysteries which followed closely the 1723 “Constitutions” (see Rituals, Catechisms and Exposures of the early part of the 18th Century, by Bro. H. Poole). In 1712 Addison writes about the Sanctum Sanctorum, the Great Temple, the inspired Hiram . . . which is Third Degree knowledge. In 1717 the Trinity College MS. proves there were Three Degrees worked. In 1709 at Haugfoot and Kelso there is direct evidence of more than one Degree being worked. On the other side of the 1717 curtail we can be absolutely certain that our ancient Brethren were practising an ethical ceremonial that consisted of a Three Degree Craft Rite and possibly other Degrees, hinted at in the book of Constitutions.

Now the earliest moment that such a ceremonial

THE MYSTERY OF MODERN FREEMASONRY
could have arisen was about 1579, the date of Spenser’s Shepherd’s Calendar, for the Ritual is couched in modern language and the English language began to be made with Spenser. Prior to that time our language was unfixed . . . a jargon of rude dialects. In the early years of Queen Elizabeth the language of culture was Latin. At the time of the Armada the various County contingents could not understand the words of command given by London officers, neither did they understand one another’s rude patois. The first English prose classic was Hooker’s Ecclesiastical Polity in 1594, the second being The Advancement of Learning in 1605, by Francis Bacon.

The man who coined words for Englishmen to use was Shakespeare with his 20,000 word vocabulary. With the unknown editor of the James Bible in 1611, he virtually fixed our modern tongue, the first English grammar being printed in 1586.

It is therefore self-evident that Modern Freemasonry never could have existed in the era of St. Alban, A.D. 303, or Atheistane, A.D. 926, or even in A.D. 1400–50, the alleged dates of the “Regius Poem” and the “Cooke MS.,” our reputed earliest Masonic documents. The earliest period in which our Ritual could have arisen was with the rise of Elizabethan literature. This is clear from another consideration. The Lodge use of the Volume of the Sacred Law and

1 “It is true our Legend says Masonry came from France in St. Alban’s time” (L. Vibert, F.M., before 1717, p. 8). All we have to do, therefore, is to discover whether our Ritual could have been in existence in the days of the medieval St. Alban, or whether the legend refers—according to the canons of Masonic dissimulation—to the times of the Elizabethan “Saint Alban” (1561–1626). Dr. Plot ridiculed the medieval St. Alban in 1686 as having anything in common with Symbolism in such a barbarous age, while his friend Dr. Knipe suggested that the mystery about “St. Alban, A.D. 303” ought to be thoroughly investigated. Unfortunately, modernist historians and critics have hitherto fought shy of the problem. The enigma is apparently still unsolved.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

the fact that much of the Ritual is taken from the Bible proves that Modern Freemasonry had its Genesis in a Protestant Era and not an England ruled by the Priest . . . i.e. from the Elizabethan era onwards.

Bearing in mind that Spenser, 1579, is the utmost limit to which we can push back our Modern Rite into the Feudal Era of Egyptian darkness, we can follow the signs from 1717 which have been purposely left by our Ancient Brethren to guide the discerning reader to the decade in which Modern Freemasonry must have taken its rise. We must therefore trace the hidden spring to its source . . . along the Secret "channel" mentioned by Bro. Preston to the "Authority" anterior and superior to the present Grand Lodge which began in 1717. We must go back step by step and decade after decade. We shall then find sufficient evidence of the Speculative Art being widespread among "Gentlemen" not operatives . . . "Gentlemen" who were drawn into the Masonic Circle not by a crude operative Rite, but by the mysterious drawing power of a cultured ethical symbolism which attracts men to-day.

Through the antiquarian Aubrey and Sir William Dugdale we know that years before 1692, the manner of the Freemason's adoption was "very formal with Signs and Watchwords." In 1696, a Dr. Plot gives a clear account of the spread of Freemasonry all over England among persons of the most eminent station. Randle Holme of Chester leaves a paper in 1659 containing the names of Freemasons, "Gentlemen of quality." In 1646 Elias Ashmole is made at Warrington among "Gentlemen." As far away as Perth, the Rosicross Masons were singing in their 1638 Lodges:

We are the Brethren of the Rosie Crosse,
We have the Mason Word and Second Sight.

(By "Second Sight" our Ancient Brethren meant that they knew how to re-read a printed work in order to

THE MYSTERY OF MODERN FREEMASONRY

ascertain secret messages that followed definite codes which were prevalent in that era when "every Prince—and commoner—had his Cypher." In 1620 there is a Freemason's Lodge connected with the London Mason's Company whose members were not labourers but City Merchants. In 1600 Sir Francis Squire Boswell of Scotland was a Freemason. In 1589 is written a play called Love's Labours Lost, which contains the sentence:

"I will visit thee at the Lodge; I know where it is situate. . . . Come, Jaquen. . . ."

Running down the side of the passage is spelled out in the Initial Capital Letters of the lines quite straightforwardly . . . "WIL IS A F.C." which means that "Will is a Fellowcraft."

We have reached the end of the journey. We have narrowed the possible birth of Modern Freemasonry to ten years . . . from Spenser 1579 to someone who in 1589 had written a phrase apparently Masonic which hinted at a Speculative Lodge and the word of the Second Degree, and who also knew our Ritual Capital Letter Cypher Code.

We thus appear to be confronted in the reign of the "Virgin Queen" with evidences of a system of Freemasonry. If the system of "Making, Passing and Raising" had not changed in Preston's day (1788) from 1650, it is quite inconceivable that it could have changed between 1650 and its genesis which must have been about 1589.

We are in an era when the greatest thoughts that were ever conceived or expressed by the soul of man were being uttered on the stage in dramatic form . . . an age of secrecy, craft, intrigue, political and religious strife, when religionists were butchering each other forgetful of the New Commandment which Masonry

1 The phonetic sound is, of course, "Jachin", the Fellowcraft Word.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

was specially created to enforce . . . that ye love one another.

Standing in the centre of this wonderfully picturesque yet terribly Tudor period, we can look up the pathway and about for a man who could have created out of the wreck of the old world myths, the crash of the operative craft, a new Ethical System that outbreathed Faith, Hope and Charity in place of strangulation by a Cable Tow.

How can such a man be found?

He can be found quite openly by Masons who remember that “all squares, Levels and Perpendiculars are true and proper SIGNS to KNOW a Mason by.”

He stands in a book which is the greatest of all secular books. For in the prefatory pages over the head of “THE AUTHOR” is printed SEVEN SET SQUARES that the Brethren might know that “Here is the MASTER that rules by the Square.” In the preface are the following significant phrases:

“The meanest things are made more precious when dedicated to TEMPLES.” (Even the humble Tools of a Working Craft.)

“Read him therefore again and yet again. . . . If you do not like him you are in some manifest danger not to understand him. . . . And so we leave you to other of his friends, whom, if you need, can be YOUR GUIDES. If you need them not you can lead yourselves and others. . . . And such Readers we wish him.”

This Book is the Great SHAKESPEARE FOLIO of 1623, the book which openly proclaims for the first time in print that there lived a man who was a Freemason and who was the AUTHOR of the PLAYS, for the writers of the Address refer to him in these memorable words:

“So worthy a . . . fellow as was our SHAKESPEARE.”

THE MYSTERY OF MODERN FREEMASONRY

In the days when these words were written, a “Fellow” was a Mason; “a Worthy Fellow” was a Worthy Freemason.

The only man who could have written the Ritual, who could have conceived and established Freemasonry, who possessed all the necessary literary, ethical, social qualifications, etc., was the Immortal Bard, “William Shakespeare.”

An examination of the literary characteristics of the Ritual abundantly proves that it bears the peculiar hall-marks of the Elizabethan Era and has nothing in common with the Age of Pope, 1717. (See Chapter X.)

The Freemasons emerged in 1723 because it was the centenary of the Great Folio, 1623, which recks with Freemasonry. Bros. Anderson, Preston and Hutchinson (the first three Official Historians) knew the Secret Author and by command left the knowledge in their works secretly by Elizabethan Rosicrosse methods.
THE MYSTERY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

"I was prosper-o the Prime (i.e. the First or the Head) ... reputed in dignity and for THE LIBERAL ARTS without a parallel ... having both the key of officer and office all dedicated to Closeness." - THE TEMPEST.

STUDENTS of the Elizabethan era are fully aware of the fact that some sort of mystery veils the life of William Shakespeare. The average man knows nothing of his personality. The complete facts of the life of the reputed Author could be written on a small sheet of notepaper, so little is known of him. Large tomes of imaginative biographies have been written respecting him, but they are mainly conjectural. Sir Sidney Lee's standard life reeks with "possible" and "probable" facts, etc. The Times reviewer said that this particular biography

"had been twisted by the hand of a master artificer into the cunning semblance of a biography."

Dr. Ward, Editor Cambridge History of English Literature, declares that "no biography which deserves any confidence has ever been constructed without a large infusion of the tell-tale words "apparently," "probably," "there can be little doubt," "perhaps," and so forth."

The historian Hallam remarks that "all the insatiable curiosity and unwearied diligence hitherto detected about him serves rather to disappoint and perplex us. No letter of his handwriting, no record of his conversations, no character of him drawn with any fullness by any contemporary has ever been produced."

Prof. Nichol says that "he passed through the world in umbra."

No one has yet suggested that a part at least of this "mystery" was due to the fact that William Shakespeare was a Freemason, the centre of a Ring of Rosicrosse-Masons, and that he purposely seems to have lived his life as though his motto was "By the mind alone shall I be seen."

It has never been suggested that the Author of the immortal plays may have regarded himself essentially as an ethical teacher. For some time it has been the custom to believe that a play was tossed off for the "Globe" frequenter like an eagle might mould a feather ... carelessly, without thought, merely for gain, with a rank indifference regarding the printing of his works or the preservation of his manuscripts.

These views cannot be sustained. We know that from quarto to quarto (i.e. the small printed editions of the plays) until they were collected in the Great Folio he must have toileted over the plays with loving care ... word by word and line upon line until they were as near human perfection as possible. The manuscripts, too, were placed in "sure wards of trust." They were not destroyed. They were carefully preserved by the Brethren who published the 1623 Folio. This fact is made quite clear by the curious preface to Troilus and Cressida, published in quarto in 1609.

We are told that the play had never been played ... "never clapper-clawed with the palms of the vulgar ... never sullied with the smoky breath of the multitude. ... Thank Fortune for the ESCAPE it (i.e. the play) hath made among you.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

since by the GRAND POSSESSORS' WILLS
I believe you should have prayed for THEM
rather than been prayed."

We here have the somewhat remarkable fact that
the Author who was supposed to have written all
his plays for the stage for profits to be drawn from
the acting, writes a play which is never acted but
printed so that any company of players may produce it.
The play is a profound utterance upon statecraft
quite over the heads of the "Globe" audiences.
The fact that concerns us most as Freemasons is
this: that it declares that the original manuscripts of
this play—and other comedies too—have passed
out of his hands and are held by some GRAND
POSSessORS. The writer of the preface speaks of
"the escape it hath made"—i.e. its escape out of the
hands of the Grand Possessors—who were unwilling
to let it escape. The inference is that the "Grand
Possessors' Wills" were opposed to letting "THEM"—
the other comedies—be published.
Charles Knight says:

"It is difficult to understand but... we
learn that the copy had an escape from some
powerful possessors. It appears to us that these
possessors were powerful enough to prevent a
single copy... being produced... till after
his death; and that... until the publication of
the Folio in 1623, they continued the exercise of
their power... The fourteen plays published
in his lifetime... were authorised by some
power having the right to prevent publication...till the 1623 Folio."

There has never been any reasonable suggestion by
any Shakespearian authority who the Grand Possessors
were who held Troilus and Cressida, who held the
Shakespeare manuscripts, who printed the Great Folio,
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

CHARITY (the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God), and the recognition of the Great Architect of the Universe. He once more introduced the principle of love — in a New Form — in an age which gave us the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the fires of Smithfield, the torturing of Papists.

The new Cult was naturally a secret one. Had there been the slightest suspicion that such a latitudinarian movement was being born as "the Religion of all good men and true," the Brethren would have been the victims immediately of Protestant and Catholic intolerance. The Brethren were necessarily sworn to secrecy on the very practices of the Era... the barbarous punishments of hanging, drawing, quartering, etc. The Third Degree Penal Sign — with its return to the centre — carried with it a very solemn and grim reminder to our ancient Elizabethan Brother who had heard the agonized shrieks of victims in the public highway at Charing Cross, that a careless word might result in imprisonment, the thumbscrew and the rack.

Shakespeare was necessarily a concealed man. The Brethren who protected him were also concealed men. They moved through the world unrecognized save by one another — like the Islanders mentioned in Francis Bacon's New Atlantis, or The Land of the Rosicrosse to give this remarkable work its correct title. They used signs in the Lodge and they also used signs outside the Lodge in a variety of cunning methods, even in printed books, as the Masonic Movement spread and became international. By the Elizabethan Brethren "great Bases were laid for eternity" in many ways, by the publishing of textbooks of general knowledge, translations, etc. They bequeathed their "Mystery" to the succeeding generation, the chief Secrets being preserved by the Heads of the Secret Fraternity, the Rosicrosse-Masons. Through subsequent generations a succession of hands

THE MYSTERY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE left the fact that they were of the Rosicrosse in their books secretly. From Shakespeare to De Quincey (1785-1859) cunning signals appear to indicate the Founder's identity.

Apart from the fact that it would have been worse than useless to have made public the birth of an ethical secret society in Shakespeare's day, it was also impracticable owing to the additional fact that the great dramatist's life was clouded by some sort of a personal tragedy about which his biographers are at variance. What the actual tragedy was does not enter into this little work. Suffice it to say that in his personal diary, Shakespeare's Sonnets, the Author states that he has been

"made lame through Fortune's dearest Spite."
"My name has received a Brand."
"Vulgar Scandal stamped upon my brow."
"Weigh how once I suffered in your Crime."
"I Authorise thy Trespass... My Self Corrupting salving thy Amiss."

Enough has been said to indicate that the "Concealed Life" of the Author was a necessity of the times. The tragedy in his life (he became the public scapegoat for the sins of another) made it also imperative that his secret activities as a Founder of a

1 The first edition of Shakespeare's Sonnets given openly to the world was in 1640. It is known as the "Benson Medley." There was a Quarto of Shakespeare's Sonnets numbered "1609" which was published to the Brethren secretly in 1623 containing six more Sonnets than the 1640 edition and of a different order. The world did not know of the existence of this (1609) edition until Geo. Steevens reprinted it in 1766 and Malone drew attention to it in 1788, pointing out the moral issues involved in such a personal record. There is indubitable proof of the publication of the Sonnets after the 1623 Folio as a "last secret book to the Craft," and that Shakespeare was never guilty of the "sins" attributed to him by some of his most ardent admirers. (For this aspect of the question see "The Alfred Dodd Edition of the Sonnets," Daily Post, Liverpool.)
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

New System of Ethics should not be known lest it militated against the success of the Fraternity. In the Sonnets is a direct instruction to the Brethren that his connection with the Craft had to be kept as a close secret.

"Forget me. . . . Let my name be buried where my Body is,
And live no more to shame nor me, nor you. . . .
For I am shamed. . . . You in me can Nothing WORTHY Prove."

Sonnet lxxxi (149).1

When Freemasonry emerged in 1717, the heads of the emergence who were the successors of the Elizabethan Rosicrosse and had had the secrets handed down to them, were desperately anxious that the name of the Founder should not be associated with the genesis of the Order, lest controversy arose on a personal issue and the emerence of the ethical cult was killed in the open thoroughfares of the world by bitter attacks on the personality of the Creator by self-constituted champions of morals, theologies, state policies.

Dr. Anderson and the 1717 Brethren sent the world looking for "Origins" among the illiterate operatives of Feudalism. In that arid wilderness some scholars are still looking even today, despite Bro. Hutchinson's assurance (the third Official Historian) in 1776—when the success of the Fraternity was assured—that:

"Our Ceremonies and Mysteries were derived from the Rites, Ceremonies and Institutions of the Ancients, and some of them from the remotest Ages. . . . The name of Mason has NO RELATION TO ARCHITECTS."

(The Spirit of Masonry.)

1 The Sonnets in the 1609 quarto had a secret order. The quarto number was lxxxi. The manuscript number was 149. Hence the quotation of two numbers.

THE MYSTERY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Bro. Hutchinson does not tell the world openly how our ceremonies were DERIVED, but he adds that:

"Our Ceremonials . . . have no relation to building and architecture, but are Emblematical."

and on Rosicrosse lines he slips in the name of the Founder who had re-created the Ancient Mysteries in a modern setting.

The 1723 world took the Book of Constitutions with its legendary tissue of anachronisms as the genuine tenets of the Speculative Art, thinking that the System had simply "Grewed like Topsy." Speculation was rampant whether it had directly descended from the Mysteries, the Roman Collegia, the Jewish Cabbala, the Knights Templar, the Medieval Trade Gild. When or how the Fraternity had changed its creedal Trinitarianism or Pagan Garments for the one Great Architect, and the Apron (Jason's Golden Fleece) with the white Robes of Theosophic Mysticism, the 1723 world never discovered.

In their Lodges the 1723 Masons sang jubilantly:

"We have imposed on those who make a Pother."

They had.

Dr. Anderson and the Grand Lodge had successfully carried out instructions. The Founder's "name" had been "buried" out of sight under a mass of extraneous speculations and partially connived at "Exposures." Freemasonry was apparently conceived, shaped and born without a Father or Mother and without any directing mind. The character of the Founder was never once brought against the 1723 Masons as a damning factor against their Ethical System for no one dreamed of looking for a personal Founder any more than men do to-day.

With the passing of the years, Dr. Anderson could afford to say in the Second Edition of the Constitutions, 1738,
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

"Most regular Societies have had and always will have their Secrets; and to be sure the Freemasons always had theirs which they never divulged in manuscript; and cannot therefore be expected in Print, but an EXPERT BROTHER by THE TRUE LIGHT can readily find many useful hints on almost every page of the Book which... others not initiated cannot discover."

"But the History here chiefly concerns Masonry without meddling with other transactions more than what serves to connect the History of Masonry with the subject of the Book. It is good to know WHAT NOT TO SAY."

This very remarkable statement suggests quite plainly that there was a Prime Secret connected with the Genesis of the Fraternity and that "Hints" respecting it have been written in secretly that can be understood not by "Cowans," but by the "INITIATED."

No Masonic Historian has told the Brethren what this Secret is likely to be. There have never been any efforts made to elucidate the "Hints" that are to be found "on almost every page," or to tell an inquirer what is "THE TRUE LIGHT," or what is the DEGREE which makes an "Expert Brother" and qualifies him so that, esoterically, he may read the secrets of a printed page. Bro. Anderson lets it be definitely known that there is other knowledge known to him which trenches on Masonry, but he does not "MEDDLER" with such knowledge for it constitutes "other transactions" which are better left unsaid openly in a history of Freemasonry. "Hints" secretly are permissible, but, OPENLY... "IT IS GOOD TO KNOW WHAT NOT TO SAY." Bro. Anderson throws up the phrase in capitals to emphasize its importance.

The "other transactions" referred to the fact that other issues were involved besides the identity of the

THE MYSTERY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Founder, his character, his reason for concealment, etc.

The "Hints"—some at least—were afterwards called by Bro. Preston, "the ART OF CHANGES," and by Bro. Hutchinson, "the SCIENCE OF ABRAC," a System of numerical Cyphers used by the Rosicross (through many printed works) from the 1623 Folio to Anderson onwards.

Very detailed elaborate evidence and proofs can be produced on the foregoing lines, but enough has already been adduced to indicate that around the Secrets of Masonry there is a "PRIME SECRET" connected with the ORDER which centres round the Creator of the Craft who is esoterically the "LOST WORD" of the DEGREE acquainted with his secrets.
III

FREEMASONRY IN THE FOLIO

"I am a brother of a gracious order late come from the sea."

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

We are now certainly justified in asking . . .
Was William Shakespeare a Freemason?
We have seen that the Editors of the 1623 Folio pointedly declare that he was "A WORTHY FELLOW" and enjoin the reader to read him again and yet again lest he be in danger of being misunderstood. It is an open hint that there may be more behind his words and phrases than appears on the surface.

However much we may wish to associate the Author with Freemasonry it is totally insufficient to conclude that Shakespeare was a Mason on the strength of a word that might bear a different interpretation. The word "Fellow" has many different meanings—a graduate of a University or even "a person of no estimation, a disreputable character;" or as a term of familiarity, such as "a jolly fellow," etc. Nevertheless the term "Fellow" was used in medieval times to signify particularly one who was a MASON. It is used in Freemasonry to-day to signify the same thing . . . a Mason of a certain Degree.

The initial difficulty is to ascertain whether the Editors of the Folio used the word with a Masonic significance or not . . . whether they wrote it as Masons to Masons.

In Shakespeare's work there is a literary subtlety known to all students . . . the deliberate employment of words which are diamond-like and flash different meanings. He never seems to use a word unless he knew its full derivative strength. He thus packed his full, expansive thought in a single word or phrase which can be examined from different angles. The context usually tells the emphasis to be placed on the leading interpretation.

The Folio Editors follow the same literary methods. If the word "Fellow" stood by itself it could be reasonably passed by as having no particular significance; but when we find the significant adjective "WORTHY" attached, the combination "A WORTHY FELLOW" ought to give any student of Masonic Origins pause. When we see the time-honoured appellation of "Worthy" associated with a word which may also have been written masonically, we can reasonably assume that the complete phrase may have been used primarily in a Masonic sense, and that it was covertly slipped into the "uninstructed world" which could not realise its significance.

It is exactly how we Masons might expect such an announcement to be made . . . a covert hint, a veiled allusion, a secret truth wrapped up in an innocent phrase. The combination has not hitherto been noticed because we modern Freemasons have forgotten how to take a hint. We are so concerned with making "a determined stand against unhistorical claims and unscientific pretensions" (L. Vibert) that we have become too negligent to look for "those marks by which we are known to each other and distinguished from the rest of the world" (The Ritual). We pass over the "set-squares" associated with the Author; we equally forget that the sacred number seven is of profound significance to the Fraternity; we are equally blind to the two Capital Letters on the first Folio page, placed by themselves, which would have designated to an Elizabethan Brother the two Pillars of Masonry "B.J." whatever else they may have veiled.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Assuming that there are veiled suggestions in these cryptic words, phrases and signs, an examination of the Folio ought to contain at least *prima facie* evidence pointed and distinct of Freemasonry, veiled yet clear enough to be understood by Masons. Such Masonic fragments would necessarily be embodied in the plays in such a manner as to arouse no suspicion... yet they ought to be plain enough to be recognized when taken out of their hiding-places by the "discerning reader."

Lord Campbell looked for Law in the plays and found it, coming to the ultimate conclusion that the Author was learned in the Law. He wrote:

"What is more remarkable in Shakespeare's fondness for Law Terms is that whenever he indulges this propensity he uniformly lays down GOOD LAW."

Nothing less than this standard can satisfy a Masonic student.

If the Folio embodies the principles of Masonry, we ought naturally to expect secret signs and signals, cover-words that look innocent, and double-meaning phraseology; yet this should be so unmistakably clear as to leave no shadow of doubt. Shakespeare, in fact, should prove himself to be a Mason, not merely by his philosophy, but by his systematic use of certain peculiar Masonic Knowledge, *by phrase, fable and sign*, if we are to accept the "Worthy Fellow" term, the "Set-Squares" and the "B.J." as possessing Masonic significance.

In our search it must be remembered that Masonry is secret knowledge known to the few. It has never been on parade before the eyes of the world. It has hitherto been unsuspected in the plays and has never been looked for. It will be found that the Poet had such a reservoir of Masonic lore that it is incorporated as naturally in the plays as are the open branches of
"The Names of the Principall Actors"

The Works of William Shakespeare, containing all his Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies: Truely set forth, according to their first Original.

The Names of the Principall Actors in all their Plays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>William Shakespeare</th>
<th>Samuel Gilbourn.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richard Burbage</td>
<td>Robert Armyn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustine Phillip.</td>
<td>Nathan Field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Pope.</td>
<td>Nicholas Tooley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Bryan.</td>
<td>William Eccles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Goffe.</td>
<td>John Shawe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Cooke.</td>
<td>John Roo.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Secret Shakespearian Seals.

The count once more is 287, the Roman Letters being arranged so that when they are subtracted from the Italics the necessary number is totalled; such subtracting and adding is all part of the game of mystification.

Plate IV

Freemasonry in the Folio

knowledge . . . medicine, heraldry, history, classical lore, law, etc.

The following Masonic allusions indicate that Shakespeare had a positive knowledge that in his day there were actually Secret Orders with their Signs and Symbols. They are simple and cumulative and leave no possible doubt of their conjoined significance.

The Masonic Allusions in the Plays

A Knowledge of Noble Orders and Fraternities.

I am a Brother of a Gracious Order late come from the Sea.

Measure for Measure, Act III, last scene.

But stay awhile. What Company is this?

Taming of the Shrew, Act I, s. 2.

I will, as twere a Brother of your Order
Visit both Prince and People.

Measure for Measure, Act I, s. 4.

The Work of Masons.

The Singing Masons building Roofs of Gold.

Henry V, Act I, s. 1.

The Founder of the Temple.

And Profound Solomon.

Love's Labours Lost, Act 4, s. 3.

The Patron Saint of Masonry.

Now by St. John that news is bad indeed.

Richard III, Act I, s. 2.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE BRETHREN.
What Hallowing and what stir is this to-day?
These are my MATES.
The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act V, s. 1.

A MASCULINE FRATERNITY.
And that no woman has, nor never none
Shall Mistress be of it.
Twelfth Night, Act III, s. 1.

THE LODGE.
Both are at THE LODGE.
Titus Andronicus, Act II, s. 4.

Doth any particular name belong unto the Lodging?
"Tis called JERUSALEM.
Henry I, Act V, s. 1.

THE CRAFT.
This is a WORSHIPFUL SOCIETY.
King John, Act I, s. 1.

THE APRON MEN.
You have made good work, you and your APRON MEN.
Coriolanus, Act IV, s. 6.

THE CHAIRS OF THE LODGE.
The Several CHAIRS of ORDER, look you.
The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act V, s. 1.

THE HEAD OF THE LODGE.
What! My old WORSHIPFUL MASTER!
Taming of the Shrew, Act V, s. 1.

FREEMASONRY IN THE FOLIO

BY COMMAND OF THE W.M.
I have ever squared me to thy Counsel.
The Winter's Tale, Act III, s. 3.

THE TYLER.
Guard the Door WITHOUT. Let him not PASS.
Kill him rather.
Othello, Act V, s. 2.

He fetches in our wood and serves in OFFICES that profit us.
The Tempest, Act I, s. 1.

THE JUNIOR WARDEN.
Where is thy LEATHER APRON and thy RULE?
Julius Caesar, Act I, s. 1.

SQUARE CONDUCT, ETC.
I have not kept my SQUARE, but that to come shall all be done by RULE
Antony and Cleopatra, Act II, s. 1.

They never meet, but they do SQUARE.
A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act II, s. 1.

THE PREPARED CANDIDATE.
I shall stay here the for-horse to A SMOCK (an Apron),
Creaking my SHOES on the PLAIN MASONRY.
All's Well that Ends Well, Act II, last scene.

Be patient . . . I'll bring thee . . . HOODWINK this . . .
Speak softly . . . This is the Mouth of THE CELL . . .
No more . . . ENTER.
The Tempest, Act IV.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE CABLE-TOW.
His NECK shall come to your WAIST, a CORD Sir.
Measure for Measure, Act III, s. 3.
(As the Initiate kneels at the Pedestal with the C.T. round . . .)

THE THREE KNOCKS.
Knock, Knock, Knock. Who's where?
knock, Knock, Knock. Who's there?
knock, knock, Knock. . . .
Macbeth, Act II, s. 3.

THE W.M. AND THE INITIATE.
Solemn and Strange Music. Master Prospero on the top Invisible.
The Tempest (see Folio p. 13, stage direction).

THE PERAMBULATION.
Here's a MAZE trod indeed through FORTH-RIGHTS (straight paths) and MEANDERS (a Circling Round).
The Tempest, Act III, s. 3.

THE VOW.
KNEEL and Repeat it. I will stand. . . .
mum then and no more.
The Tempest, Act III, s. 2.
Come SWEAR to that. KISS THE BOOK.
The Tempest, Act II, s. 1.

Your oaths are past, and now subscribe your NAMES,
That his own Hand may strike his HONOUR down
That VIOLATES the smallest branch therein.

FREEMASONRY IN THE FOLIO
I can but say . . . I HAVE ALREADY SWORN.
If I break Faith this WORD shall break for me.
Love's Labours Lost, Act I, s. 1.

THE PENALTY.
Now go and tell, and if thy TONGUE can speak,
Who 'twas that cut thy TONGUE.
Titus Andronicus, Act II, s. 5.

CHOP OFF YOUR HAND. . . . That shall be ransom for thy Fault.
Titus Andronicus, Act III, s. 1.

THE WARDENS' TEST.
Now . . . WHENCE COME YOU?
The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act IV, s. 5.

Let's PART THE WORD . . .
No! I'll not be your HALF.
Love's Labours Lost, Act IV, s. 5.

Thou speakest like him that has been Untutored TO REPEAT.
Pericles, Act III, s. 4.

MASSONIC SPEECH.
I'll SQUARE my talk.
Titus Andronicus, Act III, s. 2.

In thy DUMB ACTION, I will be as Perfect.
Titus Andronicus, Act III, s. 2.

THE CHARITY TEST.
If but one of his pockets could speak, would it not say, "He Lies."
The Tempest, Act II, s. 1.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY
The Gods requite his charity.
Pericles, Act III, s. 2.

THE DISTINGUISHING BADGE.
Lambskins to signify THAT CRAFT being richer than INNOCENCY.
Measure for Measure, Act III, s. 1.

AN ECHO OF THE INVESTITURE.
Not the King's Crown, nor the deputed SWORD,
The Marshall's Truncheon, nor the Judge's ROBE
Become them with one half so good a grace.
Measure for Measure, Act II, s. 3.

Jove's Bird, the ROMAN EAGLE.
Cymbeline, Act IV, s. 2.

THE INSTRUCTION OF THE CANDIDATE.
Take, then, this your companion by the hand,
Who hath a Story ready for your Ear!
REMEMBER, now, my BROTHER.
Cymbeline, Act V, last scene.

Note.—There was a custom as late as the eighteenth century for an experienced Brother to take the newly-made Mason into an adjoining room, rehearse him in what he had been told, how to enter, and how to leave, etc. On their return, he was presented; and the ceremony thus interrupted, was continued to the end.

THE MASONIC SYMBOL.
Like to the GARTER COMPASSE in a RING . . .
The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act V, s. 5.

FREEMASONRY IN THE FOLIO

CRAFT COLOURS.
. . . In Emrod tuffs . . . PURPLE, BLUE
and WHITE.
Like Saphire pearls, and Rich embroidery . . .
Buckled below fair Knighthood's bending Knee.
The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act V, s. 5.

THE HAMMER AND APRON.
Here, Robin, and if I die, I give thee MY APRON;
And Will shall have my HAMMER . . .
and God in Justice hath revealed the TRUTH and
INNOCENCE of this poor FELLOW.
Henry VI, Pt. 2, Act II, s. 3.

THE P . . . W . . .
I thank thee good TUBAL.
The Merchant of Venice, Act III, s. 1.

THE YOUNG MASON.
Is there no young squarer that will make a Voyage
with him . . . ?
Much Ado About Nothing, Act I, s. 1.

THE SIGN CASUAL.
The paper as the Body of my FRIEND,
Every WORD in it a Gaping Wound issuing
Life Blood.
The Merchant of Venice, Act III, s. 2.

A BROTHER TO HIRAM.
The TYRE-Paliant or any Tire of Venetian
Admittance.
The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act III, s. 3.

Note that Hiram Abif came from Tyre along with
Hiram King of Tyre . . . a home of the Ancient
Mysteries.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

HIRAM'S VOW.
Or they shall beat out my Brains with billets.
Measure for Measure, Act IV, s. 3.

THE WHISPERED WORD AND GRIP.
They whisper one another in the ear; and he that speaks doth grasp the Hearer's wrist.
King John, Act IV, s. 2.

THE DARKNESS AND HIRAM.
The prince of darkness is a gentleman . . .
Mido he's called and Mahu . . .
King Lear, Act III, s. 4.

Note that the Author corrupts the true words of the Third Degree in order not to reveal them, just as the eighteenth-century Masons did. They called them "Matchpin" and "Maughbin."
Shakespeare thus lets it be known that he knew two words were employed "having the same signification."
The "W.M." is, of course, a "Prince of Darkness" in the Third Degree . . . and a "gentleman" not an operative mason.
This is clear evidence not only of Shakespeare's Masonry, but that Speculative Masonry was confined to "gentlemen" of Culture.

THE POINT FROM WHICH A MASTER MASON CANNOT ERR.
I will find where Truth is hid
Though it were hid indeed
Within the Centre.
Hamlet, Act II, s. 2.

FREEMASONRY IN THE FOLIO

PROVINCIAL HONOURS.
He will line your apron with gold.
Pericles, Act IV, s. 6.

THE ROYAL ARCH.
Who will play the scribe . . .? With signs and tokens . . .
Titus Andronicus, Act II, s. 4.

Report what a sojourner we have.
Pericles, Act IV, s. 2.

In The Winter's Tale is actually a reference to "Warden Pies." Every Mason knows that the Junior Warden's Office deals primarily with the banqueting aspects of the Craft.
There are numerous allusions in the plays to "Worthy Masters," Potent Masters, Good Masters and "Elder Masters of Known Honour," which can be taken as referring to Past Masters.
Generally speaking, wherever there is a word or a phrase of Masonic import, there are usually other significant phrases in the context, showing that the Author had definitely the Ritual in his mind or a Lodge custom. Even in some of the most strikingly solemn or pathetic scenes there are adroit Masonic asides of dry humour. In some miraculous way—only to be ascribed to the working of the Divine Mind through a superlative genius—Shakespeare had the power of thinking along more than one plane of thought (the stresses of emotion combined with the powers of intellectual knowledge), at one and the same time. These combined threads of thought can be dissociated when one understands this particular aspect of Shakespeare's "living art."
A single instance will suffice to indicate this remarkable truth so far as the thread of Masonry is
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

concerned. The Great Folio is saturated with similar examples.

In *Hamlet*, Act II, s. 1, Folio page 259, col. 2, line 21, the play leads up to the entrance of Ophelia who is distressed beyond measure, coming to tell her father how Hamlet had visited her and affrighted her by his bearing. Through all this word-play, however, there is a secret message which runs: "*Observe an Initiation Worthy Freemason,*" etc. Ophelia's words are framed on a situation which has been seen many a time by the Brethren, the nervous Candidate entering the Lodge Room with fear and trembling... in déshabillé... When the "padding" in the open text is cut away, the Masonic allusions in Ophelia's speech with Polonius are revealed unerringly.

Polonius and Ophelia

A A And thus... (Line 21.)

WORTHY W.B. [W
BROTHER By indications... directions out:

SACRED S.S. So by my former Lecture and advice

MASON M. Shall you my sonne; You have me have you not?

THE GRAND G.G. My Lord...

A WORTHY BROTHER'S SACRED SYMBOL: THE GRAND GEOMETRICIAN, MASON

Note.—The Capital Initials of the lines were specially selected by Shakespeare because these Letters in these particular combinations, are based on the

58
FREEMASONRY IN THE FOLIO

HO! WORTHY FREEMASON! OBSERVE AN INITIATION! A WORSHIPFUL MASTER; LORD HAM—AS A PUN—TO MASTER MASONs!

In the open text is an excellently veiled account of the manners and customs in vogue to-day at an Initiation. "HIS STOCKINGS UNGARTERED AND DOWN-GIVED TO HIS ANKLE," etc., is quite sufficient to indicate that the Author modelled his recital on what he had actually witnessed in actual Lodge working. The Capital Initials are equally significant in their import for they again betray a perfect knowledge of the Masonic Ritual Letter Code. The "Pun" round the word "Ham" is not very apparent in our present slight knowledge of the esoteric ways of the Elizabethan Brethren. It was probably well understood by them and light may some day be thrown upon the subject.¹

The scattered quotations from the plays indicate at least that Shakespeare was familiar with the fact of Secret Orders and Fraternities. He knew definite Lodge Words like Solomon and Tubal and was aware that among Freemasons there were penalties, swearing and kissing a Book, the "Three Knocks", perambula-

¹ Note.—Some further examples of the Ritual Letter Code together with the Author's "direction" authorizing the reader to examine such Initial Capitals and for the "Pruning" of the text in order to reveal an "UNDER MESSAGE," will be found in Chapter VII.
IV
THE HIRAM LEGEND

"Here lies your brother no better than the Earth he lies upon,
If he is that which now he is like ... he is dead."

THE TEMPEST.

Every Masonic historian has pondered the Story of Hiram and the problem of its incorporation into the crude rite of an operative craft. Beginning with the fatal assumption that Speculative Freemasonry began in operative Lodges and that the Ethical Cult "evolved"—ignoring the patent historic fact that the operative guild union was swept away by successive Acts of Parliament before we had a modern language in which a modern Ritual could be imaginatively expressed)—every Masonic scholar has signally failed to indicate WHO created the Hiram Legend or when it was created.

It is abundantly clear that someone with a knowledge of Hermetic Rites and the Ancient Mysteries created the Story as a piece of imaginative fiction and that it was created in order that it might take the place of the Third Degree Death Rite of the Mysteries ... which centred round the Death and Resurrection of their Gods. In those Ancient Days the Candidate took the place of the God as the Initiate does to-day in the Modern Mystery.

There is thus a parallel between the Ancient Rite and the Modern One.

Bro. Pike says that in 1717:

62

THE HIRAM LEGEND

"In one of the Four Old Lodges were Squires, Noblemen, Military Officers, Scholars, Philosophers, Clergymen. To these men must be ascribed the authorship of the Third Degree and the introduction of Hermetic and other Symbols in Masonry."

That scholars were members of such a Lodge is capable of direct proof, but it is not capable of proof that these men—acting apparently as a Committee—created the THIRD DEGREE. It is pure guess-work on the part of Bro. Pike. It is, moreover, quite impossible for any heterogeneous Committee to produce a piece of Literature like the Ritual, which is essentially an Art Form of Dramatic Construction bearing the imprint of a single Mind that conceived and technically executed. There has never been a Committee yet that has produced a great Work of Art.

The reader will, however, have already noted that not only has it been proved by direct evidence that there was more than one Degree worked by the Brethren prior to 1717 (see Chapter I), but that in the Shakespeare Folio there seems to be circumstantial evidence that suggests a knowledge by the Author of the Hiram Story alleged by Modernists to be unknown prior to 1717.

As a matter of fact, the Masonic commentator who believes that Speculative Masonry grew out of an operative trinitarian formula, cannot even suggest why Solomon, the Temple, the Pillars B... and J... the Rites of the Mysteries (what little we know of them), the use of the Sacred Volume, the Three Pillars Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, the Apron of the Mysteries (Jason's Golden Fleece), etc. etc., were ever chosen by the alleged "Gentlemen" or "operatives" to play such an important part in the modern Ceremonial. No one has ever suggested why it was done or how it happened.

63
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

No writer has produced the slightest evidence regarding the identity of the man or men who created the Third Degree. Refuge has been consistently taken in vague statements like Bro. Pike:

"To these men must be ascribed..." etc.,

without a shred of textual, historical or antiquarian evidence. We have the equally airy opinion of Bro. Blackham:

"The whole of the Ritual of the Craft... developed during the eighteenth century."

Bro. Hobbs is equally emphatic and equally vague:

"During this period—1717 to 1735—the Hiramic Legend was evolved... 1746 being the probable date when the Royal Arch Ceremony was arranged."

Needless to say we are not told who "arranged" it, nor is there any evidence forthcoming to pin down the "Arrangement" to this particular year. Because we only hear of the Royal Arch Chapter about this period it by no means follows that the Chapter had not been long practised in secret prior to this date. Its emergence about 1746 is a proof of the care with which our Ancient Brethren guarded their secrets from the "attacks of the insidious." It is absurd really to talk of the Royal Arch being "arranged" in 1746 when there "are clear hints of the Royal Arch as early as 1723, the first express reference occurring in 1744." (Story of Craft, p. 78, L. Vibert.)

We have, virtually, little or no knowledge of the "historic (I)" Hiram Abif who suffered martyrdom by being slain by "THREE MEN OF SIN" at the entrance to the Temple of Solomon. There was a Hiram in the Scriptures who was a Widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali and that is about all we know. He is unknown to Jewish literature and the story of his

64

65

THE HIRAM LEGEND

martyrdom is peculiar to Masonry alone. There is no ancient legend respecting him. It has been suggested that the Crusaders brought back the story from the Holy Land, but there is no proof that it was ever in existence save as a Masonic Fable. Dr. Oliver says:

"The Third Degree is traditional, historical, legendary... its tradition being hyperbolical, its history apocryphal, its legends fabulous."

In other words someone specially created a Hiramic Myth—marked with all the detail creative touches of genius—and wove this Myth into the Art of Temple Building, no longer an operative art but a Spiritual Cult based on the sentence: "Know ye not that ye are the TEMPLES of the Living God."

Who are the men that create Myths? Who produce our Songs? Who wrote the Sagas? Who fabricate "FELONED STORIES"? The Song of Baldur and Beowulf? The Arthurian Legend? The Regius Poem?

Only one type of mind... the man of imagination. In the old days they were called Minstrels and rorrs! Someone with the mind of a Poet—one who was saturated with the Myths of the Ancient World—conceived the idea of creating a modern Rite based on the ancient one. Since he could not introduce a Pagan Christos, he introduced the Holy Temple of the Jew, three Grand Masters, one being the wisest man on earth... "Profound Solomon," a legendary Hiram Abif and a "Tragedy." That is why the Hiram history is apocryphal! Why we have teachings which bear affinities with the folklore of primitive man! Why there are analogies between our Rites and the Ceremonies of Amen Ra and the Mysteries of Holy Byblos.

"There are ceremonies even more remarkable in character connected with the Royal Arch and certain additional Degrees with other religious observances of antiquity." (L. Vibert, p. 74, ibid.)
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

One could therefore almost imagine William Shakespeare writing such words as these:

"For if I should profess that I, going the same road as THE ANCIENTS, have something better to produce, there must needs have been some comparison or rivalry between us... in respect of excellency or ability of wit."

This actually was written by an Elizabethan; and it is a matter for conjecture whether such a sentence as this does not refer to a return along the road to antiquity, the Ancient Mysteries which are to be the Model or Type of the New Ethical System of Elizabethan Freemasonry... a system which will be better than the old one because it will be linked to the Christian idea of love of charity.

In any case the Masonic system was created by a man who was an Egyptian in soul, a Greek in heart, a Christ-Man by conviction and an Elizabethan in expression. He was one who knew exactly what poetry stood for according to the Elizabethan standard.

This is what Shakespeare says regarding the creating of a poetic fiction around a piece of living history. In As You Like It, Act III, s. 5:

Audrey says: "I do not know what poetical is... Is it a True Thing?"

Touchstone: "No!... The truest poetry is the most FEIGNED. What they may swear in poetry may be said... They do FEIGN."

Shakespeare therefore knew that the Poets were the Inventors of Historical Tales that were "feigned." The writers pretended they were historical (like Shakespeare's Histories), but they were not so literally, romance and imagination being mixed liberally with the real facts. He knew this as a truth because he was guilty of this sin... if "sin" it be.

THE HIRAM LEGEND

It must have been a characteristic of the Elizabethan Age because a contemporary, Francis Bacon, wrote similarly.

"By poesy I mean nothing else than feigned history."

Shakespeare's estimate of true poetry was that in order for it to be lovely,

"There must be matter as well as Art, the spontaneous overflow of a full mind stirred to the brim with true history, a knowledge of nature and especially human nature." (Secret Society, Mrs. Pott.)

Let it once be conceded that Shakespeare beside being a supreme Artist was also, deliberately, an Ethical Teacher, possessed with a great urge—"a Philanthropia"—for the Good of Mankind and the door is at once open for his active connection with the Elizabethan Fraternity. As a creative artist, of profound knowledge, saturated as every student knows with the wisdom of the East, the theogonies of vanished civilizations, he could have created the Third Degree Death Rite and the Hiram Myth without the slightest difficulty. The Creator of Prospero, Hamlet and Lear could certainly have called Hiram into being and woven around him the tragical setting. I know of no one else in the whole range of literature who could have done so.

In any case Shakespeare knew the Hiram story—whether he coined it or not—for he leaves it in scattered fragments in various parts of the plays. I place the complete story before the reader as it is told by the Immortal Bard in dramatic form as a narrative.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE STORY OF
HIRAM'S DEATH: THE MYTH
TOLD BY SHAKESPEARE

THE MURDER
Alack, Alack! What Blood is this which stains
The Stony Entrance of this Sepulchre?
What mean these Masterless and gory swords
To lie discoloured by this Place of Death?
I hear some noise!
All run with open outcry toward our Monument.
Search
Seek and know how this foul Murder comes.
Romeo and Juliet, last scene.

THE LOSS OF THE PLANS: CONFUSION
O Horror, Horror, Horror!
Tongue nor heart cannot conceive nor name thee!
What's the matter?
Confusion now hath made his Masterpiece!
Most Sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's Anointed temple and Stolen thence
The Life of the BUILDING!
What is it you say? The LIFE?
His silver skin, laced with his golden Blood,
And his gashed stabs, looked like a breach in Nature
For Ruin's wasteful Entrance.
Macbeth, Act II, s. 3.

THE SEARCH
Look to it!
Find thy BROTHER whereso'er he is.
Seek him with CANDLE: Bring him Dead or Living
Within this twelve months.
As You Like It, Act II, s. 1.

THE HIRAM LEGEND
Bring his BROTHER to me... FIND him...
Do this suddenly. And let not search and inquisition fail
To bring again these... runaways.
As You Like It, Act II, s. 2.
Let's away...
And get our Jewels...
Devise the fittest time and safest way
To hide us from pursuit that will be made.
As You Like It, Act I, s. 3.

THE HIDING-PLACE
This is the hole where Aaron bid us Hide him.
Titus Andronicus, Act II.

THE DISCOVERY
What! Art thou fallen?
What subtle hole is this whose Mouth is covered with rude, growing briers? Upon whose leaves are drops of new shed blood... A very fatal place it seems to me...
Speak BROTHER! Hast thou hurt thee with the fall?
O BROTHER with the dismallest object
That ever eye with sight made heart lament.
Why dost not comfort me and help me out
From this unhallowed and blood-stained Hole?
Look down into this den and see a fearful sight
Of Blood and Death... Lord B... lies embrewed here
All on a heap like to a slaughtered LAMB
In this detested, dark, blood-drinking PIT.
If it be dark, how dost thou know 'tis he?
Upon his Bloody Finger he doth wear
A precious Ring that lightens all the Hole,
Which like a Taper in some Monument
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Doth shine upon the dead man's earthy checks
And shows the ragged entrails of the Pit.
O Brother, help me with thy fainting hand,
If fear hath made thee faint, as me it hath.

A SLIP
Reach me thy Hand that I may help thee out...
Poor B...'s GRAVE...
I have no strength to pluck thee to the Brink...

A SECOND SLIP
Thy HAND ONCE MORE... I will not lose again
Till thou art here aloft or I below.

HE DESCENDS INTO THE GRAVE
Thou canst not come to me. I come to thee...
I'll see what Hole is here...

And who is he that now is leapt into it?
Say, who art thou that lately did descend?
Into this gaping Hollow of the earth?

WHERE THE DRAMA IS REALLY BEING HELD

... Both are at the LODGE....

THE RETURN TO THE GRAVE
Here we have found him DEAD...
Poor B... here lies murdered...
Was ever heard the like?

This is the PIT and this the ELDER TREE.

Note.—The Acacia Tree is supposed to be the Oldest of all the trees. The wood it provided is Shittim

1 The Man who Descended into the Grave was, of course, the "W.M." of the LODGE.

THE HIRAM LEGEND
which was specially used as the hardest and oldest in the building of Solomon's Temple. The Acacia Tree, with its Masonic associations, is thus indicated as the Eldest Tree or the Elder Tree of all.

THE MURDERERS
Look, Sirs, if you can find the Huntsmen out
That should have murdered B... here.

THREE PERSONS INVOLVED: TWO WHelps AND THE PERSON ADDRESSED
Two of thy whelps, F.(ell) C.(urs) of bloody kind
Have here bereft my BROTHER of his life.
Sirs, drag them from the Pit unto the prison
There let them bide till we have devised
Some never heard-of torturing pains for them.

Note that the Initial Letters "F.C." in "Fell Curs of Bloody Kind," stand in the Masonic Ritual Letter Code for "FELLOW CRAFTS," the very class that murdered Hiram.

THEIR HEINOUS CRIME
Some bring the murdered body, some the murtherers,
Let them not speak a word, their guilt is plain,
For by my soul, were there worse end than death,
That end upon them should be executed.
The above extracts from Titus Andronicus, Act II.

THE CRIMINALS LAMENT
Our purposes God justly hath discovered,
And I repent my fault more than my death,
Which I beseech your Highness to forgive
Although my body pay the price of it.

Henry IV, Act I, s. 3.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE SEPULTURE
We have done our obsequies! 
Come, lay him down. 
Here's a few flowers, but about MIDNIGHT more. 
The Herbs that have on them the cold dew of the night 
Are strewings fit for graves . . . 
These Herblets shall . . . we strew. 

*Cymbeline*, Act IV, s. 2.

This Tablet lay upon his breast wherein 
Our pleasure, his full Fortune doth confine. 

*Cymbeline*, Act V, s. 2.

For some of these scattered quotations, I am indebted to Dr. Orville Owen who in 1894 wrote:

"I have found unmistakable evidence that the Author of the Plays was not only a Mason of High standing but that he placed in the Plays a large portion of the Masonic Ritual. 
"He claims to have been a Grand Master . . . and a Rosicrucian Knight."

This opinion is valuable because during my own researches I was unaware of Dr. Owen’s opinion. It coincides with my own exactly; neither was I then aware that he had discovered Masonic fragments embedded in the plays.

Having traced Freemasonry into the Elizabethan era, we find the greatest intellect of the age associated openly with the Fraternity by being termed a “Worthy Fellow” in one of the greatest and most enigmatical books ever written or printed. Throughout the plays he speaks of Noble Orders and Fraternities. He is familiar with a “Worshipful Society” and a “Worshipful Master.” He unquestionably camouflages the Story of Hiram in a poetic paraphrase from the Ritual,
“LOVE’S LABOURS LOST”

Such carping objectors should realize that to great genius all things are possible, vide Sir Sidney Lee’s biography of William Shakespeare.

“He rode roughshod over the unities of time, place and action. There were critics in his day who zealously championed the ancient rules and viewed with distrust any infringement of them. But the force of Shakespeare’s genius—IT’S REVELATION OF NEW METHODS—was welcomed by Playgoers,” etc. (p. 326).

Shakespeare’s dexterity in the use of the Masonic Ritual Code, etc., is indeed “A Revelation of New Methods” hitherto unsuspected of his dramatic Art. Whether he collaborated with anyone in the writing of Titus Andronicus is hardly worth the trouble of determining from a Masonic view-point, for any such objections cannot apply to Love’s Labours Lost. This verifiably was produced by William Shakespeare. It was printed in 1598 and was the first play to bear the name of “Shakespeare” which afterwards became “Shakespeare.”

The play Quarto states that it was acted before the Queen on the previous Christmas. The plays (afterwards known to be Shakespeare’s) that had already been published bore no Author’s name. There were in all eight anonymous plays. Authorities like Furnivall, Knight, Fleay, Lee are agreed that though this play was printed in 1598, it was written in or about 1589 and was one of his earliest “attempts” at play-writing.

“No older Play on the subject has yet been discovered nor any Story upon which it could have been founded. . . .

“It may be difficult to point out Shakespeare’s best Play but there is little difficulty in pointing out his worst . . . as a Drama, a study of character, or a poetical work.” (F. A. Marshall, Irving Ed. Shakespeare, Vol. I, p. 4.)
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

The play is cast in the form of a comedy. A King and three courtiers resolve to make their Court into a little Academic devoted to the pursuit of secret knowledge to which ladies may not be admitted. The ladies of course arrive. It requires little discernment to see that under such a comedy-cover, situations could arise in which Masonic words, phrases and incidents could easily be manipulated that would carry quite a different interpretation (Masonically) from the open one apparent to the ordinary reader. With the Lodge Ritual as a skeleton—its perambulations, gestures, signs, idealism, etc.—a padding of comedy could easily be superimposed through which the Masonic Bones could never be seen save by the “Initiated”... not even then unless he knew where to look and how to look.

It is self-evident that if the Founder of the Craft wished permanently to identify himself with the Fraternity, yet to remain hidden from the world, he could not have chosen a simpler or a more excellent way of carrying out his design as a Master Architect.

“The SUBJECT... not any STORY upon which the Play could have been founded” has never been discovered because it was a secret story and a hidden subject known only to Masons. It is “Shakespeare’s worst Play” from every point of view say the “un instructed” scholars of the world because all the vital asides are “lost,” being secret Masonic hints and jests.

The objections to the play are strong presumptive proofs that it is far more than seems to be on the surface. The title itself is significant Masonically—“Love’s Labour is Lost,” for Freemasonry is founded on Charity whose broad sweep takes in “Love” of all kinds. The labours of such Love—assuming that some refer to the writing of the Rituals and the founding of an organized Fraternity—are indeed “lost”; they are in the world unknown.

76
"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"

The Author lets it be known that he used the comedy as a veil for a secret, serious purpose by writing:

"That Sport best please . . . where Zeal . . . dies in that which it presents: Their Form CONFOUNDED makes MIRTH . . . Great Things Labouring perish in their Birth" (Act V, s. 2, l. 517).

Shakespeare thus directly tells the student that he has confounded the Form of something to make Mirth; the genesis of the newly born Order dies in its birth by being overlaid with humour—Great Things are being hidden in the manner of presentation. That the Author was thoroughly acquainted with the art of writing with an inner meaning as well as an outer is proved by the sentence:

"You have a DOUBLE Tongue within your Mask" (Act V, s. 2, l. 245).

He finally slips the key into the discerning reader's hand by telling him how to proceed in order to discover his real meaning. He writes:

"I that am honest BREAK THE VOW . . .
When you see me write a thing . . .
Spend a minute's time in PRUNING ME . . ."

(Act IV, s. 3, l. 181).

We have now complete justification for carefully going through this play (or any other Masonic play) and cutting out the superfluous padding of comedy. We simply take down the scaffolding of verbiage which veils a living Temple of Ethical Art . . . in order to understand the Author's hidden Theme—"Since LOVE's ARGUMENT was first set on foot" (Act V, s. 2, l. 757).

When the buried fragments are set out and catalogued, even an "uninstructed" wayfarer can see at a glance that they deal with the Ideals, Manners,
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Customs and Secrets of the Fraternity, and that they indicate unmistakably the origin and rise of the Free and accepted Brotherhood in England. It is the Author's first great Masonic play.

The passages are given as they follow in order throughout each Act.

"A PLEASANT CONCEITED COMEDIE CALLED
LOVE'S LABOURS LOST."
The Quarto Title, 1598.

Act I

THE URGE TO CREATE AN ETHICAL SYSTEM

Let Fame that all hunt after in their Lives, live registered upon our brazen Tombs, and then Grace us in the Disgrace of Death. . . . The endeavour of this present Breath may buy that Honour which shall bate the Scythe's keen Edge, and MAKE us Heirs of all Eternity.

Note.—As the Theme develops, it will be found that to be "Graced in Death" is a subtle reference to the Third Degree in which a Fellowcraft is "graced." To "MAKE Heirs" can also be understood to mean the "Making" of Masons in future Ages, the Heirs of the Elizabethans. To "MAKE" is a technical Masonic term.

THE AIMS OF FREEMASONRY

(1o) war against your own affection (passions) and the huge Army of the World's Desires.

THE CONCEPTION OF THE LODGE

Our Court shall be a little Academie, still (quiet) and Contemplative in LIVING ART (i.e. the Making of Living Temples from the Stone of Humanity).

"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"

THE THREE WHO RULE

You three . . . my Fellow Scholars . . . have sworn for three years . . . to keep those Statutes that are recorded here.

Note.—A Year is a Degree of Time. "Year" is probably intended as a Cover-Word for "Degree."

THE VOW

Your Oaths are passed and now subscribe your Names, that his own hand may Strike his Honour down that violates the smallest branch herein.

L.: I am resolved . . . The Mind shall Banquet though the body pine . . .

D.: The grosser manners of the World's Delights I throw upon the gross World's Basar SLAVES.

B.: I have already sworn . . . But there are other strict observances . . . What is the end of Study?

Note.—Speculative Freemasonry can only be practised, theoretically speaking, by free men in Mind who are not enslaved by dogmatic chains. A Freemason is the very antithesis of "a Base Slave."

THE OBJECT

To know what else we should not know:
Things hid and barr'd from Common sense . . .
To SEEK the LIGHT of TRUTH.

A FIRST VAGUE HINT

Light seeking LIGHT doth Light of Light beguile . . .
Ere you find where LIGHT in Darkness lies,
Your Light grows dark by losing of your ETES.

Note.—This cannot be understood except Masonically. A Candidate is presumed to be sufficiently
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

illuminated interiorly to seek voluntarily for the LIGHT of Masonry. The full LIGHT of a Master Mason is “DARKNESS VISIBLE” illumined by a glimmering Ray . . . the “Light in Darkness.” That Light cannot be found by a Candidate. The Light of his eyes is darkened and he loses them before he SEES.

THE ALL-SEEING EYE

Study me (i.e. show me) how to please the (human) eye by fixing it upon a Fairer EYE which dazzling so shall be his heed and give him LIGHT that it was blinded by.

Note.—The Masonic Initiate who seeks the Masonic Light can only do so by the Losing of his Eyes. Figuratively, he is BLINDED by the Light. The “EYE” is, of course, the Masonic Eye, the All-Seeing Eye, the sun.

“THAT GLORIOUS LUMINARY, THE SUN”

Study is like Heaven’s glorious sun that will not be deep-searched with Sauzy Looks (i.e. superficially).

“HE CROWNETH HIS TEMPLE WITH STARS AS WITH A DIADEM”

The Earthly God-Fathers of Heaven’s Lights that give a fixed name to every star have no more profit of their Shining Nights, than those that walk and wit not what they are . . . Small (i.e. little good) have continual plodders ever won save base Authority from the books of others.

Note.—This is a remarkably clear intimation that the Author does not consider a mere classification of “fixed names” sufficiently serviceable to humanity. It opens the door to a new interpretation of Sun, Moon

“LOVE’S LABOURS LOST”

and Stars by regarding them as Symbols with an Ethical Significance as in Freemasonry.

THE BIRTH OF FREEMASONRY

Why should I Joy in any Abortive BIRTH? To study (such matters) now is too late (in the history of the world). You CLIMB over the house (of Wisdom) to unlock the little GATE.

Note.—This positively indicates the conception of the Ethical System of Symbolism. The above objection to the inauguration of Freemasonry (placed in the mouth of a Character) is the natural one that such a Cult (based on ancient Pagan Pantheism) comes into being too late in the day, born out of due time, and should have been born into the world centuries ago.

The Masonic concept is indicated with wonderful dexterity. “The house” referred to came to be known later as “solomon’s house,” as the “House of Wisdom,” as “Solomon’s Temple,” which could only be approached by a LODGE ENTRANCE, the Door having a “little Gate” as a peephole to ascertain the person seeking admission.

The word “climb” indicates the sine qua non of the Craft and its operative connection.

The clear terms of the passage in full simply expressed the conception, creation and birth of Freemasonry in the Elizabethan age, which had not gone through Degrees of Development—from the Mysteries—through a connective line of either Medieval, operative or Secret Societies such as the Rosicrucians or the Knights Templar, but was a reconstruction of the Old Rites and Customs . . . the Mysteries, the Templars, the German Steinmetzen, etc.

“VOWS ARE REQUIRED”

(Yet) . . . I have SWORN . . . for that ANGEL-KNOWLEDGE . . . so give me the Paper.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Let me read the same, and to the Strictest Decrees I will write my name.

A MASCULINE FRATERNITY

No Woman shall ever come within a mile of my Court.

THE PENALTY

Let me see the PENALTY: (Reads) "On Pain of losing her tongue." Who devised the PENALTY? THAT DID I.

"OR THE MORE EFFECTIVE PUNISHMENT"

(Reads) "If any man ... talk ... he shall endure such Public Shame as the rest of the Court can possibly devise."

A SERIOUS OBLIGATION

If I break Faith this word shall speak for me. ... He that breaks them in the least degree stands in Attainder of Eternal Shame.

THE WRITER OF THE RITUAL

Our Court is haunted with a refined Traveller from Spain; a man in all the World's new Fashion planted that hath a MINT of PHRASES in his Brain; one whom the Music of his own Tongue doth ravish like enchanting HARMONY: a Man of Complements (ornamental accomplishments) whom RIGHT AND WRONG have chosen as UMPIRE of their Mutiny.

This Child of Fancy ... to our Studies shall relate in High-Born words the WORTH of many a KNIGHT ... Lost in the World's Debates.

Note.—Here we have the TRAVELLER from the Continent who is presumed by many Masonic writers

“LOVE'S LABOURS LOST”

to have introduced the concepts of Freemasonry into England. Shakespeare knew him. He had a “Mint of Phrases” and knew the peculiar Masonic word, “Harmony.”

The significance of this passage is self-evident. The Masonic Concept revolves around a question of “Right and Wrong.” It is ETHICAL.

It deals, too, with the "worth" of many a Lost Knight: not a Military Knight, but a Knight of Speech attached to Ancient, Noble orders lost and forgotten.

The relation in high-born words is, therefore, to be of a composite character ... a Blend of Ideals of worth taken from all over the world, for the writer is to be the "umpire" of the reconstructed Concept of Right and Wrong in the new Spiritual Temple of Freemasonry.

DEMEANOUR IN THE LODGE

To hear Meekly and to laugh Moderately or to forbear both.

THE LADDER

The STILE shall give us cause to CLIMB in the Merriness.

Note.—The Quarto and the Folio print “Stile” not “Style” as altered without warrant by modern editors. A Stile is a short Ladder. In Masonry it has Three Principal Steps. It is a clean-cut reference to the short Masonic Ladder which Masons figuratively CLIMB.

THE TIME OF MEETING

The Time When?

About the Sixth hour. ... When Men sit down to that nourishment which is called Supper.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE PLACE
(It is) Put together in Manner and Form... Then for the Place, Where...? It Standeth North-North East... by East from the West corner of thy Curious-knotted Garden.

Note.—A knotted Garden is a Symbol for interwoven Flowers of Thought taken from Systems that range from East to West: it is an exact description of the intertwined Symbolism of Freemasonry.

THE QUALIFICATION
A Man of Good Repute, courage, bearing and estimation.

OATHS AND LAWS
I will lay my Head to any Good Man's Hat these Oaths and Laws will prove an Idle Scorn... I suffer for the Truth.

Note.—Here we have the definite association of "Oaths and Laws" with a Secret Masculine Fraternity whose Ethical Ideals centre in the "Truth."

Shakespeare even associates them with "a Good Man's hat" because in all the Ancient Lodges the W.M. wore a Three-corner Cocked Hat in the Lodge as a Symbol of Authority, Freemasonry being "the Religion... of all Good Men and True" (1723 Constitutions).

THE THREE KNOCKS: ONE AND TWO
How many is one thrice told? I am ill at reckoning.
How much does the gross sum of deuce-ace amount to?

"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"
It doth amount to ONE MORE THAN TWO. Which the base vulgar do call THREE.

A most fine Figure.
To prove you Cypher!

Note.—The "One more than Two" knock is, of course, known to every Mason.
The last line of the passage tells the reader quite distinctly that what he writes carries a Code or a series of Codes to clarify his meaning. We are thus warned that we may expect a Code that will give proof of secret things not to be openly broadcast.
Secret Codes, Cyphers, etc., were rampant in the Elizabethan Era.

THE PORTER OR STEWARD AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT ALLUSIONS
More Authority... Name more... Let them be men of Good Repute and carriage.
Samson, Master! He was a man of good carriage for he carried the Town-gates "The T.P." on his back like a Porter.
O well knit Samson... I do excel thee in my rapier as much as thou didst me in carrying.
Who was Samson's love?

"A W.M." A Woman, Master.
Of what complexion?
Of the sea-water, Greene Sir.
Mine is most immaculate white and red.
Thoughts are masked under such colours.

Note.—By virtue of the Authority of "the Rapier," the Worshipful Master far excels the Porter or Steward who occupies the most subordinate Office. Though a "man of good repute" the first task of an Office Aspirant is "to fetch and carry." The Rapier was the
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

W.M.'s Symbol of Office in the Elizabethan days, the Hat and Rapier being conjoined Symbols. They are repeated in The Tempest by Master Prospero: “Fetch me my Hat and Rapier.”

With our ancient Brethren “Sam’s Son” was a corrupted cover-word for “Solomon’s Son.” The word-play of “Samson” for “Sam’s Son” denoted a Freemason. The Author enjoins the reader to “Knit Well” the word “Samson.” One naturally associates him with the “Two Pillars” under which he bowed his back when he killed himself.

There are also “Two Pillars” in Masonry, designated in Code as “T.P.” Special Masonic Symbols and phrases are invariably indicated by their Initial Letters. In the Folio paragraph the only Roman capitals, apart from “Master,” are “T.P.”; thus the “T.P.” are the Masonic equivalent for “The Two Pillars.” The Author indicates by the “knitting” of the capitals that the “Sam’s Son” he alludes to was a Worshipful Master who also, figuratively, carries the “Two Pillars” of Masonry.

The love of Samson was a “woman” but the love of a “Sam’s Son” is “A W.M.,” a Worshipful Master, the goal of every ambitious Mason. The Author prints the correct initials in capitals in the line succeeding . . . “A W.M.”

The colour of “Sea Water” is the light blue reflection of “the Vault of infinite space.” It is the Garter-Blue of the Master Mason. Shakespeare associates it with “Red and White,” being obviously familiar with both “Red and Blue” Masonry. White is a predominate feature of the Craft.

They are Masonic “thoughts that are masked under such colours.”

Within twenty lines of the instruction “To prove you Cypher,” we have the Masonic Code of Cypher Initials, unmistakably indicated by “T.P.” and “A W.M.”

“LOVE’S LABOURS LOST”

POOR AND PENNILESS YET HE SAT IN THE CHAIR OF KING SOLOMON

Is there not a Ballad of a King and a Beggar . . . ?
Some Three Ages since. . . . Now 'tis not to be found.

I will have that subject newly writ o'er that I may example my Digression by some Mighty Precedent.

Note.—We here get the germ of a Masonic Fundamental. Its complete Masonic elaboration will be seen later.

THE LODGE

I will meet thee at the Lodge. . . .
That's hereby.
I know where it is situate.
Lord, How wise you are.

THE ETHICAL SYMBOLISM OF THE TEMPLE AND THE CONCEPTION OF THE THIRD DEGREE OF MASONRY

I do affect the very Ground which is (the) Base . . . (the) Shoe which is baser . . . Guided by . . . (the) Foot which . . . doth tread . . . A Great Argument . . .

There is no Angel but Love . . . Solomon . . . had a very good Wit . . . The first and second will not serve my Turn . . . His (i.e. the King of Terrors) Glory is to subdue men . . .

Adieu Valour! Rust Rapier! Be still Drum! . . . Assist me some extemporal God! Devise, Wit; write, pen; for I am in for whole Volumes in Folio (i.e. a series of Degrees and Rituals after the “First and Second” Degrees).
“LOVE'S LABOURS LOST”

I have sworn an Oath... You may not come in my Gates but you shall be so received without as you shall deem yourself Lodged IN MY HEART.

THE CANDIDATE'S ENTRANCE

Is (he) sick?
Sick at the Heart...
Will you prick it with your eye?
No poyn't, with my Knife.

Note how “Point” is spelt in the Folio... “Poyn’t” to call attention to the word “poynt” which is given to draw the Masonic reader's attention to the “poiniard” which is used as a knife for pricking the Heart.

THE PASS-WORD

I beseech you a word...

A CANDIDATE'S CHARACTERISTICS

His Tongue all impatient to Speak and not see. (He) did stumble with haste... his face... did quote such amazes: that, all eyes saw. His eyes were enchanted with gazes.

PRIVATE TUITION

Come to our Pavilion... to speak that in words which hath (been) disclosed.

Act III

THE PERAMBULATION: FIRST DEGREE

The Way is but Short; Away... THUMP.

Note.—This is an exact description of the way... w... can... being taken to the J.W. and the “Thump” on the sh...
SHAKESPEARE, CREATORE OF FREEMASONRY

AN ASIDE TO THE CANDIDATE
This is an Epilogue or Discourse to make plain some obscure precedent that hath before been said.

THE ROSICROSSE PASS-WORD, "OUR FRANCIS"
We will talk no more of this matter.
Till there be more matter . . . ?
I will enfranchise thee!
O, marry me to one Francis.

Note.—The spelling in the Quarto and the Folio is "Francis," a Man's name, not "Frances," a woman's name, the corrupted spelling in Modern Editions.

THE W.M. TO THE CANDIDATE: MASONRY IS FREE
I mean setting thee at Liberty; Enfreedoming thy person. Thou wert restrained, immured, captivated, bound . . .
I give thee thy Liberty, set thee from durance . . . I impose on thee nothing but this; BEAR this Significant (giving him a LETTER) to . . .
The Best Ward of mine Honour is rewarding my Dependents.

Note.—Every Freemason knows that at this part of the Ceremonial, the Candidate is "rewarded" by the W.M., and that he actually does take a letter to the J.W., and that, later, the "Best ward(en)" does indeed reward the W.M.'s dependent by investing him.

THE WORK OF THE SENIOR AND JUNIOR DEACONS
I have been Love's Whip, a very Beadle . . .
a Critic, nay, a NIGHT-WATCH CONSTABLE,

"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"
a domineering Pedant over the Boy (i.e. a Candidate)—this WHIMPELED, Purblind, Wayward (one)—a Senior, Junior G...D. D...C.

Note.—"Whimpled" means Veiled or hooded. The "Hoodwinks" were therefore used in those days. The Deacon's duty is to watch the Candidate like a Constable, the ceremony is usually at "Night," he has to instruct the Candidate how to repeat, etc. with extreme precision like a "Pedant" who is a stickler for precise order, and the Candidate is indeed, usually, very "Wayward."

The story of an Initiation could not have been more tersely put.

THE BLACK-BALLS
O Lord of Folded Arms, the Anointed Sovereign... Sole Imperator and Great General (note the "G.G."—the Grand Geometrician) of trotting Paritors, I am to be a Corporal of his Field and wear his Colours that are like to a Tumbler's Hoop . . . With Two Pitch-Balls, one will do the deed though Argus were the Guard . . .

Note.—A Paritor is an officer of an Ecclesiastical Court, the equivalent of a Lodge Deacon who does quite a lot of "trotting about" on the Lodge floor like a Corporal. He deals with "Pitch-Balls."

Shakespeare's use of the word "Argus" proves that he knew how the Ballet for a proposed Candidate was taken. In Greek Mythology, Argus was supposed to have a hundred eyes. It is used to describe "any quick-eyed or watchful person." The Masonic Ballet is taken in such a way that no one can tell how the Brethren vote.

The Colours of a Tumbler's Hoop were twisted Red and Blue; so, too, are the diagonal colours of the Sash of the Royal Arch Companion which is a flexible Hoop put over the head, like the Tumbler does with his Hoop in some of the tricks.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Act IV

THE ACACIA
Where is the Bush that we must stand and Play the Murderer in? . . .

THE THIRD DEGREE SYMBOLS
Thou shouldst know, fellow, by the rest that have no HEADS (i.e. the cross-bones)... .

THE BRETHREN
Here comes a Member of the Commonwealth.

A WORSHIPFUL MASTER'S COMMENT ON THE THREE DEGREES
The most Illustrate King set eye upon the Beggar. He it was that might rightly say, "Veni, vidi, vici. . . ." O Base and obscure Vulgar! (for) he Came, Saw and Over-Came.
He came, One; saw, two; over-came, three!
Who came? The King! To whom came he?
The Beggar! The conclusion is VICTORY. . . .
I am the King for so standeth the comparison.
Thou the Beggar for so witnesseth thy Lewdness:
Shall I command thy Love? . . . What shalt thou exchange for Rags, robs! For Tittles?
TITLES! For thyself? ME. . . In the dearest DESIGN OF INDUSTRY!

Note.—In this significant piece of camouflage, is the "Newly written" Story of the King and the Beggar which the Author previously mentions and his intention to remodel the old story (Act I, s. 2). After Three Degrees, the Beggar may eventually become the King and sit in the Chair of Solomon dedicated to the "dearest Design of Industry," the Emblematic Art being welded to the operative craft.

"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"
The Beggar simply "comes" in the First Degree. He sees in two. He "over-comes" and is raised triumphantly in the Third.

"I WAS TAUGHT TO BE CAUTIOUS"
What . . . is . . . this . . . LETTER? I am much deceived—but, I remember the STILE. . . .
Fellow, a word: Who gave thee this LETTER. . . .
Come! Away.

Note.—The Quarto and the Folio again print "stile" to indicate a short Ladder. The "Fellow" remembers the "step" which is the first thing he must remember in the Pedestal Examination.

THE POMEGRANATE
(It was) ripe as the Pomewater (a watery apple, a pomegranate) which now hangeth like a jewel in the Ear of the Sky, the Heaven, anon falleth like a Crab on the face of the Soil, the Land, the EARTH.

Note.—This is a wonderful reference to the Masonic Symbol of the Pomegranate which from "the exuberance of the Seed denote plenty" (Ritual).

Shakespeare thus denotes that Freemasonry is allied to the Sun, the Moon, the Stars like the Constellation known as "The Crab"; that it hangs in the Heavens "like a diadem" (Ritual); that ultimately it will fall to the Earth and, like a Crab, it will creep out of its Hiding Place (the hidden holes in which Crabs hide) and slowly travel all over the earth through inherent vitality.

Three hundred years after this was written the Author is justified of his prophecy. The seeds of the Pomegranate have scattered and borne Fruit the
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

World over: And the "Crabs" crept out of their "Hiding Places" in 1723, the 1623 Shakespeare Folio Centenary.

CAIN WHO SLEW HIS BROTHER
MONTHLY MEETINGS

What was a month old at Cain's Birth though not five weeks old yet? 

The Allusion... the Collusion... holds in the exchange for the Moon which is never but a Month old.

A SIGN

What a rare Talent...

If a Talent be A CLAW, look how he CLAWS him with a Talent.

THE CREATOR OF EMBLEMATIC FREEMASONRY

This is a gift I have simple; a foolish extravagant Spirit, full of Forms, Figures, Shapes, Objects, Ideas, Apprehensions, Notions, Revolutions.

These are begot in the Ventricle of Memory, nourished in the Womb of pia Mater, and delivered upon the Mellowing of occasion...

You are a good Member of the Commonwealth... where all those pleasures live that ART would comprehend, KNOWLEDGE the MARK... well learned is he... that Singeth Heaven's Praise with such an earthly TONGUE.

THE RITUAL IN MANUSCRIPT:
A CRITICISM

Let me supervise the Canzonet. Here are only Numbers ratified... Elegancy, Facility and the Golden cadence of Poetry.

“LOVE'S LABOURS LOST”

Ovidius Naso was the Man... for smelling out the odiferous Flowers of Fancy, the Jerks of Invention...

Imitation is Nothing: so doth the hound his Master; the ape his Keeper.

Note.—A Canzonet is a composition restricted to no set Themes. The critic of the MS. points out that the Author has taken and merely ratified the Three Degrees of the Ancients ("Numbers ratified") and manipulated them to suit himself, imitating and borrowing ideas from a celebrated Roman Poet, Ovidius Naso, 43 B.C. This writer's "Metamorphosis" "are extremely curious on account of the different Mythological facts they relate." His Works are split into the twelve Signs of the Zodiac. They deal with "religious Rites, Ceremonies and Festivals, the Theogonies of the Ancients." (Lemprére's Classical Dictionary, p. 470.)

ARIEL'S WAY

Trip and Go...

Note.—See Ariel's Song in The Tempest for the development of the "Trip and Go" theme... (applied Masonically) thirty-four years later.

THE SOCIAL DEGREE

Before repast... please gratify the Table with a grace...

REPLYING TO A TOAST

... On my Privilege... I beseech your Society...

And thank you, too; for society, saith the Text, is the happiness of Life.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

SECRETS:
THE INVESTITURE PAT
Thou hast thumped him with thy BIRD-BOLT
under the Left Pap. In Faith secrets.

Note.—A Bird-bolt was a short bolt with a heavy head used with a cross-bow. It was virtually a replica of the Lodge Gavel. The Candidate’s heart is the repository of Secrets. The Author indicates the “Thump with the Bird-bolt” after the words . . . “it will never disgrace you.”

THE MASON OF MANY JEWELS
He comes in like a perjure, wearing Papers.

Note.—In those days a condemned Perjurer wore papers on his breast describing his crimes. The Mason to-day wears Jewels which, similarly, tell a story of virtuous Acts. The old Elizabthans had the same custom. Freemasons are familiar with the Brother who comes into the Lodge wearing a padful of Jewels on his breast, each being to mark a Record of something accomplished.

THE THREE WHO RULE
Thou makest the triumvir, the Corner-Cap of (the) society (in) the Shape of LOVE’S-TYBURN that hangs up Simplicity.

Note.—Freemasonry is indeed a “Triumvir” . . . Three Steps, Three Degrees, Three Principal Officers, etc. Three is the Corner-Cap. At Tyburn criminals were often Hung with a Rope, cut down while living, the body cut across in the form of a T-Square, the bowels being drawn out and burnt . . . if possible while the man was conscious.

"LOVE’S LABOURS LOST"
The Creator of the Ritual associated the System of Charity with this barbarous custom which was peculiar to the Elizabethan era, “penalties reminiscent of the Tyburn-Tree” says Bro. Waite (Emblematic Masonry, p. 257).

Shakespeare knew all about it and accurately called it “LOVE’S-TYBURN.”
The Master Mason can now tell where the Signs, etc., were born . . . not in Greece, Rome, the Medieval era or the Augustan. They are the pure product of the Elizabethan era and we are very real to our Ancient Brethren. We Modernists have forgotten the gruesome Customs of the Tudor Age.

THE FOUNDER OF THE ORDER SPEAKS
All Hid! All Hid! An Old Infant Play!
Like a Demi-God hear sit I in the Sky, and
secrets heedfully o’er-eye . . .

You found this “mote”, the King your
“mote” did see, but I a seam do find in each of
three . . . (i.e. Degrees).

Now step I forth to whip Hypocrisy . . . To see a king transformed . . . profound solomon . . . A CANDLE, Ho!

I will praise a Hand, a Foot, a Face, an Eye, a Gait, a State, a Breast, a Waist, a Leg, a Limb . . .

We are Pick-Purses in Love . . . who see
the first opening of the gorgeous east . . .
blinded by her Majesty . . . A gracious moon . . . an attending star . . . where several worthies make one dignity. . . . O WOOD Divine . . . O who can give an oath? Where is a book? That I may Swear . . . Dark needs no Candles now, for Dark is Light.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

GRAFTING THE SPECULATIVE TO THE OPERATIVE STEM

O for some authority how to proceed: Some tricks, some quillets (i.e. legal or historical quibbles) to cheat the Devil (i.e. the spirit of intolerant Ignorance). Some salve for perjury.

Note.—The Emblematic System lacked in the Elizabethan era any direct connection with Antiquity. The operative lodges had been destroyed by State Edicts. Some authority was necessary to dignify its claims to “Time Immemorial” through Medieval Times.

“O, for some Tricks, some Quillets” to cheat the Devil of Ignorance that demands that everything of import should be dated from the Creation of the World (as it actually did in those days). . . . “Tricks and Quillets” like the creation of the “Regius Poem” and the “Cooke MS.” that would serve to indicate that Masonry was known in operative lodges centuries past . . . to cheat the Devil!

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE GRAFTING

Is not love as subtle as Sphinx . . . O, then . . . for Wisdom’s sake . . . for Love’s sake . . . for Men’s sake . . . let us once lose our oaths to find ourselves. . . . It is religion to be thus forsworn. . . . For CHARITY itself fulfills the LAW, and who can sever LOVE from CHARITY.

Advance your standards! Now to plain dealing! Lay these glozes by.

1 The writing of the Higher Degrees . . . the Knights and Sovereign Royal Orders.

The “Glozes” were the “plausible” Manuscripts that were to be “laid by” — buried — like the “Regius” and the “Cooke MS.” to be discovered by future Ages: links “forced” with Antiquity.

98
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

they wish to read (like our expert Bro. Hughan who declared the "Grand Lodge MS." was dated by internal evidence about 1526 . . . until a faded date was found, 1583, Dec. 25), have only themselves to blame if they are mistaken.

A HINT OF LODGE WORKING

In the Posterity of the Day which the rude multitude do call the afternoon.

The King is a noble gentleman. . . . I do beseech thee "Remember thy curtesie! . . ."
Let it pass.

Among other serious designs . . . but let that pass.

It will please his grace . . . but let that pass.

By the world (i.e. the uninstructed world),
I recount no fable: Some certain special honours, it pleaseth his Greatness to impart to Armado, a soldier, a man of travel . . . but let that pass.

The very All-of-all is, I DO IMPLORE SECRECY.

The King would have me present the P . . .
S . . . C . . . (i.e. the prepared senior candidate) with some ostentation, show or pageant. . . .
I have acquainted you withal to crave your assistance . . .

You shall present before the Nine worthies . . . (with) our assistants . . . this most gallant, illustrate and learned gentleman (Armado).

Where will you find men worthy enough . . .?

Joshua, yourself, myself; and the gallant gentleman, Judas Machab-eus, shall pass Pompey the great.

"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"

He is not quantity enough for that worthy's Thumb. He is not so big as the end of his club.

Present Hercules in minority. His enter and exit shall be by strangling.

An excellent device. . . . For the rest of the worthies!

I will play three myself (i.e. three degrees). Thrice-worthy gentleman.

Goodman Dull! Thou hast spoken no word all this while. . . . We will employ thee.

I will play one in the dance (i.e. the degree, the perambulation) or I will play on the tabor to the worthies.

Note.—In this passage we get a "Noble Gentleman" who sits as a king in the chair of Solomon. He is to be greeted with a sign, "a curtesy." There is to be a "passing" ceremony. The author writes the word "pass" four times—specially calling attention to the word by repetition—before giving the correct formula, "The I.M. shall pass Pompey," i.e. the installed master. (There was no printed character "J" in the Elizabethan alphabet. The printed "J" stood for "I" and also "J." It being an interchangeable character, the author makes considerable use of it. In the folio, "Judas" is printed "Iudas." We thus get "the . . . I . . . M . . .")

There is also to be an initiation of candidates, senior and junior, for one is in minority whose entrance is to be by "strangling," while the other to be presented is the P . . . S . . . C . . ., the prepared senior candidate.

Armado is also to receive the special honours due to his rank. Not only is he a traveller from east to west, but he is a soldier of masonry, i.e. a knight of one of the higher degrees.

There are also junior officers in the lodge designated as assistants, and the "Good Man's" initial "D . . ."
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

tells us that as a “Deacon,” he assisted in the Perambulations. Incidentally we discover that when the Worthy enter the Lodge they are greeted with Music. “I will Play on the Tabor.”

A Club is used for knocking: So, too, is the gavel of the “W.M.”

In order to indicate his knowledge of the Whispered Word of the Third Degree, the Author deliberately mis-spells the word “Maccabaeus” in both the Quarto and the Folio . . . making it “MACAB...” breaking the stem of the Word correctly at the very point where the Word splits itself into two, “both having the same signification.”

“Joshua” is the name of a Royal Arch Principal.

PARTIAL EXPLANATIONS

We need more light to find your meaning out. . . .

I will darkly end the Argument
You do it still in the dark. . . .

A good conclusion. . . .

Note.—In the Third Degree, the Conclusion, the Candidate is, of course, left very much “in the dark.”

THE BEGINNING OF A WORD

(It is as) Fair as a text “B” in a copy-book. . . .

O, that your Face were not so full of “O’s” (Circles).

Note that one Character says “B” and it is at once capped by the other Character adding “O” which is the proper way to Letter.

1 The significant word “Goodman” denotes that the man “Dull” is a Mason—one of the “Good Men and true” regarded as Masons by Bro. Anderson in 1725.

“LOVE’S LABOURS LOST”

AN OLD CUSTOM

What was sent to you?
This glove!
Did he not send you twain?
Yes!

Note.—It was customary in the Old Lodges for a newly made Brother to present the Brethren with a pair of white gloves. We thus know that the Author was well aware that the Brethren wore white gloves out of memory to Hiram Abif.

THE SECRET OF THE PLAY OF L.L.L.

A folly in wisdom hatched (that) hath wisdom’s warrant.

Note.—Since the Author declares that his Play hath a “warrant” one can well accept the corollary that he knew that the Lodge he was founding would have to have a “warrant” also. We thus get a clear hint of the creation of the “Old Operative Charges” (so-called) which were created to serve as Warrants of Constitutions.

AN EXPOSURE OF A REHEARSAL

O, I am Stabbed with Laughter . . . love doth approach Disguised; Armed in Arguments: You’ll be surprised . . . I stole into a . . . Thicket . . . and overheard what you shall overhear. . . . A Page that well by Heart had conined (i.e. learned) his Embassage (i.e. a prepared Recital).

Action and Accent did they teach him, “Thus must thou speak and thus thy Body bear. . . .”

(They) clapp’d him on the Shoulder. . . . One rubbed his Elbow—thus . . . and swore a better speech was never made before.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Another, with his Finger and his Thumb, cried
"Via (i.e. this way) we will do it."
The Third, he capered and cried, "All goes well."
The Fourth turned on the Toe... so profound...
Ridiculous appears... Passion's Solemn Tears... where everyone his Love-feat (Feet) Advance.

MEMORIZING THE RITUAL

While it is spoke each turn away (the) face.
Why that contempt would kill the Speaker's Heart, and quite divorce his Memory from his Part.

THE BOARD OF INSTALLED MASTERS

A Holy Parcel that ever turned their backs to Mortal Views.
Their Eyes... their Eyes...
True...
"VOUCHSAFE... etc. etc. (see Esotery).

MASONIC SPEECH

What would these Strangers...? Do they speak our Language?... Know what they would!
We have measured many miles...
Tell how many Inches doth fill up one Mile...? We measure them by steps...
VOUCHSAFE to show the Sun-shine of your face that we may worship it.
My face is but a moon and Clouded too.
VOUCHSAFE bright Moon and these thy stars to shine (i.e. the Sun, Moon and the Seven Stars of Masonry as the Ritual Lecture of the First Tracing Board). She is the moon and I

"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"

the man. ("Man" used esoterically is a cover word for mason in this instance and in others.)
The music plays! VOUCHESAFE some motion to it.
Our Ears VOUCHESAFE it.
But your Legs should do it. Since you are strangers and have come by chance...
TAKE HANDS...

WHY... THEN...
Curtisle... (Masonically: Step, Grip, Sign). We cannot be bought...
If you deny... Let's hold some chat.
In private, then.
WHITE-HANDED M... ONE WORD.

Honey, and Milk and Sugar: there is Three (i.e. H., M., S. The Sun, the Moon and the Master Architect of the Lodge, Hiram).
Nay! Two Treys... half a dozen. ("T.T." an Elizabethan Symbol for the Two Pillars of Masonry, "Thirty-Three," etc. The "T.T." is to be found in many books of Rosicrucian origin.)
Seventh... Adieu; since you can cog! (To "cog" Dice is to manipulate them so that they may fall in a given way. The Author shows that he can "cog" Words before the dialogue ends. The "Seven" refers to the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the number required to form a perfect Lodge.)
One word in secret... VOUCHESAFE to CHANGE a WORD.

Name it...
You have a DOUBLE-TONGUE within your Mask.
Let's part the word.
No! I'll not be your half...
One Word in private...
Bleat softly then...
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

T The Tongues of Mocking Wenches are as keen
CAT A As is the Razor’s edge invisible
C Cutting a smaller hair than may be seen...
AS Above the sense of sense: so sensible
Seemeth their conference...
Not one word more. . . Break off.
. . . Break off. . .

Note.—The Author has “Cogged” the Words so that the Initial Capitals in the last lines spell two syllables “bo” and “as” which are split by the introduction of the word “cat” descriptive of the “mocking wench” in the text. This clearly indicates design. The conjoined syllables on either side of the “cat” are known to Freemasons the world over. The Word is not only “parted” but “halved and lettered.”
The Word “Vouchsafe” is particularly known to the board of installed masters. Its repetition is to direct attention to the fact that Shakespeare was a Past Master.

A COMMENT ON THE AUTHOR’S COGGING

This fellow. . . is Wit’s Pedlar and retails his Wares at Wassails (Health-Drinking) and Meetings. . .

This is the Ape of Form. . . He Plays at Tables, chides the Dice in Honourable Terms.
. . . Pay him the Due of “Honey-Tongued.”
All HAIL! . . . CONSTRUE my SPEECHES BETTER if you may. . .

This jest is Dry to me. . . Your wit makes wise things foolish. . . A Superfluous Case that hid the Wor. . . A . . .

Thus Pour the Stars down Plagues for Perjury.
Here Stand I . . . Bruise me . . . Thrust me

“LOVE’S LABOURS LOST”

. . . Cut me . . . Taffeta phrases, silkier Terms precise. Three-Piled Hyperboles, spruce Affectation, Figures Pedantical . . . I do FORSWEAR!
I here Protest by this White Glove! I have a Trick.
. . .
I’LL LEAVE IT BY DEGREES. . .
Lord have Mercy on those three.

THE FREEMASON

You are not free . . .
No! They are free that gave those tokens to us.
What did he whisper in your ear.

SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

I knew by this jewel he did wear. . . . Then . . .
Following the signs, he’d but the sign of S. . . .

THE SQUARE

Do you not know my—foot by the squier (i.e. the Square Rule).

“I NOW PLACE YOU” (i.e. As an Installed Master)

And stand between his back, Sir, and the F. . . . (Footstool).
Holding a T. . . . (i.e. a T-Square), I . . . M . . . (i.e. installing Master).

Die when you will, a smock (an Apron) shall be your Shroud.

Full M. . . . (Masonically) hath this Career been run. Lo, He is Tilting Straight! Peace! I have done.
THREE WORTHIES SEEK ADMISSION

They would know whether the THREE WORTHIES shall come in?

What! Are there but THREE?
No! But it is verra fine, for every one pursents (presents or represents) THREE (i.e. every Master Mason represents Three Degrees).

Three times thrice is Nine.

Not so, Sir, under correction.

By Jove, I always took Three Threes for Nine.

The Parties themselves will show where—

until it doth amount to Perfect one Man,

one POOR MAN...

I KNOW NOT THE DEGREE OF THE WORTHY.

Go! Bid them prepare.

We will take some care.

But there are worthies a-coming will speak their Mind in some other Sort.

Note.—This definitely indicates that there were worthies that were familiar with the Language of the Higher Degrees... Masons who knew more than the Three Craft Degree Ceremonial. To "PERFECT" a man is a very clear reference to one of the most notable of the Higher Degrees; the "Rose Croix."

A STRANGE BROTHER

Doth this Man serve God?

Why?

He speaks not like a Man of God's MAKING.

AN OFFICER'S REMARK

But I hope I was Perfect: I made a little Fault, I... G... (Inner Guard).

108

"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"

THE UNIVERSAL SYSTEM

By East, West, North and South, I spread my Conquering Might.

THE MASONIC WAY

I come with this APOLOGY.

Keep some State in thy exit...

THE EXAMINATION

STAND ASIDE...

Hercules is presented.

J Judas I am.

A "A" Iudas!

Not Iscariot... Machabeus (in the Folio all the intervening words after Judas are printed in italics so that the next Roman Letter may begin with the "C" in "Clipt").

C Clipt is plain Iudas.

H How are thou proved Iudas? (This is the next direct question which brings in the "H" in "how," the intervening aside being "A KISSING TRAITOR," a very significant phrase Masonically, for Masons "Kiss the Book."

I Judas I am.

What mean you?

Begin.

Iudas was hanged on an Elder. (Note that the Elder Tree was the Acacia Tree.)

WHAT IS THIS?

N A CitterN Head: The Head of a BodkiN: a riNg: an old coiN: The carved boNe-face. . . .

(It is IN a brooch: IN a brooch of lead: worn IN a cap.

109
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

(These are interjections made by different characters in the play. Five of the words contain the letter “n,” the last three phrases containing the word “in” as a concluding syllable.

The Author thus gives the last letter and syllable of the Masonic Word indicated in the Capital Initials. The Word is again not only Lettered but Halved... “in.”

The Cittern Head symbolically denoted “A grip,” for to play it one has to take a “grip” of the Head; the old Coin is a “token,” etc.

In this subtle manner Shakespeare lets the discerning Masonic Reader know that he is quite familiar with what actually goes on at the Pedestal.

He is an Ass. Let him go! Adieu Sweet Iudas, Nay, why dost thou stay?
For the Latter end of the NAME.
For the Ass to the Iude: Give it to him; Ind-as, AWAY.

Note.—This dialogue is a faithful camouflaged representation of the Candidate’s Pedestal Examination. He stands at the side. He is presented, the proper questions asked, the word given in a peculiar manner, the grip and token indicated, and the “away” given.

If the syllable “Ass” in the mock-word “Iudas” be conjoined with the “b” and “o” of the Copy Book (already noted under the caption “Partial Explanations”) there is revealed the same subtle workmanship of esoteric Masonic Knowledge.

There is again in the passage the purposeful misspelling of another word “MACHABEUS” to indicate something whispered.

By the necessary “Words” the Three Degrees stand openly revealed.

"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"

A LODGE INCIDENT
A light for Iudas! It grows dark! He may Stumble.

THREE SYMBOLS
I do adore thy... slipper. ...
By the foot.
He may not by the yard.

A FELLOW CRAFT
Fellow Hector... is gone... (He is) two months on the Way...

Note.—This constitutes direct proof that the Elizabethans gave but One Degree a month as we do to-day. Masonically, a Fellow Craft is two months on the way.

THE APRON AND THE CASE

Master, let me take you a button-hole lower. Do you not see YE P.M. PO. (i.e. Your Past Master, (the) Potentate) is uncaseing? What mean you. You will lose your reputation...

Note.—The direct question “What mean you?” is a sly hint to throw the real word in the text which is “POMPEY” into an anagram of letters (Y.E.P.M.P.O.) and decode Masonically. Anagram making was a universal fashionable literary pastime in those days.

THE APRON
I'll be sworn he wore... but a dishclout...
And that he wears next his heart for a favour...

And by these badges understand the king.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

DEATH
The King . . . (is)
Dead for my life . . .

My tale is told . . .
For my part, I breathe free breath . . .
I will right myself like a soldier.

Note.—As a Freemason of the Craft, the speaker is free to join the Higher Degrees and to become a Knight (a Soldier) of one of the Mystical Degrees.

THE COMEDY IS A MERE PADDING
ROUND A VITAL REALITY

For your fair sakes have we neglected Time, played foul with our oaths . . . even to the opposite ends of our intents: And what in us hath seemed ridiculous . . . full of unbecoming strains . . . wanton . . . full of stray shapes, of habits and of forms . . . have miscarried our oaths and gravities.

Those Heavenly Eyes that look into our faults have tempted us to make . . . we to ourselves prove false by being once false for ever to be true.

A sin thus purifies itself and turns to grace.

We rated them as pleasant jest . . . as bombast (padding) and as lining to the time.

Note.—The foregoing makes it quite clear that Shakespeare chose this method of associating himself permanently with the Fraternity: that he buried the genesis of the Order in the Comedy . . . "the opposite ends of our intents." He admits that he

"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"
was "Once false" to the secrets of the Fraternity, that he might be "For ever true to himself" declaring secretly in the only possible way that he was the Father and Founder of the Ethical Society.

THE GRAND MASTER MASON'S PRAYER
TO THE CRAFT

With three-fold love, I wish you all these three.

THE INSTALLATION

Remote from the World . . . Stay until the Twelve Celestial Signs have brought about their annual reckoning . . . change not . . . nip not the gaudy blossoms of love . . . Bear this trial and last love, then, at the expiration of one year . . . Challenge, challenge . . . by these deserts . . . intituled in the . . . heart . . . a twelve month shall you spend.

Note.—Modern Editors usually delete several lines in these passages as mere repetitions.

THE EPILOGUE

TO THE WRITER OF THE PLAY

Oft have I heard of you . . . The world's loose tongue proclaimed you for a man replete with mocks, full of comparisons . . . which you on all estates will execute that lie within . . . your wit.

THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE JEST

Visit the speechless sick, converse with groaning wretches, enforce the pained impotent to smile. To move wild laughter in the throat of death . . . is the way to choke a jibing spirit whose influence is begot of that loose grace.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

which shallow-laughing HEARERS give to
FOOLS.

The Prosperity of a Jest lies in the EAR of
HIM that Hears IT.

Note.—This not only indicates what Freemasonry
stands for but also is confirmatory of the fact that the
play must not be taken at its face value . . . “like
shallow laughing hearers at fools” but that it must
be studied to find its esoteric meaning.

SO MOTE IT BE

This time-honoured Masonic phrase is given very
ingeniously in Act III, Folio, page 129.

In the play is a character spelt “moth.” He is
introduced on p. 124, “Enter Armado and moth.”

This person is never given his name throughout the
play. He is referred to in the Headings and Dialogues
as a “boy” or a “page,” see Folio, page 128. His
name is thus deliberately suppressed by the writer of
the play for some reason.

Modern Editors alter “Enter . . . Boy” or “Enter
Page” to “Enter moth” or “Re-enter moth.”

The correct phonetic sound of “MoTh” is “MOTE.”

Prof. F. A. Marshall says “Grant White suggests
that ‘Moth’ should be written ‘mote’ as ‘this was
clearly thus pronounced.’” (Irving Ed., Vol. I, p. 2.)

As a matter of fact, the Author specifically draws
attention to the correct sound of the word by spelling
the word “mote” incorrectly twice on page 134, line 2,
in the very significant lines (to a Mason):

“You found his MoTh, the King your MoTh
did see,

But I a Beame doe finde in each of thee.”

This is a direct allusion to the Scriptural Mote and
Beam in the Eye.

The Author pointedly wishes you to notice that

“LOVE’S LABOUR’S LOST”

where “mote” is used, it has the French pronunciation
. . . “mote,” as the play is cast on the Continent.

In the body of the text the name is given twice in
Act I, p. 125, with a Masonic significance.

Boy: What shall some see?

C.: Nothing, Master Moth (“M.M.” = Master
Mason), but what they look upon.

In the other place the dialogue runs:

Brag: Who was Sampson’s love, my deare
Moth?


In Act III the word again appears twice closely
together in the body of the text, page 129, in a
dialogue scene of word-play which begins:

“Some Enigma, some Riddle,” and ends “Doth
the Inconsiderate take Salve for l’Envoi and the
word L’Envoi for a Salve?”

Now F. A. Marshall (p. 57) says: “It is evident
that Moth here intends a pun upon the word Salve,
Latin; A WORD USED BY THE ROMANS AT
PARTING. . . . I can find no other sense in the
question.”

The word “envoy” means “the conclusion: a short
stanza by itself and serving oftentimes as a DEDICA-
TION OF THE WHOLE.” (Cotgrave, Irv. Ed.

In this short scene—which revolves round an
“Enigma . . . a Riddle,” that is a play on words
which no one understands, but which somehow refers
to “the conclusion of something” and also refers to
“Something said at Parting” (a short Stanza that
serves as a DEDICATION of the WHOLE)—we find the
Boy’s name with the sound of “mote” mentioned
twice in the text in the following passage which
concludes a dialogue between two speakers.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

The first words of each speaker are given in
consecutive order.

A

A

A

Cable-Tow c.t.

The . . .

Go me . . .

Brother b.

By . . .

True b.

True . . .

But tell me . . .

Mote

I will tell you sensibly.

Thou hast no feeling of it Mote

(i.e. Mote).

We

We will talk more of this matter.

Till there be more matter . . .

Sirra Costard, I will infranchise thee.

So

So

O Marrie me to one Francis. I

smell some l'envoy, some goose in

this. (A Goose is the end of

Market according to a French

Proverb.)

B

By my sweete soul I mean setting

thee at Liberty.

It

It

True, True let me loose.

I give thee Liberty, set thee free

from durance . . .

Moth (i.e. Mote)

Moth (i.e. Mote) follow!

(Page) Like the Sequel, I.

In the above the Author tells the Reader to "FOLLOW
Mote like following the Sequel . . . I" which
letter "I" is to be found on the last line, being the
first Initial Letter.

By following the Initial Capitals after "I", all the
by-play in the scene is explained . . . for we get:

Mote. It. b. so. Till. We; Mote. It. b. True. B;

C-T. A.

"LOVE'S LABOURS LOST"

These Initial Capitals and Words clearly stand for:

Mote it be so till we (meet): Mote
it be true, brother: A Cable-Tow.

The double repetition of the phrase after "Mote", the fact that the Author tells the reader to "FOLLOW 'Mote'" which he identifies with the letter "I"; that the allusions are to a "Parting", to a "Conclusion", to a phrase that is a "Dedication" of the whole, which is exactly apropos to Masonic Meetings . . . make it absolutely certain that here we have the Masonic Motif which came into being out of the air mysteriously into the Speculative Craft:

"SO MOTE IT BE."

The germ of the phrase was the scriptural "Mote" which the Author associated with the "Beam" found in each of the Three Degrees in one form or another. "May it be TRUE," a "C-T's" Circle of Truth.

The foregoing text-extracts are by no means exhaustive. The discerning student can easily quadruple such examples. There is already, however, too great a mass, the details too definite, to permit anyone to assert that such phraseology was the result of blind, unconscious CHANCE.

Even a man who is not a Mason can detect the peculiar tang of the Craft which pervades the openly written word.

Every Freemason will know at once that they are distinctly Masonic. The hand of the dyer has become subdued to what it works in. The written thought of the Author ran naturally to Ethical Symbolism because he must have been a Mason par excellence . . . saturated Masonically to the finest fibre of his being, the living tissues of his mind.

The essential secrets of Masonry are pointedly indicated but they are veiled in the proper Masonic
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY
way. They are to be known only by those who understand.

"L.I.L." clearly indicates, when stripped of the
"Comedy-verbiage", the genesis of the fraternity.
It could only have been written round a System actually
in being in 1589, the date the play was written. It
could, moreover, only have been written by one who
was above the "vow" as the "Father and Founder"
—and therefore had the right to break it in order
to identify himself secretly as the "Creator and Founder"
of the Ethical Craft so that some day it could be
discovered and revealed.

No Master Mason to-day nor Provincial nor Grand
Lodge Officer has the right to "write, indite, mark
or engrave" such secrets. Never has any Mason
lived save one who dare have done it. Never has
any Mason lived who could have done it in such
a subtle manner. That one man was the Father of
the Fraternity, the man described by his friends
as "A Worthy Fellow" and associated him with the
seven set squares, the Master Architect who
conceived the Ethical Temple of King Solomon:
SHAKESPEARE.

The Last Page of the Comedies:
"The Winter's Tale"
From Secret Shakespearian Seals.

This is the last page of the Comedies and it again yields the Secret Seals 287 and 157.

These Numerical Seals run throughout the entire Folio, not only in the plays themselves, but also in many of the Songs introduced into the mouths of their respective characters. Chance is absolutely precluded by the fact of its unerring repetition. The "Count" is always to be found as a total somewhere.

The "Sonnets" are Sealed in a similar fashion (also his poems "The Rape of Lucrece," etc.), both at the beginning and the end, also in many individual Sonnets.

PLATE VII
(See page 193)
VI

THE TEMPEST:
SHAKESPEARE'S LAST MASONIC PLAY

"I have given you a thread of my own life."
"(I was) Prospero the Prime. . . . Reputed in Dignity
and for the Liberal Arts without a parallel. . . ."

THE TEMPEST.

LOVE'S LABOURS LOST was written in or about
1589. Some thirty-three years later the Great
Shakespeare Folio appeared containing plays
that had never been heard of previously, many that
had been heard of but never printed, and many that
had been printed previously but were now reprinted,
some being altered so considerably that they almost
were "new-made." One that had never been printed
was The Tempest. It is placed first in the Folio, but
scholars are virtually agreed that it was the last
written. They also agree that this is the play that
contains personal references to the Author in a variety
of ways, that it was his "Farewell" to the World
through the mouth of "Prosper-o."

The scene is cast on an uninhabited island that has
no location. Prospero is described as "Master of a full
poore Cell . . . and thy no greater FATHER." In
this cell, he wears Magic Robes. He is surrounded
with invisible Intelligencies that do his bidding. He
has a daughter named Miranda and a servant—an
uncouth human named Caliban. On the shores are
cast a ship-wrecked King and his courtiers. Through
the Art of Prospero they go through a series of trials
. . . from storm, lightning and thunder to the sublime
spectacle of the opening heavens.

119
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

"I have given you a thread of my own life," says Prospero.

As a matter of fact there are many personal threads in the play. There is a broad hint that one at least is Masonic, for the first word of the text of the play (folio, p. 1) is "Master", which is given a line to itself and is printed in italics, while the last word is "free" (p. 19).

In view of the suspicious Signals in the Preface (the Seven set squares and the "B", "J", etc.), one would naturally expect to find in the first play the Golden Thread of Masonry running through the story—a Thread that is "veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbol." The conclusion of a scholar who, fifty years ago, wrote with an insight that has never been surpassed, is this:

"The Finale of The Tempest proves that we have here the Idealism of the Mysteries themselves portrayed to us" (Shakespeare and the Rosicrucians, p. 48, W. F. C. Wigston).

The moment, however, that we touch the Mysteries, we touch Freemasonry. Behind the Speculative System stands the Ancient Wisdom. This fact in itself provides a clue that Shakespeare, The Tempest, the Mysteries and Freemasonry are inextricably intermingled.

A modern writer, Colin Still, expands the opinion of Wigston in a very illuminating and careful study by detailed analysis. He entitles his work, The Tempest: Shakespeare's Mystery Play. These are some of his conclusions:

"The Tempest corresponds with significant accuracy to the Pagan ceremonies (p. 13) . . .

It contains numerous points of resemblance to the Rites of Initiation (p. 32).

"If Shakespeare had not consciously in mind the Pagan Initiatory Rites, he must have had in mind

"THE TEMPEST"

some prototypical Concepts to which those Rites conformed (p. 75).

"The theory that Shakespeare at the height of his creative power deliberately collected a number of fragmentary records whose meaning he did not clearly understand, and ingeniously fitted them together for the simple purpose of illustrating the outward form of ancient Initiation ceremonies is not one likely to commend itself. . . . Yet a remarkable similarity does exist between the play and Pagan Rites (p. 83) . . . of natural symbolism (p. 86) . . . an ascent through a seven-fold scale of three main stages . . . the prototypical three degrees of all Pagan Rites, Purification, Self-Conflict, Death (p. 110).

"The Tempest is a Theological Heresy judged by the standards of Shakespeare's day (p. 205).

"Assuming that he was aware of the more important implications of the comprehensive allegory, we may assume that he took pains to conceal its inner meaning (p. 207).

"Is it not probable that The Tempest is the expression of a DEFINITE AND COHERENT MORAL PHILOSOPHY?" (p. 238).

Is it not remarkable that this writer, through pure literary methods and classical knowledge, should arrive at the conclusion that this particular play deals with a system of moral instruction which finds an exact parallel in Modern Freemasonry?

"A Theological Heresy . . . a Sevenfold Scale . . . Three Degrees . . . a Comprehensive Allegory . . . a definite and coherent Moral Philosophy. . . . He took pains to conceal its inner meaning. . . . He must have had in mind either the Pagan Rites or some other concepts TO WHICH THOSE RITES CONFORMED."

Does not the evidence of these two scholarly
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

witnesses make it abundantly clear that behind the First Folio play there is a Hidden "SOMETHING"? The fact is that just as we get in L.L.L. the hidden genesis of the Fraternity, thirty years later we get a clear vision in The Tempest of the way in which Shakespeare leaves a RECORD of the grafting of the modern Mystery of Freemasonry to the ancient one ... the Mysteries which truly date "from time immemorial." The evidence of Messrs. Wigston and Still proves that Shakespeare had a thorough knowledge of the Ancient Wisdom. It will be seen, on examining the play through a Freemason's eyes, that he associated Modern Freemasonry with it in specific details.

Without going into the minutiae of the researches of these scholars (they are Books to be studied quietly) let us assume that there is a classical element in the play. It will serve as a base to ascertain whether such allusions to the Ancient Rites have in any sense a Masonic connection.

The first open classical allusion that stands prominent is one to Æneas in Act II, s. 1. It occurs in a passage quite irrelevant to the progress of the play. It has obviously been dragged in purposely—and even repeated—for some reason. It is always cut out for stage acting (see Ivo, Ed.).

A.: Tunis was never graced before with such a paragon to their Queen.
B.: Not since WIDOW Dido's time.
A.: WIDOW? How came that WIDOW in? WIDOW Dido?
B.: What if he had said "Widower Æneas" too? Good Lord! How (do) you take it?
A.: WIDOW Dido, said you? You make me study of that. She was of Carthage, not Tunis.
G.: This Tunis, Sir, was Carthage.

"THE TEMPEST"

G.: We were talking that our garments seem as fresh as when we were at Tunis, at the marriage of your daughter who is now Queen.
A.: And the rarest that e'er came there.
S.: Reckoning, I beseech you, WIDOW Dido.

This irrelevant dialogue contains the classical word "Æneas . . ." "Widower Æneas. . . . How do you take it?"

It is to be taken as a veiled allusion to the Mysteries. Virgil's Æneid VI begins with the arrival of Æneas in Cumae, a harbour in Naples, from Tunis or Carthage. Here Æneas made his "Descent into Hell," a poetic account of an initiation according to the Ancient Mysteries. He fled from the lure of the world, and the end was purification and initiation into a Higher World of spiritual knowledge.

The shipwrecked King in The Tempest play was, similarly, on the way to Naples. Like Æneas, he was "a Traveller from East to West." Now "why did Shakespeare," asks Colin Still, "having all the Seven Seas to choose from, select the one with the Æneid VI association?"

Shakespeare knew what he was doing because he was "a WORTHY FELLOW." He associated the journey of a King over a route which he knew led Æneas to a participation in a Ceremonial Rite. Not only do the King and Æneas travel from East to West, but so, too, does every Initiate in Freemasonry.

"Whence come you? The East! Whither directing your course? The West!"

the inducement being to search for certain definite secrets which may be found by personal industry and instruction.

The association of widow Dido with Æneas provides a clue and a hint of profound import.

122
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

In the two dialogues the phrase is repeated three times. . . . The Author forces special attention to it. "Widow Didol O Widow Didol I, Widow Didol."

Modern Editors alter the Folio "I, Widow Didol!" to "Ayl Widow Didol!"

The Author, however, wrote the phrase to make a personal connection between the living speaker and the dead widow. How? He wants to make the reader "study that" also! To see the connection between the Ancient Mysteries and the Modern One.

Widow Dido was of Carthage of the land of Phœnicia.

"The Carthagians were indebted to the Tyreans for their origin, manners, language, customs, laws, usages" (Hist. of Carthage, Vol. I, p. 89, Rollins).

It was from Tyre that Solomon got his artificers through Hiram, King of Tyre, and his Architect, Hiram Abif, who was "a WIDOW'S SON." All Freemasons are Brothers to Hiram Abif, and therefore "Sons of the WIDOW," for there is only one widow in Freemasonry and she lived in Tyre. It is therefore manifest that the Author wishes to indicate that if Queen Dido is related through AEnaeas to the Mysteries of Virgil, the Widow Dido is related, similarly, through every Master Mason to the Mysteries of Freemasonry.

"You make me study of that!" Of course! For "I, Widow Didol" indicates a connection . . . a personal one, a filial relationship according to the Legend of the Ritual.

Could this covert allusion have been written without a twined knowledge of the Mysteries and the Hiram Legend of the Third Degree?

It is manifestly absurd to think so.

In each dialogue "Widow Didol" is repeated three times as though to give a further indication that the

"THE TEMPEST"

Author knew the Masonic Story of Hiram and its correct place in the Ritual Degrees.

Even a non-Mason like Wigston saw the significance of this passage years ago, but he cried to the deaf ears of Masonic Scholars. They were stopped (and still are) with the dust of medieval operative creetal customs. He says:

"The strangest feature of the Play is the bringing in of Dido, Widow Didol and AEnaeas of Carthage or Tunis. It is a most striking and suggestive Masonic hint. . . .

"Directly we read of Dido our minds go back to the foundation of Carthage . . . the land of Phœnicia, of the Phœnic, Libya. Of Perdita in The Winter's Tale is written, 'She came from Libya.' Here again we are at once in touch with Solomon and Hiram, and therefore of Masonry. . . .

"In Pericles we have Tyre again, for Pericles is Prince of Tyre. . . . It is striking to find these Plays profoundly in touch with the Land of Masonry, of Solomon, Hiram, Dido.

"Tyre is the most Masonic City we can think of, since Hiram Abif, Solomon's Great Architect. . . . who plays such an important part in the Degrees came from there. . . .

"Tyre was the City of Pythagoras from whom the Masonic historians extract the earliest origin of their Symbols.

"The Dido passage is pregnant with profound significance. . . . In certain Masonic Degrees there is the substitution of the Candidate for Hiram . . . hence the origin of the expression, used sometimes for Masons, the 'Widow's Son.'

"Is there no key hidden in this or hint that may throw light? The passage is quite outside the Play and is either sheer nonsense or a hint of profound import" (pp. 120–135).
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

There is a Key in the play. It is in the form of a Cypher used by Masons to-day. It is the initial letter code used in the privately printed Rituals—such as “J.W.” to indicate “The Junior Warden,” etc. Throughout the whole of the two great Masonic plays, Love’s Labours Lost and The Tempest, it runs from the first line to the last. It steadily persists down all the Capitals of the first lines in consecutive order. Here is a slight example where the actual text of the play is elucidated Masonically by the Code.

THE ORACLE

And there is in this business more than Nature
Was ever conduct of: Some Oracle
Must rectify our knowledge.

The Tempest, Act V, s. 1, line 242.

In a Freemason’s Lodge the “Oracle” that speaks with authority on things Masonic is a Worshipful Master. Since the Author wishes the discerning reader to know the kind of Oracle he has in his mind, he writes the lines so that the first letters of the three lines spell “A W.M.” All Masons know that this is the abbreviated Ritual Code for “A Worshipful Master.”

Wigston was not a Mason and therefore never tumbled to the Key of the Ritual Code in the play. The elucidation of the plays by this Code is outside the scope of this little work, but the above illustration is sufficient that the “hint” of the Widow was indeed of profound import. One can well imagine that among the Elizabethan Masons, the query “Who is Widow Dido?” was as well understood as the more modern one—which has survived from those days—“How old is your Grandmother?” (“I...think Nobly of my GRANDMOTHER,” The Tempest, Act I, s. 2.)

It stamps the play in very truth as “A Mystery

126

THE TEMPEST

Play.” It can be proved that it is associated even more closely with Freemasonry than the Ancient Mysteries: For there is no Hiram Myth in the Mysteries, but there is in Masonry and also in “The Tempest.”

In Act III, s. 2 (note that Act III=the Third Degree) there is a further allusion to the Hiram Story. “Three Varlets...Confederates...plot a foul conspiracy against the life of Prospero, the Master of the Cell,” having first seized his books wherein lies his peculiar knowledge which makes him a Master. The murder was to take place at noon. He had to be brained and his skull battered.

“Tis a custom with him in the afternoon to sleep; then thou mayst brain him, having first seized his books, or with a log batter his skull...”

What is this but a fragmentary replica of the Hiram Ritual Story?

“Our Master retired to pay his adoration...as was his wonted custom at the hour of high twelve...the Ruffian demanded the secrets...the Villain was armed with a heavy Maul...and struck him a violent blow on the forehead.”

There were Three Fellows of a determined and atrocious character in the Ritual Story. There were Three “Men of Sin” in The Tempest. Both Principals were “Masters.” Both Masters were to be brained. Both were to be murdered on their retirement. Both were to meet their death after High Twelve. Both were to die by a wooden weapon, one by a log, the other its wooden equivalent in the Lodge. Both the Ritual and the play use identically the same word—“custom”—to describe the habit of both Masters; and it is placed in the forefront of the story in both cases.

If Shakespeare were ignorant of the Third Degree,
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY
and if this Masonic Ritual Story (quite different from all Ancient Third Degree Death Rites) was not created until 1717–38, we have begun to tread on the skirts of one of the greatest miracles of coincidence the world has ever known.

The Murder of a Master! “Widow Dido” said you? “You make me study that!” Of course!

That the Author is trying throughout to convey a secondary meaning is evidenced by the reiteration of another phrase of which he queries the meaning by calling it a play on words, i.e. that it carries a double meaning. He wants the reader to ponder it. It is a phrase peculiar to the Craft and so brings us nearer to the heart of the Speculative Mystery. In Act IV, s. 1, occurs this dialogue:

T. We steal by Line and Level.
S. I thank thee for that jest. . . . Steal by “Line and Level” is an excellent passe of pate. There is another Garment for it.

In this word-play the Author draws special notice to the words “Line and Level” by saying that it is “an excellent sally of Wit (passe of pate) . . .” a jest. He then tells the reader that he has used a phrase which is intended to convey a double meaning, a secondary one. To prevent any mistake in his meaning he actually adds: “There is another Garment for it.” Thus we know that the phrase has been used as cover-words—a garment—for a finer fabric of thought, hidden and likely to be undiscerned.

In what can the jest consist save in a double meaning? The Author was referring to the Masonic manner of stealing through the world by “the Line and the Level,” unknown, unsuspected, secretly. They are special symbols associated with the Second and Third Degrees.

In The Tempest are references to old Masonic customs such as are definitely known to have taken place in the Lodges of some two hundred years ago. To-day we have removable Tracing Boards, but in the old days when Lodges were often held in the upper rooms of Taverns, the symbols of the Degree were often chalked on the floor by the Tyler prior to the entrance of the Candidate. At the conclusion of the Initiation, the first duty of the newly made Brother was to wash out the symbols with a mop and a pail that they might not be discovered by outsiders. In the “Exposures” after 1723, some of the writers poke fun at the Freemasons as “The Mop and Pail Brigade.”

Relative to this ancient custom occurs the following passage in Act V, s. 1:

“It is you that have chalked forth the way that brought us hither. . . . Oh, rejoice beyond a common joy and set it down with gold on lasting Pillars.”

In Act IV, s. 1, is the sequel:

“Before you can say ‘Come’ and ‘Go,’
. . . and cry ‘So, So’
Each one Tripping on his Toe
Will be here with MOP and MOW,
Do you Love me, Master? No?” (i.e. know).

Note.—This Song of Ariel, “Trip and Go,” is to be found as a motif in Love’s Labours Lost: see “Ariel’s Way,” Chapter V.

These phrases would clearly stand as veiled allusions to practices characteristic of the eighteenth-century Lodges. They also stand for Lodge practices that must have been in existence in Shakespeare’s day.

We have the Chalking of the Way which is not a “common joy” if associated with the golden Pillars of Masonry; the command to “come”; the command to “go . . .”, i.e. the manner in which the Candidates have to “come” and “go” on entering and leaving the Lodge: “so . . . so . . .”; the tripping on the
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

TOE . . . which commonly happens to the slip-shod Mason; and the use of a mop and pail “to clear up,” which is forced into the text; it is the Master of a Cell who directs the operations, who performs mysterious Rites, the Mysteries being held in caves originally; Chalk, moreover, is the Masonic Emblem for Freedom; and the Golden Pillars of Masonry are named Wisdom, Strength and Beauty.

There is a further allusion to an ancient Masonic custom now, virtually, fallen into disuse in present-day Lodges. The Master then wore his Three-cornered Hat in the Lodge, only doffing it during prayers. By the side of his Chair was placed an upright sword. The Hat and the Sword were the ancient Masonic Symbols of Authority and Justice. In Act V, s. 1, Prospero says:

“Fetch me the hat and rapier in my Cell:
I will disrobe Me.”

Disrobe means to undress, to disrobe, to unclothe. Masons are said to be clothed when in their regalas. They are unclothed or disrobed Masonically when they remove it. Shakespeare’s phrase is a distinct allusion to an old Lodge custom.

The Sword and the Hat were Emblems of Office for which the Master was responsible. “Fetch them,” Prospero says. “Mine eyes fall fellowly drops.” He is then speaking to persons outside the Cell who the Folio says “have entered a CIRCLE which Prospero had MADE.”

He says in effect, “I will unclothe myself.” He was dressed in his “Magic Robes” (i.e. his Masonic Regalia). The Lodge Symbols are to be put away. He returns to normal attire. Shakespeare actually coins a word, used only once in the Folio, that reminds one of the “Worthy fellow” preface—“fellowly,” which had reference to persons standing in the

“THE TEMPEST”

“CIRCLE” which “HE had made.” The Symbol of the Circle is again of profound Masonic significance.

One is driven to conclude that the word “FELLOWLY” was used to veil the word “Brotherly” in a Masonic sense, since we find it allied to the Masonic Circle, and that the entire passage refers to an ancient custom which had continued from the Elizabethan era until it emerged into the light of day after 1723.

We have therefore direct proof that the ancient customs which we know were in being, historically, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, were not created by the 1717-23 Masons, but were known to and practised by the Freemasons of 1623.

In The Tempest, the Author tells a dramatic story to the world, but behind it are veiled secret meanings hidden in cunning language as in his first play, Love’s Labours Lost. We know that the Author is “playing with words and phrases” purposely and that nothing he writes is accidental. He writes with “double meanings” and calls them “sallets of wit.” Have we not already seen enough to enable us to say with Lord Campbell, regarding the Author’s knowledge of Law, that when he indulges in the propensity of such purposeful phraseology, he lays down GOOD MASONRY in his allusions and suggestive asides?

An examination of the play on the same lines as those on which we examined Love’s Labours Lost clinches the entire position without further argument.

“THE TEMPEST”

ACT I, SCENE I

THE PENALTY MARK
He hath no penalty Mark upon him.

THE ENTRANCE TO THE LODGE
Stand Fast . . . to his Hanging.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE CABLE-TOW
Make the Rope... our Cable.

"THE PENALTY OF YOUR OBLIGATION"
This WIDE-CHOPT Rascal, wouldst thou mightest lie Drowning, the Washing of ten tides...

THE BROTHERHOOD
Farewell... Brother.

WHENCE COME YOU?
Thou art ignorant of WHENCE I AM!

THE FATHER OF FRATERNITIES
I was Prospero, Master of a Full Poor Cell.

... Thy no greater FATHER.

AT THE PEDESTAL
'Tis time I should inform thee farther: Lend THY HAND.

COPY MY EXAMPLE
Open thine ear: OBET and be Attentive.

THE GRAND WORSHIPFUL MASTER
I was Prospero THE PRIME (i.e. the First or the Head) reputed in dignity and for THE LIBERAL ARTS without a PARALLEL... having both the KEY of OFFICER and OFFICE... all DEDICATED TO CLOSENESS.

A STRANGER
Mark his Condition... Tell me if this might be a BROTHER?

132

"THE TEMPEST"

ATHELSTANE, EDWIN AND YORK

M. I will cry it o'er again! It is a HINT
That wrings my eyes to it.

... P. They hurried us aboard a Bark,
Bore us some leagues to sea; where they prepared
A rotten carcase of a boat, not rigged,
Nor tackle, sail, nor mast; the very rats
Instinctively had quit it.


Malone is undoubtedly right. The Author tells us that it is to be regarded as a " Hint," a something to be seen through. The "Hint" leads to something exceptionally important.

In the "Old Operative Charges" of the Masons, which came into being no one knows how, Edwin (described as Athelstane’s son, also as his brother) is supposed to have gone to York and given to the operative masons their Speculative Charges in 1926. "Edwin presided as Grandmaster," says Preston (The Illustrations of F.M., p. 182). He adds that "the only blemish that historians can find in the reign of Athelstane is that he is the supposed murderer of Edwin... He put him on board a leaky ship and he was drowned" (p. 184-7).

The legend of the Speculative Charges of operative masons stops abruptly with the unhistoric gathering of Masons at York... proved to be a myth by Findel (Hist. of F.M.).

The "Hint" masonically taken, suggests that Shakespeare was familiar with the "Cooke MS." and
SHAKESPEARE, CREATORS OF FREEMASONRY
the “Regius Poem” (then unknown to the world),
which did not see the light of day until Speculative
Masonry was firmly established. They tell the story
for the first time of Edwin’s alleged connection with
York Masonry. Shakespeare introduces the Story as
a Masonic allusion. He wished the thoughtful reader
to know that he understands all about the alleged
Charges of Edwin narrated in the earliest of undated
operative Manuscripts.
“It is a hint that wrings my eyes to it . . . ” to be
seen through because of its far-reaching implications.
The illiterate operatives never had such a legend.
The cultured man who created the “Regius Poem”
to dignify the operative craft and then buried it until
Halliwell found it a hundred years ago has never
been discovered, any more than the scholar who wrote
the “Cooke MS.” . . . both of which are the only
possible connecting links between the Modern System
of Freemasonry and Antiquity.
The suspiciously mysterious documents necessary
to establish the claims of Masonry to long descent
from “time immemorial” were known apparently
to the Author. The “Hint” can only apply to Masonry
and to nothing else. That York, with its alleged
historical incidents, was “hinted” at is much more
probable than Malone supposed owing to the fact
that in Act III, s. 3, there is some further word-play:
“My Son in the Ooze is bedded.”
York happens to be on the River Ouse. In the Folio
the Author prints “Ooze” with a capital “O” to indicate
a place of the same phonetic sound.
The “Hint” suggests that Shakespeare knew all
about the grafting of the Speculative Fraternity on its
operative stem and was acquainted with long-buried
documents that Masonic scholars are puzzling over
to-day. He was acquainted with the documents because
he wrote them. They were the “quilllets,” the

“THE TEMPEST”

“Authority” that he cried out for in Love’s Labours
Lost.

THE DISTINGUISHING
CHARACTERISTIC
A Noble Neapolitan, out of his CHARITY
being then appointed MASTER OF THIS
DESIGN.

“THAT BRIGHT MORNING STAR”
I depend . . . upon a most Auspicious Star.

MASONIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
Here cease more questions.
Note.—In the Old Lodges when the Ritual was
not being worked, Lectures were given and Masonic
instruction was obtained by question and answer from
one to the other:
“These are the usual questions, Brethren . . .”

THE POINTS OF MASONRY
Hast thou performed to Point that I bade
thee?

“THE N.W. PART”
I left him . . . in an Odd Angle.

THE SUN NEVER SETS ON MASONRY
Thou didst call me up at Midnight.

CALLING OFF AND CALLING ON
Prospero. THY CHARGE exactly is performed.
. . . But there’s more work . . .
What is the time of Day?
A. Past the Mid Season . . .
Pro. At least Two glasses . . .
A. Is there more toil?
RAISING TO FREEDOM
A. Let me remember thee what thou hast promised which is not yet performed me.
P. What is it thou canst demand?
A. My liberty.
P. Before the time be out?
A. I have done thee worthy service.

THE MONTHLY RECITALS
I must once in a month recount (i.e. Recite) that which thou forget'st.

TO THE INITIATE
Do So... Discharge Thee...

THE SERVING BROTHER
We cannot miss (i.e. do without) him: He does make our Fire, Fetch in our WOOD, and Serves in OFFICES that profit us.

Note.—The Serving Brother not only looks after the comfort of the Brethren in the Social Degree, but also prepares the Lodge. He arranges the Wooden Implements, “our wood,” as a duty of his office.

THE NORTH-EAST
A South-West blow on you...

Note.—For the South-West to blow on the face of a Brother, he must necessarily be standing in the NORTH-EAST part of the Lodge.

"THE TEMPEST"

THE BEES AND BEEHIVE
Work! All Exercise... As thick as honey-comb... more... than bees that Make 'em.

Note.—The Beehive and Bees are the Masonic Symbols for Industry. Though unknown in many modern Lodges, the Beehive Symbol is still to be found to-day in Lodges of ancient origin.

THE LEWIS SYMBOL
Thou shalt have cramps.

Note.—"Certain pieces of Metal dovetailed into a Stone forming a cramp." (LEC First T.B. Ritual.)

THE SUN AND MOON SYMBOLS
Thou didst... teach me how to name the bigger light and how the less that burn by Day and Night.

ACCEPTED AS A LODGE BROTHER
I Lodged thee in mine own Cell.

THE COCK AND DOG OF AN OLD RITUAL
A. Bow wow! The Watch-dogs bark! I hear the strains of strutting Chanticler cry Cock-a-diddle-dow...
F. I have followed... or it hath drawn me rather.
P. He hath lost his fellows and strays about to FIND them.

Note.—This is a very significant touch. The word "fellows" is intended to be interpreted masonically. It indicates that Shakespeare was familiar with the old Ritual found by Findel in 1866.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Q. What is a just and perfect Lodge?
A. Two E.A., two F.C., and two Masters, on the highest hill or the lowest valley in the world, without the Crown of a Cock or the Bark of a Dog.

In The Tempest, F. is sitting in a “vale” and hearing A. singing “the music in the air,” follows it uphill. The obvious Masonic conclusion is that he is looking for the “Just and perfect Lodge” where he can find his “Fellows,” his Masonic Brethren as in the old Ritual.

THE PASS-WORDS
Pro. A word, good Sir.

Soft, Sir! One word more.

This swift business I must uneasy make, lest too light winning, make the prize light! One word more. I charge thee that thou attend me.

Note.—Prospero asks for three “Words” indicative of Three Degrees. The request for the last Word, being the most difficult of all to communicate, is expressed very subtly.

THE MASTER AND TWO WARDENS
This is the third man I saw.

SOLOMON’S TEMPLE
There is nothing ill can dwell in such a temple.

THE TRIAL
P. Follow me.
M. Make not too rash a trial of him for he’s gentle (a Gentleman). I’ll be his surety.
P. I say, my foot my Tutor. Come on!

"THE TEMPEST"
OBER! Thy nerves are in their infancy again and have no vigour in them.
F. So they are . . . bound up . . . But light to me might I behold.

THE LODGE
All corners of the earth let liberty (i.e. free Masonry) make use of. Space enough have I in such a Prison (i.e. Prospero’s Cell or Lodge).

MASONRY
P. Thou shalt be as free as mountain winds but then . . . do all points of my command.
A. To the syllable.
P. Come! Follow (what I say). Speak not for him.

Act II

THE INITIATE’S CHARITY TEST
If but one of his pokey could speak, would it not say, “He lies.”

THE GLANCING BLOW AT HIRAM
What a blow was there given ...
If it had not fallen flat-long.

Note.—To fall “Flat-long” means a glancing blow, not a direct hit. In the Ritual the First Blow glanced. This is the first Masonic allusion in The Tempest after the widow dido episode already noticed.

MASONIC DISSIMULATION
Surely this is a Sleepy Language! What is it thou didst say?
This is a Strange Repose to be asleep with eyes wide open! Standing, Speaking, Moving.

138
A SIGN
S. Thou didst snore distinctly. There's MEANING in thy snores!
A. I am more serious than is my Custom. You must be, too, if you HEED me, which to do TENABLE thee over.
Note.—In one of the eighteenth century "Exposures," the writer says that if a Freemason enters a company and would announce himself, he should cough three times . . . two loud ones and a little one. Antonio's snores were in threes. The sounds were TENABLED over the ears of the listener. Shakespeare was familiar with the Masonic manner of manipulating sounds as well as KNOCKS.

"STAND PERFECTLY ERECT"
S. I am Standing Water.
A. I will teach you how to Flow.
Note.—There is nothing more perfectly erect than a perpendicular fall of water. The candidate is to be taught how to go, to WALK . . . "to Flow."

A SACRED SPOT IN MASONRY
There is a Space whose every CUBIT seems to CRY out . . . "MEASURE US."

DUE SUBORDINATION
There be he that can RULE as well as he that sleeps . . . or prates unnecessarily.

THE SLIP-SHOD MASON
S. But . . . your conscience?
A. If it were a KNEE (i.e. a sore heel) 'twould put me to my SLIPPER.

"THE TEMPEST"
"MADE TO REPRESENT," ETC.
Here lies your brother, no better than the Earth he lies upon. If he were that which now he's like, he is dead.
Note.—This most remarkable passage exactly describes the most Solemn Moment in a Master Mason's Lodge. The profound significance behind these words cannot possibly be understood by anyone unacquainted with Masonry. The Man who wrote it knew the Third Degree, it could never otherwise have been written.

THE HAILING SIGN
And when I rear my HAND do you the like.
. . . O, but ONE word.

A CANDIDATE FOR THE THIRD DEGREE
They'll not Fright me with Urchin-shows (i.e. mischievous horse-play drama), pitch me in the MIRE (i.e. lay me on the Ground), nor lead me IN THE DARK out of my way . . . I'LL FALL FLAT.
Note.—Every Mason will agree that this is a wonderful piece of camouflage of what actually happens in the Third Degree.

IN HIS ABSENCE AS WELL AS IN HIS PRESENCE
His Forward Voice is to speak well of his Friend. His Backward Voice is to utter Foul Speeches and to Detract.

THE THREE OBLIGATIONS
G. I'll Swear to be thy true Subject.
S. Here, Swear then . . . Here, KISS THE BOOK.
"THE TEMPEST"

A MASON
I'll... be your fellow... Here's my HAND.

THE OBLIGATION
KNEEL AND REPEAT IT. I will stand;
So shall... mum, then, and no more...

MASONIC ASIDES
How now shall this be compassed...?
Thou mayst knock...

THE THREE STEPS
Go further off... Prithee, Stand further off... Stand further! Comel proceed.

THE PENAL SIGNS
Batter his skull: PAUNCH him with a Stake:
Or cut his WESAND with thy Knife.
Note.—These are very subtle, conjoined references
relative to the Third and First Degrees... to strike
the Stomach with a POINT and to cut the throat across
the windpipe.

ANOTHER SIGN
Give me thy hand... I beat thee but...
Keep a good TONGUE in thy head...
Ayl on mine honour.
Note.—"The TONGUE of Good Report," etc.
(Ritual).

MASONRY IS FREE
You taught me a while ago... thought
is free.

THE BLIND INITIATE'S THOUGHTS
Here's a MAZE trod indeed through Forth-
Rights and Meanders.
Note.—"Forth-Rights"=straight paths: "Meanders"=a circling round, apparently aimlessly.
ENETRING THE LODGE
Solemn and Strange Music. Master Prospero
on the top, Invisible. (A Stage Direction in
Folio.)
Enter Several Shapes . . . with Gentle Actions
of Salutation.
What harmony is this . . .?
Report this now . . .

AFTER THE CEREMONY
I cannot too much muse . . . such gestures
. . . such sound expressing . . . although they
want the use of tongue. . . . A kind of Excellent
DUMB DISCOURSE.

Note.—The Entrance to the Lodge is taken from
the Folio Stage Directions, altered and misplaced by
modern editors. Prospero on the top—or at the Top
of the Lodge—would naturally be invisible to a hood-
winked candidate for Initiation.
The very words, "Harmony, Salutation, Report," are particular words in constant Ritual use.
The musings of the Initiate after the Ceremonial
are the expressions exactly of the average newly made
Brother.

"STAND TO YOUR GLASSES,
BRETHREN"
Brother, My Lord the Duke!
STAND TO and do as we . . .
I will stand to . . .
FEED! !

THE THREE VILLAINS OF MASONRY
You are Three Men of Sin . . . most unfit to
live. . . .

"THE TEMPEST"
THE STEPS
Step by Step attend.

THE AFFLICTION INTELLIGENCE
Why stand you in this Strange Stare?
My Son i' th' Ooze is bedded. I will seek
him deeper than e'er plummets sounded and
with him there lie muddied.

THE PURSUIT
All three of them are desperate. Their great
Guilt like Poison given to work a great time
afterwards . . . follow them swiftly.

Act IV
"THIS TRIAL WAS NOT MADE TO
SPORT," ETC.
All thy vexations were but trials of thy Love,
and thou hast strangely STOOD THE TEST.
Here afore Heaven, I Ratify this . . . RICH
GIFT.

THE TEMPLE OF MASONRY
The Solemn Temples shall dissolve . . .
Like this insubstantial pageant.

Note.—It shall fade "like the Pageant" of a Solemn
Masonic Ceremonial which passes into the Yesterday
of Dreams . . . and Memories. This complete
passage—one of the most beautiful in literature—was
inspired and modelled round the thought of one of
the old Elizabethan Masonic Ceremonials.

THE TYLER TO THE CANDIDATE
Be Patient. . . . The Prize I bring thee to
. . . (I) shall hoodwink thee. . . . Speak softly
. . . . This is the Mouth of the Cell! No Noise!
ENTER.

K

145
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

LIGHT
O King . . . O Peer . . . O worthy. . . .
Look what a wardrobe is here. . . .
Note.—This exactly expresses the surprise of the Initiate after the "Blessing of Light" has been "restored to him," and he sees the richly clothed Brethren in their varied Regalia and Jewels.

Act V
MASONIC CLOTHING
Prospero in his Magic robes.

THE CIRCLE
They all enter the circle which Prospero had made and there stand. He Speaks . . .

THE EMBLEMS OF MORTALITY
A Solemn ayre and the best Comforter to an unsettled Fancie Cure thy Brains . . . Boyle within thy skull . . . stand . . . you are Spell-stopt.

Note.—To interpret this passage, the emphasis must be placed on the word "thy," nor can it then be understood (Shakespearian scholars confess themselves in the dark as to the meaning) except Masonically.

The persons in the circle are looking at a SKULL, devoid of brains that can be Agitated as theirs are by being confronted with the skull and cross-bones.

Shakespeare applies the Emblems of Mortality with the same individual meaning that Masons do to-day.

Notice that in the Third Degree a Solemn ayre is played in this Degree according to Shakespeare. There is a tendency in many modern Lodges to cut out the solemn music of the Lodge. It is to be regretted: Such "cutting" is not consonant with

"THE TEMPEST"
ancient Elizabethan practice according to the Founder Shakespeare.

"THERE IN A GRAVE . . ."
Bury it certain fathoms in the Earth Deeper than did ever Plummets Sound. . . .

"DROP A TEAR OF SYMPATHY"
Mine Eyes fall Fellowly Drops.

"HEARTY GREETINGS"
To Thee and to thy company, I bid a hearty welcome. . . . This cell is my Court. Here have I few attendants and Subjects none abroad. . . .

All the blessings of a Glad Father compass Thee about. . . .

You have chalked forth the way. . . . set it down with Gold on Lasting Pillars.

THE SQUARE PAVEMENT
The Cell opens . . . and discovers (they are)
Playing at Chess.

Note.—According to Prof. Allen, Naples (the Scene of the play) was the Centre of Chess-playing in the Author's day. The introduction of a Chess-Board is very significant, Masonically. It represented the Black and White Square Pavement of the Masonic Lodge on which the Players in the Cell moved. Masons move on the Black and White like Chess-players but in a very different manner.

SPECULATIVE FREEMASONRY
This is as Strange a Maze as e'er Man Trod.

A  And there is in this business more than Nature
W.M.  [Was ever conduct of: Some Oracle
W.M.  [Must Rectify our Knowledge.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Note.—The “Oracle” that can rectify the Author’s knowledge and declare his meaning to the Reader is “A W.M.” because only a Worshipful Master, familiar with Speculative Masonry, can possibly understand the allusions, asides and double meanings of his literary craftsmanship.

“As strange a Maze,” etc., is an echo of the Ritual . . . “Nature . . . when she has conducted you through these Intricate Windings . . . ,” etc.

THE APRON AND SASH OF THE ROYAL ARCH

Mark but the badges of these Men, my Lords . . .

Go to my cell . . . take with you your comrades . . .

Every third thought shall be my grave.

Note.—Because every Mason’s Third Thoughts are Third Degree Thoughts and are associated with death and the grave.

THE CHAPTER : ROYAL ARCH

“WE THREE DO MEET AND AGREE”

I will deliver all . . . that (i.e. every Third
Thought) is thy charge . . .

BE FREE.

Please you draw near . . .

SET ME FREE.

In this last request of the Author, “SET ME FREE,” there is a hint of the tragedy of which he was an innocent victim. To pursue this is quite outside my scope; but Freemasons should remember that there is a “SOMETHING” connected with the Founder’s Life which can only be cleared up by the ministration of his friends—“the brethren” in particular—in future

148

“THE TEMPEST”

Ages. He leaves the matter to them when the truth becomes known.

“I will speak of him as well in his absence as in his presence, and boldly repel the slanderer of his good name.” (The Ritual.)

“He that robs me of my good name . . . leaves me poor indeed.” (Shakespeare.)

“As you from Crimes would pardoned be,
Let your indulgence set me free.”

These are Shakespeare’s Last Words in The Tempest. They are a Petition and a Prayer.

“Set me free,” he asks, from the cruel verdicts and harsh judgments of prejudiced men, from the Brand of Cain, the mark which “Vulgar Scandal stamped upon my brow.” (The “Sonnets,” cxii—l46.)

Rest assured of this: There was more than one
Tragedy in his life: these were the things which helped to make him into a CONCEALED MAN.

149
THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

"I likewise will visit thee with mine LETTERS. . . ."
THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA, ACT I, S. I.

"PERUSE that LETTER. . . WRITE FROM IT . . . if you CAN."
TWELFTH NIGHT, ACT V, S. I.

"And from the Cross Row (i.e. the Rosicrosse) plucks the LETTER G" (i.e. the Grand Geometrician).
RICHARD III, ACT I, S. I.

In the previous chapter it has been observed that in the Shakespearian text there are definite proofs of design in the use of Capital Letters—particularly Initial Letters and Words—which unmistakably suggest that the Author knew the Masonic Letter Code in use to-day among Masons—such as "A W.M.," to designate "A Worshipful Master," etc. This particular Code-knowledge of which examples have been given has been noted in Love's Labours Lost and The Tempest, but it will be found that the Author scatters this form of secret writing throughout the whole of the plays according to his humour.

In the two Masonic ones the Capital Letter Code runs throughout, systematically, from the first line to the last. Similarly in "Shakespeare's Sonnets"—which was the Author's personal diary—the code runs through the entire body of verse, one hundred and fifty-four Sonnets, the Capital Letters being employed to explain in concrete terms the imaginative, enigmatical utterances of the Poet. These messages prove that William Shakespeare's passion for the Royal Art,

THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

the Ethical System, was a dominant one, an incalculable factor of supreme importance in his Life and Art. It enabled him to pass through the world in umbra. It accounts for much of the mysteriousness which veils him from us, especially the enigma of his personality which perplexes even scholarly students.

At the present time, unfortunately, literary men reject the idea that Elizabethan writers ever used any form of Anagram, Code or Cypher in their work—especially in the Shakespearian text. "It is impossible," say they, "that Shakespeare, after writing a magnificent piece of blank verse or a wonderful Sonnet, not from the toils of labour, could possibly have begun to pull his new creation about, twisting it, altering it, beating it . . . simply to write in a meaningless bit of gossip, the structural beauty being simplicity, not Complexity."

This argument sounds very well in the mouths of twentieth-century writers in our present mechanical age, but such disparagement does not affect this truth: that the Elizabethans, whether we like it or not, did resort to such devices and that such efforts as an art-form demand literary craftsmanship of the highest order. It is a height quite beyond the reach of the current free-verse Modernist who refuses to shackle himself with metre, feet, rhyme, rhythm, rules, as being much too old fashioned. The fact is that definite rules impose a test of skill on any would-be poet. The more they are to be observed, the more ingenuity must be displayed by the craftsman. Add to these rules, the art of writing so that the words drop in a certain definite order, that new words may be formed according to rule, and it is at once evident that only a Master of Words could use such complex rules with freedom—especially when such craftsmanship conveyed the air of artful simplicity.

No poet has been born since Shakespeare who could write the "Simple Language of the Sonnets." Each
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

one is like a woven piece of tapestry in which the warp and weft of the poet's language trace out a hidden design vertically and horizontally ... a series of designs which give the concrete motif of the Poet's Passion. The world has yet to marvel at the loom on which the Shakespeare Sonnet was born, the mind of the man who could think during its construction on several planes of thought at one and the same time, creating a Diversity in Unity.

It is sheer folly for literary critics to aver that Shakespeare never pulled a Sonnet about, or rewrote a passage in blank verse, and that poetry is not created in such a fashion. The fact is that no one knows HOW he wrote the Sonnets and no one ever will know. The Squires and Sitwells of to-day may write their verse with a hop, skip and a jump, but that does not prove that Shakespeare never wrote and re-wrote. There is solid evidence that he revised considerably. He altered the two Sonnets in the "Passionate Pilgrim" that afterwards appeared in the Quarto numbered "1609." He almost transmogrified some of the Quarto Plays when they were placed, finally revised, in the 1623 Folio. He knew the truth so bluntly expressed by Sheridan, "Easy writing's damned hard reading!" It most certainly is!

We cannot judge the fashions of another age by our own. Because we do not indulge in the habit of enrolling secrets in our verse—and think it silly so to do—we have no right to infer that the old Elizabethans did not indulge themselves in this practice.

"The author who decides on the tastes of another age by those of his own day, and whose knowledge of the National literature does not extend beyond his own country, is neither Historian nor Critic."

The truth is that ANAGRAMS were then (in

THE HEAD PLATE IN THE SONNETS

This ornament was placed at the Head of the "1609 Sonnet Quarto," and is a specimen of Rosicrucian Symbolism. The light A and dark A design is one of a family of headpieces (fourteen in all) peculiar to books with which the Rosicrucian Literary Society had some connection, especially in the latter part of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The same blocks were used by printers far apart and were supplied by a central organization.

The light and dark shading of the "A A's" car-marked the book as one that contains in the shadow more than is openly revolved. They are designed in the form of ladders or a winding staircase... a Masonic Symbol.

The centre ornament is an urn which, emblematically, contains the ashes of a dead personality. Underneath the urn is the Shuttle of Time supported by a partially unwound skein... the thread of Fate. A Key on the point of entering the lock completes the base... indicating that with this Sonnet Key Shakespeare unlocks his heart.

The urn supports a basket vase which holds Floral Emblemes. On the right-hand side is a Palm Branch. The Mystical Palm at once associates itself with Solomon's Temple: "Upon each post were palm trees... palms to the Arches... and palms to the Seven Steps."

On either side of the urn is a single leaf or fleur-de-lis of purity... a Rosicrucian emblem.

On the bottom right appears a very clearly marked scroll "T", emblematic of the "Sacred Word" known to Royal Arch Companions.

PLATE IX

(See page 193)
"SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS"

The Last Sonnet in the "1609 Quarto"

SONNETS

The little Lute-God lying once a sleepe,
Laid by his side his heart inflaming brand,
Whilst many Nymphes that you should life to keep,
Came tripping by, but in her maiden hand,
The fairret votary took up that fire,
Which many Legions of true hearted warld'd,
And to the General of his defile,
Was flipp'd by a Virgin hand diffus'd.
This brand she quench'd in a coole well by,
Which from loves fire tooke heat perpetual,
Growing a bath and healthfull remedy,
Forest rifeb, but I my Misstrate thrill'd,
Came there for curesd this by that I grew,
Loves fire heates water, water cooles not love.

FINIS.

From Secret Shakespearean Seals.

The seal mark of 287 is shown in two places quite clearly. One of the sly methods of the Rosicross is seen in the use of the large Capitals "FINIS x A," to indicate a clue to the Sonnet Riddle. In Tuder times "Key" was pronounced "key," and to spell backwards was a favourite trick. If these letters be spelled backwards we get the vital sentence that "A Kay (i.e. a Key) is in r." The Key referred to that is "m" the Sonnets is, among other things, a Masonic one, for "y" stands for Freemasonry. Numerically, "y" stands for 25, and this number plays an important part in the rearranging of the Sonnets into their correct original order.

PLATE X

THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

the Elizabethan Era) the fashionable amusements of the Wittiest and the most Learned... "There came also two Anagrams to my hands not unworthy to be owned by the Rarest Wits of this age, wrote D'Ewes. "The Anagram may contain some allusion to an event," etc.

So wrote I. D'Israeli in Curiosities of Literature (p. 257), and added that "Acrostics, Anagrams and Echo Verses may be shown capable of reflecting the ingenuity of their writers." He also says:

"I have seen some of the latter Acrostics where, both sides and cross ways, the name... has been sent down to Posterity with eternal torture. One name is made out four times...

"Great difficulty must have been experienced to find words by which the LETTERS forming the name should be forced to stand in their particular places" (p. 107).

This literary antiquarian, judging by his famous book, was a Rosicrosse-Mason and familiar with the prime Secret of Freemasonry in the Elizabethan era.

The secrets contained in the judicious though arbitrary use of CAPITAL LETTERS are very cleverly told by the celebrated essayist Joseph Addison, familiar with Freemasonry and apparently well acquainted with Rosicrosse methods of conveying Masonic asides on the printed page. He writes:

"I shall Discourse upon those Single CAPITAL LETTERS... which have afforded great Matter of Speculation to the Curious...

"I would not have my reader surprised if, hereafter, he sees some of my papers marked with a Q, a Z, a Y, an etc., or with the word Abracadabra...

"I shall so far explain myself... the LETTERS C, L, X, are CABALISTIC and carry in them more
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

than is proper for the World to be acquainted with. . . .

"A Divine . . . Chaplain to the Earl of Essex in Queen Elizabeth's time, had an admirable head for secrets of this nature. . . .

"There may be a great deal of false writing in the CAPITAL LETTERS. . . . But for the full explication of these matters, I MUST REFER THEM TO TIME WHICH DISCOVERS ALL THINGS."

(Vol. III, p. 103.)

It is not without significance that Addison so pointedly refers to the use of Capitals for conveying esoteric knowledge, associating it with the Elizabethan era in the person of Robert, Earl of Essex, for every Shakespearian student knows that there was some subtle bond between Shakespeare and Essex, many authorities going so far as to say that the Essex tragedy had a very serious effect on the character of the plays written after the Earl's execution. In short, Addison's remarks seem to imply that he had in his mind Shakespeare's Art in the use of Capital Letters when referring to the Essex era. In any case, Addison recognized that "secrets" which were "cabalistic"—a cover-word for the "Masonic Mysteries"—were openly expressed by a Code of Capitals which was known only to the "initiated" and which "carried in them more than is proper for the world to be acquainted with."

In view of the testimony of two such literary witnesses as Bros. D'Israeli and Addison as to the use of such methods in the spacious days of the "Virgin Queen," it is not sheer presumptuous ignorance for any modern critic to assert that these Rosicrucian-Masonic methods of dissimulation were not employed by "our Ancient Brethren"? Though we may dislike the practice, we must accept the fact that "Codes" were in use not only by the State Secret

THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

Service, by Kings and Queens to protect their privacies—"every Prince then had his Cypher"—but that literary men were similarly infected by the use of Ciphers, etc., in those days.

It is not, however, sufficient to assume that Shakespeare uses a Letter Code simply because it was a prevalent practice in his era. Nothing less than his own authority can justify the student in reading a special significance into the use of his Initial Capital Letters. This authority he actually gives to the discerning reader. He not only writes in Act IV, s. 3, "Spend a minute's time in pruning me, if you would understand me," which pruning has led to the unearthing of a mass of pure Masonic Imagery, but he also specially directs our attention to something else—the "LETTER-CODE" itself.

"It comes so smoothly off . . . so fit . . .

his page at other side, that Handful of Wit . . .

Ah Heavens! It is not (i.e. Knit) sowlal Sowlal!" (Love's Labours Lost, Act IV, s. 1. See 1623 Folio, p. 131 for the correct words.)

That which was knit together was the String of Capitals on the other side of the page, which begin each line, the left-hand side . . . for the eyes finish reading on the right. They were to be read vertically down or up, Chinese fashion. "Fit the Letters, the Capitals," he says in effect. "They read smoothly. . . . They are small gems of wit." The last words are addressed to one of the Brotherhood—"S.O.W.L.A." In those days a Member of the Fraternity was known as a "Son Of Wisdom," and since the play is cast in France the last Syllable "La" means "there." "It is Knit, Son of Wisdom, there . . . on the other side

1 Note.—It is not generally known that the members of our own Royal Household correspond with each other by a Code of Letters, etc., known only to themselves in order that the privacy of familiarity may be assured between them.
THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

Shakespeare thus intimates that he has woven his name in some way in the fabric of the open text. The reason why he has woven his name by anagram in such a manner is because in the previous line he has written:

“I Keep INVENTION in a Noted WEED.”

“Invention” was the Elizabethan term for Poetry. A “weed” was a term used to signify a “disguise,” something behind which one could hide one’s face, hence the phrase, “A Widow’s weeds.” Shakespeare thus tells the discerning reader that he veils himself and his Supreme Art behind the Ethical Symbolism of the Craft. He is hidden from the open view of the world but quite discernible to the person who has learned to read in an extraordinary manner. The moral impact behind the plays is ETHICAL and MASONIC—not theological Creedalism. His Epics of Moral Passion are aflame with the highest ideas of the Great Architect of the Universe, the Brotherhood of Man, the New Commandment, “That ye love one another.” That is one of the prime secrets of the Immortal Bard.

The Author, however, takes the matter a step further. He says that every Word not only Felis his Name, but that his Words

“Show their birth and where they did Proceed.”

We thus know that the concrete motif which brought such “words” into being, “WHERE they proceeded to and from,” the various passions that stirred him into emotional activity, are, "Felled and Seamed" in his utterances. He clinches the truth that he employs a Letter-Code in the open text by the avowal in the last lines:

“So all my best (Work) is DRESSING OLD WORDS (into) NEW (ones), Spending again what is already Spent.

This unequivocal statement intimates that the writer has used all his ingenuity in arranging the
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

words in his verse—his Dramatic as well as his
Lyrical—in such a way that out of them (the old
ones) new words could be formed, and thus “spend
again” (i.e. spend again the letters used in the old
words) what is already spent.

We are thus driven, by pure literary analysis, to
accept the conclusion that Shakespeare uses at least
one code method which consists in the manipulation
of letters and words to give a new meaning.

This is clinched by the fact that he indicates that he
can “cog” with words and letters like sharpeners can
with dice—to make them fall in a given manner (see
Chapter V, “Masonic Speech”).

The definite rules by which this “Cogging” and
“Felling” is done, etc., cannot very well be given
in an unpretentious work such as this. Enough has
been adduced to show the literary craftsmanship
necessary to perform such work successfully. If we
put the little truth we know into operation—by
examining the plays and poems—readers will be
surprised how the truth of such “Cogging” and
“Felling” will demonstrate itself. The following
illustrations are quite definitely Masonic and will be
recognised as such the world over.

"THE TEMPEST"
Act I, s. 2, l. 15.

THE MASON
{ N . . .
{ I . . .
{ (This line is cut out by brackets: See Folio)
{ Art ignorant . . .
{ Of whence I am, nor than I am
{ To more better
{ Than Prospero, Master of a full,
poor cell,

THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE
A A And thy no greater Father.
Mason M More to know.
To a Mason in art.

FOUNDER AND FATHER L. 66.
The T
Worshipful W
Master w. m. M
I I
Be Be . . .
Of all Of all . . .
The Masons The Ma . . .
T T
And Prince a pr. And Pr . . . the prime . . . reputed
Inspector in In dignity and for the liberal
Arts
Worshipful w. Without a parallel . . .
The The

THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER I BE OF ALL THE MASON:
THE WORSHIPFUL INSPECTOR AND PRINCE T . . .

THE THIRD MAN L. 442.
A A word good Sir.
J Why . . . this
Junior Warden j. w. Is the third man . . . I saw . . .
Is That
That
To blind Initiates. To b . . . I . . .
A junior Warden is that to blind Initiates.

THE THIRD DEGREE L. 466.
O O dear Father
Most M
High H
O most High.
159
THE INNER GUARD L. 458.

The There's Nothing ill can dwell in such a Temple
Inner Guard I.G. If the ill spirit have so fair a House
Good things will strive to dwell with't. Follow me? (i.e. "do you follow what I mean?")

Is Is S
Set Se T
Worshipful W Installed I
Master M

THE INNER GUARD IS SET WORSHIPFUL INSTALLED MASTER.

"THE THREE PILLARS"

Act V, s. 1, l. 202.

A Freemason A For it is you that have chalked forth the way
Worthy W.F. Which brought us hither . . .
I I say A . . . G . . . (i.e. "Great Architect").
Wisdom W S . . . O rejoice
Strength B Beyond a common joy and set it down
Beauty With With gold on lasting PILLARS:
I on.
D . . . C . . .
(Ionic)
(Doric . . . Corinthian)

A WORTHY FREEMASON I: WISDOM STRENGTH BEAUTY WITH IONIC DORIC CORINTHIAN.

THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

Note that the Capitals which follow the "W.S.B." are "I . . . D . . . C . . ." and are all associated with the "PILLARS" in the text according to the Ritual. "But as we have no noble orders of architecture known by the names of Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, we refer them to the three most celebrated which are the Ionic, Doric and Corinthian."

A MASONIC KNIGHT

Act I, s. 2, l. 158.

A A
High H Brother B
N Noble . . .
O Out of his CHARITY . . .
M Master of this DESIGN . . .
R Right Worthy R.W.Kn.
W Kn From From . . .
J Jerusalem J

A HIGH BROTHER: MASON: RIGHT WORTHY KNIGHT FROM JERUSALEM

Note.—The word "Mason" is also spelled by the position of the letters in lines 4 and 5: "Som . . . A N" (an anagram).

A FELLOW CRAFT'S KNOWLEDGE L.177.

Know Know thus far forth:
By By accident most strange . . .
Now Now . . .
Boas B Brought to this Shore . . .
Jachin JA I find . . .
(A most auspicious Star (i.e. "The Blazing Star").

KNOW BY NOW, BOAS JACHIN.

L 160
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE LODGE RECITALS  L. 259.

Know No . . .
The Th . . . Speak: Tell me!
Solemn S
Obligations s.o. O . . . I must
Once in a month recount . .
Worthy Wo. Which thou forget'st . . .
Freemason F. Fr. M . . .

KNOW THE SOLEMN OBLIGATIONS, WORTHY FREEMASON.

MAKING A MASON  L. 468.
The Worshipful W
Master w.m. My Foot my Tutor . . .
Who Who mak'st a . . .
Initiates I
Freemason F
A A

THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER INITIATES A FREEMASON.

POOR AND PENNILESS  Act II, s.1, l. 65.

Nota Bene N
(Take Notice) n.b. B
At A
Initiation I. If one of his pockets could
speak would it not say, “He
lies”
Installed I (“I” in Folio, not “Ay.”)
Master i.m. M
The T

TAKE NOTICE: THE INSTALLED MASTER AT INITIATION.

Note.—This exactly describes the incident that takes
place at the initiation of every candidate.

162

THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

THE WORD  L. 96.

Sir . . . at Tunis . . . your daughter . . . Queen,

And the rarest . . .

Bate . . . widdow Dido.

bo-as
bo


Is Is . . .
The Th . . .
Word. W . . . or . . . d . . .

boas is the word,

THE ROYAL ARCH JEWEL  L. 48.

On

son

J

S

M

A

Mason J
Jewel

The

A Companion

A Companion . . . you . . .

A COMPANION: THE JEWEL: MASON.

THE LECTURE  Act III, s. 2, l. 48.

At I . . . As I told thee before . . .

At T

The T

Tracing T . . . if you trouble him any
more in t's tale,

Board. t.b. By this hand I will . . .
AT THE TRACING BOARD (Folio, p. 12, col. 1).

A HIGH DEGREE  L. 112.

Installed I
Master (or Most) M
THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

The T
Worthy W. We wish you Peace...
Compasses Com...
Solomon's Temple s.t. {T...
          {S...
I I my commander...
Say Say...

LOVE'S LABOURS LOST
Act I, s. 2, l. 132.

THE LODGE

MISS MIS M
       [I will visit thee at the LODGE
       [That is hereby
       . I know where it is situate
       . I miss it.

"WILL" THE FELLOW CRAFT L. 143.

Will wil W
Is is I
A A
Fellow Craft F.C. F
       [Come Jaquen...
       [Will is a fellow craft: come "Jaquen," (i.e. "Jachin," phonetic).
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE THREE JEWELS

Act II, s. 1, l. 179.

The T
Square S
The T
Level L
Plumb-rule Pr . . . do my commendations.
Jewel J
Jewel J

THE SQUARE, THE LEVEL, PLUMB-RULE: JEWELS.

Note.—the three "J's" follow each other in the Folio printing order.

WHO WAS THE MAN THAT WAS "W.M."?

L. 184.

I
S
A
W
M
W.M.

WORSHIPFUL MASTER WAS I.

"SAM'S SON"

Act IV, s. 3, l. 240.

To
SAM
S
A
M

B . . . doth varnish Age, as if new born . . .

A

166

THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

O, tis the Sun that maketh all things shine.
BO. BO. By heaven, thy love is black as ebony.
JA. JA. A

TO SAM: A BROTHER: BO: JA.

Note.—"Sam" is a contraction for "Sam's Son," the phrase used for "Solomon's Son" between the Elizabethan Masons. "Bo," "Ja," contraction for Boaz, Jachin.

In the Mysteries, one Pillar was White and one Black.

THE BUILDERS

Act V, s. 2, l. 130.

Hiram
Abif H.A. Hold . . . this . . .
Hiram. H . . . then the King . . .
Solomon. H . . . take this . . . t . . . (to)

SOLOMON, HIRAM, HIRAM ABIF.

HIRAM THE ARCHITECT L. 406.

The T
Third Principal Three P . . .
(F
Ha HA Ha . .

BIF BIF. By this white glove . . .
I H
HirAM M

THE THIRD PRINCIPAL: HIRAM(H)ABIF.

167
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

A SYMBOL OF THE CRAFT

Act I, s. 1, l. 84.

Why

Why should I joy in an abortive birth?

A

A

Tracing

T.B.

T

Solomon’s Temple

S.T.

So you... study...

That were to climb o’er the house to unlock the little Gate.

At

AT.

Then for that Angel Knowledge.

WHY A TRACING BOARD AT SOLOMON’S TEMPLE.

Note.—Masons are supposed to climb the Ladder of Masonic Knowledge. The “House” referred to in the text was, of course, “Solomon’s House” used interchangeably for “Solomon’s Temple” or the Lodge in the Elizabethan era. “The little Gate” is in every Lodge Door to spy strangers.

“AND WAT MOT YT BE”

Act II, s. 1, l. 1.

Nem Con. N.C.

Now, M... (i.e. Mason)

(Unanimously)

Consider

To whom he sends and what’s his embassy:

YT (i.e. YT)

YT

MOT (Mote)

MOT.

168

THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

BE

{T

Be...

WAT

WAT.

A

W

And P... G... T... all

(A Parting Greeting to All.)

AND WHAT MOTE IT BE: NEM CON: A PARTING GREETING TO ALL.

Note.—There is the touch of the “Regius Poem” in this phonetically archaic spelling... “WAT MOT yt Be.” This phrase, whose origin has long puzzled scholars, is also to be found most cunningly given in the same play in the passage “Not a word... ‘so’ it is... ’IT’ May be ’SO’... B E T O M E...” etc. (See Folio, p. 124, col. 1, l. 5.) The “ETOM” spelled backwards gives “mote,” the other letters “BE,” the “IT” and the “so” give the complete phrase: “So Mote it Be.”

A LODGE INCIDENT L. 25.

The

B

T

Tracing Board

T.B.

(Bold of your worthiness...

A

Tell him...

Baton

BATON

On serious business...

Hil

HI.

Importunes... with

Haste...

Lecture

L...

His High Will,

Past Officer

P.O.F.

Proud of Employment willingly

I go.

A

A

A PAST OFFICER’S LECTURE: “Hil! THE TRACING BOARD BATON.”

169
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Note.—All Masons know what a characteristic little incident this is in the Lodge: a flurried P.M. calling for the “Pointer.”

THE DIVINE MIND

Act IV, s. 2, l. 43.

The T. Tis true . . .
Great
God comfort thy capacity. The allusion holds in the Exchange.
Architect G.A. A . . .

THE GREAT ARCHITECT.

THE HEAD OF THE ORDER
(See Folio, p. 131, col. 2, l. 65 for the Initials.)

It it
This is a gift I have . . .
I praise the Lord for you . . .
Is S
Grand G. Master . . .
Worshipful W
Most M. O

IT IS THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER.

Note.—There has been much learned discussion whether there was a Grand Master prior to the “Emergence” in 1717. We now know definitely that William Shakespeare was the Head of the Fraternity and that he was the Grand Master . . . Prospero the Prime.

THE I.P.M. JEWEL

Act V, s. 1, l. 453.

Your You gave me this . . .

170

THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

Immediate
My faith . . .
Past I knew h. by this JEWEL . . .
Master I.P.M. P . . . this JEWEL did he wear . . .
A A
N I
Know . . .
Knight KNIT Too . . .
A KNIGHT YOUR IMMEDIATE PAST MASTER.

THE ROYAL ARCH

“WE Three,” etc.

Act V, s. 2, l. 122.

Their purpose is to parle (speak)
And every one his love feat (feet) will advance,
Unto his several . . . which they know.

TAU.

These lines could only have been written by one who knew the peculiar way in which by Feet and Speech the respective Companions, having advanced to each other, close the Chapter.

MASTER OF THE CRAFT FOR TWELVE MONTHS

L. 874.

Take N
Notice. N.B. B
Then at the expiration of the year,
Come . . . Challenge . . . Challenge. . . . By these deserts . . .

Installed A
Master I.M. I will be thine . . .

171
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

IN IT THE INSTALLED MASTER: TAKE NOTICE.

Note.—It will be seen that the “Installed Master” is surrounded by the Letters “T.C.A.R.F.” He has been placed in the CENTRE of them. The Letters re-arranged spell:

CRAFT

Shakespeare has thus placed the newly Installed Master in the very place where he ought to be, surrounded by the CAPITAL LETTERS which so subtly represent the Brethren of the Lodge—the CRAFT.

This exquisitely cunning design is alone sufficient to prove the wonderful literary craftsmanship of our National Poet and the truth that William Shakespeare was a FREEMASON, a member of the Craft.

THE FATHER

ABBA

With Three Fold Love I wish you all these Three

NOW I SEE IT

ABBA (FATHER) NOW I SEE (C) IT.

172

THE MASONIC RITUAL LETTER CODE

Note.—Just above the “Abba” is the spelling of “Taf” phonetic and the italic “R” the ancient Symbol used by Pythagoras to denote the triple path, the trivium, where the road to the infernal regions divides, according to the ancient wisdom, into two; one to Elysium, the other to Tartarus.

The foregoing illustrations definitely prove Shakespeare’s acquaintance with Freemasonry and his knowledge of the Ritual and its Letter Code, the Masonic allusions in the text being clinched and amplified by the Capital Initials.

It must, however, be remembered that in Love’s Labours Lost and The Tempest, this type of literary craftsmanship runs throughout the entire plays. Even the words in the text are chosen with such precision that in numerous instances the first letters of the words give the letters used by Masons to veil their secrets, such as “M... r... a... l... b... a... k... w... m... b...” etc. Fragments are given of the above and also of the Esotery of the Board of Installed Masters. There are direct references to the Allied Degrees, the Rose Croix and the Sovereign Inspectors, etc.

Shakespeare not only gave to the world broad canvases of human action, but it will now be seen that he was equally as great an artist in his miniatures... in the minutiae of his handiwork by which he built up his dramatic effects. Out of microscopic little GEMS—perfect foraminifera—he created a Pageant of Life. His Art is the most perfect expression (or rather, imitation) of the Workmanship of the Divine Power ever given to Humanity.
VIII

THE DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE:
"SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS"

"And now I will unclasp a secret book . . . .
I'll read you matter deep and dangerous . . . .
Upon the unsteadiest footing of a speare . . . ."

I HENRY IV, ACT I, S. 3.

The facts disclosed in the Shakespeare Folio prove conclusively that William Shakespeare was a Freemason on the testimony of his friends, that he was connected with a Secret Body of Persons termed "The Grand Possessors," and that he was "the Worshipful Master of all the Masons." He has, moreover, proved himself to be a Mason by "Signs, Tokens and Words." He is steeped in Masonic phraseology. He knows the usages of present-day Freemasons. He is familiar with the Ritual Letter Code or Cypher.

In some instances, the decoding of the passages may be questioned, but there are a sufficient number of indisputable ones to prove that the first letters of the play-lines did not fall into position by blind chance, but by deliberate design, and that they bore a Masonic relationship to the imagery and matter of the text, two plays in particular being woven into a tapestry design which is purely Masonic.

Elsewhere in the plays are numerous other instances in which Masonic Lodge customs are written round and incorporated in the text. They are quite unsuspected by a world that knows not Masonry and even

THE DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

by Brethren who have never thought of examining the Shakespeare text for Masonic allusions. The Capital Initials down the side are invariably placed in order to give the alert Masonic reader positive proof that the author was deliberately using Masonic knowledge.

His mind, apparently, was so steeped in the ethics and customs of Masonry that even in the most solemn moments of character construction, he could not forbear smiling grimly at its likeness to what he knows of Lodge procedure. The "Ophelia" illustration goes far to prove that only a saturated Masonic mind could possibly have entwined two such opposite emotions—the suppressed mirth provoked by the fears of a nervous candidate and the agonised emotion of Ophelia at her lover's mental disorder. Could anyone but the creator of the Ethical Symbolism of Freemasonry have conceived such a unique piece of writing?

It may, of course, be considered by some critics that because all this Masonic knowledge is found in the plays, it does not necessarily follow that Shakespeare was a Mason, because these writings are dramatic, with no assurance of anything personal.

This objection, however, cannot be sustained in view of the fact that Shakespeare's PERSONAL DIARY similarly declares very positively his knowledge of Masonry and his association with the Fraternity as the Founder and Father.

His diary is a small body of verse. It is called "Shakespeare's Sonnets." It is a Mystery Book that Shakespearian scholars have been wrangling over for more than two hundred years. They do not know when it was published, to whom the Sonnets were written, how they came to be printed or what the Sonnet-Diary reveals or was intended to reveal.

There are all sorts of theories regarding the little book. Some of them are foolish, some vicious and not
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

a few illuminating. But the academics will never understand either the verse or its import until they realize that Shakespeare was a much more clever and astute man than they at present credit. He did not write the Sonnets for the world of scholars, but to the immediate friends of his bosom, the Brethren. It was therefore a secret book written only for those who understood. The Sonnets, in fact, was the author’s last Secret Book to the Craft. Its real theme was “love,” and its proper title was “The Perfect Ceremony of Love’s Right” (Sonnet xxiii—1).

Since the Sonnet-Diary contains Secret Knowledge and Esoteric Wisdom, the perplexities of the Schoolmen regarding its Personal Problems can well be understood. They are of the “uninstructed, vulgar world.” They have got neither the Pass-word nor the Key to enable them to enter the “Tiled-Door.” Without these, they can never hope to enter the Sonnet Sanctum Sanctorum guarded by the mysterious Initials “T.T.” and “W.H.” They can only wrangle among themselves on the threshold.

“The debate has now continued for over a hundred years . . . some sixty writers propagating a multitude of more or less differing views . . . vigorous conflicts . . . long discussions . . . There is still no agreement” (The Problem of the Sonnets, p. 4, J. M. Robertson).

There can be no doubt, however, that these Sonnets are autobiographical. They are something far removed from mere literary exercises. They are lyrical outpourings, purely personal and emotional in which he reveals himself almost nakedly. He takes the reader into a hidden shrine—the Holy of holies of his own heart—and there we see the simplicity of this great man, the genius sent by the Great Architect to the English race, the mighty teacher William Shakespeare

176
THE DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
with all his hopes and fears, his triumphs and his tragedy.

"The experiences which rent and harrowed Shakespeare's soul ... are in these poems. ... Here and here alone we see Shakespeare himself ... loving, admiring, longing, yearning, adoring, disappointed, humiliated, tortured" (Life of Shakespeare, Geo. Brandes).

The Diary-like character of the Sonnets has been well expressed in the following words by one of our finest Shakespearians:

"He revealed himself to himself in the sanctity of a Diary-like record (p. 50). They throb with passion, they abound in confidences, they are self-revealing, they are the analyses of a Poet's Soul. Therefore they are comparable to a DIARY" (The Mystery of Shakespeare's Sonnets, p. 88, Cuming Walters).

He does not, however, reveal himself to everyone quite so openly as is herein indicated, hence the perplexities of the commentators who seek to interpret him.

The complete body of verse contains one hundred and fifty-four Sonnets written from his youth upwards and kept carefully hidden away, "in sure wards of Trust" until the end of his life. When the Sonnets were printed the little Quartos were only issued under seal to the Brethren. All the verses were mixed up like a jig-saw puzzle with nothing to indicate what they were about. There was no date on the book, simply a number, "1609." As the Sonnets were all "Love" verses on different Themes, which seemed to blend into one long poem, scholars who had no esoteric knowledge concluded that the "1609 Quarto," as it is called, was in very truth a long poem, written virtually at a sitting (or within a few months) which had no coherent message unless it were a glorification
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

of “Dark Ladies,” Procreation and Sensuality, for, says Brandes, blandly, “Great Geniuses are not Models of correctness.”

Thus we get the Riddle of the Sonnets.

I was happily fortunate in having it discovered to me, quite unexpectedly, how to set the mixed Sonnets in order, and to split the body of verse into the respective Themes so that the Poems could be read easily and connectedly. Though the information was esoteric I took no vow of Secrecy nor was I obligated. It was left to my personal choice to declare or reserve according to the exigencies of the situation. At a much later date I learned that at least one scholar had declared that there were a series of Themes in the Quarto and that others had said that the “1609” Sonnet Order was not necessarily true.

“On analysis the Sonnets are found to treat of some half-dozen distinct Themes, sometimes briefly, sometimes at length . . . hopes and fears regarding his fate . . . desire for immortality . . . invariably merging into ALLEGORY . . .”

(ibid., p. 110, Cuming Walters).

“Sir Denys Bray in The Original Order of Shakespeare’s Sonnets, is convinced like most of us that the Quarto Order cannot be right . . . but his method . . . plunges us into perplexity”

(ibid., p. 96, J. M. Robertson).

Cuming Walters got very near to the truth when he wrote the word “ALLEGORY,” for “Freemasonry is a System of Morality based on Allegory and Illustrated by Symbol.” The chief thing of interest to Freemasons is the fact that there are several Sonnets on Masonry and the personal note behind each is very strong. He writes to the Brethren as one having authority and not as a mere scribe.

The Sonnet Dedication is signed “T.T.” which simply stands for “Thirty-Three,” the highest Degree.

THE DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

in Masonry, the two Pillars of Masonry, the “T” Sign of the Royal Arch, the “Two Crosses” of one of the Higher Degrees . . . according to Carlyle, “Mysteries of F.M.” It is the same “T.T.” which is to be found in the inscription at the Stratford Monument, and between the feet of the Shakespeare Monument in Westminster Abbey, erected by Pope and the Rosicrosse Masons in 1738 to mark the Emergence of the Fraternity. It is the Sign of the Golden “T-Book” found in the Tomb of Father Rosycross, the Founder of the Rosicrucians of which Shakespeare was a Fratre and Imperator. The “T.T.” mark is to be found in connection with many writings and public inscriptions connected with Shakespeare always with an esoteric significance.

Among the Sonnets is a series to Apollo, the God of Poetry and Eloquence. In Mythology he is regarded as the Embodiment of Passion, Creative Love, and so he controlled all Passions.

The captions are mine and have been arrived at after a literary study of the text together with certain enfolded messages which the Author says he has “Felled” into the open text (Sonnet lxxvi—68).

Sonnet 80

THE IMMORTALITY OF LOVE—LIFE’S GREATEST THEME

Not M. . . Not Marble, nor the Mason

Gilded Monuments

Of Princes shall outlive (Prince)

this powerful rhyme,

But you shall shine

more bright in these contents

1 See Illustration, Chapter IX.

179
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time. 
When wasteful war shall Statues overturn, (Statues)
And Broils root out the Work of MASONRY,
Nor Mars his sword, (Ma.s...) nor war’s quick fire shall burn

The The The living record of your memory.
The Grand Geometrician

'Gainst Death, and all-oblivious Enmity
Shall you pace forth: Your praise shall still find room
Even in the eyes of all posterity

Set that wear this world out to the ending doom.

Solomon’s So. So till the Judgement Temple that your Self arise,
You live in you You live in this and this etc. dwell in Lovers’ eyes.

NOTE, MASON, PRINCE BOAS: THE TWAIN
—STATUES OF MASONRY: THE GRAND GEOMETRICIAN SET SOLOMON’S TEMPLE.
YOU LIVE IN THIS.

Note.—The Capital “Prince” in the text associated with the word “Boas” proves quite conclusively that

The DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

the Poet was familiar with the Pedestal explanation of the word “Boaz” at Masonic Ceremonials...

There were Two Great Pillars set up at the porchway or entrance to King Solomon’s Temple by King Solomon. One was called Boaz. It was “so named after Boaz, the great-grandfather of David, a prince and Ruler in Israel.” The “Import of the word was ‘In Strength.’”

The word in the text “MASONRY” associated with so many Rosicross secret asides in the Initial Capitals make it quite certain that no one save the Creator of the Ethical System could have used such Masonic ideas with so profound a familiarity.

Apollo being the God of Creative Love—having all passions in his power according to Mythology—is thus associated with almost miraculous genius, with the Love idea on which modern Freemasonry is founded—CHARITY, i.e. the Charity which is truly love, which suffereth long and is kind...not the species of almsgiving so often mistaken for Charity.

Note the Initial Letters in the first line:

Not M no. the G M
Note Mason! Know the Grand Master.

The only Capitals in the Quarto text in the body of the Sonnet are the words “Prince, Statues, Ma.s...” In decoding the Capital Initials of the lines, the text Capitals or words must also be used. This applies to every Sonnet rigidly.

It will thus be seen that through this Sonnet (as in every one) Shakespeare “Cogs” the Initial Capital Letters and those in the body of the text in order to spell out his secret asides to the Brethren who have been taught to read.

The true literary interpretation of this Sonnet, and indeed of every one, can, however, only be proved to be correct by a free prose rendering similar to the construing of a piece of Latin. In such an interpretation
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Each word should be analysed in its full meaning, for the skill of a lyrical poet consists in using diamond words that flash many meanings. A word may thus have more than one interpretation. In order to be quite sure that we have got the poet's meaning correctly we must endeavour to get down to the concrete irritation that caused him to embody his emotion in imaginative verse. (This is usually "Felled" through the Sonnet—i.e., woven horizontally through the lines. With this particular method we are not at present concerned.) Each Sonnet therefore should be set out so that the reader can get a clear idea how to read in prose. He can thus check the prose analysis with the poem itself and reject or accept the interpretation. In this Sonnet, as in others, there are certain misprints in the original Quarto, and there are also other matters touched upon, extraneous to our present inquiry, so the interpretations are necessarily restricted and condensed to the Masonic aspect only.

The Literary Interpretation

Key Words: "The Work of Masonry."

Word Meanings:

These contents—these Sonnets.
All-oblivious—which causes to be forgotten.
Broils—a confused disturbance: noisy quarrels between persons: turmoil, a noisy quarrel or discord between individuals.
Unswept—stone—not swept away by time and therefore crumbling.
Masonry—a peculiar System of Morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by Symbol.

Free Prose Rendering:

Neither Marble Temples nor the Gilded Palaces erected by Kings shall outlive this powerful rhyme.

1 Key words are significant words which indicate the theme, etc.

THE DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

In these Immortal Verses, Apollo, you shall shine more brightly than in material Works of Art destined to fall into crumbling ruins, overgrown with ivy, stones that will be smeared with the sluts of Time.

When War shall overturn the Statues of Stone, like the Pillars of Masonry, when noisy quarrels among the Brethren of the Craft shall root out the work of the Fraternity, the tenets of Love, of Masonry, yet neither the sword of the War-God, Mars, nor the quick fire of war-like strife shall destroy the living record of your memory; for children of the brain (like my verses) and of the flesh are the ever-living, everlasting flowers of love never-to-be-forgotten.

But the true "Living Record" of my secret passion for you will be the "Succession of Masons" who will continue until the end of Time to Defy the Love Passion of which you are the Symbol in the Mysteries.

Against Death, the decay of Nature, against the cause of present jealous enmities, and against past forgotten enmities . . . shall you pace forth Immortal. Your praise—the praise of Love—shall still find room, a Lodge, to be praised in the spiritual Temple of Humanity, in the eyes of successive generations, all posterity, to the end of Time. So till the Judgment Day, when all men shall rise who have been created by you, Apollo, the Creator and Judge, you shall live deified, not only in a Sonnet secretly, but you shall dwell till then in the eyes of every true Lover of love, and in the broad Charity which is the pride of every true Mason.

* * * * * *

The subtle manner in which Masonry is mentioned is particularly worthy of notice. The image runs quite clearly and admits of no dispute. The Poet is deifying Love in wondrous language. He asserts that Love is eternal and will endure the rack of Time. He deals with the only two aspects of conflict which Love can survive—material and ethical conflict. He balances one off against the other in his imagery. Says he: "When

182

183
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

wasteful war shall overturn Statues of Stone (material) like the Pillars of Masonry, and when petty jealousies—Brothers forgetful of Brotherly Vows—shall strike at the very principles that Masonry stands for, i.e. LOVE, CHARITY (ethical), yet love will still survive to pace forth (for Masons pace forth by definite Steps) despite either material conflict or the noisy wrangles of men who forget to practise as Masons what they profess to admire.

The association of the Temple of Apollo with Masonry is noted by Bro. Geo. W. Bullamore in The Antiquity of the Third Degree.

“We have the Laurel, Sun, Moon, Stars, Bees, and the Pentagon associated with the Temple of Apollo, while in Freemasonry we have all these Emblems associated with the Temple of Solomon.”

We need only notice one more Sonnet, a very remarkable one, which has never been hitherto interpreted by anyone.

Sonnet 143
THE WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER ON THE RICH JOY OF MEETING IN SECRET LODGE

So So So am I as the Rich whose blessed Key
Candidate Can. Can bring him to his sweet un-locked treasure
The The The which he will not every hour survey,
For For For blunting the fine point of Seldom Pleasure.
Solomon’s Temple s.t. Therefore are Feasts so Solemn and so Rare
Since, seldom coming, in the Long Year set,

THE DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Like Stones of Worth they thinly placed are,
Or Captain Jewels in the Carcanet.

Solomon sol. So is the Time that keeps you as my Chest
Or as the Wardrobe which the Robe doth hide,

To To To make some Special Instant special Blast,
Brother B. By new unfolding his imprison’d Pride.
Blessed “Blessed are you, whose Worthiness gives Scope,
Be Be Being had, to Triumph; being lack’d, to Hope.”

SO THE CANDIDATE FOR SOLOMON’S TEMPLE:
BE BLESSED BROTHER TO SOLOMON.

THE LITERARY INTERPRETATION

Key Words:
“Whose Blessed Key.”
“Seldom Pleasure.”
“Feasts so Solemn and so Rare.”
“Captain Jewels in the Carcanet.”
“My Chest . . . my Wardrobe . . . my Robe . . .”
“New Unfolding his Imprisoned Pride.”
“To make some Special Instant, Special Blast.”
“Blessed are you whose Worthiness . . .”

Word Meanings:
Captain = Chief.
Carcanet = an Ornamental Chain, Collar or Necklace, usually Gold with Jewels. (Note that this word is particularly applicable to the Masonic Collars and Jewels of Office.)
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Note.—The ordinary reader who is not a Mason cannot thoroughly appreciate or understand this Sonnet, nor its significance. Only a Master of Thought and Language could have said so much and yet said so little. Its exquisite subtlety is proved by the fact that though it has been in the eyes of the world for three hundred years, though thousands of scholars have pondered it, no one has ever discovered its secret.

To the uninitiated the Sonnet may well be incomprehensible. To the initiated it takes the noviciate from outside the door of the Lodge to the Final Addresses to the Newly Installed Master and the Brethren. No one but a Mason, familiar with the working of present-day Craft Masonry, the Ritual and the Charges could have written it.

It is numbered "52" in the old Quarto, the number of weeks in the year. The numbers 5 and 2 added total 7, a number of importance to the Brethren; 7 form a perfect Lodge, etc.

These are the first outer Signals calling attention to the Sonnet.

Free Prose Rendering:

So, though "poor and penniless," yet as a Rosicrucian Philosopher steeped in the Ethics of Masonry, am I as the Rich Man whose blessed Key, the password, can bring him to his sweet and secret treasure, the Sacred Symbols, up-locked behind tiled and guarded doors and up-locked in the safe and sacred repository of his heart.

These Symbols of peculiar richness he will not every hour survey ... only monthly. If they were surveyed too often it would blunt the fine point of seldom pleasure, which can be only kept fine by being seldom surveyed, a treasure not to be used too often or too familiarly.

Therefore are Feasts—the spiritual Feasts of Masonry and the Banquets of the Social Degree—so

THE DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

solemn and so rare, solemn in Ceremonial and precious as a Meeting of Brothers, rare because the meetings are only held at monthly intervals. And because the Lodge Meetings, seldom coming, are thus in the long year set with its fifty-two weeks, they are like stones of great value, thinly placed to show their special merit. Or they may be likened to the best of all Jewels, those Captain Jewels in the Carcanet, the Chief ones worn by Master Masons to denote distinction for meritorious services done ... especially the Charity Jewels, the Emblems of Love, Jewels which adorn the Collars of the Officers of the Lodge.

So is the time of meeting, solemn, rare, priceless ... the time that keeps you—my Masonic Secrets, as my Chest, my Lodge which is a closed Chest; and also in my heart which is enclosed within my breast, or as a Lodge-Chest which seems as a Wardrobe which doth hide the Robe—many Robes of the Brethren—the Regalia of which Masons are so proud, regalia never to be worn in public, only within the Chest and Wardrobe of the Lodge, hidden; the regalia which is, moreover, brought out, apart from the Monthly meetings, to make some Special Instant Special Blest, the Annual Time of Installation, by a new unfolding of the imprisoned pride of the Regalia, the gathering together of Worshipful Masters of other Lodges and the Officers of Provincial Rank; the new unfolding of Pride because all Officers doff their badges of office which are newly unfolded to be bestowed afresh on others according to rank, merit and ability.

Blessed are you, Newly Installed Worshipful Master, whose Worthiness gives scope for the exercise of the Highest Honour in the power of the Brethren to bestow, and ultimately to attain higher Rank as a Provincial. Being had—i.e., having been Installed, you are now in command of the Lodge after many years of faithful service, while you, my Brethren,
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

who are not yet so dignified, being lacked, live in the hope of ascending the Master's Chair, and that in due time merit and ability will be rewarded.

Note.—Within the short compass of fourteen lines the imagination of the Poet takes the Initiate to the tiled door, gives him the Key, points him to the Lodge, shows him the Jewels, movable and immovable, recites the Ritual, touches the Ethics of Masonry, takes him to the Banquet, tells him the reason why there are few meetings in the fifty-two weeks, and finally introduces him to the Annual Installation Ceremony, concluding with the actual phrases which bring up to the mind's eye of every Mason the beautiful solemnity of the Special Charges to the Newly Installed Master and to the Worthy Brethren who, though lacking Office, are enjoined to hope.

Apart from the Sonnets which are definitely Masonic, Shakespeare grafted his Masonic knowledge in Sonnets which are not Masonic—in much the same fashion as the "Ophelia" example. One illustration will be quite sufficient to indicate how his mind seemed to be saturated with Masonic thought and phraseology even in his personal poems.

THE RITUAL CODE GRAFTED TO PERSONAL EMOTION

Sonnet 23

DESPITE WORLDLY VERDICTS ON A THRONE QUEEN

... "I LOVE THEE"

(O Queen)

xcvi

Sacred Symbols

Some say thy fault is (o) youth, some wantonness;

Some say thy grace is youth and gentle sport;

188

THE DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Both grace and faults are loved of more and less;

Tracing Board t.b. Thou makest faults graces that to thee resort.

A A As on the finger of a Throned Queen (Queen)

(Jewels)

The basest jewel will be well esteem'd,

Solomon's Temple s.t. So are those errors that in thee are seen

To To To truths translated and for true things deem'd.

Hiram (Lay) HI If like a lamb he could (w) his looks translate!

Hiram H. How many gazers mightst thou lead away,

How many lambs (l) might the stern wolf betray,

Abif ABIF As, thou being mine, mine is thy "Good Report."

HIRAM ABIF, HIRAM TO SOLOMON'S TEMPLE WILL LAY JEWELS, A TRACING BOARD'S SACRED SYMBOLS, O QUEEN!

189
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Note.—This cryptically Masonic message is absolutely true according to the modern Ritual of Freemasons. Esoterically, the plain meaning is that out of the despised tools of a working operative craft the Poet can create Jewels associated with a Royal Order which will be well esteemed in such a connection, though of base origin. Base faults in a Queen are likewise translated into the Jewels of Virtue because of their immediate environment, like “Queen Dido”.

The last Sonnet Words “good report” (always associated with a close typed Lodge) subtly indicated the System of Masonry he is fashioning, translating errors and truths into a new setting, placing the “basest jewels” of a working craft into a Solomon’s Temple and coining the “Hiram Story.” This is the first mention of Hiram, etc., outside of the plays... *Love’s Labours Lost*, etc.

The expositor who would solve the Riddle of the Sonnets must therefore be prepared to deal with each Sonnet—in two aspects, the Code and the Literary. He must be able to decode the Masonic Messages, etc., and he must be able to produce a prose rendering—based on word analysis—that will explain the concrete motifs that goaded the Poet into his “fine frenzies.” The man who can do this will have solved for all time the Sonnet Problem and brought us immeasurably nearer the personality of our Immortal Bard.

The importance of precise word definitions cannot be over-estimated. A single example will suffice.

Scholars have long disputed whether the Sonnets 1–17 were written to a man, Lord Southampton, or someone else, urging him to marry. The poet’s use of one word proves quite conclusively they were not addressed to a man at all but to a woman... for in Sonnet II (3) is the line:

190

THE DIARY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

“Where is all the Treasure of thy lusty Days?”

Shakespeare employed the word “Lusty” as a lyrical poet should do—packing all his expansive thought into a diamond-word which flashes more than one meaning. He chose it with subtle discrimination. And since we may be unaware of the dominant idea at the back of the word, one can only assume, to be on the safe side, that he meant it to be used in all its shades of meanings—according to the highest canons of poetic skill.

Now “Lusty” means “Healthy, Vigorous,” but it also means “PREGNANT.” So the Poet (confined to one word by the exigencies of metre) really says: “Where is the TREASURE of thy healthy, vigorous days... THY DAYS OF PREGNANCY?” The peculiar Treasure of Women which is a Child or Children.

By the choice of such a word, Shakespeare points out the sex of the person addressed. Men are ruled out by the Treasure of the days of Pregnancy.

The litterateurs who would get to the bones of Shakespeare’s imaginative thought must similarly analyse each diamond word—employing all meanings that shade into the context. It will be found that these particular verses apply essentially to a woman... an aristocrat whom he loved.

These Sonnet selections are sufficient to prove that Freemasonry was a very personal matter to Shakespeare—a life to be lived. There are others that show he spoke to the Brethren as the Father of a Community to his Sons. He was the “ABBA” of *Love’s Labours Lost*, “Prospero, thy no greater Father” of *The Tempest.* He had the right to say to the Brethren, “Forget me quite, For you in me can nothing worthy prove,... Let my Name be Buried and live no more to shame...” (Sonnet LXXII—149).

There are undoubtedly Sonnets which give an inkling of a tragedy that had overtaken the author of
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

which the Brethren were cognizant, and which he obviously felt might besmirch the Ethical System if it were known that he was the Founder.

What the tragedy was need not concern us. It was, however, a factor in the deliberate camouflage of the 1717–23 Emergence. The Masons of that era knew the truth better than we do. They were loyal to his specific instructions and kept his name out of sight—"Buried."

In 1788, Bro. Preston speaks of Shakespeare's knowledge of the use of the Hand as a Masonic Signal (Illustrations, p. 208), "Lift up thy hand, make signal of that hope, He Dies and makes no sign" (Henry VI, Act III). He also lets the discerning reader know that he is familiar with the secret of Sonnet LXXIV—150, by his reference to the "Brother who was accomplished in every Art... and who fell a sacrifice to the cruel hand of a Barbarous Assassin."

There are strong circumstantial grounds for believing that instructions were left to the Heads of Masonry (probably the "Thirty-Third" Degree, or the "Rosicrosse") respecting the future progress of the Order. These, however, are matters which are not germane to the present work.

The "Personal Poems" indicate that he was a Mason equally as clearly as the plays—perhaps more so. Such lyrical utterances to the Craft are absolutely in keeping with the Masonic Spirit that lives in the Great Folio. They are a fitting justification of the Men who wrote: "So worthy a fellow as was our Shakespeare."

IX

THE SCHOOL OF THE ROSICROSSE, THE SECRET ELIZABETHAN LITERARY SOCIETY

A SERIES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

"From the Most Able to him that can but Spell: There you are NUMBERED."

"They are offered to your view... ABSOLUTE IN THEIR NUMBERS."  THE FOLIO PREFACE.

"Count, 'tis your Qu.----MUCH ADOE ABOUT NOTHING.

REFERENCE has already been made to the fact that in the second edition of the Book of Constitutions of the Freemasons, by Bro. J. Anderson, M.A., D.D., is a very cryptic paragraph the significance of which has hitherto been ignored.

"AN EXPERT BROTHER BY THE TRUE LIGHT can readily find many useful hints on almost every page of this Book which others NOT INITIATED cannot discover..."

Here we get quite definitely a Grand Lodge official pronouncement that there are HINTS on almost every page—necessarily printed Hints—which could only be understood by "Expert Brethren" initiated by the "True Light."

Bro. Anderson is directly referring to the printed matter in the Constitutions. We are thus given to understand that all the true and proper signs to know a Mason by, are not necessarily confined to the signs learned at the Lodge Pedestal for purely Lodge observance. There are, in short, Masonic Secrets and Signs to be found in the open text of certain books to be understood only by those who have "PASSED
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE VEILS.” He is telling his reader with the same clearness as Shakespeare to “Learn to Read what Silent Love hath writ, to hear with Eyes,” to take “A Second Sight” at the printed page and so read in an extraordinary manner as well as an ordinary one.

Bro. Anderson wrote in this fashion because he was one of the Heads by Succession of Shakespeare’s Secret Literary School, known among the Fraternities of his day, the Rosicrucian College (S.R.I.A.) as well as the Masonic Craft. This small coterie was directly responsible for perpetuating the Shakespeare literature, etc., even beyond the day of Bro. Anderson. A Rosicross-Mason was one who was able to read the Secret Signals in printed works issued by the Fathers of the Order, the mysterious “Fra Rosi Crosse.” We are now in a position to understand clearly the enigmatical lines of Bro. Adamson of Perth who, in 1638, wrote:

“We are the Brethren of the Rosie Crosse
We have the Mason Word and Second Sight....”

He is signalling to Posternity the truth of Masonic Secrets cunningly hidden in the pages of the old books in a variety of ways and which can only be discovered by taking a “Second Sight” after reading the open text.

We have already seen and examined at least one method—the use of the Masonic Capital Letter Code—employed by the Founder of the Rosicross School, William Shakespeare. There were other literary codes, Felling and Anagrammatic (which are unnecessary to dwell upon) but one of the most evidential methods employed by “Fra Rosi Crosse” was the “Numerical Code” because of its mechanical precision. This particular code proves quite conclusively deliberate design on the part of the Heads of the Brotherhood, the men with whom Shakespeare consorted, the “Grand Possessors” mentioned in the Troilus and Cressida preface (1609), who then held the Shakespeare Manuscripts and whose successors, presumably, still hold them after having the Folio Plays printed in 1623.

This Secret School associated itself permanently with the publications for which it was responsible by sealing such works with a “Number-Count” arrived at very simply by a definite system, the chief being the “Simple Cypher” and the “Kaye Cypher.” Every letter had a numerical value, thus:

A B C D E F G H I K L M
Simple: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
Kaye: 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 10 11 12
N O P Q R S T U W X Y Z
Simple: 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
Kaye: 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

There was also a “Reverse Count,” Z being 1, and A, 24. The number Seals of “Fra Rosi Crosse” were “157” and “287,” the numerical Signature of Shakespeare being “103” and “259.” Here is the method by which names and numbers were linked together.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fra Rosi Crosse.</th>
<th>Shakespeare.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple</td>
<td>Kaye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

195
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

The prefatory and end pages of all books issued by the Rosicross Press were numbered with a count of words or letters.

The opening pages of the 1623 Shakespeare Folio are all scaled with 157 or 287. Every play is similarly scaled in one of the beginning columns and also at the end page of the play. The genuine early Quarto and poems carry the same numbers all carefully arranged by Shakespeare’s “Staff of good pens,” his “Compeers by Night giving him aid,” the Brethren (Sonnet lxxxvi—116).

Far beyond the seventeenth century, the descendants of “Fra Rosi Crosse” have left their imperishable footprints... “All Absolute in their Numbers,” the proud boast of the Folio Preface. These hallmarks appear in Sir William Dugdale’s Warwickshire in his references to Shakespeare (1656), Nicholas Rowe, Shakespeare’s first biographer (1712), and the Official Works (sanctioned by Grand Lodge) of Bros. Anderson, Preston and Hutchinson.

The “Numbers” in Masonry are very important—more so than is considered by the average Craft Mason—and are recognized as such by some of the Higher Degrees. The Rosicrucian College in connection with Masonry specifically draws attention to the significance of “Numbers,” based on the “Fama” and the “Confessio,” etc., the text-books of the Rosicrucians. Pythagoras, who is so revered in the Craft, particularly with Past Masters, declared that “All was form and number.” He laid it down that his pupils could communicate secretly with each other, through interchanging letters for numbers, though the text passed through outside hands. Our ancient Elizabethan Brethren therefore based their peculiar esoteric “Number-Knowledge” on a very ancient model, associated with the Mysteries.

The illustrations in this work will demonstrate the truth of William Shakespeare’s connection with

THE SCHOOL OF THE ROSICROSSE

Rosicrosse-Masonry. The evidence is intended to be cumulative and the reader should study the examples one after the other from Plate I, facing page 20, to Plate XVI, facing page 239.

The first seven illustrations are facsimile pages of the 1623 Great Folio. Plate I, “To the Reader,” is the first Folio page and faces the celebrated “Folio Portrait,” the only genuine contemporary one in existence, the “Chandos,” being purely an imaginative picture. Both the Folio pages carry the two Secret Seals of the Rosicrosse, the numbers 287 and 157, the spelling being manipulated so that the page would contain these counts: see Plates I and II, facing pages 20 and 21.

The number-count is continued in the “Epistle Dedictory,” the words totalling 157 and 287, while “The Names of the Principall Actors” likewise yield 287: facing pages 48 and 49 (Plates III and IV.)

Ben Jonson’s poem “To the Author,” facing page 76, Plate V, is particularly interesting because of the “Seven Set Squares” directly placed in connection with “My Beloved, the author.” These Masonic Symbols are also associated with the Rosicrosse Seal 287. The first page of the Folio Comedies, “The Tempest” (Plate VI), shows the Seal of 157 and 287 respectively in the first and second column totals of words, while the last page of the Comedies (Plate VII, facing page 118) again carries the 157 and 287 Seals.

Plate VIII shows the “Numerical Signature,” 292, of “Wm. Shakespeare” associated with the Title Page of the 1640 Edition of the Sonnets (facing page 119). The student will note that the secret “1609” Sonnet Quarto—which was privately issued to the Brethren—is not only marked with Masonic Symbolism (Plate IX, facing page 152), but also carries the 287 Signal on the last Sonnet page, Plate X. In the Quarto was also bound the poem, “A Lover’s Complaint,” the last page counting 157.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

This systematic "sealing"—which was actually a private mark known only to the "Instructed"—was not confined to the books sponsored by the Rosicrosse Literary Society, but actually extended to Monuments, etc. In the Latin Inscription under the Shakespeare Bust at Stratford (Plates XI and XII, facing pages 176–177), the mysterious 287 again appears allied to the Tau of the Royal Arch, showing the subtle connection between the two Fraternities. Even the Shakespeare Monument in Westminster Abbey, erected a century after the Stratford one, carried significant Masonic Symbolism (Plates XIII and XIV, facing pages 202–203) with the Rosicrosse Seal 157 (Plate XV, facing page 238). On the Royal Arch Jewel of 1805 (Plate XVI, facing page 239) the 287 has been engraved as a further proof of the subtle connection between the Rosicrosse and Freemasonry.

Apart from number-counts, purposeful errata—intended to serve as hints to the curious reader—Capital Letter Codes, etc., our "Ancient Brethren" and even watermarked their printing paper with Signs Symbols relative to the Craft: see pages 199–200.

The foregoing examples, though sufficient to indicate design, are really infinitesimal compared with the vast amount of Secret Signs and Numbers to be found in many of the old Elizabethan books. Shakespeare’s Secret School was quite evidently engaged in a work which it was thought would help to enlighten humanity educationally, intellectually and ethically by methods—the publication of books and plays—which promulgated ideas that would have been frowned on by Authority, Juridical and Theological, in an age which was politically and religiously intolerant, when the social gulf was deep and wide and when men butchered and burned each other in the name of Religion.

The Brotherhood based on "CHARITY" (i.e. Love) was necessarily a secret one; but it sought to signal to future ages that it was in the vanguard of Advanced

MASONIC WATERMARKS

The above watermarks are in a book entitled Truth Brought to Light and discovered by Time, Anonymous, 1631, discovered by Dr. Prescott, of "York Place," Franklin, Mass., U.S.A., and forwarded to me.

The top illustrations represent the Hat worn by the Worshipful Master in the Lodge in that Era, 1697.

The "M.B." denote "Rosie Cross," and the flourish of the Ribbons on the first one forms the well-known Masonic Symbol, "The Square and Compasses." These are apparently repeated, though not so clearly, in the second illustration. "M.B." probably stands for one of the Higher Degrees with which I am not familiar.

The two in the bottom examples represent symbolically the holding of wine pressed from many grapes, an image used in Elizabethan days, to denote that Masonry was a philosophic combination drawn from many sources, distilled and blended by an expert and then given to the Brethren.

The small triple circles represent the Three Degrees and also are emblematic of the Grape-watermarks which are to be found in clusters repeatedly in old books.

The animal is a representation of a Squirrel that stores its nuts and acorns for future use.

The top ornament is a Phallic Symbol indicative of Creative Power.

The ornament rests on a Helmet (the chin-chain attached makes the symbol quite clear) which is none other than the Helmet of Pallas Athena, the Shaker of the Spear of Wisdom at the Serpent of Ignorance, according to Mythology. The Rosicrosse were known as "The Invidibles," for their members symbolically wore her Helmet which in the Myths made the wearers Invisible.

198
THE SCHOOL OF THE ROSICROSSE

Thought, the Drama and Ethical Principles, by sealing all its activities with a "Number-mark," whose monotonous repetition would prove the reality of the organized Fraternity.

Some time after the Book of Constitutions was published, a writer who signed himself "Plain Dealer" in the Daily Post for September, 1724, declared that Bro. Anderson was "an orthodox though MatheMatical Divine." "Plain Dealer" was evidently of the Rosicrosse, and wrote his letter to leave a record of the fact that the book carried definite "counts," and was sealed over and over again with numbers which are the numerical signatures of the Founder and "Fra Rosi Crosse." The second official historian, W. Preston, also bears his testimony to the connection of mathematics with Freemasonry.

"Masonry is wisely planned; and in the investigation of its latent doctrines the philosopher and the Mathematician will experience equal delight

... (p. 57.)

"Arithmetic teaches us to deduce the powers and properties of numbers, which is variously effected by Letters, Tables, Figures... By this Art, demonstrations are given for finding out any certain NUMBER... (p. 81.)

"The Mystery of Masonry consists in natural, Mathematical and mechanical knowledge... and some part they still conceal." (p. 140.)

Elsewhere (p. 147), Bro. Preston refers to numerology as "the Arte of Changes" and the "Faculty of Abrac" which has "a magical signification" (pp. 161-3). There can therefore be no question that secret numbers could be, and were, changed into names and words by our ancient Brethren.

The third official historian, Bro. Hutchinson, also refers to the art of Numbers in The Spirit of Masonry...
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

as the “Faculty of Abrac” which was used by Basilides, the author of “365.” Bro. Hutchinson gives a very pointed illustration of the numerical value of the word “ABPAZAX.” He also manages to slip in the name of the Founder, similarly to Bro. Preston.

Since their works were passed as official documents by the Grand Lodges of their respective eras the truth of the secret knowledge—with the far-reaching consequences herein illustrated—is beyond question.

THE SHAKESPEARE MONUMENT AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY

The Shakespeare Monument was erected in 1740 under the auspices of the third Earl of Burlington, Dr. Richard Mead and Alexander Pope. The Ben Jonson and the Gay Memorials were erected about the same time and are examples, being secret proofs, of the survival of Shakespeare’s Literary Society and the “then powerful prevailing influence on English Art of Rosicrucian Masonry,” says Sir Robt. Rice in Hamlet and Horatio. “The crossed legs have a Rosicrucian significance.”

PLATE XIII
(See page 193)
X

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RITUAL AND THE AGE WHICH PRODUCED SUCH CHARACTERISTICS

"There be three degrees of this Hiding and Veiling of a Man's Self: the First . . . Closeness, Reservation, and Secrecy; the Second . . . when a Man lends Fall Signs; the Third, when a Man industriously and expressly Feigns and Pretends to be that He Is Not," (i.e. when he is "made to represent the body of our Master, Hiram Abif").

ESSAY "SIMULATION."

"Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse but to weigh and consider."

FRANCIS BACON.

In view of the startling Masonic facts brought to light in the previous pages through research work which is quite original, we may profitably stress some of the evidence already adduced. In the recapitulation I must necessarily touch slightly a personal note, that my reader may the better be acquainted with my interest in William Shakespeare as a Free-mason.

When I was made a Mason over thirty-five years ago I was a journalist. At that time my youthful head was naturally crammed with wise saws and diamond phrases cribbed from Shakespeare, together with many historic mysteries. Who was Junius? The Man in the Iron Mask? etc. To these early impulses must be attributed the fact that from the night of my Initiation I have ever taken a keen interest in the literary
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

characteristics of the Ritual, and in all subjects, direct and indirect, bordering on Freemasonry.

In those early days my mind was greatly intrigued with its Genesis, the “Whence and How” of the Cult, the man or men responsible for the Mystery, the writer of the Charges, the creator of the Ceremonial. It was a very fascinating problem.

Needless to say I did not discover these hidden secrets. Indeed, I gradually realized that neither historic works, Past Masters, nor the Rituals of the Higher Degrees threw any light on the Genesis of the Speculative Craft or on the identity of any historic personage who had conceived “The Perfect Ceremony of Love’s Right” (Sonnet xxxi—1) and had shaped and welded into modern language an unique concept which is “a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.”

Through this wide gap of time—midst vicissitude and change—I have never once wholly lost sight of the Quest ... the Gleam which once beckoned me to follow. Whatever, then, I have written, or may write, is not the result of hasty thought or ill-digested theories. Indeed, I am not so much concerned with theories as with actual facts. If we can succeed in getting our facts right, logical analysis will necessarily provide the only correct working theory that will fit them.

Unhappily, an inquiry into the origins of the Craft sometimes occasions sharp dissensions. Yet I hope that the “New Truth which is Old” that I have enunciated will not prove to be in any sense disconcerting, but, rather, a helpful contribution to the greatest of all Masonic and Literary Problems. No one should know better than a Freemason that Truth often appears in strange Shapes and quaint Robes. Consider, therefore, judicially, what I have written, in the open court of your own mind, for are we not “Free Men and of mature age!” Free to think. . . . Free to resolve every human doubt. . . . Free to follow wheresoever.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Now the background of our Speculative System is the Sacred Mysteries of forgotten civilizations. The ancient Wisdom, the principles of the Roman Collegia, the working tools of a Medieval operative craft, the Ceremonies of the Knights Templar, beloved by Saint Bernard, are, apparently, all interwoven in our Masonic Rites. The Plumb-Rule has been found in Pompeii, the Square in Egypt, the Compasses in Greece, the Rule and Slippers in Rome, the Masonic Apron being the counterpart of the Golden Fleece of Jason and the Argonauts. Probably, as alleged, they were all Symbols of Ethical significance. But it does not follow that though our present System draws its sustenance from these ancient centres, with their Nature Worship of Sun, Moon and Stars, our Modern Craft Rite of Three Degrees was practised in Ancient Egypt, or that to-day we are following an exact Ritual of Solomon and thus participating in a Ceremonial older than the Holy Roman Hierarchy.

When the Mysteries were swept away by the Holy Church there was necessarily a break in the continuity of descent with pre-historic time. With the Fall of the Roman Empire and the smashing of the Medieval craft guilds by State Edicts there were further breaks. Evidence has been adduced (Chapter I) which proves that the 1723 Grand Lodge of Freemasons was not the natural outgrowth from a body of operatives that perished 1350–1425; and that our modern System, couched in modern language, must have arisen in England between the times of Spenser’s “Faerie Queene” (1579) and 1723. For its Third Degree someone specially created “a feigned Story,” as Shakespeare termed it, “the Legend of Hiram Abif” as a Rite analogous to the Death Rites and Resurrections of the various Gods of the Mysteries.

It is obvious that the modern Ethical System and the Ritual are one and the same, i.e. an oral ceremonial which has been reduced to book form. Which, then,

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS came first? The System or the Book? Quite clearly the Book.

Because the printed Ritual has only been in existence a little more than a hundred years (G. C. Clare, 1838, A. Lewis, 1869, etc.) it does not follow that the Oral Ritual before this date was not based on an “original Ritual” which Bro. Gould suggested may once have been in existence. It is true that we have no knowledge of “an original Ritual” left in manuscript, neither have we any knowledge of the edited MSS. of the James Authorized Bible (1611), nor the MSS. of the Shakespeare Plays (1588–1623). Yet these Manuscripts must once have existed, for they have been printed a million times from authentic, genuine writings by hand . . . fashioned word by word, line upon line, stroke upon stroke by someone. The Church is founded on the Bible. The Anglican Service on a carefully thought-out prayer book. Similarly, the important fact to remember is this, that behind the complete System—which bears marks of design—stands MAN the Thinker. Freemasonry is thus the outward effect of an invisible cause, the systematic thought of a concealed Designer or Designers expressed in a concrete Ritual.

Our first task, therefore, is to ascertain the earliest period in which a modern writer or writers, using modern language, could have created or reconstructed our Modern Rite as interpreted by the Modern Ritual.

Manifestly the Modern Ritual (and therefore Speculative Masonry) could never have been known in the Medieval Era. There was then no flexible English language in existence by which a nimble thinker could clothe his thoughts. There was no proper medium by which the idiom of a foreign tongue could be correctly translated. Our flexible Ethical Charges could never have been written until SOME-ONE first created words for Englishmen to use. We have
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

already seen that that “someones” was Shakespeare with his 20,000 word vocabulary, many being new and strange words—derived from the roots of ancient and modern languages.

Now the language of the Ritual is so modern that the majority of our learned Masonic Brethren have no doubt that the Ritual and Modern Freemasonry are of comparatively recent origin. The scholarly modernist—“making a determined stand against unhistorical claims and unscientific pretensions”—assigns them to the 1717–23–38 era, the immediate years after the “Four Old Lodges” of London met at the “Apple Tree Tavern” and united to form a Grand Lodge. It is alleged that the cream of our Masonic Symbolism was then created, apart from the question of language modernity, because of what may be termed “negative evidence.”

1. Researchers hitherto have not been able to discover the actual practices and the number of Degrees (the Craft and the Higher ones) known to the Freemasons pre-1717.

2. It is asserted there is no reference anywhere pre-1717 to the Legend of Hiram or the Ethical Concept of King Solomon’s Temple.

3. Masonic scholars, generally speaking, consider that this particular era was favourable for the creation of the Craft concept of “the Great Architect” and for the promulgation of a Deistic philosophy in place of a Trinitarian.

Ignoring the fact that Bro. Anderson and the Grand Lodge emphatically declared that they had rigidly adhered to the Ancient Landmarks, introduced no innovations and had simply inherited an Ethical System handed to them by a previous generation, the Masonic Modernist nevertheless believes that in some mysterious way Bro. Anderson and the Grand Lodge...

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS

created the Rites of Craft Masonry and laid the foundations of the “Development” of the Rituals of the Higher Degrees which were created during subsequent decades—some fifty years or so.

“The course of this development was a curiously secret thing, alike by accident and design. . . . Those concerned elected apparently to hide. . . . It was never betrayed by an unguarded word.” (Emblematic Freemasonry, p. 15, A. E. Waite.)

This admission leaves the entire question of the creation of the Ritual an open one. There are no grounds, no proofs for foisting the creation of Freemasonry on to the shoulders of the 1717 Masons. Bro. Waite does not know. He only thinks and suspects they created something and hid it. The reader of this book, however, already knows that the man who did the “hiding” was Shakespeare, the creator of the Hiram Story.

“The development (of the Ritual) was so curiously a secret thing” that it could only have taken place in the vivid realms of the imagination of those “1717 Theorists” who believe that the Symbolism of the Royal Art began to evolve in the illiterate lodges of craft masons, daubers and labourers; and that eventually the full flower of Craft Masonry blossomed in the studies of Bros. Anderson, Desaguliers and the Grand Lodge, created and fashioned by them; or that it was evolved in the convivial Lodges of the 1717–23–38 London Brethren in some mysterious manner no one knows how or by whom. It has been suggested that “Gentlemen” joined operative lodges in some remote era and persuaded the down-trodden, wretched operatives to give up gradually their trade union ideals which revolved round wages and hours of labour for philosophic concepts—“spiritualizing Temples and
morali\hspace{1mm}zing \hspace{1mm}on \hspace{1mm}Tools." \hspace{1mm}The \hspace{1mm}truth \hspace{1mm}is \hspace{1mm}that \hspace{1mm}even \hspace{1mm}in \hspace{1mm}the \hspace{1mm}Elizabethan \hspace{1mm}era \hspace{1mm}there \hspace{1mm}were \hspace{1mm}many \hspace{1mm}so-called \hspace{1mm}"Gentle\hspace{1mm}men" \hspace{1mm}who \hspace{1mm}could \hspace{1mm}not \hspace{1mm}even \hspace{1mm}read \hspace{1mm}or \hspace{1mm}write.

\textit{There is no direct proof} that Freemasonry at some particular period became telescoped into the operative craft; or that "Gentlemen" joined operative lodges; or that such lodges suddenly or gradually changed their operative ideals—wages, hours and conditions of labour—for Ethical ones which were out of the orbit of the grossly illiterate, horribly poor, struggling stonemasons, daubers, plasterers, navies and labourers of the building trade... regarded by the State as mere hewers of wood and drawers of water.

\textit{There is no direct proof} that the 1717 "Four Old Lodges" were operative lodges, "the direct descendants" of the Middle Age Gilds; or that the ethics of Freemasonry grew naturally or unnaturally out of their creedal crudities. There is as much difference between such theological beliefs and the broad-based charity of Masonry ("to be good men and true") as between American Jazz and a Beethoven Symphony.

\textit{There is no direct proof} that the Ritual "evolved," for ethical concepts cannot evolve of themselves. They can only be created and recreated by the genius of an informed mind or minds. Moreover, the practical difficulties of getting a Ritual universally accepted... presumed to have been in a state of flux for many years... by widely spread Lodges—a Ritual emanating from a Central Grand Lodge in London—has never been faced by any 1717 theorist. Roads were bad and communication difficult in that era as well as in Feudal times. It would have been little less than miraculous for members of scattered

\textbf{THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS}

Lodges to have remembered and memorized an oral ceremonial heard only once or twice during an ever-changing evolution from 1717 to 1738.

Definite historic proof has, however, been adduced that there were no operative lodges in existence in 1717 for all such trade combines were swept away by a series of enactments that began in 1350. Long before the close of the sixteenth century the craft gilds of working masons had perished. Individual masons persisted, but not as members of a trade gild or lodge. There is not a scrap of evidence anywhere—letters, minutes, manuscripts or historical facts—that, in the teeth of the State Laws, specially devised out of fear of rebellions and peasant risings (like the Wat Tyler, John Ball and Jack Cade outbreaks) one solitary lodge of operative masons survived the 1425 Decree or the Elizabethan Acts of Parliament. The Elizabethan punishments were so terrible that workmen dare not have held a private lodge or a public assembly for the purpose of discussing wages, etc. It would have been incipient rebellion and dealt with by the military.

Having thus clarified the position—for there could be no Ritual evolution in operative lodges when none existed after 1425, nor any evolution prior to this date, there being no flexible language until 1579-89—we can proceed to examine the Ritual, alleged to have evolved from 1717 to 1738 from one crude operative Degree to Three.

The first important fact—already touched upon—is that the Bible enters into the Ritual, the details of King Solomon's Temple being taken from it. The very phrase, "And Scripture informs us," combined with the Lodge use of the "Sacred Book," indicate a familiarity that could never have been possible in an England ruled by the Priest. It was only in the reigns of Elizabeth and James that an ethical ceremonial with its private interpretations and the use of Holy Writ
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY
dare have taken place in a private Lodge of Laymen. In the reign of “Bloody Queen Mary” the Bible—which had never been in general use—was suppressed.

It is therefore self-evident that the Ritual was conceived in a Protestant and not a Catholic era. It was necessarily shaped and fashioned either in the Elizabethan or the Augustan Age of Letters, i.e. the Shakespeare or the Pope era. It is, naturally, hallowed with the characteristics of the Age that produced it. Does it, therefore, bear the distinguishing marks of the 1717-38 period?

It does not!

With the Restoration in 1668 there was a distinct change in English literature in matter and style. Dryden began a new type of expression which was maintained and developed by Pope and his contemporaries. The prose may have become more perfect than the Elizabethan, but it was chiefly executive or technical; the observance of definite rules that had to be mechanically followed.

Enthusiasm was repressed; the imagination tempered; symmetry and uniformity had to be preserved at the expense of decoration and invention ... so pronouncedly a characteristic of the Elizabethan era. We have only to think of the mechanical couples of Pope, the polished phrase of Addison, the pungent satire of Swift, the steel-like precision of Hume, the hard matter-of-fact diction of Gibbon, to realize at once the tremendous gulf between the lively imagination of the 1616 Elizabethans and the classically cold expression of 1717 Augustan convention. There was then a new spirit of criticism abroad, bitter, biting, satirical. Picturesque fancy was anathema.

Austin Dobson says: “To be clear, logical ... became the unwritten code of the times. Working prosaically its chief gifts were in prose. ... It

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS
gave us a poetry of convention unexampled in mechanical accomplishments.” (Chambers’s Cyc. Eng. Litt.)

If one thing is more certain than another in the purely literary domain it is this: That the Spirit and the Language of the Ritual is not the product of the high-water mark of a mechanical, prosaic conventionalism which glittered with the cold fire of an iceberg and was devoid of the warm humanities of life. Its modernity is not the mechanical polish of the 1717 Augustan Age any more than it is the product of the purely respectable veneer of Victorian sentimentalism. The Ritual has a distinct flavour of its own, as pronounced as the difference between a Corona and a Cuban. Even oneversed in literary style and thought can feel on very little reflection the tremendous gulf between the didactic, technical precision of the poet Pope who sets out in plain, set terms:

“Man! Know thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is Man,”

and the Master-Poet who wrote:

“What a piece of work is Man! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an Angel! In apprehension how like a God! The beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!”

The difference in treatment of the same subject—Man and God—is exactly the difference between a Ritual created and shaped in the Spirit of the 1717 Augustan Age, of which Pope was the leader, and the Ritual we actually possess. Pope could never have written Shakespeare’s lines, neither is there any contemporary of Pope who could have infused into our Ritual its dramatic imagination and living power. It glows with warmth, tenderness, emotion and vigour from the first line to the last.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

The style dates itself. It is purely Elizabethan. It could not possibly be the product of an age of metallic artificiality of structure to set form and rule that would have made the Ritual a wooden, dead and lifeless thing. A literary epoch that prided itself on clarity of expression could never have produced the imaginative phrase:

"The light of a Master Mason is darkness visible, serving only to express that gloom which rests on the prospect of futurity. . . . It is that mysterious veil which the eye of human reason cannot penetrate unless assisted by that light which is from above," etc. (The Ritual.)

There is an indefinite definiteness in this passage—like the impressionism of Turner or Whistler—as contrary to the Pope era as to the Medieval. It is this particular spirit—the spirit of Romanticism, Imagination, Fancy, Picturesqueness which arises from deeps of Mystical Spirituality—that pervades and saturates every word, thought and turn of expression. It is found, later, in the Theosophic Mysticism of the Higher Degrees.

The modern Ritual was conceived in an age afire with a spirit akin to Milton and Bunyan, not Locke and Hume. Even Bro. Waite, 1717 theorist though he be, reluctantly confesses that—

"The early eighteenth century is about the last period to which we should willingly refer the invention of an Elloquent Symbolism and the morality of a GREAT MYTH." (Emblematic Freemasonry, p. 113.)

I should think so! The force of circumstances drives the impartial student right away from the age of Pope to the Golden Age of Letters. . . . the Age that vied for comparison with all that "insolent Greece

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS

or haughty Rome ever sent forth." (Ben Jonson on Shakespeare in the Folio.) When an authority like the late Bro. J. Hughan affirms that one of the most remarkable of Elizabethan books, The New Atlantis, "seems to be, and most probably is, the Key to the Modern Rituals of Freemasonry," we can be quite sure that we are more than justified in saying that the Ritual is steeped in the Elizabethan Spirit. (Quoted in The Columbus of Literature, by W. F. C. Wigston, p. 218.)

Assuming, however, that a mechanical age might possess a creator capable of producing something at variance with its spirit, who were the Freemasons that could have produced the Ritual in 1717–23–38?

The only men were Bros. Anderson and Desaguliers, both Divines and scholars of Scotch and French descent. Both have left literary works. There is absolutely nothing in their writings to indicate that they possessed any CREATIVE GENIUS, or the necessary peculiar ability, allied to a mature and comprehensive scholarship, to conceive and technically produce the Ritual.

Bro. Anderson's work is mediocre. It evinces the painstaking talent of academic education only, patience and industry.

Bro. Desaguliers' works have much more literary brilliance and reflection. He had the inventive mind and much eloquence. But he lacks the Divine touch of Genius, the Fire that descends from above. Neither scholar had the gift of CREATIVE POWER. The Grand Lodge Committee—the only persons who could have assisted them—were all literary nondescripts, apart from Bro. Payne.

But the suggestion that the Ritual was the work of a Grand Lodge Committee is palpably absurd. The Ritual is a classic and a WORK OF ART. It has found favour in the sight of men and LIVED because it is impregnated with that subtly mysterious something that may be called "Divine Impact," by virtue of which
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

all great Classics live through varying ages and climes. It touches the common chord of all Humanity.

Now no great Work of Art has ever been accomplished by a Committee. The members invariably pull different ways. There are squabbles over trivial, concrete points that are plain and straightforward. How much more pronounced would such squabbles have been in a "1717 Reconciliation" Grand Lodge Committee" over new ideas, new methods, new signs, new symbols, new Degrees? It is certain there would have been a cleavage in the ranks. The "Ancient Landmarks" of the alleged "One Degree Operative" would have been held to be in jeopardy by some of the Brethren. There would have been jealousies, cabals, splits, secessions and new Orders.

When we know that the mere change from the pre-1717 isolated, independent Lodges to a Grand Lodge business Combine caused grave bickerings from Masons who wanted to preserve their independence, we may be quite certain that where Ethical Principles were at stake there could neither have been alterations, innovations or creations imposed upon the 1717 National Fraternity—then practising Masonry all over the country, in Ireland and Scotland—without tremendous opposition of which there would have been left RECORDS. The Committee who had conceived the alleged new system of Three Degrees would have been asked very plainly, "Who made YOU Rulers in Israel?"

With comparatively little trouble the distinguishing characteristics can now be tabulated with certainty, since the most formidable of the a priori claims of the 1717 modernist have been dealt with. The first important fact which emerges is:

1. THE UNITY OF CONCEPTION AND EXPRESSION THROUGHOUT THE THREE CRAFT DEGREES.

The Ritual bears the impress of a single mind that conceived and executed. The Degrees are linked one
to the other. That is the chief technical beauty of the Ritual as an ART FORM. The Second Degree arises naturally out of the First. The Third completes the Story and rings down the Curtain on the Drama of Life.

1. The Birth of a Thinking Human Being.
2. His Education through the World.
3. His Death and translation to a Higher Life.

The finished Ritual thus bears its own internal witness that it could never have been spatchcocked together in successive decades by ethical and literary tinkers. He who understands how a creative work is conceived, shaped and born, could not possibly believe that this unique Child christened "Freemasonry" was the creation of many men working in many Lodges or even one Lodge.

The primal conception is too unique, too vast in its scope: the inter-relation between the details and the perfect whole is too precise; and the symmetrical relationship of the Three Stages of Man through the Degrees too interwoven to be anything other than the work of ONE SUPREME THINKER, who had surveyed a tremendous field of knowledge, and had poured into the crucible of his mind a mass of facts relating to God, Nature, Humanity, Art; and from such ingredients in diversity had created an Emblematical System in Unity, an Ethical Temple in which the Brethren might worship, united in the search for the Lost Word, "Love," a Word that would solve the world's economic, moral and religious problems, and which was to be found by each seeker within his own heart.

The Unity of the Ritual with its search for the "Lost Word," could no more have been produced by a Committee, than The Tempest or Hamlet could have been created by all the talented scholars conjoined from 1717 onwards.

216

217
2. SIMPLICITY: THE ART WHICH CONCEALS ART.

When we examine the Ritual in detail, its literary beauty is very striking. It is couched in simple language similar to the prose of the Bible. It is strong, direct, clear, with a nervous style typically English. The opening of the Initiation Ceremony is indicative of the clarity of treatment that runs throughout.

"As no man can be made a Mason unless he is free and of mature age, I demand of you are you a Free Man and of the full age of twenty-one years?"

The simple words are exactly apropos to the peculiar circumstances of the Candidate, equally as much as the more elaborate utterance uttered under very different conditions.

"Our Brother has been made to represent one of the brightest characters recorded in the annals of Freemasonry," etc.

We are apt to forget the supreme Art by which these striking Lodge effects are produced. The simple language blinds us to the fact that only a great creative artist could have produced round the meditative silence of two monthly intervals, such a series of cumulative incidents, which steadily heighten and deepen in intensity of personal emotion until it reaches a climax in the Finale of the Master Mason's Degree, as impressive after years of iteration to the Old Past Master as to the newly-raised Brother.

The effect produced is nothing less than the result of the conscious exercise of an Art Faculty which conceals Art... the Art of a practical executive Thinker, an Art that could never have been "stumbled into" by accident or design by untrained writers, by immature, uncertain thinkers, by unskilled executants unused to fitting "the word to the action and the action to the word."

None of the 1717-38 men had the necessary technique—apart from the conception of the prime idea—to produce the necessary Art effects from simple words. The trained mind behind the Ritual, actually framed his ideas with one eye on the Candidate that he might impressively understand and follow easily the ordeal... and one eye on the Brethren that they might assimilate without effort the simple words, thus sowing seeds for future ethical studies.

Such craftsmanship can neither be bought nor acquired. It is a Divine Gift. It is to be found neither in the "Rummers Tavern," in Grand Lodge Committees, in the heart of a Doctor of Divinity or a Fellow of the Royal Society. It is the "fine frenzy" that abides only in the soul of great genius.

"Such great wits," said an old Elizabethan, "are not the common Births of Time... Like the Phoenix, Nature gives the world that Individual Species but once in five hundred years."

3. THE EUPHONY OF PHRASE.

It is significant that there is the same triple form of expression that is characteristic of the great genius of the Elizabethan School, viz.:

1, "Reading maketh a full man; 2, conference, a ready man; 3, and writing an exact man. . . ."
1, "Some are born great; 2, some achieve greatness; 3, and some have greatness thrust upon them."

The mannerism of this triple beat is notable throughout the Ritual.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

1, "The Sun to rule the day; 2, the moon to govern the night; 3, and the Master to rule and direct his Lodge."

We have the same music beat in the more elaborate sentence:

1, "The Sacred Writings are to govern our Faith; 2, the Square to regulate our conduct; 3, and the Compasses to keep us in due bounds with all mankind."

The average Freemason does not analyse the music of the words, but the beat and the rhythm run throughout like crystal streams of living waters. Even an untrained literary ear can detect, with little conscious effort, the euphony of phrase and sentence, the harmonics of pure verbalism alone, and the exquisite balance of the sustained passages. This triple mannerism runs throughout the entire Craft System from the three simple knocks on the door to the three Principals who Rule. We thus possess positive evidence of conscious design and purposeful intent on the part of a thinking mind hitherto unsuspected.

4. THE WORKMANSHIP OF A POET.

On higher literary grounds the fact emerges that the mind behind the Ritual was that of a Poet. What makes a supreme Poet? A prime factor is the gift of being able to see analogies in things the most diverse. He must therefore possess imagination, fancy, a sense of the beautiful. He must be able to give to "airy nothings"—unsuspected by the average man—a concrete form (a Symbol) that can be seen and understood, "a local habitation and a name." It is the Divine Touch which transmutes to gold the "poet’s pen."

The philosophy behind the Ritual is poetic and the Author necessarily a "Poet-Philosopher," for "the

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS

true philosopher and the true poet are one," says Emerson. The Creator of the Ritual must have had a mind similar to that of the ancient philosopher who wrote:

"I found that I was fitted for nothing so well as for the study of Truth, having a Mind nimble and versatile enough to catch the resemblance of things."

5. ANALOGIES OF ALL KINDS.

Now the Ritual is replete with analogies from the first note, "Brethren assist me to open the Lodge," to the conclusion, "that we may ascend to the Grand Lodge above," or the Lodge Finale, "according to ancient custom look up our Secrets in the safe . . . repository of our Hearts," etc.

There is such a welter of piled-up analogies enforcing deep philosophic and moral truths by a Mind "nimble and versatile enough to catch the resemblance" between rude, concrete forms—the maul, chisel, ladder, pillars, aprons, the Tyburn Tree, Sun, Moon and Stars, etc., and their relationship to the purely abstract metaphysics of the Soul, expressed in the simplest manner with unerring accuracy, nothing vitally omitted, nothing dragged in untowardly—that one can only stand reverentially speechless at the wonder of it all.

6. ITS MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

Apart from these characteristics there is a maturity of thought, the product of a ripe philosophy, indicative of "the years which bring the philosophic mind."
The Ritual is a Moral Treatise on human life . . . a series of reflections thrown upon a Lodge Screen in

1 The play on the word "safe" is quite a characteristic of the puns and quibbles which saturate Shakespeare’s Works. He was the great adept at the use of setting "Diamond-Words" in his line to flash numerous meanings.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

the form of a succession of pictures from the cradle to the grave, the happenings that are likely to befall a Child of Man in his progress from the Eternal Past to the Eternal Future in the Eternal Now, which, in the Ceremonial, represents our passage through the world. . . . Simple language, simple pictures which serve as “CANDLES to LIGHT Poor FOOL’S the way to dusty DEATH,” the Candidate being the Actor that “struts and frets his hour upon the Stage” of life and eventually passes into the wings to await the arrival of others who are to be “re-born.”

The philosophy behind the Ritual is so natural, so simply expressed that it is difficult to realize that there is a profundity of meaning behind the simplest symbol. It is as difficult to realize as the fact that there are depths of knowledge, wisdom and philosophy in the plays, undreamt of by poor pedants who shallowly imagine that Shakespeare wrote solely for “GAIN,” to amuse the idle hours of idle clowns at the Globe Theatre, uninfluenced by any nobler incentive.

“In all cases of danger and difficulty in whom do you put your trust?” asks the Ritual. The Candidate’s answer at once links him to the Creator who marks even the Fall of a Sparrow. From a philosophy of Faith in a Divinity which shapes our end arises the philosophy of works without which Faith is DEAD; the educative mind and soul culture of the novice; his relationship through moral duties to all men, based on a lifelong search for a “LOST WORD,” a Key only to be found in his own breast wherewith to solve the Riddle of Life, a personal attitude to be expressed in the trivial round, the common task towards God, one’s neighbour and one’s self.

These are the metaphysics of the soul expressed as

1 Note this marvellously subtle reference to the Third Degree with “the glimmering ray” of the candle thrown athwart the Solemn Rites of the Death Chamber of “poor” Freemasons.

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS

a practical reality. It is the highest type of Divine Philosophy shorn of all the academic jargon of the thousand and one Schoolmen of the Ages.

7. THE ORATORY OF THE RITUAL.

The Ritual was never intended to serve as a mere reading exercise. Much of its beauty would be lost were it only read in the quiet of one’s study. It was compiled, essentially, to be spoken, to be declaimed, to be memorized, to be pondered over phrase by phrase, so that the inflection of the voice or the gesture of the hand should interpret the sense. There are passages of declamatory power that rise in language, imagery and sustained eloquence to the highest heights. Who could have composed them? No one but a SUPREME ORATOR. Someone who had often looked into the eyes of his fellows and watched the play of his words sweeping across the chords of their souls, stirring their emotions and quickening their resolutions.

Bros. Anderson and Desaguliers were both public speakers, but there is nothing to indicate that they were orators of the first water, that their utterances ever flamed with the fire of a Demosthenes. Yet no one could have written the oratorical, recitative passages who had not faced an audience, who knew not how to rise slowly from height to height with solemn gravity until a crescendo is reached . . . as in the sonorous, ringing tones of the W.M. to the newly raised Master Mason:

“. . . that even in this perishable frame resides a vital and immortal principle which inspires a holy confidence that the Lord of Life will enable us to trample even the King of Terrors beneath our feet, and lift our eyes to that bright morning Star whose rising brings peace and salvation to the faithful and obedient of the human race.”
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

There is the cadence of a dying fall in the last words. The hearers have been stirred by an immortal note of triumph: "Oh Grave! where is thy Victory! Oh Death! where is thy Sting!" And then by a touch the orator takes them by the hand as their emotions subside, to walk beside the still waters, beneath the quiet stars, their hearts inspired by unconquerable hope to fight the good fight in the battle of life.

The writer of the Ritual was no ordinary public lecturer (like Bro. Desaguliers) but a consummate orator who possessed an Art Power similar to the craftsmanship used by Shakespeare in Mark Antony's Oration. He must have possessed a natural strain akin to one of the great orators of whom Ben Jonson wrote:

"He commanded where he spoke and had the judges angry or pleased at his devotions. No man had their affections (i.e. Passions or Emotions) more in their power... His hearers could not cough or turn aside... lest they missed a word."

8. THE DIGNIFIED CEREMONIAL.

The work of a Lodge centres round its Ceremonial which is precise, defined, orderly. The Worshipful Master presides over a band of Officers, supported by Past Masters. Each officer is presumed to know his work in every particular. There is a formal opening and closing Rite in each of the Three Degrees. The signs, knocks, perambulations, gestures, etc., are all inter-related. There is the same UNITY found in the Ceremonies as in the Literary Unities. The same austere severity pervades the formal opening as it does the closing, deliberately introduced to set the spirit that should animate all Lodge meetings, those "Solemn and rare Feasts which are set in the Carcanet of the long year like precious stones at Monthly Intervals,

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS

lest the fine point of Seldom Pleasure be blunted by too much familiarity." (Sonnet I.1—148.)

In all the Ceremonial, opening, closing, initiation, passing, raising, the Board of Installed Masters, the Higher Degrees, there is nothing hazardous or arbitrary introduced. The MIND that conceived all these formalities must have been thoroughly familiar with Ceremonies that were dignified and impressive. The tang of Royal functions, Court procedure and cold Judicial splendour impregnate the entire services. The Thinker behind the Ritual could never have produced such a severity of dignified tone if he had not been steeped in procedure of a similar character. One can imagine a Shakespeare who fills his pages with Kings and Queens, who even knows the exact ceremonial of a Legatine Court, projecting such workmanship on the pages of the Ritual, but neither operates nor philosophiers, ignorant of formal ceremonial, could have produced an atmosphere to which they were strangers.

9. THE WORK OF A SCHOLAR.

The Unknown Thinker must also have been a Scholar of a Rare type, with a mind stored with knowledge drawn from the Ancient, the Medieval and the Modern (Elizabethan) world. The archives of the past must have been ransacked and assimilated. If the Ancient Mysteries of Egypt and Greece contributed their quota, so, too, did the Medieval operative guilds, as well as the customs of the contemporary world (particularly seen in the Penal Signs of the Degrees) in which he must have lived. All this is done with such subtle art that one is only conscious of the exterior glitter, whereas the Ritual, like a berg of jewelled caves, has vast unseen foundations, deeper, greater, grander than the awe-inspiring peaks of concepts which now sail the ocean of time.

There are two ways in which a scholar can impart
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

knowledge. He can treat his theme elaborately, minutely, exhaustively, so that when the last word is written there is nothing more to be said, as it were, on the subject, like Fraser's Golden Bough or Spencer's First Principles.

There is another method, in which the scholar veils his knowledge purposely. He writes suggestively to stimulate reflection and research. He leaves deliberate gaps to drive a student into a train of thought. He uses a word or a phrase and leaves it to the "discerning mind" to reflect that it could only have been used out of a tremendous storehouse of systematized knowledge. The style of the Ritual is similar to

"... one of the most suggestive authors that ever wrote... whose sayings are like some of the heavenly bodies that are visible to the naked eye, but in which you see constantly more and more, the better the telescope you apply to them."

(Archbishop Whately.)

This quotation accurately expresses my point of view. It is a judgment profoundly true of the Ritual. There is a tremendous reserve of power behind the simplicity that makes its impact dynamic in its intensity of expression. It is a quarry to which Masons will repair for generations to come, finding in it veins of golden knowledge which must be thoroughly comprehended as systems of imbedded thought in the mind of the Author.

He used, in fact, the discovered treasures of the World Universal as a Master Craftsman and Artist, utilizing, like a Master, after strict examination, only the most precious and flawless stones with which he fashioned a new and Ethical Solomon's Temple for the healing of the Nations.

It is for this reason that men of different types of mind see in the Ritual the flashing of different precious stones—chalcedony, sardonyx and pearl—Theosophy,
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

very roots had there not been personal virtue behind the writer and which was known to his immediate associates.

As a Work of Art, a System of Morality, a Philo-

sophic Concept Freemasonry stands second to none. It is unique. Ruskin lays it down as an axiom that a

depraved man cannot produce a supreme work of Art, that the “viciousness” will “out” somewhere in his workmanship. In short, that a man’s real character—

if he be inherently vicious—beats and betrays him. It stains the white radiance of eternity, the “Immortal Conception,” if the life be of the earth, earthy. It is

only Beauty on the Body of Truth that can create a Divine Form; Love, not Lust that is eternal. It is only purity of motive that carries the supreme Artist to his highest flights as in the Elder days of Art when:

Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part,
For the Gods see everywhere.

The Ritual could only have been produced by one who was sound in head and pure in heart with no ordinary purity, for it is steeped in the purest morality, the most sublime poetry, and exquisite emotional spirituality. One can well apply the old Elizabethan’s phrase to the “gentle Shakespeare” that “All who were great and good loved him.”

The Ritual sprang from a pure life and a pure mind . . . not from any charnel house of corruption. It is an immortal classic like all great works which spring from the purest passions of the Soul. It is destined to be recited by the children of men until “the Solemn Temples, the great Globe itself shall dissolve like an insubstantial pageant faded.”

11. A MAN OF THE WORLD.

The Founder of Freemasonry must also have been a man of the world who knew the value of the Social

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS

Degree of Song and Mirth in promoting kindliness and good feeling among the Brethren in the feast of reason and the flow of wit in the Lodge where controversial subjects are forbidden. The “Merrie Meetings” that took place at the “Mermaid Tavern” may have had a far deeper significance than has hitherto been suspected. In any case we can well imagine that he visited similar Elizabethan gatherings to the one described by Prof. Nichol.

“Could we have had better company than that which talked and laughed and speculated and exchanged bon mots around the Board . . . while the flowers exhaled their fragrance, and the music rang, where there gathered about the choicest spirits of the time. There poets, thinkers, men of science and of the world, jurists and diplomats associated on equal terms. . . .”

One can almost imagine in this vivid description a Masonic gathering when the call has been from “Labour to Refreshment.”

12. THE WORK OF A DRAMATIST.

But the most striking feature of the Ritual is its sweep of Dramatic Power. When the Curtain rolls up—with the opening of the tiled door to the candidate—the spectators, who are the Brethren, are brought face to face with the Drama of a Human Life—the common lot of every one—portrayed in THREE ACTS or Three Degrees. Though the subject-matter of the Play is steeped in the Moralities, the Philosophies of the Ancient Cults and Christian Ethics, yet the supreme test of the Drama is everywhere apparent . . . Action, Action, Action.

The dramatic unities are observed, the sequence of incident maintained, and the entire movement works up to a climax . . . the Tragedy of Hiram.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

It is followed by what in weaker hands would have been an anti-climax, the recitative of a fragment of traditional history and an exposition of a number of working tools. But this is so skilfully executed that the supplement serves as a fitting scaling down into the common normalities of every-day life from the heights to which the Lodge has been carried by the solemnity of the Preacher.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy Youth... For Man goeth to his long home, And the mourners go about the Street."

In the Epilogue our tense emotions are restored. The Drama is finished with the remembrance that the duties of life are more than life.

Unlike an ordinary play, there are no stage effects. The results are attained despite the most difficult circumstances—fatal to popular success in any ordinary theatre production—to carry the hearer's mind onward, by dialogue, the swift-moving verbal action of the respective parts by unskilled amateurs, the dramatic gesture and movement of the actors on the floor of the Lodge as the Story of a Life unfolds itself from Degree to Degree, or, rather, from act to act.

SHAKESPEARE, THE CONCEALED FREE-MASON.

The world does not know the Author of the Ritual. Nor does the majority of the Brethren. It slipped into the world in MS., no one knows how, with the System it inculcated. An anonymous Work! An anonymous Ethical System! The Author veiled himself in a cloak of invisibility, known, necessarily, to comparatively few. It was as though he had said: "By the mind alone will I be seen!"

To have maintained the role of "A Concealed Man" successfully, he must have been a Proteus who had

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS

the facile gift of changing his disguise daily, a Pastmaster in the art of simulation and dissimulation, with the secretive mind of our ancient Brother who wrote:

"Set it down that a Habit of Secrecy is both Politic and Moral... Who will open himself to a Blab or a Babbler?

"Mysteries are due to Secrecy... Talkers are commonly credulous... He that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not...

"The advantages of simulation and dissimulation are... to lay asleep opposition... to reserve to a man's self a fair retreat... The best is... a power to feign if there be no remedy."

This constitutes the marrow of Freemasonry regarding the manner in which our Masonic Secrets should be guarded, equally as much as the Ritual injunction, "never improperly to disclose... and cautiously to avoid all occasions which may inadvertently lead you so to do." It would apply with peculiar emphasis to a concealed Founder, especially if circumstances were such that he had no choice but to remain concealed, possessing only "the power to feign since there was no remedy." Secretive by nature, making a virtue of necessity, he might almost have written the Elizabethan phrase that must have been known to him... "It is the Glory of God to CONCEAL a thing and the Glory of a KING to find it out."

These distinguishing characteristics of the Mind behind the Ritual may not be individually very remarkable, but, as a combination of mental and ethical qualifications, which the Unity of the Entire Work proclaims are to be found United in a Single Mind, it is so extraordinary, that the
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Personal Identity of the Man ought to stand out even against the dark background of the centuries that have slipped into the historic past. Let us deduce, then, from the Ritual, the type of man that must have produced it. He must have been:

A Scholar.
A Philosopher.
A Perfectly Wise Man.
Tolerant of Religious Opinions.
Of Splendid Tastes.
Possessed of Great Aims for the Good of Men.
Gifted with a Wonderful Mind that had a Universal Grasp of Knowledge.
Morally Admira ble.
A Man of the World.
One that had taken all knowledge to be his Province.
An Orator, a Poet, a Dramatist, Familiar with Ceremonials.
A Concealed Man.

It is now transparently clear that the Art Form of the Ritual was never produced by a Committee. Its Unity throughout proclaim it to be the product of a Single Mind. Where, then, is the Man who possessed all the enumerated characteristics which have been clearly discovered? Is he to be found between 1717 and 1738? No! What man among Masons possessed within himself all the qualifications in the above list from 1717 to 1816 when the Lodge of Reconciliation was formed to consider minor ritual details between the London and the York Grand Lodge methods?

There is not one.

Could Bro. Anderson have given us the musical rhythm of the simple words of Freemasonry? Could

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS

Bro. Desaguliers have created the Dramatic Action and Plot? Did either of them possess the microscopic mind for detail combined with a Universal grasp of First Principles? They could no more have conceived and technically executed the Complete Idea behind Freemasonry (of which the Craft Ritual is but a Part—the Base for the Higher Degrees of Christian Mysticism similarly created and concealed) than Bro. Findel with his mechanical temperament, or some of his modern confrères whose minds merely run like the catalogue index of uninspired dull plodders.

In the early eighteenth century there was no one who possessed the peculiar cast of mind to create so unique a presentation of Truth in Symbolic Form, a cast of mind that must have been properly envirooned for it to have been stirred into such singular activity. The finished concept with its Pyramid of Degrees, is as far above the minds of the 1717 Brethren, as genius is above mere talent, or the towering Himalayas above the plains. There is the same difference between the Ritual we possess and a Ritual conceived and written by mediocre minds, operatives, theologians, academics or business-men as there is between a Turner and the insipid hack-work of a pot-boiler. The one lives. The other is not even wooden.

Behind the touch of Turner is the mind of a man who sees ... who knows how to produce his effects by a simplicity of effort which predicates an exquisite discrimination of taste, feeling, craftsmanship, and a profound knowledge of the fundamentals of art, the result of practical experience allied to genius.

Behind the many touches of the Ritual there is the same kind of genius and unerring accuracy in the blending of colour, light, shade, form and composition. The visible points we see, indicate a vast store-house of esoteric information, a pyramid of heaped-up treasures which calls for an explanation.

The theorists who believe that Modern Freemasonry
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

was created from 1717 onwards have to find a man who had this peculiar cast of mind, who was also a supreme dramatist, who could adapt the dramatic art not for the characterization of an individual, but for the characterization of Universal Man and his relationship as an ethical being to the world, to Nature and to God. In the 1717 era even Pope, Swift, Addison, Rowe, temperamentally and intellectually had not the necessary qualifications. It is therefore futile to urge that a combination of mediocre men, whether operatives or "Gentlemen," created the System and the Book. Water cannot rise above its own level: And the level of inspiration rises no higher than Bros. Anderson and Desaguliers. Any number of ordinary minds joined to theirs could not have brought down the fire from heaven though they gashed themselves with the knives of despair.

The "Anderson-Desaguliers School" never produced the Ritual. They never claimed to have produced it. They were emphatic on the point. They simply asserted that they were faithful to the "Old Charges" of Freemasonry in their efforts to bring to the notice of the world a System which had hitherto been practised in secret.

There is no reason to doubt their veracity, for we have found that the Ethical System is revealed in its entirety in the Shakespeare text. We know now that the "Old Charges" did not revolve round a crude operative legend, but round the "making, passing and raising" of Freemasons, a system of Three Degrees that had been worked as far back as 1650 on the authority of Bro. Preston, confirmed by the 1702 Haughfoot Minute, the 1711 Trinity College MS. and the alleged "Exposures" from 1723 onwards.

Standing in the 1717-23 era with the Ritual in our hand, which contains the portrait of a Personality, we can look backwards and forwards along the stream of time. If we want to find the Creator of the Craft,
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

An examination of the Shakespeare Plays on the same literary lines will disclose the fact that the same distinguishing characteristics are there to be found which we have discovered in miniature in the Ritual. There are a thousand authorities drawn from all over the world that lay their tribute at the feet of the Supreme Dramatist as the man who seemed to possess within himself every branch of Knowledge and Scholarship. The characteristics of the Ritual and the Plays run on parallel lines. They were wombed out of the same cast of mind. And the Author linked for ever his Masonic knowledge to the plays by his marvellous Images and his expert use of the Ritual Cypher.

J. O. Halliwell who discovered the “Regius Poem” has said that:

“Every unprejudiced enquirer will admit that in all probability English Masonry in its present state was not introduced before the close of the sixteenth century.” (Ancient F.M., p. 48.)

This more than confirms the position. The Ritual was the product of the Elizabethan Age, the creation of a single mind, a unique genius, no other than the Immortal Bard, referred to by the 1623 Folio Editors as “A Worthy Fellow” and by Ben Jonson as “My beloved, the author, and what he hath left us,” a sly hint that Shakespeare had left behind him secretly the Complete System of Freemasonry to the “Thirty-third Degree.” This is confirmed by Bro. Yarker, who, in 1883, declared that England was the home of the Higher Degrees which she “possessed prior to 1717,” for in “Long Livers,” 1711, the Higher Degrees are alluded to in express terms.” (Spec. F.M., pp. 2-4.)

The reader is now in possession of sufficient data to enable him to arrive at a decision respecting the Masonry of William Shakespeare. There are other facts in this connection which it is impossible to disclose for the moment, for it would make this work too voluminous. But the facts now made public speak for themselves. Shakespeare proves his Masonry by “Signs, Words, Tokens and the Perfect Points,” etc. I am too old a Mason to be easily imposed upon or deceived. Every student of the era and every Shakespearian scholar knows that there is some mystery connected with his life. It has never been thoroughly discovered because, to a very large extent, it is a Masonic one.

It is manifest that the secrets of Masonry dare not have been written in the plays by anyone who had taken the oath not to “indite, mark,” etc. They could only have been written by one who was above the VOW as the Father of the Fraternity. With such a Creator as Shakespeare, any attempt to “Improve” the Ritual by operatives or “Gentlemen” from Ashmole to Dunckerly is manifestly an absurdity. It would be a gilding of refined gold, the adding of a perfume to the violet.

Bro. Vibert has stated that “Our Legend says that Masonry came from France in St. Alban’s time.” So it did. There was a Medieval St. Alban of A.D. 303 and an Elizabethan St. Alban of 1560-1626. Both were M/artys and one came from France, for he travelled long from “East to West.” Our ancient Elizabethan Brethren baffled the world by mixing the two St. Albans and the ages in which they lived... in the “feigned stories” or “operative legends” made in their Rosicrosse Scribeneries.

Shakespeare buried his Secret Ethical System like a bulb and left it to root itself in the darkness for a hundred years before the first shoots appeared in the planned Emergence of the 1717-23 Grand Lodge, the centenary of the Great Masonic Shakespeare Folio of 1623.

To Bros. Anderson, Desaguliers and the 1717 Masons who guided the Emergence, we Masons owe
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

a special debt of gratitude. But to a "Concealed Man" and a little band of Elizabethan Rosicrosse Masons, the world owes an incalculable debt. They laid "GREAT BAGES FOR ETERNITY." They were responsible for the rise of Elizabethan literature, the secret growth of high ideals to benefit humanity—midst great dangers and difficulties—the quiet dissemination of the Gospel of Brotherhood and charity in an Age of Fratricidal Strife.

THE SHAKESPEARE SCROLL ON THE WESTMINSTER MONUMENT

Reproduced from Secret Shakespearian Seals.

The persons responsible for the Monument (presumably Pope) altered a passage from The Tempest, spelling several words differently, putting an apostrophe instead of "e" in "Fowers" though there was ample space for the "g," and actually deleting ten words.

This was done to make the letters count exactly 157. This proves the existence of "Fra Rosi Cross" in the days of Pope.

Note that Shakespeare's finger points to the significant word "Temples."

Plate XV
(See page 193)
XI

"SO WORTHY A FELLOW AS WAS OUR SHAKESPEARE"

"My Life hath in this line some interest,
Which for memorial still with thee shall stay. . . ."

The Worth of that is that which it Contains,
And That is This and That with Thee remains."
SONNET LXIV—150.

The above lines are taken from one of the Masonic Sonnets. The last ones have never been understood by any commentator, for they are too enigmatical. It has never dawned upon anyone that this was a Masonic Sonnet and was written, as Masons would say, "ON THE CENTRE." The Author indicates it by the position of the word "AND" in the last line. "AND" is the Key-note of the line, yet, from a purely literary view-point, it is meaningless. Masonically, however, the Word is pregnant with Life. "And that is this—and this with thee remains." It is the MIDDLE word of the Line. In Masonic parlance it is the "CENTRE" and the Sonnet is therefore written "ON THE CENTRE," the mysterious place known to every Mason that stands for Truth, the invisible Reality behind all external Form, the unseen soul behind the scaffolding of Clay—nerves, sinew, muscle and bone.

The truth behind the enigmatical phraseology of the lines is similar to the precedent ones. . . . "My

PLATE XVI

THE ROYAL ARCH MASONIC JEWEL OF 1805 WHICH CARRIES THE ROYAL ARCH SEAL OF 1879

Gentlemanly supplied by H. Seymour, London.

This illustration indicates the connection of the Royal Arch Degree with Fra Rosi Creuse, for it carries the Seal of Friendship, Stockport, formed in 1793. It never has been customary to engrave a Chapter number on the Arch Jewel, nor is it done to-day.

The hanging Basket was the Elizabethan Emblem signifying "a collection of things." The Sun in the Centre was the Symbol for "God's First Creature which was Light," the "Laws" of the Rosicrucians and the "All-Seeing Eye"—which Gilded the earth wherein it gazeeth (Sonnet xxv—77) of the Fennimore. The modern Arch Jewel closely follows the above illustration, but it carries no number or date. On the circle and scroll is written in Latin two significant sentences: "If thou canst comprehend these things thou knowest enough," and "Nothing is wanting but the key."

The only English words on one side are placed upside-down along the base of the triangle above the English Letters which are set in the circle between "stops." Thus:

PHILOSOPHICAL

AL. AD.

It was a favourite Rosicrucian device to place words upside-down to call attention to those "in the Know" to look for something. "The object of upside-down printing was to reveal, to those deemed worthy of receiving it, some secret concerning the Founder," says an authority. The "Stop" and "Step" on either side of the "AL. AD." are intended to make the reader pause and consider what they stand for, that they really spell . . . "A LAD," so that the phrase actually runs, "We have found a LAD." The "LAD" of the Royal Arch Companions was obviously the same lid that began the Rosicrucian Fraternity according to the "Pamphlet," and the Extraordinary Youth!" that Bro. De Quincy declared began Freemasonry. (Freemasons and Rosicrucians.)

There are numerical totals in the Jewel that definitely associate Shakespeare with the Royal Arch as the Founder by numerical signatures as well as the 267 of "Fra Rosi Creuse."

239
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Life hath in this line some Interest,” etc. Here we see that the Author was quite content to leave something in one short line which he intended to remain quietly and forever (i.e. “still”) to serve as a “MEMORIAL” to perpetuate his memory after he had “passed away.”

No one has ever understood Shakespeare’s clever cunning in erecting a permanent Memorial, duly lettered, but which is invisible to the eyes of men who have not “Learned to READ.” He is here writing as the Founder of the Craft, as a Rosicrosse-Mason to other Rosicrosse-Masons who know what to look for and how to read. Through the line he has actually felled according to an Elizabethan Code a secret record which states: “I AM A MASTER MASON.” Writing as one Mason to another he thus lets it be known that his prime “INTEREST” was Masonic. . . . The Memorial he sought was that of being secretly known as a CONCEALED ETHICAL TEACHER. “This,” he says in effect, “shall stay with thee quietly and for ever.”

It is outside the scope of this work to explain the system of “Felling” and my Brethren must be content with my statement that I am quite as sure of my ground regarding this message as I am regarding the truth of the Masonic Images and Code examples in Love’s Labours Lost and The Tempest. Shakespeare’s Masonry was a consuming fire from youth to old age. It outpours itself in his early plays. It is left as a Memorial to mark his Literary Remains, his personal ashes, in the eventide of his life, so wonderfully portrayed in lines which seem to be equivoctring infirmity:

“That Time of Year thou mayest in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few do hang
Upon those Boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin’d Choirs where late the sweet birds sang.

240

CONCLUSION

In me thou seest the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the West
Which by and by Black Night doth take away,
Death’s Second Self that Seals up all in Rest.”

(Sonnet LXIII—151.)

In the lyrical utterances of Shakespeare as well as the dramatic we thus see that his mind constantly runs to the Ethical Symbolism of the Craft.

It would be a waste of time to argue regarding the bona fides of the Masonic imagery he employs. The majority of the phrases are precise, definite, concrete. There are scores of expressions so pronouncedly Masonic that even a non-Mason can recognize the Emblems peculiar to the Royal Art.

They have necessarily been torn from their context but each illustration is perfect in itself. They could only have been based on definite hidden knowledge consciously employed. That they were unconsciously written—in view of the precise Ritual Code Letters he uses so often in conjunction with such Masonic innuendoes—without premeditated DESIGN is as unthinkable an explanation as the theory that the world came into existence without the CREATIVE WORKMANSHIP OF THE GREAT ARCHITECT. Marks of DESIGN—whether in the Plays, the Ritual, the Universe—necessarily predicate a DESIGNER. The Mind behind the plays like the Divine Mind behind the Universe can truthfully say to the Herd Mind or Mass Consciousness:

“As the Heavens are higher than the Earth,
so are my Thoughts above your Thoughts and
my Ways above your Ways.”

Shakespeare’s Mind has a depth that no critic—especially mechanically-minded men of the Robertson-
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Brandeis-Lee School of thought—has ever plumbed. “Others abide our question: Thou art free.”

To my Masonic readers who are inclined to lay great store on the purely textual methods of the Schoolmen in solving the Genesis of the Craft, I would say:

“Beware of whole-heartedly accepting the arbitrary proof-standards of the ‘vulgar, uninstructed world’ whereby to fathom the Masonic Problem of the Genesis, lest in so doing you cut yourselves off from your own rightful and peculiar Masonic Heritage, from your own Standards of Proof which have nothing in common with the so-called Standards of Authority accepted by the world of non-Masons.”

We cannot determine the Genesis Problem on purely academic lines alone. Masonic matters must be masonically discerned. Our standards of proof are standards peculiar to ourselves. We spell, we walk, we knock, we manipulate our hands, we wave our arms, we pat our stomachs, and by such SIGNS are we known to each other, by such proofs do we enter into King Solomon’s Temple. Even the academic certificate is worthless as a Masonic test or proof of proficiency.

No amount of mere textual research can compensate for those rightful Masonic proofs which, in the nature of our Constitution, we have a right to expect from anyone who presumes to speak with authority regarding origins or the Labours of the Worthy Brethren who were responsible for the Emergence of Freemasonry into the light of day in 1723.

It must be remembered that we are not dealing with the establishment of a worldly organization, like the origin of some local Co-operative Society about which there is nothing to hide. We are dealing with the conception and birth of the world’s greatest Secret

CONCLUSION

Society. Its early history is bound to be shrouded in mystery to the “cowan and intruder.” Yet not so shrouded that the “Discerning Brother” cannot pierce the veil. A Designed Brotherhood like Freemasonry must necessarily contain its own internal proofs of descent, framed on subtle lines of dissimulation, left by the Architect of the Order, that Brethren who wished to advance in Masonic Lore might read the Riddle of the Genesis aright. Those proofs may not commend themselves to the academics that are as much strangers to the “Masonic Knock” as to the “A.B.C. Code” of the Business Mart. But their rejection of Elizabethan methods, because they make a self-imposed modern standard the sole touchstone, does not alter the facts of the case—that Freemasons now hold irrefragable and monumental proofs of Shakespeare’s knowledge of Masonry... proofs which could be substantiated by the academic methods of the Universities, did space permit.

One of the men who definitely knew the truth of the matter was that brilliant scholar and Mason, Thomas De Quincey. He knew that Shakespeare was the Founder of the Fraternity. He wrote a remarkable essay on “Freemasonry and the Rosicrucians” which has, naturally, been misunderstood by the scholars of “the uninstructed world,” and also by certain Masons who think that only the precise methods which are in vogue in young ladies’ seminaries should be employed in the elucidation of the Genesis of the Fraternity, anything outside “scissors and paste” research constituting “unhistorical claims and unscientific pretensions.”

The truth is that much which passes for “history” is false, and much that passes for “orthodox science” to-day is cast on the rubbish heap to-morrow, and he who would limit “proofs” to present-day customs is false to his Masonry—to what he learned at the Pedestal. Our real proofs are not scholastic. Our ancient
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

methods belong to a bygone age when all sorts of
secrets were wrapped in the open text by numbers,
anagrams, felling, etc., some examples of which have
been exhibited. These were the methods employed
by Bros. Anderson, Preston and Hutchinson, the
THREE OFFICIAL HISTORIANS OF GRAND LODGE. To
understand the Mystery we must understand the
methods they employed to whisper their secret under
the Rose to future ages.

Bro. De Quincey employs a similar trick, using a
number to denote whom he means in the following
open passage where we get a clear hint that the Young
Man Shakespeare was the Founder.

"To a hoax played off by a young man of
EXTRAORDINARY TALENTS in the beginning of the
seventeenth century—about 1610—but for an
elevated purpose... the whole Mysteries of
Freemasonry are here distinctly traced" (p. 157).

Bro. De Quincey does not tell the identity of the
"extraordinary young man" openly. He talks instead
about Fludd and Fludd’s "friend," and then slips in
a numerical Cypher which tells a Rosicrucian that
De Quincey’s Essay was inspired by definite
knowledge, written exactly two hundred years after
the publication of the 1623 Folio. He does not tell
us even what the "Hoax" was which was played. He
leaves it to the "curious Brother" to realize that the
"hoax" consisted in burying the story of the Genesis
of the Craft in a Comedy of Laughter, Love’s Labours
Lost, through which the author still laughs at the
world that has been taken in by the play.

The same "young man" of De Quincey was the
"youth" of the Rosicrucians who, their Manifestoes
declared, was the Founder of their Fraternity. He
can be identified with the "lad" which the Royal Arch
Masons had "found"—according to their Jewel—

CONCLUSION

for Shakespeare was but a stripling when these various
Orders were begun by him.

Knowing the secret of Love’s Labours Lost, Bro.
De Quincey writes:

"Such is the power of a grand and capacious
aspiration of Philosophic Benevolence to EM-
BALM even the idlest LEVITIES as amber
enshrines straws and insects." (Ibid., p. 157.)

This exactly describes the Masonic asides and cus-
toms to be found in the two plays, Love’s Labours Lost
and The Tempest. Our Masonic Genesis has been
embalmed for all time in "levities." These secret things
will be seen through to-morrow though the world be
blind to-day.

"Oh! Mighty Poet! Thy works are not as
those of other men, simply and merely great works
of Art; but are like the phenomena of nature, like
the sun, the stars... to be studied with
entire submission of our own faculties, and in
the perfect faith that in them there can be no too much
or too little, nothing useless or inert—but that the
further we press in our discoveries the more we
shall see Proofs of DESIGN and SELF-SUPPORTING
ARRANGEMENT where the careless eye had seen
NOTHING BUT ACCIDENT." (The Knocking in
Macbeth, Bro. De Quincey.)

Note.—The Knocks in Macbeth were in
"threes."

There are many remarkable asides in Bro. De
Quincey’s Essay, but enough has been said to indicate
that Shakespeare was known to him to be par excellence
an Ethical Teacher CONSCIOUSLY (whatever else he
may have been) and that this "Philanthropia" or
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

"Urge" for the Good of Mankind was an all-consuming passion with him.

The knowledge that Shakespeare was the Founder of an Ethical Fraternity necessarily gives us a different idea from the current one of the aims and ideals that stirred his soul. That he was in any sense altruistic, that he ever had a motive behind his work as a Playwright, or that he ever regarded himself as an Ethical Teacher—regarding his plays as moral epics—is a view held by very few Shakespearian authorities. They prefer to regard him with Voltaire as "a God-intoxicated genius," an artist who was only concerned with Art, not Morals, the truth being that Art and Morality are one and the same, despite the Wildes and Lawrence's of to-day.

In the new light of Love's Labours Lost and The Tempest the commentators of the future will have to take into consideration the supreme fact that Shakespeare's urge to produce, to create, was based on an ethical impulse, an altruistic Ideal, an overpowering passion to elevate the mental, moral and spiritual standards of humanity.

He shouted at the ignorant masses of his day, the Calibans wherewith he was surrounded:

"Ignorance is the Curse of God,
Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to Heaven."

To the theological sectaries who were butchering each other in the name of the Master he bade them remember "the New Commandment that ye love one another." He called:

"For Wisdom's sake; for Love's sake; for Men's sake; for Women's sake let us once lose our Oaths to find ourselves..."

CONCLUSION

It is RELIGION to be thus forsworn,
For charity itself fulfills the Law
And who can sever love from charity?"

It is because of this broad, ethical concept, its constant enunciation, his tolerance, charity, absence of specific theological teaching that commentators are still wondering what his real religious opinions were: whether he were a Catholic, a Protestant, an Agnostic, a Spiritualist, or a pure Secularist. We know now that the ruling passion of his life was FREEMASONRY because it was founded on love, and that he privately established an Ethical Brotherhood—the craft of charity—to grow and spread through the ages: hence the personal Sonnet-Note: "I have laid great bases for eternity." (cxxx—136.)

Much more could be said, but "it is good to know what not to say," said Bro. Anderson many years ago, and therefore it is better that "the curtain be allowed to drop," as Bro. De Quincey remarked, having thought he had said quite enough.

It may be urged on purely a priori grounds by critics who do not want to regard Shakespeare as an Ethical Teacher and a Freemason that Freemasonry could not possibly have been conceived, and the first Lodge founded between the writing of Love's Labours Lost in 1589 and the time when the Actor left Stratford for London, alleged to be in 1587. I reply—the fact is we do not yet know what genius can do and we do not know what Shakespeare did. What I know as a Mason is this, that Shakespeare was an Ethical Teacher, the Founder of the Craft; "Prospero the Prime, reputed for the liberal arts without a parallel, having both the Key of officer and office" as "The W.M. of all the ma..." (The Tempest), and that the plays are saturated with Masonic Symbolism far more than with law phrases and legal customs.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

It is not for me—a simple researcher in the Mine of Truth—to explain away alleged anomalies which may be resolved quite easily were we in full possession of all the facts of the period; neither is it for me to explain directly how the Masonic nuggets came to be buried in the Shakespeare plays, any more than it is incumbent for a mere digger with pick and shovel to explain scientifically how his treasure-trove came to be imbedded in the earth's crust. It is enough for me to have unearthed sufficient Masonic Jewels that I need dig no more. I know there is sufficient left to make even an army of labourers rich beyond the dreams of avarice. The reader can discover the Truth for himself. So I say, pointing to the 1623 Folio, "Go and do likewise."

It may be thought perhaps that I have spoken too freely of Masonic matters. At first sight this might appear to be so, especially to those Masons who are more concerned with the textual secrets of Masonry — i.e. the words, the knocks, the steps — than with the broad creative spirit in which Freemasonry is steeped, through which it was conceived, in which it lives and moves and has its being, and without which Freemasonry would be a dead and a lifeless thing. The principles of Freemasonry are indeed sacrosanct and eternal, but the mere marks by which we are known are trivial, ephemeral, of the earth, earthy, and will pass into the nothingness of things.

Moreover, if I have spoken freely of these matters I have not done so of my own initiative. I have created nothing; I have said nothing; I have disclosed nothing except what is to be found a thousand thousand times over in cold print already, written originally by the hand of the Supreme Genius of the Ages, WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, the Father of the Fraternity. He wrote these things. He disclosed these secrets. He left them to be discovered. I found them and more things beside. I merely point to my little store of new-found wealth and I say to the world in general and to the Craft in particular:

"There you are! Look! I have Sought and I have found! Here is light on the Genesis of the Brotherhood! Proof palpable of the Freemasonry of Shakespeare!"

I have a right so to point; a right to enlighten the Brethren on the prime fundamental of the Order when so much clotted nonsense is being poured out by acrid critics and pseudo-historians who carelessly mix their facts with their opinions to the confusion of the average reader. I have the right of a FREE MAN whose lips were never padlocked so that they might not utter the Truth in a world where Error reigns regarding the Personality of the Founder; a Free Man who was enjoined to make a daily advancement in Masonic Knowledge. Moreover, the special information that was given to me — the Map, so to speak — that led me to the Quest, was not given me under vow or seal. Indeed, it was an obligation imposed upon me — I felt it to be so in my heart of hearts — to make the matter known after I had checked the communications by the usual methods of academic research . . . for the Author had written, "SET ME FREE."

Bros. Anderson, Preston, Hutchinson and De Quincey never told the matter openly in their works because they knew the Founder had left all the necessary information regarding the Genesis in the Plays and Sonnets. It was no business of theirs to make a premature disclosure. They had entered into their Rosicrucian knowledge by obligation and vow and could not take the gag from their mouths. Even in Bro. De Quincey's day, the time was not ripe. I am free to say at last that "Shakespeare was the Founder of the Fraternity."

This may be disputed by some Masonic scholars who hold high Degrees in the Order. Their denials
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

will not be the result of any esoteric knowledge learned in the course of their Masonic duties. They will merely voice their own opinions, and such opinions can carry no weight in view of the facts herein adduced. There is no Mason in the world dare deny OFFICIALY that SHAKESPEARE WAS THE FATHER AND FOUNDER OF THE CRAFT IN ENGLAND. In view of the fact that the first three official Historians of Grand Lodge leave the name of the Founder secretly written in their works—Bro. Anderson's particularly being passed with the assistance of the "Learned Brethren" (Rosicrorse-Masons)—THE UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND CANNOT DENY THE TRUTH OF SHAKESPEARE'S MASONRY. He was the first Grandmaster of the Order.

I have partially completed the task laid upon me to discharge. I have discovered to the world a small but powerful literary Brotherhood—"THE GRAND POSSESSORS" who once held (and may still hold) the Shakespeare Manuscripts whose disappearance is one of the Mysteries of the Elizabethan era ... who were "GAGGED" openly and had to work in secret in order to spread their educational and spiritual ideals—a little band of Freemasons to whom the world owes an incalculable debt, who had passed unknown and forgotten. I have revealed the supreme genius "William Shakespeare" as the Founder of Freemasonry ... a great Ethical Teacher with an urge for God and Goodness. I have vindicated the greatness of Bros. Anderson, Desaguliers, Preston, Hutchinson, who, with the members of their respective Grand Lodges, played a Worthy and Immortal part in the great and imperishable Emergence of 1723—our Ancient Brethren who knew the Founder and in their Works left a secret record of the Author.

And so may all Good Men and True stand by the FATHERS OF THE CRAFT ... our Ancient

CONCLUSION

Rulers Supreme and Subordinate: And by the Masonic Candles lit by Bros. Anderson, Desaguliers, Payne and the "Learned Brethren" who Examined and Pass'd the 1723 Book of Constitutions: For the Ancient Light still Shineth in Modern Darkness and the Darkness comprehended it not.

"SO MOT YET BE."

ALFRED DODD.
NOTES

THE FIRST "WORTHY FELLOW."

The First Person to be openly described in print as a Member of the Fraternity was William Shakespeare. In the 1623 Great Folio of Plays, the Editors describe him as a "Worthy Fellow."

THE SIGN OF THE MASTER.

In the prefatory pages of the same Work, the Editors associate his name with the Sign of the Square, for above his name they print "SEVEN SET SQUARES."

Among Masons "Seven" is the perfect number. The initiate is told in his first instruction at the Pedestal that "ALL SQUARES . . . are true and proper signs to know a Mason by." When associated with a particular person, it is "THE SIGN OF THE MASTER that Rules by the Square."

THE DEATH OF THE OPERATIVE CRAFT.

Owing to Government fears of rebellion among the labouring classes for higher wages and shorter working hours (Wat Tyler and Jack Cade rebellions, etc.), the gilds of the labourers were destroyed by successive Parliament Acts.

In 1360, "Congregations, Chapters, REGULATIONS and OATHS ('Regulations' such as the Cooke MS. which has never yet been proved to be a historic contemporary document of 1450 faithfully recording contemporary customs) were FORBIDDEN, the ordinance being renewed and stringently enforced. The Law seems to have regarded them as assembling merely for the purpose of obtaining an increase in their wages." (Hist. of F.M., p. 79, Findel.)

In 1425 an Act was passed that "Masons shall not congregate in Chapters of Congregations. . . . At the special request of the Commons we ordain and establish that such Chapters and

congregations shall not thereafter be holden. . . . They that cause such to be holden. . . . shall be judged for Felons. . . . punished by imprisonment of their bodies and make fine and ransom."

"This Act put an end to this Body and all its illegal Chapters and pretences." (G. Pownall, quoted by Gould, Hist. F.M., Vol. I, p. 353.)

"1424 is the proper date to assign for the cessation of English Freemasonry as a strictly operative association." (Early Hist. of F.M., Fort.)

There was a further Act making the labourer still more directly under the heel of the State in 1495.

These Acts were never repealed and when Queen Elizabeth ascended the Throne all the repressive laws were reaffirmed (Findel, p. 80), the celebrated Statute of Elizabeth (5 Eliza., cap. 4) being specially directed against any type of union or combination between the Workers. (State and its relation to Labour, pp. 34-36, S. Jevons.)

THE REBELLIOUS MASON.

"The Masons of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries must have been very factious and rebellious, as we may learn from the Statutes of Parliament being always renewed from time to time." (A.Q.C., Vol. 38, Dr. Begemann.)

THE OPERATIVES AND WAGES.

"In the fifteenth century congregations and confederacies were jealously watched and forbidden . . . Carpenters, masons, plasterers, daubers, tilers and paviers had to take whatever wages the law decreed." (Hist. F.M., p. 170, Gould.)

"On the 28th April, 1610, the justices of the peace established the following legal schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A freemason which can draw his plot and set</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in accord</td>
<td>out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A rough mason who can take charge over</td>
<td>8/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td>12/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A bricklayer</td>
<td>5/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice</td>
<td>4/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

253
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

"In 1689 the wages of freemasons were prescribed to be £1 4s. per diem. To receive more was to subject them to 21 days imprisonment." (Hist. F.M., pp. 130-1, Fort.)

Masons and Daubers.

"Masons were classed with carpenters, plasterers, tilers and all manner of labourers in 1350, and with carpenters, tilers, thatchers, daubers and all other labourers in 1425." (Story of Craft, p. 29, L. Vibert.)

No Special Privileges.

"No evidence is forthcoming from the Statutes of the Realm that the Freemasons as a Fraternity or Gild at any period possessed or held any patent whatever." (Hist. F.M., p. 171, Gould.)

Did Gentlemen Join Operative Lodges?

"We cannot believe at that period, 1389, amateurs could have been present as accepted masons or as honorary members. Patrons were nominated by the King to superintend the erection of buildings but they certainly had no knowledge of the craft." (Findel, p. 77.)

The Merchant Gild and the Craft Gild.

"The Masters developed into an employing class and the fellows into a class of workers by the day. As the gulf widened the masters used the machinery of the gild for their own aggrandisement. To resist them the journeymen . . . began organising gilds on their own. This was bitterly opposed by the masters who invoked the civil law to stop the practice." (Hist. F.M., p. 179, H. L. Haywood and J. Ebury.)

(By the modernist, freemasonry is supposed to have begun in ordinary working craft lodges . . . not the merchant gild. It was this labouring craft that was stamped out by the various enactments.)

The Annual Assembly of Operatives.

"Is there anything in the fabric of English law which will form some foundation in fact for the references that are made

NOTES AND FACTS OF IMPORTANCE

in the 'Regius Poem' and the 'Cooke MS.' to an Assembly? . . . That there was an annual assembly that all labourers and artificers were bound to attend is incredible . . . not one record of the circumstances descending to us." (Hist. F.M., pp. 152-154, Gould.)

The Operative Legend: A Fabrication.

"The History contained in the MS. Constitutions (i.e. the Legend of the operative Old Charges) was . . . a sketch of a pretended history of Masonry fabricated by learned men." (A.O.C., Vol. 38, Dr. Begemann.)

"I cannot bring myself to believe that the masons who plied their trade in remote villages and hamlets about the early part of the fifteenth century, were either by education or intelligence capable of comprehending the Halliwell Poem (i.e. the Regius Poem) had it been related to them." (Hist. F.M., Vol. I, p. 360, Gould.)

It is abundantly clear that the Regius and the Cooke cannot be accepted as descriptive of historical practices of the fourteenth century.

They were fabricated just as the Song of Beowulf or the story of Job. They are feigned histories, written in the Elizabethan era to serve as connecting links with the operative craft—the quillets and authorities" that the Author of Love's Labours Lost said he would write.

Philosophic Symbolism and Illiterate Labourers.

"Philosophic recondite Symbolism never originated among the manual-labouring, illiterate masons of Scotland and England. They had no use for nor would they have understood and comprehended such symbols or the doctrines concealed in them . . . There could have been nothing in the companionship of illiterate day labourers to attract such men . . . (types of Gentlemen known to be attached to such Lodges) in York, Lancashire or London." (Sym. M., p. 68, Albert Pike, quoted by Armstrong.)

It is surely self-evident that “recondite symbolism” of such infinite variety could only have been conceived by one who had the mind of a Poet and could only have been welcomed by men of culture. It could only have arisen in the Elizabethan
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

Era round the mind of the greatest Poet. Shakespeare and the alwyaers of Gray’s Inn with whom the cult started had nothing to do at all with the operatives. Their gild had been non-existent for more than a century.

THE REGIUS POEM AND ANTIQUITY.

“The Regius MS. contains a set of rules and regulations for the Government of what was obviously a gild of craftsmen. . . . A PATENT ATTEMPT TO ACCOUNT FOR AN ANTIQUITY of that institution. . . . In some manner this particular MS. was lost for some 450 years.” (Hist. of F.M., pp. 181–2, Haywood and Ebury.)

It was “made” in one of the Elizabethan scriveneries of the Rosicrasso Masons. It was lost for some length of time because it was in hiding with the “GRAND POSSESSORS” who have other MSS. even more important . . . handed down “by Succession.”

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN 1440.

“In the time of Henry VI, the lot of artificers appears to have been a hard one. In 1440 Warrents from the King were sent to the Wardens of Masonrie and Carpenters at Eton.

’y evying that powair to take, in what place so ever hit be, almanere of workmen, labourers and cariage as shal some necessarie or behoveful inhaire craftes to yhe edifacacon of our college of eton.”

(Appron Men, p. 35, Blackham.)

The above specimen is quite sufficient to show that the Modern Ritual never evolved out of operative customs. When the cultured scribes of Kings used such a cribbed style the language of the common workers must have been infinitely more barbarous. Ethical symbolism in such days is incredible.

ILLITERATE OPERATIVES.

“They (the operatives) specially had need of a secret system of recognition that an illiterate man could use to satisfy another as illiterate.” (Freemasonry, p. 33, L. Vibert.)

NOTES AND FACTS OF IMPORTANCE

THE BEGINNING OF MODERN ENGLISH.

“Spenser marks a beginning of English literature. . . . In Spenser as in Hooker . . . these tentative essays were the necessary exercises by which Englishmen were . . . learning to write. . . . Then the splendid Elizabethan Drama, that form of art that has nowhere a rival, the highest powers of poetic imagination.” (Spenser, pp. 2–3, R. W. Church.)

ANAGRAMS.

The art of spelling out a word or words by the initial capital letters was known to the Copyist of “The Newcastle Roll,” one of the Old Charges.

THE NEWCASTLE COLLEGE ROLL

An Anagram upon ye name of Masonrie. Richard Stead to his friend Joseph Claughton upon his Art of Masonrie as followeth.

M Much might be said of the Noble Art,
A A Craft yts worth esteeming in each part,
S Sundry Master, nobles and their Kings also,
O O how they sought its worth to know.
N Nimrod and Solomon ye wisest of men
R Reasoned to know this Science then.
I I’ll say no more least by my shaking rhyme I
E Endeavouring to praise shall blame Masonrie.

Findel says there is an Anagram mentioned in the York MS. (Old Charge) and that he has endeavoured to discover it, but failed.

The Newcastle Roll was written about 1700 and is an exact follow-on of the methods employed in Love’s Labours Lost and The Tempest.

THE FATHER OF THE (SO-CALLED) OPERATIVE CHARGES.

“The old charges seem to have played the part of a Warrant without which no Lodge was held. All the known copies have descended from one original although transmitted by several channels.” (The Antiquity of the Third Degree, G. W. Bullamore.)

r

255

256

257
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

The Ninety Old Charges.

"The 'Old Charges' is a popular name given to some ninety
or so MSS. of a masonic nature to which attention was drawn
some sixty years ago. . . .

"They are in various forms, some on parchment and some
on paper . . . book form . . . rolls . . . a few have survived
only by being printed and the originals are now lost." (The
Old Charges, p. 8, H. Poole.)

Masonic Language in the Folio.

The greater part of the Masonic language in the Folio will
have been used—(owing to the tremendous vocabulary of
Shakespeare and the fact that he largely fixed the language)—
for the first time in print, such as "I have ever squared me to
thy Counsel." "I say, my FOOT my Tutor." "Let's PART
the Word? No! I'll not be your HALF!" etc.

This is a very important point to consider. If Freemasonry
was made in 1717, the creator must have known his "Shakes-
ppeare" through and through, with all its subtle innuendoes
which no one has ever yet seen and given to the world.

The Official Historians.

The works of Bros. Anderson (The Constitutions), Preston
(The Illustrations of Masonry), and Hutchinson (The Spirit of
Masonry), obviously stand in a very different category from
those of present-day writers.

These first three historians had their works officially sponsored
by the respective Grand Lodges of their day. They therefore
speak with authority on all matters. What they write in
secretly is with the sanction of GRAND LODGE.

Writers like Bros. Findel, Gould, Waite, Vibert, etc.
know nothing of the secret of the Emergence and therefore
can tell us nothing save their opinions. . . . The official
historians not only knew the secret, but also knew how to
transmit it to future generations who wished to be acquainted
with the truth.

The Honour of Dr. Anderson.

"Dr. Anderson and Dr. Desaguliers were honest men doing
a work which they believed to be good or . . . the most
consummate rascals. Looking at their characters it is impossible
to doubt their thorough integrity. . . .

"If they and their associates were guilty of imposture, would
it not at once have been detected and exposed? . . .

"The rapidity with which it spread makes it all the more
difficult to imagine that this resulted from the inventive genius
of Drs. Desaguliers and Anderson. It is incredible that they
INVENTED and Introduced the System.

"It is in the Highest Degree probable that they found, AS
THEY SAID, a System already existing which they deemed
worthy of their utmost exertions to extend." (Origin of F.M.,
p. 39, C. I. Paton.)

Is it not manifest that the System was indeed handed to them
having travelled down the years from SHAKESPEARE?

Was William Preston Credulous, etc.?

"Rev. Bro. Woodford says of Preston that he may well be
called the Father of Masonic History and his Work will
always be a standard Work for Masons. He was a painstaking
and accurate writer. Though we have access to MSS. he
never saw, yet, on the whole, his original view of Masonic
History remains correct." (Cy., p. 566, Kennings.)

Philosophers and the Genesis.

Bro. Gould suggests that "A set of Philosophers of the
seventeenth century may have ransacked antiquity in order
to discover a Model for their newly-born Freemasonry."
(Quoted by L. Vibert, Freemasonry, p. 120.)

Bro. Gould was nearly right: But there was only one
PHILOSOPHER and he was also a POET and a DRAMATIST. He
lived in the latter part of the sixteenth century. The men who
helped him in launching the Craft were the Law Students
from Gray's Inn. It is all to be found in Love's Labour's Lost,
which in 1597 was played before Queen Elizabeth.

Green the Historian draws a wonderful picture in order
to bring home the facts to the imagination of the reader:

"In Love's Labour's Lost, the young Playwright fresh
from his own Stratford, flings himself into the midst of
the brilliant England which gathered round Elizabeth
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

with the humours, quixotisms, wit and whim which veiled its inner nobleness!” (Hist. Eng., Vol. III, p. 423.) Its “inner nobleness” was Masonic.

Organized Craft Operatives.

“In spite of efforts which have been made to show that operative masonry was one big Fraternity, as Modern Freemasonry is, the evidence weighs overwhelmingly against that theory.

“Through the enactments... which made it unlawful for a worker to ask or to receive more than the most miserly pittance... the pay of a master mason in Free stone was fourpence a day which began at dawn and lasted until nighttime... Each new enactment weighed more heavily upon the craftsmen until the trend of adverse legislation culminated in the 1425 Act.” (Hist. of F.M., Hayward and Ebury.)

The Bible and the Ritual.

“The Geneva Bible was the Bible of England from 1560 till late in the seventeenth century. ... It gives for Boaz ‘In strength,’ and for Jachin ‘To establish’ or ‘Stability.’ ... It mistranslates both these words. Boaz means ‘In him is strength,’ and Jachin ‘He will establish.’

“Another mistranslation... is the meaning given to Tubal Cain, ‘Worldly possessors,’ when it means Tubal the smith. It gives for Shibboleth the fall of waters or an ear of corn... more correctly it is a stream of water. ... The men of Gilead put the test to the Ephraimites when they were standing beside a Shibboleth, a swiftly flowing stream.” (Freemasonry, p. 131, L. Vibert.) The writer of the Ritual was therefore familiar with the Geneva Bible. So, too, was Shakespeare. His Bible quotations in the plays prove that he was thoroughly steeped in this edition.

The Bible in Feudal Times.

“In 1290 the price of a fairly written Bible was £37, the hire of a labourer being then 1s. 4d. a day. ... “Wyclif’s translation was about 1380, but only the New Testament was ever printed. A copy brought £40.

NOTES AND FACTS OF IMPORTANCE

“The first printed English Bible was W. T. Tyndale in 1526. In 1529 the edition was bought up and burnt. He was strangled and burnt in 1536.

“In 1540 a copy of Tyndale’s Bible was required by law to be put in every parish church, but, later, the Papist power succeeded in suppressing it. It was restored again about 1570.” (Bible Dict., p. 205, Beeton.)

It is quite clear that there was no access to the Bible by the common class prior to the days of Elizabeth. Even if they had had access, the people were illiterate. There was no education and no English books printed. The manners and customs of the lower class were naturally vulgar in the extreme. To regard the medieval labouring masons of England as “symbol loving Operatives” is sheer credulity. They had neither time nor inclination to worry about recondite symbolism after working from “dawn to sunset for the miserly pittance of fourpence a day” under wretched housing and social conditions.

Freemasonry never started either among operatives or in operative lodges any more than it began in the “Apple Tree Tavern,” a “1717 Grand Lodge” of literary non-descript, or Dr. Anderson’s study.

It could only have been created in the Elizabethan Era... by one man. The unity and literary characteristics of the Ritual proclaim him to be William Shakespeare who was primarily an Ethical teacher rather than an artist, the leading motif behind each play being an Ethical one.

The Absence of English Books.

“In the catalogue of the library of Sir Thomas Smith, 1566, of one thousand books, only five were written in the English language. In Francis Bacon’s youth there were few books which made any pretensions to literature. Elliot’s The Governor, Ascham’s Scholemaster and Wright’s Art of Rhetoric almost exhaust the list.” (Smedley.)

English in the Days of Queen Elizabeth.

Referring to the early days of Queen Elizabeth, I. Donnelly writes: “The English-speaking Elizabethans of Britain. Refinement and culture scarcely extended beyond a few towns. ... The agricultural population was
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

steeped to the lips in ignorance, rude and barbarous in their manners and brutal in their modes of life.” (The Great Cryptogram, Vol. 1, p. 27.)

THE COUNTY DIALECTS.

“So pronounced were the different dialects that it was hard to catch the words of command” (i.e. when the different Counties were being organized to resist the Spaniards at the time of the invasion). (The English of Shakespeare, p. 83, Goadby.)

Schooling in the Days of Shakespeare.

“The common people were densely ignorant. They had to pick up their mother tongue as best they could . . . Schooling was impossible. For the many, BOOKS did not exist. The Horn Book for teaching the Alphabet would almost exhaust the resources of any schools that might exist. Little if any English was taught in the lower classes of the Grammar school.” (Ibid., Goadby.)

As a rule there was no educated person in the parish beyond the parson. It is therefore farcical to suggest that in previous decades—when a deeper night of gross darkness covered the people—the “Regius Poem” or the “Cooke MS.” could possibly have been gravely recited by a class of illiterate workmen in their “lodges(!)” after their working hours, worn out with out-door toil, in an era when English reading and writing were virtually unknown even among the ruling classes . . . the “Gentlemen.”

“In Elizabethan days, apart from the University little culture could be found. The agricultural classes were densely ignorant, brutal in their manners, and incredibly filthy in their habits.” (B. G. Theoald, B.A.)

“To be able to read and write outside of professed scholars and men and women of rank was an accomplishment still valued as a rarity.” (Dr. Samuel Johnson.)

IGNORANCE OF THE MASSES AT THE TIME OF HEN. VIII.

“In the reign of Hen. VIII the great body of the people were as yet in the most profound ignorance, removed as far as

NOTES AND FACTS OF IMPORTANCE

the cattle of the fields from any knowledge of books or letters.” (Hist. of Eng., Vol. II, p. 379, Martin.)

THE LABOURING CLASS AT THE TIME OF THE EMERGENCE.

Writing of the 1702–14 era (virtually the time of the Emergence of the Freemasons) the same historian says: “The education of the lower classes was neglected on principle . . . Low pleasures were still the natural results of the ignorance that still prevailed among the English peasantry. It was believed even by the greatest writers that to educate the bulk of the people was to destroy the distinctions of rank. They . . . were unable to divert or instruct themselves with reading.” (Vol. III, p. 353.)

THE MASSES IN 1789.

“In 1789 rude manners and coarse amusements still prevailed among the lower classes. Little or no provision was made for their education . . . The low pitch of moral refinement among the wealthy class as well as among the lower order is indicated by their sharing in demoralizing pastimes. There were few readers and few books in the humbler walks of life. The unlettered classes in town and country were addicted to diversions like cock and dog fights.” (Ibid., Vol. III, p. 653.)

ANAGRAMS AND ERRATA, ETC.

Cyphers, Anagrams, Echo Verses, Watermarks, Hieroglyphics, Pictorial Emblems, Cyphers of all kinds were once as fashionable in England as the modern craze for Crossword and Picture puzzles.

“Deep Mysteries were conjectured to be veiled by them . . .

“The mechanical critic who speaks contemptuously of the taste of another age by those of his own day, and whose knowledge of the NATIONAL LITERATURE (i.e. the Plays of the National Poet) does not extend beyond his own century is neither historian nor critic.

“The truth is that Anagrams and the like were at one time the fashionable amusement of the Wittiest and the most learned.” (Curiosities of Literature, D'Israeli.)
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE "Gentleman."

(To-day) "every well-dressed, well-behaved man is 'a Gentleman,' but in England in the sixteenth century it meant a great deal more. It signified a man of gentle blood, a great and impassable gulf lay between 'the Quality,' 'the Gentry,' the 'Hereditary Upper Class' and the common herd who toiled for a living. . . . The distinction in the England of 1596 between the Yeoman and the 'Gentleman' was almost as wide as the difference to-day (1888) in America between the white man and the black man." (Donnelly, p. 55, Vol. I.)

DID EVER ILLITERATE LODGES ADMIT "GENTLEMEN?"

In view of the historic facts—the poverty of the masons, their illiteracy, their pariah-like social standing, the disdain of the "Upper Classes" for the "Common Herd," their brutal pursuits, their coarse habits—the fact that the gilds of masons and daubers was stamped out by Parliament Edicts—it is farcical to suppose that such masons kindly consented to admit "Gentlemen" to their meetings! Only a very credulous historian could possibly say: "Nevertheless, they continued to meet and to admit other persons (Gentlemen) as members. . . . They read the Old Charges. . . which they were at pains to transcribe from time to time. They certainly never did prior to the Parliament Acts, and they could not have done so afterwards. They were illiterate. There is no evidence anywhere that Gentlemen joined such lodges.

LONDON AND YORK MASONRY.

Bro. Henry Sadler says: "I am fully convinced that at this period the Leaders of the Rival Grand Lodges really knew very little of each others' origin and antecedents." (Hist. F.M., p. 338, Gould.)

THE RISE OF MASONRY IN ENGLAND.

"The Modern Masonic Order can be traced to the period of European History famous for its intrigues both political and sociological. Between the years 1600 and 1800 mysterious agents moved across the face of the Continent. The fore-

NOTES AND FACTS OF IMPORTANCE

runner of Modern Thought was beginning to make its appearance." (Lectures on the Ancient Philosophies, Manley Hall.)

"Our own feeling is that Freemasonry was founded in England about 1600, or it may have been a few years earlier and was the outcome of a combination of men of social position and intellectual acquirements. . ." (The Masonic Record, p. 116, J. Stevens.)

"That Freemasonry existed in a Speculative Form before 1493 is not a fact capable of specific proof." (Hist. F.M., p. 117, Findel.)

"Every unprejudiced inquirer will admit that in all probability English Freemasonry in its present state was not introduced before the close of the sixteenth century." (Early Hist. F.M., J. O. Halliwell.)

ENGLAND THE HOME OF THE HIGHER DEGREES.

"The derivation of the Higher Grades . . . which had come to form part of the Craft System prior to A.D. 1700. . . . England has as good a claim as any other country to the Ancient Possession of a System of Higher Grade Freemasonry, and those nations which received Craft Masonry from the Grand Lodge of England sooner or later imported the Higher Degrees which England possessed prior to 1717. . . . Now the best proof of this is an edition of Long Livors, dedicated by Eugenius Philalethes, Jr., in 1721, where the Higher Degrees of Masonry are alluded to in express terms.

"My object is to dispose of the repeated allegation that we derive our Higher Grades in the first instance from France, the fact being the reverse." (Speculative Freemasonry, pp. 2-4, John Yarker.)

This important declaration by Bro. Yarker in 1883 is absolutely confirmed by the fact that such Degrees are indicated quite clearly in the Shakespeare Folio.

The facts disclosed in the Folio more than confound those who have declared that Bro. Yarker was "a man of confused mind 'with bees in his bonnet,' etc., who often stultified his readers." The stultification is with the cock-sure critics whose a priori dogmatism on vital issues is now proved to be worthless in the light of Shakespeare's Masonry.
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

THE ELIZABETHAN "HAD-Y-WYSTE."

In the "Regius Poem" is the word "Had-y-wyste," which is an exclamation of those who repented of anything inadvertently performed. This expression is very common in Elizabethan writers. (See appendix of the "Regius Poem" reprint, J. O. Halliwell.)

This in itself is sufficient to give a clue to the real date when the "Regius Poem" was written.

ELIZABETHAN SCRIVENERS.

In Elizabethan days there were professional scriveners who copied Manuscripts for clients. They were much in use by the Playhouses to copy the various parts for the Players from the original MS. of the author.

When a MS. was sold to any of the Theatre Companies copies were made for the actors by these professional men. Milton's father was a scrivener. There was a Scrivener's Company of this kind which held a rigorous monopoly within the jurisdiction of the City of London.

There was also a famous private scrivenery in that era to which was attached John Davies of Hereford, "a professional scrivener and the most skilful penman of his time." He copied documents for various employers and gave instruction in the art of penmanship.

"By the industry of Mr. T. le Marchant Douse, his (Davies) handwriting has been identified on the famous 'Northumberland Manuscript' found in 1867 in Northumberland House, Charing Cross, on the cover of which is scribbled over and over again 'William Shakespeare.'"

It is believed that some of the actual Manuscripts of the Plays once lay between the covers.

On the top right-hand corner are certain ROSICRUCIAN symbols, one emblem being the "Hand Glass of Pallas Athena," which immediately associates the name of Shakespeare with the Mysteriges and the Rosicrucian movement with which he was connected. There can be no possible doubt that Shakespeare had such a secret scrivenery that assisted him in his work, hinted at in Troilus and Cressida as the "GRAND POSSESSORS." Speaking to himself in the Sonnets he calls them his "COMPEERS BY NIGHT GIVING HIM AID," and elsewhere, speaking in his own

266

NOTES AND FACTS OF IMPORTANCE

person, he says, "MY STAFFE UNDERSTAND ME," a very clear statement that can only be understood on the lines of a literary school of which Shakespeare was the Editorial Head.

We know that at least one famous contemporary Elizabethan had such a private scrivenery which he called his "GOOD PENS," which included such names as Ben Jonson, T. Hobbes, Thomas Bushell, Peter Boener, Sir John Davies, etc.

Shakespeare ran such a scrivenery, who were members of his secret Society. His output of literature cannot be accounted for on any other grounds. One pair of hands could not possibly have accomplished all the incidental mechanical work in writing and preparing for the press as well as following his private avocation whereby he had to live.

The counting of letters and words especially must have taken a considerable amount of time as well as marking the "proofs" to be printed with certain purposeful errata with which the Plays and Poems abound. The open facts of the case drive one to the view that he had a Masonic Staff of assistants who were sworn to secrecy. This alone explains much that is enigmatical in the Elizabethan era.

It would have been an easy matter for such a School of "Good Pens" to have turned out the penmanship of the Regius Poem (thus antedating it by its style) and the original variations of the "Cooke MS" Legend, thus forming the nucleus of the MSS. of the so-called "Old Charges" of the Operatives which served as "WARRANTS" in the Speculative Lodges of the seventeenth century onwards. It is very significant that the earliest "Old Charges," the "Grand Lodge MS," belongs to the Elizabethan era, 25th Dec., 1583. The "Cooke" and the "Regius" both undated unquestionably belong to the same age.

FREEMASONRY AND THE STRATFORD MEMORIAL.

The direct connection between Shakespeare and Freemasonry is evidenced by the fact that when the foundation-stone was laid of the Stratford Memorial Theatre in July, 1929, the ceremony was performed with full Masonic Ritual by Lord Amphi'hill, pro-Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, six hundred Masons being present in full regalia.

Lord Amphi'hill used an old Egyptian Moul used at Sakhara four thousand years ago.

In 1877 when the former Theatre was about to be built the
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

same Masonic Ceremony was observed. (See The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre.)

This can only be regarded as an outward sign of the connection between Freemasonry Shakespeare and the Plays. There is no valid reason why Grand Lodge should be interested in the Stratford Shakespeare Theatre save the esoteric secret reason that the Creator of the Plays was also the Creator of the Craft.

THE MYSTERY OF SHAKESPEARE'S TOMB.

In view of the unmistakable Masonic and Rosicrucian Signs on the Epitaphs (see Illustrations), the remarks of Wigston in A New Study of Shakespeare are of interest. He says (p. 367) that:

"It is especially worthy of note that the Poet's supposed gravestone does not state in words that it is Shakespeare's at all. Tradition alone says that..." How extraordinary is the mystery attached to the Poet's grave at Stratford. For the vault (according to what we have seen) appears to be empty.

Washington Irving relates that the old sexton who made bold enough to look into Shakespeare's vault saw neither dust nor bone. And Dr. Ingleby endorses this fact by collateral evidence. He says (Shakespeare's Bones, p. 31): "In 1796 the supposed grave was actually broken into in the course of digging a vault in its immediate proximity..." It is certain, I believe, that the original stone did not bear the name of Shakespeare any more than its successor...

"I am informed on the authority of A FREE AND ACCEPTED MASON that a Brother Mason of his has explored the Grave which purported to be Shakespeare's and that he found nothing in it but DUST."

One is tempted to ask, Why should a Freemason be brought in as a witness regarding an apparent Mystery re the Tomb unless it be a fact that there is some subtle connection between Freemasonry and the Plays, between Shakespeare and the Folio.

MASONIC SYMBOLISM IN THE "OLD GREYFRIARS CHURCH" OF EDINBURGH, 1614.

This Old Church, in which was signed the Solemn League and Covenant in 1638, has been described as the Westminster of Scotland.

NOTES AND FACTS OF IMPORTANCE

Around the walls of the graveyard are many remarkable monuments. They clearly prove that some of the leading citizens of the City, about 1614 onwards for some decades, were Freemasons. On each of these monuments are engraved some wonderful symbols, exactly similar to the Symbolism to be found in the Elizabethan Rosicrucian books.

Many of the monuments are flanked by the Two Pillars of Masonry. Carved in relief are to be found the "Tudor Rose," the St. Andrew's Cross with its Four Roses, the Triple Tau, "T.T.T.," the Skull and Crossbones, the Coffin, the three Candles, the Hammer, the Rapiers of the Master, the Rosicrucian EMBLEMS of the Hour-glass associated with the Hand grasping a Bell to awake the Sleeper—"Tis Time,"—together with clusters of Fruits and Flowers. Even the Phallic Symbols of the Spade and the Distaff are to be seen. One carving, now crumbling away, associates these Symbols with Charon's ferry-boat of the Mysteries.

There is not a Symbol used in any of these Tombstones—a good number—which has not a special esoteric significations. It is impossible to believe that so many Symbols could be grouped on a single stone without a definite knowledge of Masonic phrase and imagery. There appears to have been quite a colony of Freemasons about 1614. They must all have been fairly wealthy cultured "Gentlemen" for such monuments must have been very expensive. Their names and inscriptions—some in Latin—prove that they did not belong to the operative class.

So far as I know attention has never yet been drawn to these remarkable Masonic Monuments of esoteric Symbolism. Students of "Origins" would be well advised to pay attention to them before they crumble into dust. They go far to prove that Freemasonry was well established in Scotland—among the Squire Boswells—from 1600, among "Gentlemen" of culture, not illiterate labourers.

MASONIC SYMBOLS IN AMERICA, THREE HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

Leonell C. Strong, Esq., of the Yale University (School of Medicine) recently made an interesting discovery which proves conclusively that Masonic Symbolism was known in America long prior to 1717. On August 24, 1936, he wrote me:
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

“Can you give me any information on the letter G. The reason I ask is because I can get very little information in this country. . . . Where did it come from?

I discovered some time ago a square and compass cut into a large Boulder on the top of the highest land along the Atlantic seaboard. Above the Square and Compass was a St. Andrews Cross and between them was an I.M. . . .

I can find no masonic use of the 'I.M.' in this country . . .

Geological evidence pointed to the conclusion that the emblem was fully 300 years old, yet Mackay's Encyclopaedia declares that the letter G is a modern innovation not used in association with the square and compass before the end of the eighteenth century.

The letter "G." was plucked by Shakespeare from the capital letters used with an esoteric significance by the Rosicrissi Literary Society, of which he was the Head. Shakespeare obtained the idea of symbolising the Grand Geometrician of the Universe from the Capitals used by "Fra Rosi Crosse" (the Heads of the Secret Elizabethan Litterateurs). He used the Symbol "G." He thus identifies Freemasonry with the Literary Rosicrosse. This fact Shakespeare tells the reader quite clearly in Richard III, Act I, s. i, l. 55 . . . . "And from the Cross Row (i.e. the Rosicrosse) plucks the Letter G." He uses Capitals in order to write secretly, and some he uses with a special ethical significance such as G. or "I.M." to denote the "Installed Master" in the examples noted in Chapter VII.

The geological proof of these particular symbols dating back to the Elizabethan Era is not at all surprising and entirely confutes the short-sighted idea that such Symbolism was created from 1717–23–38 onwards.

In the early years of Shakespeare England had begun her Colonial policy. One of his literary contemporaries was directly a Founder of New States, the Virginias and the Carolinas, thus making the New World English instead of Spanish. The Tempest—a purely Masonic Play—is supposed to have been inspired by one of the ships of Sir George Somers being driven out of her course when bound for Virginia by a "tempest" in mid-ocean, in 1609. For some nine months the shipwrecked sailors remained on an island—the Bermudas. Similar instances gave rise to much wandering on the part of sailors and emigrants in that Era along the Atlantic seaboard. And Masons—made in England, as we know they were through

270

NOTES AND FACTS OF IMPORTANCE

Bro. Anderson and Preston in the time of Elizabeth—and familiar with the Craft Symbolism, would be just as proud to leave their “Marks” behind them as the Scotch Masons were in the same period in the "Greyfriars Church" of Edinburgh.

SHAKESPEARE'S CONNECTION WITH SECRET SOCIETIES.

In the light of modern research it can be proved to the hilt that Shakespeare was the driving power behind the secret literary and ethical movements of the era which really began with the establishment of a very small body called "Fra Rosi Crosse." This literary coterie were the brains of the subsequent Secret Orders that came into existence—the Rosicrucian and the Masonic. The Rosicrucian Colleges were created in England, not Germany, and the present "S.R.I.A." (Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia) connected with Freemasonry, is the direct descendant of the first Elizabethan College mentioned by Ben Jonson. It is utterly inconceivable that R. W. Little, a clerk of the Freemasons' Hall, created the Nine Degrees of the S.R.I.A. in 1865. He simply organised a Rite openly to the Masonic Order that had hitherto been in hiding from the days of Elizabeth.

There is a solid body of evidence which warrants the following conclusions—evidence too extended to be given in this work—and which is of the highest importance to the Fraternity:

1. "Fra Rosi Crosse" were the Invisible Brains of the Secret Movement which was eminently literary but which led to direct action in the creation of the Rosicrucian Fraternity and the Masonic Brotherhood.

2. The "Rosicrosse-Mason" was one who could read Signs in the printed text. The "Mason-Word" between the "Rosicrosse" was "Our Francis."

3. The Elizabethan "Rosicrucian" (S.R.I.A.) did not necessarily know the identities of "Fra Rosi Crosse" nor their printed secrets. Rosicrucian secrets were limited then as to-day, to College secrets. A Rosicrucian was not of the Rosicrosse until he had been taught "how to read by using his eyes."

4. The "Craft-Mason" and the Higher Brother (at least up to and including "Thirty Two") are exactly in the same position as the Rosicrucian. They know nothing
SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY


TO THE FREE THINKER AND STUDENT

The facts here outlined are by no means exhaustive. The evidence—though sufficiently extraordinary to demand attention—is but a fractional part of the complete presentation of the case which has still to be given to the world.

While engaged in this research work, I have corresponded with many scholars and Brethren. Many have interviewed me with formidable lists of questions regarding the Masonry of Shakespeare. Everyone has gone away completely satisfied with respect to the Freemasonry of the Plays and the Author's position in the Craft as the Father and Founder.

Some Brethren have carefully studied the matter for themselves in the old books along certain definite lines and checked the Manuscripts I have compiled. I know of no one who has not been thoroughly convinced of the truth I have enunciated.

Out of a voluminous correspondence I quote sufficient to indicate the importance of the matter in the opinion of Freemasons of professional standing.

J. WALTON RIPON, P.M., Chairman of the Merseyside Masonic Research Association (Author): "I really cannot express my feeling as to the truly remarkable results of your examination of the two Plays, Love's Labours Lost, and The Tempest. The more one ponders over it, the more remarkable it seems to be. . . .

"Your discoveries amaze me, and it is astonishing that no one has stumbled to it before.

"It seems almost incredible that the plays should have so much hidden information which has remained undiscovered. It is wonderful how the items hang together to form a continuous story."

SHAKESPEARE, CREATOR OF FREEMASONRY

hours. . . . Speaking personally, if I were a W.M. of an English Lodge I would present every newly raised M.M. with one. . . . I have been a student of Masonic origins all my Masonic life. . . . a contributor on the research side to the Masonic papers. . . . The Masonic examples in Love's Labours Lost, and The Tempest are indisputable. . . . There is no doubt of the matter."

R. MOULTON, Esq.: "I am writing this from the Bay of Biscay to thank you for the Revelation re the Founder of Masonry. . . . I am proud to think I once sat in Lodge with you many years ago. . . . How my old dad who was a great Shakespearean scholar would have loved to have known the truth. . . ."

PROF. F. LOWRY CLARKE, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, U.S.A.: "Having had the privilege of going through the MSS. of your complete Work in your own home, I am thoroughly satisfied. The evidence and logical deductions are quite irresistible."

G. L. EMMERSON, London, P.M., P.Z., etc.: "My Masonic friends who have had a sight of your paper would like me to thank you on behalf of the Craft for all the research and work that you must have put in to make such a paper possible."

JAMES WM. DUNN, P.M., P.Z., 18°, Celebrant Mersey College, S.R.I.A.: "It is now about fifteen months since I was first moved by your lecture on 'The Unknown Founder of Freemasonry.' I felt at once that I was being drawn to the heart of a great Mystery and also a great Tragedy. . . . This revelation comes with such a blinding force of illumination that one is never afterwards the same; one walks in the Light and still cries for more Light. . . .

"It is now thirty-two years since I first saw the Light of Masonry. But it seems that I have only been seeing through a glass darkly. I have been searching for a Lost Word. . . . I have found many Words . . . Signs . . . Tokens . . . Vows . . . But these things no longer draw me, neither do they awe me nor comfort me. . . ."

"There has now been revealed to me a man—a tragic man—England's supreme genius, the Immortal Shakespeare whom you claim to be our Unknown Founder. With the talisman you gave me I have tried to unravel the heart of the Mystery.

"I have studied the Plays and Sonnets (particularly Love's
POSTSCRIPT

"Now if any Brother or Well-wisher shall conscientiously doubt or be dissatisfied, touching any particular point contained in this Treatise, because of my speaking to many things in a little room: and if he or they shall be serious in so doing, and will befriend me so far, and do me that courtesie, to send to me before they condemn me, and let me know their scruples in a few words of writing, I shall look upon myself obliged both in affection and reason to endeavour to give them full satisfaction."

AN ELIZABETHAN EMBLEM:
THIRTY-THREE,
SIGNIFYING
MOAB... THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS.

INDEX

A
Aeneas, the Mysteries, 123
Addison, Joseph, his Masonic knowledge, 30
on Capital Letter Codes, 153–4
America and Symbolism pre-1717, 269
Anagrams, 151
D'Israeli on, 153, 263
on Masonrie, 257
Anderson, Dr. J., "Constitutions," 1723 Ed., 22, 25
his Fabrications, 23
Confusions, 25
Knowledge of Secret Creator, 35
Sends the World astray, 41
"Constitutions," 1738 Ed., Printed Hints, 43–4; 193
not a Creator, 73
"Good Men and True," 84, 102
his Rosicrucian Code Knowledge, 193
a "Mathematical Divine," 201
the Ancient Landmarks, 208
his Literary Works, 215
a Lecturer, 223
as a Writer, 232
and the Emergence, 1723, 237
and Reservation of Truth, 247
a Vindication, 250
his Honour, 258
Apollo, the Sonnet Sun-God, 80, 104, 179, 184

B
Bacon, Francis, The Advancement, 31
New Atlantis, 40
Essays, 203
Deccive, the, 137
Bible, the, James Edition, 31
and F.M., 37, 211
and the Ritual, 260
in Feudal times, 260–1
Blackham, Col., the Ritual, 24, 64
Eng. Language in 1440, 256
"BO," 102, 167
Bos, 105, 180–1
Board of Installed Masters, 104, 107
Boswell, Squire, and F.M., 33
Brandes, Geo., Shakespeare's Soul, 177
Bray, Sir D., the Original Sonnet Order, 178
Broadfoot, P., the Ritual, 206
Bullamore, G. W., Apollo, 184
Old Charges, the, 257
INDEX

C
Cable-Tow, the, 34, 133
Campbell, Lord, Shakespeare’s Law, 48
Castells, F., The Genesis of F.M., 22
Claret, G., Ritual, 207
Constitutions, the Book of, and Purposeful Inventions, 1738 Ed., and printed Hints, 44, 149
Cook MS., the, 31
Cotgrave on the word “Mote,” 115
Customs, Masonic, 54, 57-61, 81-118, 131-149
their Evolution, 63
their Remarkable Character, 65
Blinded Candidates, 80
Climbing, 81
the Ballot, 91
Chalking the Floor, 129
the Circle, 130
the Sword, 130
“Calling Off,” 135
Monthly Recitals, 136
the Ceremonial, 144, 224
Hoodwinks, 145-6
Craft Rites pre-1717, 26
Cypher Codes, 85, 111, 193-202
the Ritual Letter Code, 126
in Love’s Labours Lost and The Tempest, 150-173, 175

D
Desaguliers, T., Dr., Literary Work, 215
the Lecturer, 223, 233
his Honour, 258
Development of Rituals, 209
Diary, Shakespeare’s, 174-191
D’Israeli, J., on Anagrams and Codes, 153, 263
Dobson, Austin, the Restoration, 212
Dramatic Power of Ritual, 229
Dugdale, Sir W., and F.M., 32

E
Edinburgh, Masonic Symbols, 268
Elizabethan Era, the, Barbaric Customs, 22, 96
the Language, 31, 207, 262
Books in English, 261
Culture in the, 262
Elizabeth, Queen, Statute of Labourers, 27
“Emulation” Working, 205
English Grammar, the, 31
Language in 1440, 256
Modern English, the, 257
Ethical Symbolism, 27, 34, 80-83, 87, 92-4, 96-7, 180, 227-8, 255, 268
Examinations, Masonic, Pedestal, 95, 93, 96, 109-10
Testing Strangers, 104
Exposures of F.M., the, 39
Evolution of Ritual, 210-11

F
“Fellow,” a Name, 156
Fellow Craft, the, 46, 111, 130, 137, 160, 165

INDEX

Findel, F. C., the Operatives, 24, 251
York Masonry, 133
an Old Ritual, 137
a textual critic, 233
“Gentlemen” and operatives, 254
the Genesis of F.M., 265
Fort, G. F., operative craft destroyed, 26
“Four Old Lodges,” the, 23
Pike, A., on the, 62
were not operative, 210
“Fra Roi Crosse,” 194, 271
their Secret Seal Numbers, 195-202
Freemasonry, the Origin of, 17, 18, 21-35, 204
the 1723 Emergence, 22
from France, 31, 82
a Protestant Era Creation, 32
and the “New Commandment,” 33
in the Shakespeare Folio, 46-61
and the Mysteries, 66
and Stratford, 267
Free Men, 79, 107

G
“Gentlemen” and the Masons, 27, 56, 101, 237, 263
illiterate, 210, 234, 254-5
Gilda, the Merchant and the Craft, 254
Gilles, Peter, 205
Godfrey on Elizabethan Dialects, 262
on Schooling, 262
Gould, on an “Original Ritual,” 207
on the operatives, 254

H
Hallam, H., the Shakespeare Enigma, 36
Hall, Manley, Origin of F.M., 264
“Hat, the Good Man’s,” 84, 102
Haughfoot MS., the, 30
Haywood and Erbury, the Regius, 256
operative organization, 260
Higher Degrees, the, 22, 23, 88, 108, 112, 161, 209, 214, 265
Hiram Abif and Hiram of Tyre, 55
the Legend of, 62-73, 206, 208
the Murder, 139

278

279
INDEX

L
Lee, Sir S., on Shakespeare, 36
Sh. "New Methods," 75
Lewis, A., "Emulation," 207
"Liberal Arts," the, 132
Literary Characteristics of Ritual, 203-238
Lodge Ceremony, n. 100-2, 146
Lodge of "Antiquity," the, 28-9
London and York Masons, 30, 134, 205, 264
London Masons' Company, 33
"Lost Word, The," 45, 217
Lover's Labor Lost, 33
The Genesis of F.M., 74-118, 245-6

M
"Machab..." 100, 109
Making, Passing, Raising in 1650, 29
Malone, E. (1788), on Athelstone, 133
Mark Antony, 224
Marks of Design, 241
Martin, F., Ignorance of Masons, 262-3
Marshall, F. A., on "L.L.L.," 75
on "MOT,E," 114
Masonic Knowledge, 48
Allusions in the Plays, 49
Authority pre-1717, 29
the "Eye," 80
Light, 80
Jewels, 96, 107
Speech, 104
Modernists, 208
Line of Descent, 235
Peculiar Proofs, 242

N
Naso, Ovidius, 95
National Fraternity, 1717, the, 216
Nichol, Prof., the Hidden Post, 37, 227, 229
Northumberland MS., the, 266
Number-Counts in 1623 Folio, 196
and J. Anderson, 201
and W. Preston, 201
and W. Hutchinson, 201

O
Official Historians, the, 244, 249, 250, 258
Old Charges, the, 234, 258
Oliver, Dr., the Third Degree, 65
Operative Charges, the, 25
as Warrants, 257
Operative Craft, the, telescoped into Freemasonry, 24, 210
its Death, 26, 206, 211, 252
Customs, 68

P
"Gentlemen" members, 210, 264
in 1717, 211
Operatives, the, their wretchedness, 209-10
their wages, 253-4
the Annual Assembly, 255
their organization, 260
their ignorance, 260-1
Ophelia, Hamlet, an Initiation, 58, 175
Oracle, the, 126, 147-8
Owen, Dr., on Shakespeare's Masony, 72
INDEX

on Athelstane, 153
Numbers and their Properties, 201
his Vindication, 250
his alleged "Credulity," 259
Prosper-O, 28
the Art of, 119
the Master, 120
Promulgation, the Lodge of, 205
Prose rendering of a Sonnet, 182-8
Pythagoras and Tyre, 125, 173
and Numbers, 196

Ω

Queen Dido, 123
Quinney, De, on F.M., 243-5, 249

R

Reconciliation Lodge, the, 205
Regus Poem, the, 31, 65
a Trick Poem, 98, 99
Shakespeare's Work, 134
and the masons, 255
a Fabrication, 255, 256
and "Had-y-wyze," 266
a Scrivener's product, 267
Rehearsals, Masonic, 103, 136
Restoration, Literary Style, 212
Ritual, Shakespeare the Author of, 35
the Marks of a Mason, 47
its Evolution, 62-9
the Writer of, 82, 113
in MS., 94
of the Rose Croix, 108
Letter Code, 33, 58, 126, 150-173
of the Cock and Dog, 136

Literary Characteristics of,
203-38
Emulation, Stability, 205
and Working Rules, 205
and the Mysteries, 206
Robertson, J. M., the Sonnet Problem, 176
Robison, Prof., on the Genesis, 22
Royal Arch, the, 23
its Creation, 64
the Sash, 91
Companion, 145
Word, 171
Rosicrucian Colleges, 194, 271
and the Northumberland MS., 266
Rosicrosse-Masons, the, 32, 40,
193-202, 238, 271

S

Sam's Son (Samson), 86 (B. of C.
p. 9)
Scriveneries, the Elizabethan,
237, 266
Second-sight of Rosicrosse-
Masons, 32
Set Squares of the I.M., 34, 252
Shakespeare, his Vocabulary,
31, 208
L.L.L., 33, 74-118
the First Freemason, 34, 37
and the 1623 Folio, 34
and the 1723 Emergence, 35
the Mystery of, 36-45
his careful revisions, 37
the MSS., of, 37
an Ethical Teacher, 37, 39,
246-7
Sonnets, Benson Medley, 41
a personal Tragedy, 41
buries his Name, 42
the Hiram Myth, 67-73
and "Feigned Tales," 66
as Father of the Craft, 73, 97,
237
his accomplishments, 74
Knowledge of "Degrees," 107
buries the Genesis in L.L.L.,
112
welds F.M. to the Mysteries
in The Tempest, 119-149
as Prospero, 119
the Creator of the Regius and
Cooke MSS., 134
creator of Cock and Dog
Ritual, 137
his Last Words, 148
Sonnet Codes, 151
and his Sonnet Diary, 174-91
the Concealed Man, 230
his Personal Identity, 230
a "Worthy Fellow," 239-257
his Royal Art, 241
the Supreme Dramatist, 236
his Philanthropia, 245
the Scrivener of, 267
the Tomb, 268
Signs, F.M., and Tudor Penal-
ties, 40, 97
Penal, 143
Signals in Printed Books, 41
and Knocks, 140, 141
Skull and Cross Bones, 146
Smeley, T., Books in 1566, 261
Solomon's Temple, 65, 65, 81,
138, 145, 168, 208, 226
Solomon, King, and the Beggar,
87, 92
"So Mote It Be," the Origin,
114, 117, 168-9
"Sons of the Widow," 124
Spenser, "Shepherd's Calendar,"
31
Speculative and operative Graft-
ing, 98, 99
the York operative Charges,
133, 206

Stability Working, 205
St. Alban, "A.D. 303," 31
"A.D. 1561-1626," 51, 237
Steevens, J., the Genesis, 265
Stratford Memorial, the, 267
Still, Colin, Shakespeare's Mystery
Play, 120
"S.R.I.A.," 194

T

"TAU," 171
Temple of E.M., the, 34
Tempest, The, 119-149
Masonry and the Mysteries,
245-6, 270
Theobald, B. G., Elizabethan
Culture, 262
Theory, the 1717, 209-10
Third Degree Death Rite, the,
63, 164
Dr. Oliver on, 65
in "The Tempest," 127, 141
Three Degrees pre-1626, 203,
208, 229, 234
Titus Andronicus, 74
Theosophic Mysticism, 214
Trinity College MS., 30
Triumvir, the Masonic, 96
Troilus and Cressida, 37
"T.T.T." Symbols, 105, 178
Tyre, Hiram of, 124

V

Vibert, L., the Ritual, 24, 26
the Craft dies, 27
F.M. and St. Alban, 31
on the Royal Arch, 64, 65
on masons and daubers, 254
INDEX

and the illiterate operatives, 256
on the Bible, 260
Virgil's Aeneid, 123

W

Waite, A. E., the birthplace of F.M., 23, 24
and pre-1717 Rites, 26
the Tyburn Tree, 97
on Ritual Development, 209
and the Invention of Symbolism, 214
Ward, Dr., on Shakespearian Biography, 36
Walters, Cuming, Shakespeare's Diary, 177
Warrant, the Lodge, 103
Whateley, Archbishop, 226
Widow Dido, 122, 124-5
Widower Jeannes, 123
Wigston, W. E. C., The Mysteries and The Tempest, 120
on Tyre and Pythagoras, 125
Woodford, Rev. W., on W. Preston, 259
the Genesis, 22
Working Rules of F.M., the, 205
Words, Masonic:
Tubal, 55
Solomon, 49
St. John, 49
Jerusalem, 50
Worshipful Master, 50
Prosper, 52
Hiram, 55
Matchpin and Maughbin, 56
Scribe, E., 57
Sojourner, 57
used by Design, 61
All-Seeing Eye, the, 80
the W.M., 86
the Lodge, 87
the J.W., 90
blackballs, 91
Hoodwinks, the, 91
Pomegranate, 93
Charity, 98
Joshua, 102
BO., 102, 167
Machab ..., 100, 109
Boas, 105
Jachin, 109
Ja, 167
Gloves, 103
Apron, 111
"So Mote It Be," 114
Line and Level, 128
Mop and Pull, 129
the passwords, 138
Worthy Fellow, the, 34, 252

Y

Yarker on the Higher Degrees, 236, 265
York and London Masonry, 30, 134, 205, 264