

## Degree of English Master, or the Golden Ring

### Etymology of this Degree

This degree closely corresponds to the Scottish apprentice as given in France. It was rather unknown formerly, even before the war of 1741, and this for a rather appreciable reason. The English who knew the lightheartedness of the French and the abuse they had made of Freemasonry, substituting them by selling them to some friends, had not deemed it necessary to inform us. It was only the civility with which the English prisoners in the war of 1741 were treated, so that the generosity of the French made the English confer this degree upon those to whom they had some liabilities.

There are several lodges in England where they do not have any other Master degree.

The Stuart prince, Pretender to the throne of England, had conferred this degree to those general officers who had accompanied him in his retinue. This degree presented here can nevertheless be allocated to the series of the French Master, after this that of Perfect Master, and Perfect Irish Master.

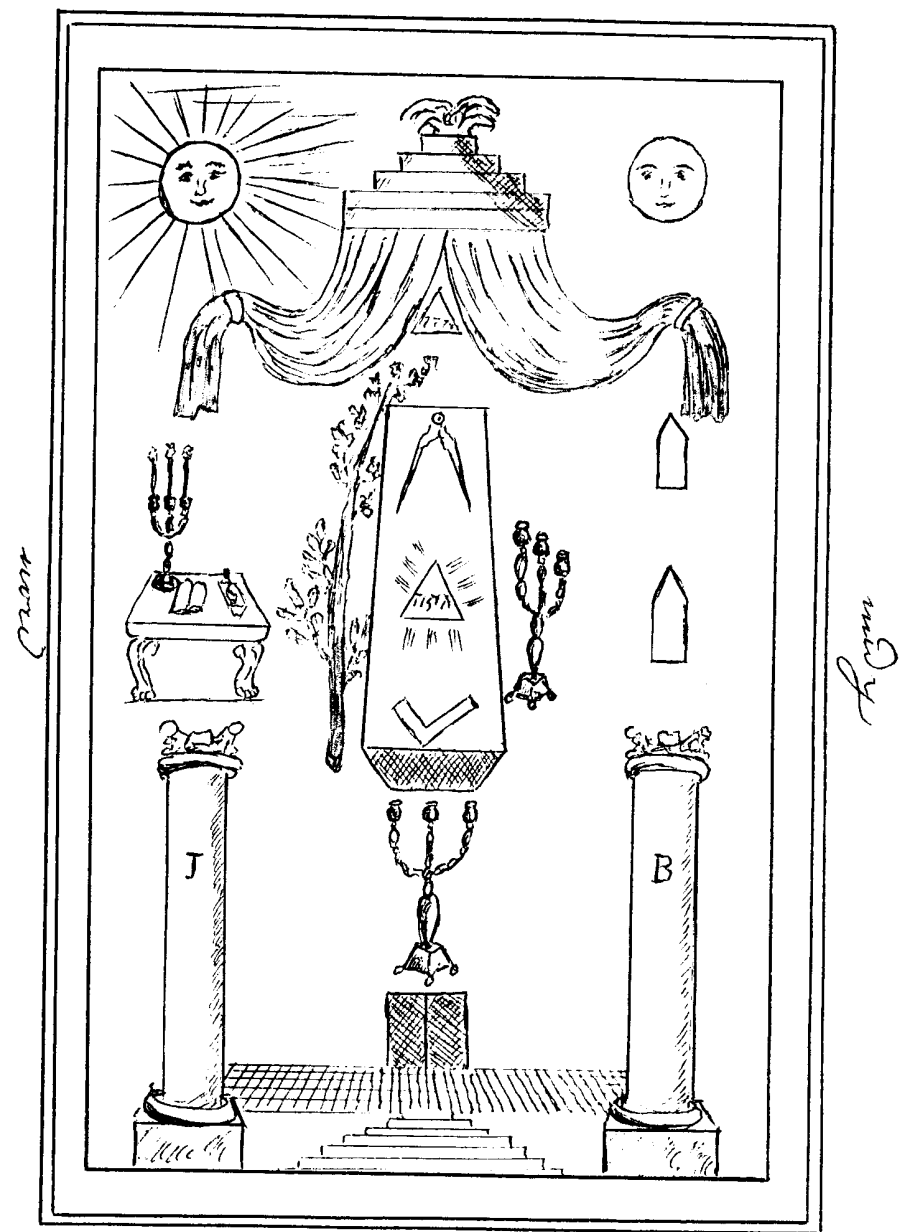
### Decoration of the lodge

The decoration is the same as that of the Craft Master except that on the altar there is a small hod with oil in which there is a small golden trowel, the book of the Gospel and a candlestick with three branches with lighted candles. On the step at the base of the altar there should be placed a brazier full of fire. Over the canopy is a shield in the middle of which will be a large radiant glorious triangle in the centre of which will be written the name of God in Hebrew. The Tracing Board of the lodge is nearly the same as the one of the Master degree except, however, that at the top, between the sun and the moon, there is a triangle similar to the one of which is spoken before, as well as one on the tomb.

The lodge will be illuminated by nine candles placed around the Tracing Board similar to that of the Master.

The Grand Master and all brethren are decorated with a pair of gloves and an apron of white leather lined and bordered with red as well as a large ribbon of red watery silk. The Master and all his officers wear it around the neck falling with a point on the level of the stomach and the brethren wear it as a sash on the end of which hangs the jewel, which is a pair of compasses with the points resting on a quarter of a circle. In the centre of the compasses is a sun with the rays extending likewise to the compasses and to the quarter of the

Tableau du m<sup>r</sup> anglais surnommé l'anneau d'or  
orient



occident

circle. On the reverse is a star with five rays radiating its glory and in the centre of which is the letter G. This jewel has to be made of gold or at least of gilded metal. Besides this, they are each decorated with a golden ring that they wear on a finger of the left hand; they carry swords by their sides, Everything being thus prepared he opens the lodge as follows.

### Opening of the lodge.

After the Grand Master has the doors secured and has been informed that all brethren are true English Masters, he gives seven knocks, in this way o..oo..o..oo..o..oo.., with his mallet on the altar and says to the assembly: My brethren, assist me to open the lodge of the true English Masters. The wardens repeat this each with the same number of knocks and they say each in turn: To Order, my brethren!

Then all of the brethren rise from their seats and stand to Order holding their right hand on their stomachs, the fingers close to each other and as if they would cut open the belly. In this posture the Grand Master says the following prayer.

### Prayer

Sovereign and Great Architect of this vast Universe, You, Who with Thine divine Eye penetrate the hearts of mortals and uncover the most hidden places, purify our eyes with the sacred fire of Your love. Imprint on our souls the character of the divine wisdom, guide and direct our steps on the path of virtue. Eliminate from Your divine presence the impious and perverse. Do that by being uniquely occupied with the great work of our perfection, it will be the price of our labors. May peace and charity tighten the knots of our union so that this lodge may be a weak image of the happiness the true Elect will enjoy. Give to our spirit a true insight, in order to separate chaff from wheat and not to be mistaken in the choice of those we are going to mark with the awful seal of perfection. May we, finally, have no other goal than Your glory and our advancement in the good and the reign of true Masonry. Amen, amen, amen.

- Q. Worshipful brother Senior Warden, what directed your steps here?
- A. The love for Freemasonry, my obligations and the desire to attain a degree of perfection of a true Mason.
- Q. What do you bring with you?
- A. A zealous heart, a friend and supporter of virtue.
- Q. Which are the qualities you need to gather them?
- A. Zeal, fervour and constancy.
- Q. Why these virtues?

- A. The first two conduct us to the third, which very often procures to us the happiness of knowing the Great Light.
- Q. What is the hour?
- A. Full noon.
- Q. What does full noon signify?
- A. That the sun enlightens us to work efficiently at the work of our perfection and that it is time to profit from its generosity.
- Q. Where would you find materials?
- A. In the treasury of the virtuous Masons, by settling and measuring my actions and my heart with the square and the compasses of the divine wisdom.
- Q. Where do you find this wisdom?
- A. In the heart of each brother composing this Worshipful lodge of which you are the support.

Upon this answer the Very Worshipful Grand Master says to the whole assembly: It is upon you, my Very Dear brethren, that I will model mine; I shall endeavour to support your desires. To this effect, Worshipful Senior and Junior Warden, announce to this Worshipful assembly that the lodge of true English Masters is open and that each must work with zeal, fervour and constancy. After this announcement to the two columns, as was ordered, all give the sign together, the nine claps, as before, with the hands, saying three times: 'Vivat'. Then everyone sits down silently and the initiation is started as follows.

### Initiation

The lodge being open, the Terrible brother or Preparer, on the order of the Very Worshipful Grand Master, leaves and go to see the candidate in the preparation chamber. After entering he has him take off the collar of his shirt and finally his hat and sword. In this condition he takes him by the hand and conducts him (with free sight) to the door of the lodge, where he gives five knocks as before. Then after the usual formalities of announcing and opening, the candidate is introduced to the West, between the two wardens. There the Very Worshipful takes the word and says:

- Q. What are you coming to do here?
- A. To conquer my passions.
- Q. Are you a Mason?
- A. My brethren and companions recognize me as such.

He then poses several questions on the degree of Master which he has already passed. When he is satisfied the Very Worshipful Grand Master says to him: Search for the word, although it is lost here.

- Q. Do you wish to proceed?
- A. Yes.

Leave now, I will let you be informed when it is time. The candidate then leaves and the Very Worshipful says to the whole assembly:

My brethren, do you consent that this Master passes to the degree of true English Master?

When everyone has given his consent in the usual manner, the Very Worshipful Grand Master orders to have the candidate brought back and placed in the West. When this order has been executed, the Very Worshipful Grand Master says to the candidate:

- Q. My brother, does your conscience not reproach you of anything? Are you not guilty at all since you were received as a Mason, of any treason against one of your brethren, our religion, or our monarch? And did you never reveal our mysteries to profanes?
- A. No, Very Worshipful Grand Master.
- Q. What would you have done, if you had lived in the period when the malicious ones assassinated our dear Master Hiram. Would you have revenged his death?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Have you always been faithfully attached to the compliance of the obligations you engaged in the presence of the Great Architect of the Universe?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did you find in our oaths anything which would be contrary to religion, the State or yourself?
- A. No.

After this answer the Very Worshipful Grand Master says to him: You should know and never forget that if the tepidity or the disgust of our sacred mysteries should take possession of you, you would equally be guilty, as your crime would be enlarged in proportion to the amount of light you have received. Your crime would therefore come into the full daylight, if you would be a true English Master, as you are going to observe. (My brother). You will advance with great steps in Freemasonry, to which you will be more perfectly attached by the inevitable obligations, now unknown to you, but also all our sacred mysteries will be unveiled to you in all their extent. Your brethren have to become equally attached to you, their needs will have to become yours, as the strong have to work for the weak; you have now to ban all prejudices, all human distinctions and never to admit among your brethren any other distinction than that which causes virtue. It will soon no more be

possible to renounce our particular acts of masonic virtue and our true libations. Go and make your reflections on all I just told you. If you still persist in your feelings, you will announce yourself.

The candidate leaves and the Very Worshipful says to the whole assembly: My brethren, do you persist in the same feelings and the same goodwill for this brother? When everyone has given his consent in the usual form, the Very Worshipful Grand Master orders to introduce the new member into the West side of the lodge. After this order is executed, the Very Worshipful Grand Master says to the candidate:

Q. Do you still persist with the will to take on new engagements?

A. Yes.

In this case, my brother, wash your hands to prove that you are innocent and that you never violated your promises. And remember that our fathers did the same. Water and towel are brought. After washing the hands the Very Worshipful Grand Master dries them and says to him: My brother, unite again your spirit and your heart to take new obligations, more awful than those you engaged until now. Be especially watchful, because you will give your vote in the future to admit blind profanes among us. Make the steps of a Master and come to me.

He comes to the throne by the three Master steps and kneels at the base of the altar, the right hand placed on the holy Gospel. In that posture all brethren take the drawn sword in their hands and surround the candidate. Then the Very Worshipful Grand Master takes the following oath.

#### Oath

I promise on the holy Gospel in the presence of the Great Architect of the Universe and of this Worshipful lodge to be faithful to the Eternal and the right religion in which I want to live and die; never to take arms against my King, never to engage, directly or indirectly, in a conspiracy against him or against the State, but on the contrary to reveal those which may come to my knowledge. Besides, I promise never to reveal to any Mason the mysteries which are being confided to me, not to write, paint, draw or engrave them and never allow that they be so. To attend lodge at least once a year, on the day of St John the Baptist, provided my business or circumstances would not permit me to be present more frequently; to allow for perfect equality among my brethren, without distinction between the poor and the rich, the noble and the ordinary and to make no other difference than which produces virtue; never to refuse to recognize a brother in which state or condition he may be, even when in poverty, provided he be virtuous and that he makes himself known in

a satisfactory way; to visit my sick brethren, to help them and to assist them with my advice, my purse and my arm in their needs and afflictions, even when they are in a dungeon; never to take the sword in my hand against them and to use it only for the defence of religion, my prince, the State and my brethren, or for the defence of Freemasonry against the perjury of traitors and not to give my vote for the admission of a candidate to our mysteries than after scrupulous investigation and a detailed knowledge of his life and morals; and never to abuse a brother's wife, nor dishonor her or her family, and finally never to break the vows I take with virtue and the virtuous. I promise all these things under the penalty of my first oaths. May God and His Holy Gospel be my aid. Amen, amen, amen.

He kisses the Gospel and the Very Worshipful Grand Master takes, with the small golden trowel, oil from a small hod of the same metal, placed on the altar. He anoints the left eye, the mouth and the heart of the candidate saying: By virtue of the power I received, and which I acquired only by my assiduous labours, my constancy and my integrity, I anoint this eye with the oil with which formerly Aaron, David the penitent and the wise Solomon were anointed. I mark you with the awful seal of the Great Architect so that you will always live in His venerable presence. May He always be in your spirit and in your heart. May He penetrate them as the oil in the iron and may fervour and constancy be the sole motive for your actions.

#### Libations

He says: Eat with me this bread and drink the wine from the same cup with me to teach you that the brethren are obliged to assist each other without payment.

When the candidate has eaten and drunk, the Very Worshipful Grand Master takes one of the golden rings of which was spoken before and presents it to the candidate, saying: Receive this ring as a token of the alliance you just made with virtue and the virtuous. Promise that it will never leave your finger before death and that you will only give it to your faithful and virtuous wife, or to your eldest son, or to him, who will have merited your friendship.

When this ceremony is finished, the brethren each eat a piece of the bread presented to them for this purpose, on a plate and from which each breaks a piece off. After eating the bread they make a libation according to the usage, which was formerly the custom and which is to fill a cup or chalice with wine.

The Grand Master drinks first and passes the cup to all brethren in the circle. Each of them takes only one draught. When the chalice or cup has

returned to the Grand Master he finishes it by drinking the remainder, except some drops, which he throws into the brazier with fire, of which was spoken before. When this is done, he raises the candidate and he has him pass to his right side where he gives him the signs, words and token as follows.

There are five signs, which are that of horror, of admiration, of relief, of friendship and of satisfaction.

The horror sign is that of Mastership, but instead of bringing the right hand to the centre of the forehead, the true English Masters bring it only to the heart with the outside of the fingers to the stomach, so that the end of the thumb always touches the heart. In that posture they bring the left hand to the forehead and throw the body backwards, in order to mark all of the horror which this sign expresses.

That of admiration is given by extending both hands forward at the height of the stomach, the fingers closed, the thumb separate, the outside of the hands downward and the inner side upward. In that position the eyes are lifted to heaven.

The sign of relief is given by bringing the closed hands to the head exclaiming: To me, children of the widow. This sign is explained during the initiation of the Master degree.

The sign of friendship is given by having the hands intertwined.

Finally, the one of satisfaction is given by directing the eyes to heaven, saying: Consummatum est.

The sacred words are Moabon, Jehova, Stinks.

The passwords are Giblim, Giblum and Giblas.

The token is made by extending the right hand reciprocally to the elbow and then bringing the left hand on the right shoulder, slightly lower than in the Master degree, the middle finger resting under the bone of the shoulder. In that posture they place foot to foot, knee to knee at the outside, then follows the embrace as in the Master degree, saying alternatively: Moabon, Jehova. After this they withdraw, smelling the finger with which the shoulder was pressed, saying: Stinks: which means 'it stinks'.

The Very Worshipful Grand Master sends him then to make himself known as a true English Master to the whole lodge, which is done. When he is

back he has him sit down among the brethren and when all of the initiations are finished, he proceeds to the lecture as follows.

### Lecture

- Q. What conducted your steps here?
- A. The love for Freemasonry, my obligations and the desire to attain the degree of perfection, the true veritable Mason.
- Q. What do you bring here?
- A. A zealous heart, a friend and supporter of virtue.
- Q. What are the qualities required to make you acquire it?
- A. Zeal, fervour and constancy.
- Q. Why these three virtues?
- A. The first two conduct us to the third, without which we can not come to the knowledge of the great Light.
- Q. What should be the dispositions of a true English Master?
- A. To eliminate from his heart vindication and jealousy, always to be prepared to do good and never to use his tongue for calomny, slander and lies.
- Q. How should one behave in this place?
- A. With deep respect.
- Q. What is the reason that the rich, the poor, the prince or his subject, all present here, are equal and brethren?
- A. That is because something is present here greater than you, Worshipful Grand Master, in the triangle, repeated on the tomb and in the firmament.
- Q. Why is it the subject of your respect?
- A. Because it contains the sacred Name of the Great Architect of the Universe, well-known, revered and praised on earth and in heaven.
- Q. What is your age?
- A. Nine years accomplished.
- Q. Why accomplished?
- A. Because I am a true English Master and have passed the trials and it is to me to collect the fruits of my labors.
- Q. What did you contract when you received this degree?
- A. A double alliance with virtue and the virtuous.
- Q. What is its mark?
- A. A golden ring signifying purity.
- Q. What is the hour?
- A. Full noon.
- Q. What does full noon signify?
- A. That the sun illuminates us to work efficiently on our labour of perfection and that it is time to profit from its generosity.
- Q. Where would you find materials?

- A. In the treasury of the virtuous Masons; by regulating and staking off my actions and my heart by the square and compasses of the divine wisdom.
- Q. Where would you find this wisdom?
- A. In the heart of each brother composing this Worshipful lodge of which you are the support.
- Q. Are you a true English Master?
- A. Yes, I am and I am proud of it.
- Q. How did you acquire this emblem of favour?
- A. By the goodness of the Very Worshipful and all of the brethren who believed to see in me the required qualities.
- Q. Which are these?
- A. Zeal, fervour and constancy.
- Q. Is it a peculiar degree?
- A. No, it is the end of English Freemasonry and the recompensation for Perfect Masons.
- Q. How did you enter the lodge?
- A. With firmness and courage in my heart and on my face the usual look of innocent and virtuous souls.
- Q. What did you see on entering the lodge?
- A. A deep sorrow.
- Q. Did it last long?
- A. No, it ceased due to the joy at finding the corpse of Hiram.
- Q. What else did you see?
- A. Nine great lights, representing the nine days the fellowcrafts were searching the traitors, as well as the Masters searching the Worshipful Master Hiram.
- Q. What else did you observe?
- A. The candlestick with seven branches, which signifies the six years dedicated to the building of the Temple and the seventh of its dedication to the Eternal.
- Q. How many fellowcrafts were employed to search and punish the assassins of our Worshipful Master?
- A. Sixty, of whom fifteen left through the East porch, fifteen through that in the South and fifteen through that in the West and another fifteen stayed at each of the porches, divided by five.
- Q. What is the name of these unfortunate assassins?
- A. G.:, G.:, G.:.
- Q. Which punishment did they have to suffer, when they were found?
- A. That of retaliation.
- Q. What do you call the place where Solomon had the Temple built?
- A. The threshing floor of Arauna near Mount Moria.
- Q. How was it known that it were fellowcrafts, who committed the crime?
- A. Through the general appeal of the workmen and the absence of the three

I just mentioned.

- Q. Where did they hide after this horrible action?
- A. In a nearby village, having arrived by different roads.
- Q. Which honours were paid at the funeral of our Worshipful Grand Master Hiram?
- A. He was buried in the sanctuary of the Temple with so much magnificence as if it were for Solomon himself. A triangular jewel was placed on his tomb, in the centre of which was engraved in Hebrew characters the sacred Name of the Eternal. A canopy was made over it, in the centre of which the triangle was repeated. All of the Masters attended the funeral, dressed with apron and white gloves.
- Q. Why had they aprons and white gloves on?
- A. As Solomon saw the consternation of the Masters, caused by their fear that the blood shed would come upon their heads and that of their descendants until the seventh generation, he gave them as a mark of their innocence commanding them not to regard this day as criminal, but as a work of virtue and a day of triumph and glory for themselves and their descendants.
- Q. Which place did the Masters occupy during the funeral?
- A. The Apprentices occupied the nave in the North, the Fellowcrafts that of the South and the Masters the gallery of the throne, which runs around the sanctuary.
- Q. What happened after the funeral?
- A. An exact representation of all things which accompanied the lifting of the corpse of the Worshipful Master.
- Q. How do we distinguish between our Master and the King of Tyre?
- A. By the surname Abif.
- Q. What does this word signify?
- A. Inspired.
- Q. What does the red collar we wear signify?
- A. It is in commemoration of the blood our Master shed for Masonry. He reminds us too that we, in accordance with his example, should always be ready to do the same.
- Q. Where are the letters of the king of Tyre to be found?
- A. In the Paralipomenon.
- Q. Where was the corpse of our Very Worshipful Master Hiram Abif found?
- A. In the South near a village called Giblim in a heap of gravel nine feet high.
- Q. What is the password of the Apprentices and Fellowcrafts?
- A. Tubal Cain and Schiboleth, because Solomon changed the instructions at the death of the Master, so that the absent guilty ones could be recognized, if they should come back. Then he made war with the Egyptians, conquered them and made them tributary, agreed to peace and

then married the daughter of the Pharaoh, after he had concluded the treaty with the Pharaoh. Under this treaty the Egyptians became friends of the Hebrews. Several lived among them, but they could not be admitted to the labors in the Temple, in conformity with the order the Hebrews had received from the Very High. The Egyptians could not pronounce these passwords like the Jews. They served to distinguish them. The same applied in warfare and all those who wished to pass the guards as Hebrews, were obliged to pronounce these words. Those who could not pronounce them, were passed over the edge of the sword and were thrown into the Jordan.

- Q. Why do we cover the eyes of the candidates and do we hang a cord around their necks?
- A. 1° to remind man that he is born without knowing evil;  
2° that when we receive life we are deprived of light;  
3° that Moses did not see the Eternal at all in the Burning Bush, that he only heard His voice and that he did not possess sight of Him until he was in His glory. Similarly our mysteries were only unveiled at the death of our dear Master Hiram. The cord is also a symbol that stone can not be raised to the top of an edifice without its assistance.
- Q. Why are we deprived of all metals?
- A. That is because when Solomon had the Temple built the great of the people, even the women, sacrificed their most precious jewels and gave them to be molten for the making of golden and silver vases adorning the sacred temple. In the same way we should be happy when we can assist our brethren in their needs.
- Q. Why is in the Apprentice degree the knee made bare and a foot put in a slipper and why do the Masters have to wash their hands?
- A. To teach us that when our fathers took their obligation at the porch of the town, their knee was made bare, a bell-man then made the tour among the people and said: In the name of the Great Living God I announce to you that this, &c. puts aside his interests, in order to be true to his promise. When he would be accused and would prove his innocence, he washed his hands and the bell-man announced him in the same way as was told above, this being the essence of the oath.  
The foot in the slipper is in imitation of Moses, when he wished to approach the Burning Bush and the Eternal said to him: Take off your sandals, the place you are to enter is holy and sacred.
- Q. Why is the breast of the candidate made bare?
- A. To teach us that our hearts must be uncovered to our brethren, without any disguise.
- Q. What do the perambulations he has to make signify, and the stairs of the Temple of which he has to mount three steps?
- A. That virtue is not attained at the first step.

- Q. What do the East, the West, the South and the North signify?
- A. The North signifies the chaos of the world before creation. It is not lighted, because it is the place where the traitors, assassins of our Very Worshipful Master Hiram, forged their execrable conspiracy. The South is where the sun illuminates and warms us to profit from the time; the West, the time of rest and the East the fruit of our labors.
- Q. What do the steps of the Apprentices and Fellowcrafts signify?
- A. How long we walk blindfolded before we attain reason.
- Q. What do those of the Masters signify?
- A. The terrible and difficult roads the masters had to go to find the corpse of our Very Worshipful Master Hiram Abif.
- Q. Why should Mastership not be given before twenty years?
- A. Because it is the age at which Solmoon started his edifice.
- Q. What do the three immobile jewels represent?
- A. The rough Ashlar, the man who is just starting out. The cubic, the man who begins to understand his situation, and the tracing board, the tables of the Law given to Moses, the statutes and the justice of our order.
- Q. What do the three pillars signify?
- A. The first two signify the Strength and Wisdom of the Great Architect of the Universe and the third the Beauty of His works.
- Q. What do the three mobile jewels signify?
- A. The square, the Great and Sublime Architect of the Universe, the level His Son, and the perpendicular the Holy Spirit.
- Q. What does the reversed square signify?
- A. That all knees should bend before the Eternal, all signifying but ash and dust in His Eyes.
- Q. What do the perambulations of the Apprentices, Fellowcrafts and Masters signify?
- A. When the workmen were dispersed to search for their very worthy and very Worshipful Master, and since the authors of his death pressed their feet into the sand or dust to mark that they had passed there, they made a habit of it when leaving Jerusalem in order not to deviate from the road.
- Q. What is signified by the password of the Masters?
- A. It is the name of the village where the corpse of the Very Worshipful Master Hiram was found and recovered.
- Q. What is signified by the sign of relief?
- A. The Masters used it, when they searched for Hiram on the mountains, which announced to those who were below that they had not yet found anything.
- Q. Which are the obligations of the English Masters?
- A. Never to visit nor go to any clandestine lodge, never to deny a poor and virtuous brother, who gives sufficient proofs, and not to think that he is not truly a Mason, to visit the sick and the prisoners, to console and assist

them in their needs according to his possibilities, never to abuse the wife, nor the daughter of his brother, never to dishonour his brother's family, to attend lodge at least once a year and especially upon the day of St John the Baptist, if unfortunately one cannot come more often; to revenge the Eternal, his country and his brethren to the last drop of his blood; to punish the traitors and stubborn to Freemasonry; and finally never to break the bond made with the virtuous, of which the ring is the emblem.

Q. What do the trials signify?

A. That the acquisition of virtue is the fruit of much effort. Besides this, the trials signify that the Masters suffer quite some fatigue before they reach the ability to find what they search for. These trials signify moreover that our fathers tried hard in their undertakings before being able to enjoy the happiness of entering the promised land.

Q. How many signs do we have?

A. Five, i.e. that of horror, of admiration, of relief, of friendship, and of satisfaction.

Q. Why do the Masters travel from the West to the East and all over the earth?

A. To show the extent of the Great Architect of the Universe, Who is without restriction and that during all times this usage has been observed in the Temples dedicated to Him.

Q. Why is the ventral sign given with the thumb lifted over the wounds, and the answer by cutting the bowels, the head turned away?

A. In memory of the wounds of our dear Master Hiram and also to remind us that one has to turn away from scandalous passions.

Q. Why is the old Masterword revived among us?

A. By the certainty we had that our Worshipful Master Hiram would absolutely not have revealed it, because the three masters, who accompanied the three groups of fifteen fellowcrafts elected by Solomon to search the assassins, asked for it of the guilty to save their life and that they could not give it.

Q. Why is it only given to Masters of the lodge?

A. Because it is the name of the Great Architect of the Universe and because it should never be promulgated deliberately to the whole world.

Q. Why is the triangle the most precious emblem and jewel of all true English Masters?

A. Because its justness and equality represent the mystery of the Divinity and of Freemasonry.

Q. Why are the square and the compasses the jewel of the Master?

A. To show us that there should be an unshakable rule governing our actions and that we should never deviate from its wise limits.

Q. What signifies the letter G.: in the centre of the triangle?

A. It signifies God in English and in French Dieu.

Q. Why do we call each other Gabaon?

A. Because it is the place, where the Israelites deposited the Ark of the Covenant in times of troubles and persecutions, and because it was the place Solomon gave to the mother of Hiram, where she mourned for her son during the remainder of her life.

Q. Why do we clap before and after the labors?

A. To show in a tangible way the joy we feel in practising works of charity, justness and virtue.

Q. What do the red and white powder signify?

A. When Boaz permitted Ruth to reap corn, which ordinarily was granted to poor strangers, he recognized so much virtue in this woman that he ordered his family and servants to receive her among themselves and to let her dip her bread into the wine. This was only permitted to free persons. Those who have committed faults are treated as profanes and reduced to consuming white powder.

Q. Where are our mysteries to be found?

A. In Flavius Josephus and in the Talmud, or tradition of the Jews.

Q. Why is it forbidden to women to enter our lodges?

A. Because every lodge is a temple for the Eternal and in the temple of Solomon women did not enter into the sanctuary. Besides, they never work at building.

Q. Which subject for meditation does Solomon offer?

A. That the most wise, the most worthy and the most virtuous Master, far from becoming proud, should always defend himself justly, because a single look, a word or a single reflection may start and end our ruin.

Q. Why do we say among ourselves that it rains when there is a profane among us?

A. That is because when it rains, the works are halted and the profanes are also a great obstacle to our works as the rain is to the workmen.

Q. Why do we keep the true word?

A. To mark the respect due to the position it holds and the one it represents. We also keep it for fear, because there are traitors menacing its life nowadays.

Q. Why do we place our hands on the arms when a true English Master arrives?

A. Because one can not enough honour virtue and by receiving someone of this sublime degree, we believe him to be sufficiently courageous to expose his life for his religion, his country and his brethren.

Q. What should a Master of the lodge do when an English Master comes to visit after having received the word?

A. He has to offer him the throne and the mallet.

Q. What is the hour?

A. Midnight.



- Q. Why?
- A. Because after the work comes rest and the midnight watch is for the wicked workmen.
- Q. Which motive conducted your steps here?
- A. The burning desire to practice together acts of justice, of lawfulness and of virtue.
- Q. What is the attraction the lodge has for you?
- A. The triangle is the object of the ardour we feel from possessing it.
- Q. Why is it represented on the tomb and in the vault?
- A. To mark the absolute power of the Great Architect of the Universe, Who commands on earth and in heaven, and to remind us again that our Worshipful Master Hiram, after having built a perishable temple for the Eternal in which he was assassinated, now participates in the happiness which the virtuous Master enjoys in the Grand Lodge, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides.
- Q. Which fruit do you propose to gain from this lodge?
- A. To conquer my passions, to have the will to do only what virtue inspires and to practice daily acts of wisdom, friendship and charity.
- Q. What will you take with you from here?
- A. A greater attachment to Freemasonry.
- Q. What is your age?
- A. Nine years accomplished.
- Q. What can a true English Master wish for more, who does not know anything of the mysteries, than being initiated to the highest degree of Masonry?
- A. A happy death and his entry into the Lodge of the Universe, where the Eternal One presides.

After this answer the Very Worshipful Grand Master gives nine knocks as before with his mallet on the altar, serving as a signal to all brethren to stand to order.

The Worshipful brethren Senior and Junior Warden repeat them each in turn with their own mallets. The Very Worshipful Grand Master says: Worshipful brethren Senior and Junior Warden, inform the Very Worshipful brethren composing this august and very Worshipful lodge, that in view of the hour and the age, it is now time to discontinue the labour; the lodge of true English Masters is closed and we shall clap nine times.

The wardens announce this each in turn to his column. All give together the signs, nine handclaps as before, saying: 'Vivat'. When this is done they embrace each other and after the box for the poor has gone around, everybody retires after the banquet in peace.

finis

*Décor de l'anneau lumineux.*

