

THE SECRETS OF MASONRY.

The public sometimes ask of us, "What are those signs, grips, passes and ceremonies which Freemasons prize so greatly and preserve so sacredly among themselves?" We reply, "These would be of no use to you even if we could communicate them, partly because you are not first prepared in heart understandingly to receive them, and partly because you would be under no pledges to answer or even preserve them. They have a special meaning to those who are *first prepared in heart*. The cry of the little one in its cradle, which to you, its mother, is so fraught with meaning, has little meaning to others. The love-look of the maiden, which to her lover is expressive of such a world of tenderness, conveys but little meaning to me. And so it is with these signs and other methods of Masonic recognition; they only serve a purpose to those who are prepared to *understand* and to *respond* to them, but would convey no meaning to you.

"Yet we will communicate to you some signs and passwords and a ceremonial form *full of Freemasonry*, and equally as binding upon *you* as they are upon *us*.

"1st. When from the lips of parent or Christian friend you hear the words of solemn counsel, warning, rebuke or exhortation, *answer those words*, we charge you in the name of God, by refraining from evil practices and drawing nearer to the cross of Him whose spirit has put it into the hearts of loving friends thus to do you good. Those words of counsel are the 'true words of Freemasonry,' ancient as the warning words which God addressed to our erring parents in Eden.

"2d. When upon the convulsed face of suffering humanity you perceive the tears slowly trickling down—when you see the hands painfully clenched under the agonizings of human sorrow, and hear the choking sob and heavy sigh, answer those signs, we charge you in the name of God, answer them quickly and give such sympathy and aid as it may be in your power to afford. These are the 'grand hailing signs of Masonry,' ancient as the day that Rachel sorrowed in her death-pangs and universally binding upon Masons and anti-masons, man and woman, to the last syllable of recorded time."

THE MASTER'S DEGREE OF CORNWALL.

Bro. William James Hughan, in his History of Freemasonry in Cornwall, says:

It is supposed, on good evidence, that the degree of Master Mason, as a *secret and distinct degree*, was instituted about 1720, and that its ritual then was vastly different to what it is now, as at that period the Royal Arch degree was unknown, and its mysteries formed part of the third degree from that year to about 1740, when an alteration was made. These alterations, we believe, continued for some years, and then another change was made, as also in the two previous degrees, and at the "Union in 1813" the final and unalterable forms were decided upon and established. Before 1717, Freemasonry, as a secret institution, was represented by the "Apprentice and Fellow Craft degrees," since by the third degree, and now by the three Craft degrees combined, including the "Holy Royal Arch," of the Grand Lodge of England.

ORDER OF THE PALLADIUM.

The date of the origin of this society is unknown. It first appeared at Douay, France. Its ritual and statutes are ascribed to Fenelon; the rules admitted both sexes to membership; its professed objects were spiritual and moral improvement. The male members were called the "Companions of Ulysses," and the female the "Sisters of Penelope." The seal of the Order was a heart, crowned with flowers, upon an altar, ornamented with a garland, with a branch of laurel at the right, and another of palm, at the left. Upon the heart was the inscription: "*Je sais aimer*," I know how to love. This device and the intimacy which prevailed between the Companions of Ulysses and the Sisters of Penelope indicate with sufficient plainness the certain end and principal object of the Order of the Palladium. Its existence was of short duration.

A GENUINE LETTER OF THE OLDEN TIME.—The following is a copy of a letter sent along with a watch which required repairing: "Friend JOHN—I have sent thee my clock, which strongly standeth in need of thy friendly care and correction. The last time he was at thy school he was no ways reformed by thy discipline, nor the least benefited thereby. I perceive by the index of his mind that he is a liar, that his motions are wavering and irregular. In the night watch, when he should be on duty, I generally catch him napping; purge him, therefore, I beseech thee, with thy cleansing stick, that he may circulate and vibrate, according to the motion that is in thee; and draw out thy bill in the spirit of moderation, and it shall be faithfully remitted to thee, by thy true friend,

MANASSAH SMITH.

"On the second day of the week, commonly called Monday."

SOLOMON, who in Masonic tradition is said to have been the first of the three Grand Masters concerned in the building of the temple at Jerusalem, was anointed King of Israel about two years before the death of his father DAVID, B. C. 1020. The young king, for he was but nineteen years of age, ascended the throne of Israel at a peculiarly auspicious period. The kingdom was established on a firm basis; the surrounding nations were either subject to the payment of tribute, or there existed treaties of amity and concord between them and the Israelites. They were at peace with all the world and among themselves. Hence SOLOMON was at leisure to pursue those plans which elevated the Hebrew nation to a position of wealth, grandeur and power never before attained.

The mission of Freemasonry is one of mildness and peace. It carries with it no panoply of power, but its own purity of purpose; its own intrinsic excellence and value.

SOME MASTERS injure the Lodge by their want of punctuality in opening—waiting until the room is full. With the requisite number there should not be delay of one minute.

§ A new Commandery of Knights Templars was organized in Louisville, Kentucky, on the evening of the 14th ult., at the Masonic Temple.