

We establish then, as one point in the history of the ritual, that the investiture with the apron as "an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason," is a part of the ritual which existed at the time of the revival in 1717, and that it has undergone no essential or material change since that period.

This is the method in which we are to proceed to determine historic points in the history of oral or esoteric Masonry, by the rational processes of critical comparison, deduction and inference, founded on the collation of contemporary documents which, though not legal, are authentic.

A few other, but more important points in the ritual may now be considered, and the same method of reasoning may be applied to them. The results, I think, will be satisfactory and not uninteresting.

The three most prominent symbols in the present ritual of Speculative Masonry, so prominent as to be universally recognized in all countries and in all rites, are the *Temple*, the *Legend of Hiram*, and the *Word*. It will be interesting to apply some of these principles of criticism to the enquiry into the relation and position that these symbols held in the ritual of the revival.

The *Temple* might, from its prominence, be almost called the characteristic symbol of Speculative Masonry. The whole system of Masonic symbolism is not only founded on the Temple at Jerusalem, but the Temple idea so thoroughly permeates it that an inseparable connection is thoroughly established, so that if the temple symbol were to be obliterated from Freemasonry—if it were to be purged of all the legends that refer to the building of the Temple and to the events that then occurred, we should have nothing remaining by which to recognize and identify Speculative Masonry as we know it. The history of the Roman Empire, with no account of Pompey or Augustus, or that of the French Revolution, with no allusion to Louis the Sixteenth, or to Robespierre, would present just as mutilated and dilapidated a narrative as Freemasonry would were all reference to the Temple of Solomon to be omitted.

Seeing, then, the prominent place that this symbol occupies in the ritual of the present day, it is important that we should know whether it held the same or a similar position in the ritual of the revival—whether the Masons of that day looked upon it as we do now, as the great central symbol, around which all the other symbols congregate—or whether it was the after-thought of some subsequent inventor.

Now we cannot answer these questions by a reference to the primitive ritual of 1717, for that ritual is no longer extant, but we may reach a proximate solution by means of documents contemporary with that period or immediately precedent or subsequent to it.

In the oldest Constitution that we have, the one known as the Halliwell M. S., whose date is supposed to be not later than the middle of the fifteenth century, there is no allusion to the Temple of Solomon, and the "Legend of the Craft," as it is called, terminates with the "Legend of Euclid." The word *temple* occurs but once in the whole poem, and then it is used to designate a Christian Church or place of worship. But in the Cooke M. S., written apparently about forty years later, there are ample references to the Solomonic Temple. We are there told that King David loved Masons—that at the building of his Temple, Solomon had four score thousand at work, and that Solomon "confirmed the charges that his father had given to Masons, with but little difference from the manners that now are used,"—and finally, that Masonry was carried to France and many other regions from the Temple at Jerusalem. It is very evident that when this manuscript Constitution was written the Craft had become familiar with the connection of the Temple with Masonry. After this, there is not a Constitution written in which the idea is not repeated and even gradually developed with larger form. Thus the Alnwick M. S., written about 1701, a few years only before the revival, dilates upon the Temple of Solomon as connected with Masonry, in many words, and gives elaborate details of the construction of the edifice, of the number of Masons employed, how they were occupied in performing other works of Masonry, and how, finally, one of them left Jerusalem and extended the art into other countries. This is also found in some earlier Constitutions.

Was the omission of all notice of Solomon's Temple in the Halliwell M. S., about the middle of the 15th century, intentional, because the Masons of that day attached no importance to it? If so, then its subsequent introduction into the Cooke M. S., at the close of the same century, showing that it was then familiar to the Craft, would naturally lead us to conclude that the Temple of Solomon was first adopted as a symbol in Speculative Masonry between those two periods, not later, we may suppose, than the year 1470.

The continued reference to the Temple in all the subsequent Constitutions, from the end of the fifteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth century, proves that the idea was never again lost sight of. The Constitutions published in 1723 by Anderson, one of the revivers, contains a more enlarged view of the Temple and a diffuse narrative