

communicated as they are with such perfect courtesy and taste, possess the most intense interest, mention the circumstance of a party of ladies and gentlemen having been taken prisoners in the Bay of Bengal by the French frigate *La Forte*, but who were afterwards afforded the means of escape on the captain's discovering that there was the Master of one of the Calcutta lodges among them. It is needless to multiply instances, since every one knows that a Masonic token has often arrested the sword of the destroyer, and I would but ask those who represent our order as a rusty relic of bygone times, altogether incompatible with the golden age in which we live, to point out any other invention of man which could so soften the miseries of war, and heighten the courtesies of life between individuals of contending nations. For my own part, I conceive that, until the light of true religion shall pervade the universe, and the happy period arrive when the whole world shall become a Lodge, and every man a Brother, the fondest enthusiast for the amelioration of the human race can scarcely dream of a condition of society, to which the enforcement of the obligation of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth can be inapplicable, or otherwise than a blessing; and I glory in the conviction, that Masonry was never more extended, triumphant, and influential, than at the present moment."

#### THE REVELATIONS OF A SQUARE.

We intend publishing from month to month, so far as space will admit "The Revelations of a Square," by Brother the Rev George Oliver, D.D., and trust the perusal thereof by our readers will afford them as much information and amusement as it has done us.

##### CHAPTER I.

##### THE REVIVAL.—DR. DESAGULIERS 1717—1722.

"I could a mile unfold."—SHAKESPEARE.

"Dost feel a wish to learn this thing of me?"

THEY SAID.

"Hoc est.

"Vivere his, vita posse priore frui."—MART AL.

A FRIEND and Brother, who resides in town, knowing that I am somewhat of a dabbler in antiquities forwarded to me some time ago, an old SILVER SQUARE, which he told me had the reputation of having been used in one of the earliest Lodges after the revival of Masonry in 1717. Of course I found it an object of great interest, and value it accordingly. Although a good deal battered, the inscription is still distinctly visible. On one limb of its upper face is the following legend—

KEPPE WITHIN COMPASSE;

and on the other—

ACTE ON YE SQUARE

At the angle of junction is a rude heart with the letter J on it. The reverse is blank, with the exception of two small old English capitals **U** and **M**, at the angle.

The jewel is soon described, but how am I to portray my feelings, when, with the instrument lying on the table before me, I called up the spirits of the dead, and contemplated scenes of bygone

times—the working of Lodges—the solemn Labours and convivial Refreshments which this small token had witnessed—the racy jest and sparkling wit which set the table in a roar, after the hours of business were past. This was the age when the facetious Doctor Sheridan reduced punning to a system, and it was practised by rule and compass; and, therefore we may readily believe that the Lodges had their share of it. "O!" I exclaimed aloud, "if this square could speak, what interesting scenes it might reveal, and how it would enlighten us about the doings of Freemasonry at the time of its revival!"

I had been sitting late one evening in contemplation of the scenes which took place in the palmy days of Masonry, when Desaguliers, Payne, Anderson, Lamball, Morrice, Truason, and their compeers were at the helm of affairs. A dull and dreamy sensation came over me, and I saw, or fancied I saw, the Square, which had just been reposing motionless before me, raise itself up, with great solemnity on the exterior points of its two limbs, which seemed to assume the form of legs. Body it had none, but the heart, which was delineated at the angle, put forth two eyes, a snub nose, and a mouth—a sort of amplification of the letter J—I could trace the features distinctly, as we see the figure of a human face in the fire on a winter's night.

While I was considering what all this could mean, I heard a small thin voice pronounce my name. To say I was merely surprised at this unexpected phenomenon, would be too tame an expression—I was utterly astonished and confounded. I rubbed my eyes and looked round the room. Everything appeared exactly as usual—no change could I perceive; the fire burned brightly; the books covered the walls; the candles cast their usual light, and the ticking of the spring clock over my head preserved its usual monotony. I began to fancy I had been mistaken, when my name was again uttered by the same unearthly voice, and there stood the little fellow, as it determined to indulge in some diabolical soliloquy to which I was constrained to listen. At length it communicated its intention by saying—"Attend to me, and I will realize all your wishes, by enlightening you on the subject of your meditations, and giving you the benefit of my experience, but first let me caution you not to utter a single syllable, for if you do the charm will be broken; the sound of the human voice silences me for ever."

"I was originally the property of a Brother whose extensive genius has invested his name with immortality—Sir Christopher Wren, Grand Master of Masonry at the latter end of the seventeenth century, which fell into desuetude when King George I. had the policy to supersede this great man in favour of Bro. W. Benson, and so disgusted him with the world, that he declined all public assemblies, and amongst the rest, relinquished his connection with Freemasonry. The Craft refused to meet, or hold any communication with the new Grand Master, and Masonry languished for several years, till it was supposed to be extinct; and Dr. Plot exulted in the idea that he had given it its death-blow by some ill-natured annotations in the History of Staffordshire."

"In the year 1712 a person of the name of Sir Isaac Lowmeyer published a pamphlet, which he entitled, 'Observations and Enquiries relating to the brotherhood of the Freemasons,' and a few others had been issued on the decline of the Order, as it triumphing in its fall. About this time, Dr. Desaguliers, a Fellow of the Royal Society, and Professor of Philosophy, was gradually rising into eminence. In the course of his scientific researches, the above works fell into his hands. He did not find them very complimentary to the Fraternity, but they excited his curiosity, and he was made a Mason in the old Lodge at the Goose and Gridiron in St. Paul's Churchyard, and subsequently removed by him to the Queen's Arms Tavern in the same locality, where the Grand Lodges were afterwards very frequently held. The peculiar principles of the Craft struck him as being eminently calculated to contribute to the benefit of the community at large, if they could be directed into the channel from which they had been diverted by the retirement of Sir Christopher

Wren. Dr. Desaguliers paid a visit to this veteran Freemason, for the purpose of consulting him on the subject. The conversation of the Past Grand Master excited his enthusiasm, or he expatiated with great animation on the beauties of the Order and the unhappy prostration which had recently befallen it. From this moment the doctor determined to make some efforts to revive Freemasonry, and restore it to its primitive importance.

"You may perhaps be inclined to inquire," said the Square, very naively, "how I became acquainted with these facts, as I was then quietly reposing in the drawer of a cabinet along with Sir Christopher's collection of engravings. The truth is, that the venerable old gentleman had taken a liking to Dr. Desaguliers, and presented me to him with the rest of his Masonic regalia. From henceforth I was privy to all the doctor's plans; and as he soon rose to the chair of his Lodge, I had the advantage of hearing almost every conversation he had with his Masonic friends on the subject nearest to his heart, which generally occurred in the Lodge, with your humble servant at his breast suspended from a white ribbon. Every plan was carefully arranged, and the details subjected to the most critical supervision before it was carried into execution; and by this judicious process, his schemes were generally successful. Thus, having been in active operation from a period anterior to the revival of Masonry, I have witnessed many scenes which it may be both amusing and instructive to record, as the good may prove an example worthy of imitation, and the evil, should there be any, may act as a beacon to warn the unwary Brother to avoid the quicksands of error which will impede his progress to Masonic perfection."

"Bro. Desaguliers having intimated his intention of renovating the Order, soon found himself supported by a party of active and zealous Brethren, whose names merit preservation. They were Ayer, Payne, Lamball, Elliott, Gotton, Cordwell, Dr. Noyer, Vraden, King, Morrice, Calvert, Ware, Lumley and Madden. These included the Masters and Wardens of the four existing Lodges at the Goose and Gridiron, the Crown, the Apple-tree, and the Rummer and Grapes; and they succeeded in forming themselves into a Grand Lodge, and resumed the quarterly Communications, which had been discontinued for many years; and having thus replanted the tree, it soon extended its stately branches to every quarter of the globe."

"There was no code of laws in existence at the period to regulate the internal economy of the Lodges except a few brief By-laws of their own, which, in fact, were little more than a dead letter, for the Brethren acted pretty much as their own judgment dictated. Any number of Masons, not less than ten, that is to say, the Master, two Wardens, and seven Fellow Crafts, with the consent of the magistrate, were empowered to meet, and perform all the rites and ceremonies of Masonry, with no other authority than the privilege which was inherent in themselves and had ever remained unquestioned. They assembled at their option, and opened their Lodges on the highest of hills or in the lowest of valleys, in commemoration of the same custom adopted by the early Christians, who held their private assemblies in such places during the ten great persecutions which threatened to exterminate them from the face of the earth."

"But as this privilege led to many irregularities," continued my companion, "and was likely to afford a pretext for unconstitutional practices, it was resolved that every Lodge to be hereafter convened, except the four old Lodges at this time existing, should be legally authorized to act by a warrant from the Grand Master for the time being, granted to certain individuals on petition, with the consent and approbation of the Grand Lodge in Communication; and that without such warrant no Lodge should be hereafter deemed regular or constitutional. And a few years later Bro. Desaguliers proposed in Grand Lodge that a code of laws should be drawn up for the better government of the Craft."

Accordingly, at the annual assembly on St. John's day, 1721, he produced thirty-eight regulations, which passed without a dissentient voice