

But Charles was a man of energy, and he determined promptly to rebuild his capital. Previous to the fire, the streets were narrow, crooked, and tortuous; and it was determined to re-map, at least the burned district, and turn the calamity to account by widening and straightening the streets, re-adjusting the lines of private property, ignoring the practice of erecting wooden buildings, and thus reforming while they were rebuilding the city. In addition to all this, the public buildings were to be reconstructed, churches must be supplied to the public, and St. Paul's, a memento of the early triumphs of the Cross in England, must be reconstructed in a style of greater magnificence than before. But where should Charles find a man capable of grasping the entire plan; with learning, and skill, and influence, and power to superintend the whole of these vast and complicated operations; guide the labors of so many thousands of workmen and artisans; while at the same time he could design as well, and draw and plan and superintend the mighty work of reconstructing a vast city, with all its churches, and cathedrals, and other public edifices? A man wiser than he whom the King of Tyre sent to Solomon to design and arrange the plans for the first Temple was needed—and such a man was found!

It was none other than Christopher Wren, then Deputy Grand Master of Masons in England.

Masonry was then an operative science, as it *had* been beyond the memory of man, but it was not *exclusively* so. Like an honorary membership in literary or historical societies of the present day, some were admitted as Freemasons, not because they belonged to that profession of operatives, but because of their eminence in the political, scientific, or literary world. The operatives were called *Free* Masons, because they had passed regularly through the several grades, until they had become "master workmen," and thus acquired the *freedom* of the society, and entitled to all its rights and privileges. Distinguished men were admitted because of their political eminence, or their superiority as men of science. They passed through the ceremonies of the degrees, and were called *Accepted* Masons—hence the terms, Free and Accepted Masons, as comprehending the entire body of the Craft. When Masonry laid aside its operative character, and became purely speculative, it retained the appellatives of "*Free* and *Accepted*."

St. Paul's Cathedral, London, is the most gigantic structure in the world consecrated to the interests of Protestant Christianity, and is only excelled in grandeur and extent by St. Peter's in Rome. Besides this, it is the best specimen extant of substantial Freemasonry, in its operative character, of two hundred years ago; and the Grand Master of Masons was its architect and builder. The genius which designed, and the patient energy which constructed it, must command the homage of every visitor, and especially of every Freemason, whether from England itself or other and distant lands. As you enter the central door from the north and pass between the great pillars to the center of the floor beneath the dome, you stop and look around and upward in blank amazement. The entire building is on such a gigantic scale; so grand, so imposing, so solid, so perfect, that you feel subdued and awed as in the presence of the Master-builder himself; a sense of magnitude, of power, of grandeur, rivets you to the spot, and it is some time before you dare move or turn to examine in detail. The form of this masterpiece of architecture is that of a Greek cross; its extreme length is five hundred feet; its greatest width is two hundred and twenty-three feet; and its height, to the cross above the dome, is nearly or quite four hundred feet.

Standing on the mosaic floor beneath the center of the dome, facing the south, you turn to the left, and in front of you is the organ, and behind it the choir, where the religious services are ordinarily held. You advance to near the organ, and a record of the olden days is before you—the most fitting and appropriate epitaph conceivable. There are eight splendid Corinthian columns of blue-veined marble, which support the organ and gallery, and which are richly ornamented with carved work. On the side next the dome, in the front of this gallery, on a plain marble slab, is a Latin inscription (formerly in gold letters), which reads as follows in English.

BENEATH LIES
SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN,
The Builder of this Church and City,
Who lived upward of 90 years, not for himself,
but for the public good.
Reader, seekest thou his monument?
LOOK AROUND!

Now let us see who and what was Sir Christopher Wren.

He was the son and only child of the Rev. Dr. Christopher Wren, a clergyman in the national Church of England. He was born at East Knoyle, in Wiltshire, on the 30th day of October, in the year 1632. His father descended from an ancient Danish