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SYMBOLISM.

(By Bro. L. R. R. Denny, M.M., Avon Lodge 185)

Ethical Problems.

One of the most besetting weaknesses of civilised man - unnoticed by most moralists - is the inevitable tendency to let our vision be narrowed by the vastness of our experiences. Our mental horizon is becoming so large that we have not time or ability to see more of it than concerns our own difficulties and failures.

This tends to throw us more and more on the mercy of external things, and makes us more and more susceptible to influences, subtle or obvious, disruptive or propagandist. Old loyalties are shaken and undermined, a new symbolism insinuates its way into consciousness, and it is well that we should pause once in a while to take stock of our beliefs. I feel it is true that, in the philosophical sense, man lives by what he believes. By their symbols shall ye know them! I conceive it as one of the aims of Freemasonry to keep steadily before us the bigger and the higher purposes of life. We know we are living in times; and no one wishes to prop up a crumbling edifice it its disappearance will clear the way for a finer building.

The disease of the world to-day is moral and ethical; and we are tending to the error of attempting to rebuild our economic framework without touching the ethical. "Men" as Canon Barry tells us "grow tired of walking along a road without knowing whither it leads." Masonic symbolism firmly rooted in a belief in God, should serve ever to direct our paths to a sure and certain goal.

It is easy to speak glibly of the importance of symbolism and its place in Freemasonry. There is an impressive body of Masonic writing on the subject; but as we have been warned in a recent paper read in this Lodge, on no subject It is therefore with some appreciation of the real difficulties and no little humility that I apply myself to this task.

Antiquity of Symbolism.

Symbolism is as old as thought and is co-extensive with language. Of that there can be no question. Man has ever felt the mystery of life, has realised that as Goethe puts it, "All things transitory but as symbols are sent."

Tennyson, in an oft-quoted passage, says:

"Flower on the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies.
Hold you here, root and all in my hand.
Little flower-but if could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and Man is."

The ever-living wonderment of nature, of seed time and harvest, of spring victory over winter shadows, set man thinking on things beyond his little world, and his thoughts took symbol form.

Men may differ in speech and in colour, but the essential things do not change, and there is no need to wonder that certain signs, symbols, and emblems were used by widely diverse peoples to express similar thoughts.

Dr. Fort Newton expresses this finely:

“Square, triangle, cross, circle - oldest symbols of humanity, all of them eloquent, each of them pointing beyond itself, as symbols always do, while giving form to the invisible truth which they invoke and seek to embody.

Sometimes we find them united, the Square within the Circle, and within the Triangle, and at the centre the Cross. Earliest of emblems, they show us hints and foregleams of the highest faith and philosophy, betraying not only the unity of the human mind but its Kinship with the Eternal - the fact which lies at the rout of every religion and is the basis of each. Upon this Faith man built, finding a rock beneath, refusing to think of Death as a gigantic coin lid of a dull and mindless universe descending on him at last."

Symbolism and Religion.

The building up of religion and the forming of symbols is in fact just as important an interest of the primitive mind as the satisfaction of instinct. The astonishing breadth of the Catholic symbolism offers an acceptance to the feeling which for many natures is absolutely satisfying. The immediate relation to God that characterizes Protestantism satisfies the mystical and theosophy passion for independence; and theosophy with its unlimited speculative possibilities meets the gnostic need for sublime intuitions.

"These organisations, or systems, are symbols which," as Jung tells us, "make possible for man erect a spiritual counter pole to primitive instinctive nature; a cultural attitude, as opposed to mere instinctiveness. This has been the function of all religions. For a long time and for the great majority of mankind, the symbol of collective religion has sufficed. It is perhaps only for a time, and for relatively few men, that the existing collective religions are inadequate. Wherever the cultural process is moving forward, whether in separate individuals or in groups, the disintegration of collective convictions is to be found. Every forward step in culture is psychologically an extension of consciousness, a coming to consciousness that can take place only through discrimination. An advance, therefore, always begins with individuation, that is to say, through the fact that an individual conscious of his uniqueness cuts a new way through hitherto untrodden country.

I believe there is a profound truth here. In an age that tends to stake everything on flattening out differences, reducing all to collective norms, we

do well to believe with Goethe that "the greatest happiness of the children earth lies only in personality." Do not let attachment to symbols or to institutional forms ever blind us to that.

If we conceive of the purpose of Freemasonry as essentially spiritual, then we can see meaning in the symbolism we use. When the idea or principle involved is plain there is no need for symbolism. When it is inscrutable, when its purposes are obscure both as to origin and goal, and yet enforce themselves, then we find that our ordinary powers of expression fail us, and we seek other means. We create a symbol. This symbol is more than an allegory or a mere sign. It is rather an image that characterizes in the best possible way the dimly discerned nature of the spirit.

A symbol does not define or explain, but points beyond itself to a meaning darkly divined belonging to a world beyond our grasp, and hardly to be adequately expressed in any word of our current speech.

But a spirit that demands symbolical expression is such as to contain the seeds of boundless possibilities.

Life and spirit are two powers between which man is placed. Spirit gives meaning to his life, and the possibility of the greatest development. But life is essential to spirit, since its truth is nothing if it cannot live.

We are perhaps in a position now to examine some of the symbolism we have around us.

I am quite deliberately going to say very little about Masonic symbolism as such! I conceive it as my function to sketch the philosophic background into which it fits and to leave it to my readers to apply the inferences to be drawn.

Language and Writing.

A natural starting place for any discussion of symbolism is language and writing. Speech is originally a system of emotional and imitative sounds fear, anger, love; and sounds which imitate the noises of the elements, the rushing and gurgling of water, the rolling of thunder, the tumult of the winds,

the tones of the animal world and so on; and finally, those which represent a combination of the sounds of perception.

This material with which we speak is language and speech concepts used from time immemorial as a bridge for thought communication. Language is nothing more originally than a system of signs and symbols which denote real occurrences or their echo in the human soul.

Before the invention of writing, symbols furnished primitive society with a very useful system of sign language. Egypt used hieroglyphs, Mesopotamia, a system of cuneiform symbols. Later out of symbolic writing, the alphabet was evolved. Letters are sound symbols and sounds are symbols of thought and emotion. As man's thought developed so his power over abstractions increased. The degree to which we can appreciate these abstractions from symbols depends upon our intelligence. A person of poor intelligence lives inevitably upon a more restricted plane of concrete things; and the meaning behind great music, great architecture, great painting, great literature, must be to some extent hidden from them.

Heraldry.

Heraldry owes a great debt to that art of symbolism adopted in remote ages and by many peoples to distinguish times and individuals.

Some of the symbols or charges used in heraldry are unquestionably of extreme antiquity. Such are the snake-lion dragon, the lion, the single and double headed eagle, the leaping dolphin, the saltire, the conventionalised plant and floral forms like the cinquefoil.

Possibly the oldest symbol of all is the *spiral* drawn from whorled shells. It covered many meanings, notably those of life force and the power of nature. The observant eye sees many examples of it. I recall one in the ornamentation of the massive columns in Durham Cathedral. The swastika has been thought to be taken from the Great Bear, which primitive men found to act as a pointer for the seasons, pointing to the west for one season, and to the south for another. It certainly was known in Palestine in the 2nd Century, and in ancient Britain, for we find it carved on ornaments

on long buried barrows, and it may then have been used as a charm to make the sun shine.

Colour Symbolism.

Men did not at once awaken to a feeling of colour or to a differentiation therein. They were not exactly colour-blind, but their awareness and discrimination of colours was a long time awakening. And yet there were colours aplenty around them.

Red was the colour of flame, of the day's auspicious close and threatening dawn, the colour of ripening fruit, of the maiden's glowing cheek and scarlet lips, the colour of blood. It later comes to symbolise danger, death, war terror and applied to religion it implies martyrdom and sacrifice. Blue is the colour of serenity, of the cloudless sky. It suggests constancy and profundity. As the colour of the eyes, it denotes intelligence. In religion it stands for hope, sincerity and piety.

Yellow is the colour of sunlight and of garnered grains and precious metals. It is a sacred colour with oriental races; Buddhist monks wear yellow robes; possibly this connection with a pagan religion led the early Christians to degrade yellow as much as possible. Judas was sometimes depicted in a yellow robe. In France the doorposts of felons and traitors were smeared yellow.

Green is the colour of spring and of life. It was chosen by the nomads of the desert as a symbol of aspiration; you will see it in Mohammedan mosques as the colour of Paradise.

Purple, a costly colour to produce, is the colour of royalty. White connotes innotes, purity, chastity; black, darkness, fear, evil.

The church still makes use of colours in an interesting way to mark the sequence of the year. Violet in Advent and in Lent, white for the great festivals, red for remembrance of martyrs, green for the long sequence of Sundays after Trinity.

I should be glad if some skilled Master would apply this to Freemasonry.

Modern man may scorn the idea that he uses symbols, but he has many old ones which he has not discarded; and he still creates new ones. The anchor is a symbol of hope and security; scales signify justice, the sword, war; the olive branch, peace; and the aeroplane is coming to symbolise speed.

Many have come to us from classical literature; the poppy, for sleep and death; the pomegranate for love. The first is a narcotic; the second was associated with Aphrodite in her role of goddess of fertility, the pomegranate (and also the cypress) being considered remedies for sterility.

Symbolism in Architecture.

A great building has been defined as "An outward visible sign of an inward and spirtual grace." Possibly the greatest book yet planned on the symbolism of architecture is John Ruskin's "The Seven Lamps of Architecture." Ruskin sought to show that all great architecture, whatever its period or style, is illumined by certain definite moral principles.

Thus, through every noble building, there shines the Lamp of Sacrifice. Art, like life, is essentially selective. Again, the building must be lit by the lamp of Power, or it will not endure the stress of centuries. It must be fused in the Lamp of Obedience to natural Laws, or its parts will disintegrate and the whole will fall to pieces; it must shine with the Lamp of Truth for there is no virtue in shams, and on its face must shine the Lamp of Beauty or Significance, for without this the building can have neither character nor meaning.

All noble works of art are sacramental and symbolical. They are outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace.

Carlyle says, "Not a hut man builds but is the visible embodiment of a thought but bears visible record of invisible things: But is, in the transcendental sense, symbolical as well as real." Frank Rutter in a most readable little book, "The Poetry of Architecture," puts forward another interesting classification and interpretation of Architecture.

Commencing with primitive forms he shows how they are alike in one respect. The building is round. The African Kraal and the Eskimo ingloo come to mind as instances. The first great technical advance was made when man learnt to square the circle.

When the ancient Egyptians mastered the elements of Building, the impressive achievements were the Pyramids. This was the age of fear; and bigness and height was an expression of vague longing of all humanity.

The beauty of the small Greek temples is the glory of the age of Grace. "The Greek," says Ruskin, "rules over the arts to this day, and will for ever because he sought not for beauty, not first for passion, or for invention, but for Rightness."

It was the passion for Rightness that produced the perfection of Beauty.

In Roman buildings we reach the age of Strength; their engineering work was monumental.

When we reach the Middle Ages and view the Cathedrals and Churches of Western Europe no one can deny their beauty, and wonder, nor fail to realise that here is the age of Piety and of Aspiration.

The symbolism underlying these great buildings is not always realised unless one cultivate the seeing eye. Basic of course is the cross. If you take the Greek cross with arms of equal length your building tends inevitably to become square, octagonal, or circular. If you build walls round the Latin cross your ground plan takes the form of a rectangle or an irregular oval.

Your Gothic cathedral is not petrified religion nor yet embodied caprice but in it "all is figure, token, emblem, type and sign, wrought out in a marvellous system and tenour of meaning, a labyrinth but not a maze of thoughts, expressed in a complexity of forms. The very soul of the Cathedral speaks in symbols. Yet there is one strange omission. "Nowhere in cathedrals have I found a symbol of the Christ child, the Cathedral Christ is always a Man of Sorrows, always grown up and acquainted with grief."

In the chancel windows the predominant hues are grey and red, to represent “the water and the blood.” Doubly emblematic is the high altar, for were not the earliest altars also tombs? The chancel is darkened as was the hill of

Calvary in the hour of the Passion; there is symbol as well as beauty in that stormy purple glass.

That the very body and edifice of the Cathedral should be imbued with symbol, lucidus ordo, need cause the cold critic no wonder. That was the intention, the cathedral was thus designed, to that end it was constructed, it was to image on earth its counterpart laid up in heaven. In its Greek sense the word symbol meant bringing together and uniting: a cathedral typified the sacred body joined to the living Christ again, one Word anew made flesh, the Logos descended into the Church to be its soul. was systematically set forth. The pride and fervour of Christian, Ecclesiasticism, which began to tower in the Ninth Century and culminated in the Thirteenth, had at its disposal all the lore of that branch of metaphysics, which is called theology, and a cathedral became a treatise on orthodoxy, in stone.

In its creation two sciences, architecture and theology, wrought side by side, master builders erected it physically, but Churchmen devised it intellectually. In point of fact the Master and Builder was often a priest himself. A cathedral, its great triple doors in the West symbolising the Trinity, was meant to be lofty and universal; it was to lift itself as a divine work, and image of the Infinite. must be magnificent, resonant, tall and vast, it must symbolize something of the large span and scope of Heaven itself.

There is the symbolism of the great flight of steps in the approach; the three doors each different, for there are many paths to the Cross; within, a step up to the font, the first step in the life of neophyte; three steps from nave to chancel, three degrees of the spiritual life; two outspread wings in the eagle - lectern, symbol of the two Testaments which rest upon them, and the Eternal is figured in the ever-burning sanctuary lamp.

Alone in a Gothic cathedral, as contrasted with the Byzantine and the Lombardic, and the Norman, one can forget the architect's calculations, the master builders' care, the toils and tools of carpenters and masons, and feel as if sturdy pillar and indomitable arch, sun steeped window and piercing pinnacle, are the natural expression of a living will, the clothing of a spirit which lives and breathes in all. Here dwells the consummate outward spirit and visible sign of the worshipping soul; a cathedral is an intellectual prayer.

It was no mere matter of structural consequence that pillars should lift and arches point towards the Infinite; that magnificence should tell of supernal glory; the gables and vaults should be peopled by the noble army of martyrs ascended; and the goodly fellowship of prophets foretelling and foreknowing. It was duty, religious as well as artistic duty, that the hidden parts of crocket and fineal should be carved as finely and completely as the parts which are fully seen.

I have quoted at length from Sir James Yoxall's splendid essay on The Soul of the Cathedral, in his book, "The Wander Years," because I can conceive no finer expression of creative symbolism than that which he has so eloquently described.

Modern Architecture.

"The true symbol of the modern age in Architecture is the absence of visible symbols; we no longer seek on the surface that which we can obtain effectively only through penetration and participation in the function of a structure.

As our sense of the invisible forces at work in the actual environment increases - not merely our sense of physical processes below the threshold of common observation but psychological and social processes too. As this sense increases we will tend to ask architecture itself to assume a lower degree of visibility. Spectators' architecture, show architecture, will give way to a more thorough going sense of form, nor so conspicuous perhaps on the surface, but capable of giving intellectual and emotional stimulus at every step in its revelation.

"Such economy is the moral flower of that long discipline of the spirit which Western man has undertaken during the last millennium under the forms of monasticism, capitalism, militarism, and mechanism."

Dangers in Political Symbolism.

The great opposition to a regional and cosmopolitan organisation of society comes from the psychological complexes that have been deliberately built up around the ideas of national sovereignty and centralized government. A large, so far unbreakable chunk of irrationality serves not merely as a handicap to co-operation but as a justification of national antagonism.

Men have been encouraged to project upon their nation or the state godlike attributes of wisdom and power they would never claim in their right minds for themselves, as identifiable individuals. Symbols like Fatherland, Il Duce' the Old Flag, serve to unite in compulsive automatic behaviour, people who might, in relation to everyday realities of the common life, exercise rational judgment and good sense.

This from Lewis Mumford's great book, "The Culture of Cities," must serve as a peg for discussion on this subject. I do not propose to enlarge upon it here.

Grandeur of Masonic Symbolism.

I am not one of those who are moved by the extravagant claims of some who praise the actual phrasing of the parts at least of our Ritual. But I say with all the conviction possible that the glory of Freemasonry is its stately symbolism. The simple dignity of the working tools of the three degrees with the forthrightness of their statement, and the grandeur of the dramatic elements in the ritual these make Freemasonry what it is. And we can well be thankful for some symbols that are stable in the changing world. Their insistence on ethical standards, their perpetual reminders for a wise apportionment of our time, of self-discipline and obedience to the inner law, that point within a circle from which we set our course; of the precepts of morality, equality, uprightness, and of judgement which will ultimately test the honesty of our life-building – these are lessons which every age must learn. That symbolism is surely not out-moded which ever directs our gaze to God. The last word may well remain with Carlyle in a passage oft quoted from a book seldom read, "Sartor Resamas"

"In the symbol proper, what we can call a symbol, there is ever more, or less distinctly and directly, some embodiment and revelation of the Infinite; the Infinite is made to blend itself with the Finite, to stand visible, and as it were, attainable there. By symbols, accordingly, is man guided and commanded, made happy, made wretched. He everywhere finds himself encompassed with symbols, recognised as such - or not recognised: the Universe is but one vast symbol of God: may if thou wilt have it, what is man himself but a symbol of God; is not all that he does symbolical; a revelation to Sense of the mystic God, given force that is in him."

Bro. Denny amplified his paper by quotations from Tennyson's Higher Pantheism and from Dr. Fort Newton's "The Builders."

Discussion.

Wor. Bro. Dr. Ross Hepburn, Assistant Secretary, said he wished to congratulate Bro. Denny on his paper which was a really outstanding piece of work and a valuable contribution to the Transactions of the Lodge by one well qualified to write on the subject. The paper was amply illustrated by examples especially from architecture.

A paper by Wor. Bro. Carney M. Lane on the same subject had been read in the Lodge some time ago, but Bro. Denny had approached the subject from quite a different angle, which showed that Symbolism was a subject which permitted of different methods of approach.

Bro. Denny in a verbal addition had referred to modern architecture where the symbolism was not so obvious, and one had to look deeper to perceive it and had made special reference in this connection to Liverpool Cathedral. The mention of Liverpool Cathedral recalled the fact that there were certain unusual architectural features to be found there which were not obvious until pointed out but were then clearly discernible. In particular, certain stone structures inside the Cathedral, such as the Altar and the Bishop's Throne, were so designed that they appeared, not to have been built up stone

by stone in the ordinary way, but to have been carved out of solid blocks at stone the surplus material being apparently removed, leaving what now appears. This is certainly a fine optical illusion and very striking, once it is discovered.

The symbolism of colour is a big subject in itself. Naturally we are especially interested in blue, the symbolic colour of Craft Masonry. The late Wor. Bro. J. H. Baxter, of Manchester says: “Blue represents truth, honour and friendship: it is the colour of the heavens symbolising the abode of God.” He refers to Numbers XV, 38, where Moses was commanded to speak to the Children of Israel and them make fringes in the borders of their garments and to put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue that they should remember and do the commandments of God.

In the Masonic Order, which professes truth, honour and brotherly love, this ribband of blue is used on the borders of regalia symbolically to remind us that truth and virtue are prized above rank and fortune.

"Blue is negative, it represents the spiritual side of man, and is the colour of devotion, not as an end in itself but as a striving after external truth and wisdom.....

"In Mexico and Chaldea, blue was worn as a mourning being a token of the joy realised by the soul in the Fields of Peace . ...

"Blue then in its highest form symbolises truth, fidelity, friendship and benevolence. In its opposite sense it means calmness carried to excess: hence “a fit of the blues," exactness, strictness, severity, cruelty: "a blue stocking," "Bluebeard," etc."

The question of the clergy acting as architects and builders in mediaeval times is a large and interesting one. A recent example of a building erected by monks with their own hands is Buckfast Abbey in England.

Knoop and Jones in the cause of their researches into the mediaeval building industry have come to the conclusion that the clergy did not act as their own

architects. In "An Introduction to Freemasonry" at pages 21-2 the authors say:

"The standing of the military engineer appears to have increased as the art of fortification became a recognised study: he tended to become "devisor" as well as "engineer." On the other hand the standing of the master mason appears to have diminished as interest in architecture became more widely extended about the time of the Renaissance: he tended to become mason-foreman rather than mason-architect. Thus, the master mason of the thirteenth-century castle such as Caernarvon, and the engineer and devisor of the sixteenth-century castle at Sandgate, should probably be regarded as the architects of those respective castles.

"In the case of churches, no official can be traced in building accounts or fabric rolls corresponding to the "engineer and devisor" found at some castles. The old idea that bishops and abbots planned and designed their own buildings has been disproved in recent years, though doubtless instructions were given by clerics as to what was required. This, however, would not make them the architects of their buildings."

Bro. Knoop, the author of the second chapter, mentions at page 55 that frequently clerics took part in building operations, either as clerks of works or in some supervisory capacity, participated in the administration of building operations on behalf of employers. It was very possibly clerical non-operative members who first set down in writing the Articles and Points (i.e, the Charges) for which the Masons' "Customs" served as a basis. In this connection he refers particularly to the author of the Cooke M.S. and the writer of the Regius Poem who were certainly men of some learning.

At pages 44-5 Bro. Knoop states that it is not correct as Masonic writers frequently have assumed that mediaeval Masonic institutions and customs were solely associated with ecclesiastic architecture as exemplified in cathedrals, abbeys and priories: nor that there was a more or less complete break in building development and in masonry in the sixteenth century at the time of the Reformation. There is also so far as he is aware no warrant whatever, either for associating masons' customs solely with Gothic architecture, or for drawing any sharp dividing line in England between

masons working on ecclesiastical buildings, sometimes described as "cathedral" or "church masons" on the one hand, and the general body of masons employed on lay work sometimes described as "gild" or "town masons" on the other. The absence of such a dividing line is proved by the fact that mediaeval masons in England were interchangeable between various types of building operations, this being true not only of ordinary craftsmen but also of Master Masons, many of whom supervised the construction of edifices as different as castles, abbeys and bridges.

To a great extent the ecclesiastics employed professional masons on wages to do their building work, but in the second half of the fourteenth century the Church departed from the older system and let out some masonry work to contractors, although larger operations such as those on the nave of Westminster Abbey, commencing in 1376, were still on the "direct labour" system.

Bro. Knoop mentions that the substitution of Classical architecture for Gothic in England was much more than a change in style: buildings came to be designed by professional architects or by scholars whose knowledge was acquired from travel or from books, and the union of the architect and craftsman in the same person, so common in the Middle Ages, became less and less frequent. Gothic art had been part of the life of the people in which craftsmen had frequently given expression to their own ideas. Renaissance art was remote from the people and belonged rather to scholars and courtiers.

The late Wor. Bro. Lionel Vibert in his excellent little book, "The Story of the Craft," refers to the development of architecture through the introduction of the Gothic-pointed arch. At pages 5-6 he says: "The Norman or Romanesque, with its semi-circular vaulting, was a style that presented no serious problems of construction: as the weight was carried by the vault itself acting as an arch there was no more lateral thrust than could be overcome by the weight of the walls. It was a feudal and monastic style, and the monks and barons were in a great measure their own architects.

But before 1100 A.D., at Durham, a new principle had been introduced that then appeared almost simultaneously all-over Western Europe, namely that

of the ogival vault, or vault the section of which is a pointed arch, the whole weight being carried on ribs. The principle one established, the architect was able to develop his building in height, in width, and in diversity of ground plan and elevation, for he was no longer restricted to the square bays and semi-circular apses of the Romanesque. But as he did so, and as the style we call Gothic grew under his hands, Architecture became more and more a highly technical science, and the possession of a single craft."

Bro. Denny has wisely confined his remarks to symbolism generally since it would be difficult if not impossible to refer adequately to the interpretation of individual Masonic symbols in the space of a single paper. Such symbols are very numerous, and to do them justice would require many papers-indeed in many cases a paper could be written on the interpretation of a single symbol.

It has been said that a symbol is like a pane of glass - we see through it what is beyond. In time the glass became blurred and we then see nothing but the symbol.

Wor. Bro. G. G. Calvert, Master United Forces, 245, said that he endorsed the remarks of Wor. Bro. Hepburn and joined with the other brethren in congratulating Bro. Denny on his excellent and thoughtful paper.

Wor. Bro. J. W. Roberts, Associate, expressed his appreciation of Bro. Denny's paper and said that it required a second paper to make it complete, the second paper to deal with particular Masonic symbols.

Bro. E. C. Malley, Associate, said:- I listened with pleasure and interest tothe paper by Bro. Denny, and while doing so the thought came to me that we could search into antiquity we may find some of our symbols have been just a detail copied by one generation from another until it became symbolised. To illustrate my meaning may I draw attention to the chairs occupied by our W.M., the Dept Master and I.P.M. Looking at them as articles of furniture we find details of Jacobean and Tudor periods which may some day develop into symbols. Another illustration the Brethren will be familiar with is that four petalled English rose seen on antique furniture. I would suggest that it was originally just a detail on English furniture which has become a traditional symbol of England. While we may think we are quite modern it is a fact that

when to add quality or prestige to anything we immediately turn to the past for that mellowness which comes with age, and it is this quality in conjunction with the unquestionable truths and ideals contained in our craft which accounts for its ability to stand the changes of time.

Wor. Bro. A. S. Ward. Associate , said: - I am very pleased to have the opportunity to comment on Bro. L. R. R. Denny's paper. It was refreshing and stimulating to hear the lecture. Bro. Denny has a pleasant and, may I say, soothing delivery, which tends to make the matter so much more interesting. To those who were privileged to be present, the evening, I should say, can be set down as one of the most pleasant and profitable we have had in the Lodge for quite a while. In saying this I wish in no way to belittle the previous efforts of other distinguished brethren. The fact is that matter was quite different from recent papers, and it is hoped the lecturer can find the time to prepare further lectures of the same interesting type.

Bro. L. R. R. Denny in reply: My thanks are due first to those who participated in the discussion on the paper, and particularly to Wor. Bro. Cape-Williamson for a characteristically brilliant extempore opening speech. I regret that he did not emulate Browning's thrush:

"That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,

Lest you think he never could recapture,

That first fine careless rapture!"

Then to Wor, Bro. Dr. Ross Hepburn, who has gone to considerable trouble to amplify and illustrate some very interesting aspects both of colour symbolism and of the relation existing between the Churches and the Mason contractors and Master Masons of Mediaeval times. I commend Wor. Bro. Hepburn's note to the careful consideration of members. It contains some most interesting material.

Next to Wor. Bro, G. G. Calvert, and to Wor. Bro. J. W. Roberts for their appreciation of the spirit of the paper; I must confess that I would rather listen to an experienced Master like Wor. Bro. Roberts on the application of particular symbols, then tackle that talk myself. My purpose in this paper was less to treat of particular Masonic symbols and their teaching than to try

to sketch the wider aspects of symbolism and the dangers inherent in a blind acceptance of particular ones. Actually, there is a great deal of material readily obtainable on the import of various Masonic symbols and those who are keen will have little difficulty in reading this for themselves. It is not easy to get an original approach where so much has been written.

Bro. E. C. Malley has raised an interesting point and one on which I find myself in entire agreement with him. The more we think of it the more we realise how familiar useful objects typical of earlier days have acquired symbolic force. Bro. Malley's illustration is singularly apt.

From Wor. Bro. A. S. Ward's note, brethren will realise that the evening indeed concluded in the spirit of peace, love, and harmony!