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"THE CONNECTION OF OUR WHOLE SYSTEM."

Summary of Lecture delivered to the Hawke's Bay Lodge of Research on 2nd November, 1942, by
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	FIRST.	<u>SECOND.</u>	THIRD.
(1) Emblematical Representation	Birth	Life	Death
(2) The Period of Life	Youth	Manhood	Old Age
(3) The Lights	Material Light	Light of Knowledge	Spiritual Perception
(4) Pavement	Wrong and Right	Failure and Success	Mortality and Immortality
(5) Subject Matter	The Heart (Virtue)	The Mind (Science)	The Soul (Religion)
(6) The Lesson	To Give	To Get	To Balance
(7) The Means to Rise	Jacob's Ladder (Aspiration)	The Winding Staircase (Achievement)	F.P.O.F. (Co-operative Brotherhood)
(8) Passwords	(T.G.R.)	S.	T.C.
(9) The Words	J.	B.	M.B.
(10) In the Centre	Blazing Star	A.S.S.	The P. within the C.
(11) The Deity	T.G.A.O.T.U.	T.G.G.O.T.U.	T.G.M.O.T.U. or T.M.H.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

- (1) The authority for the dissection of the matters dealt with in the degrees is found in the Exhortation from which the title of this lecture is taken. It would be a useful exercise for M.M's. to seek out the passages in this and other charges and lectures which illustrate the various parts of the preceding tabular analysis.

- (2) Admission into freemasonry is an emblematical representation of the entrance of all men on this their mortal existence. Thus the first degree treats of infancy and youth; the second, of manhood; while the representation of the third degree is old age with its trials, tribulations and inevitable termination when the spiritual temple is nearly completed (c.f. Ecclesiastes ch. 12).

- (3) Freemasonry dates its existence from the year of light, i.e., the foundation of the world. Masons are referred to as the "Sons of Light." Hence Bro. Robert Burns :

Oft have I met your social band
And spent the cheerful festive night;
Oft, honoured with supreme command,
Presided o'er the Sons of Light.

Having been restored to a certain blessing, the attention of the candidate is directed to the emblematical lights in freemasonry. He is then warned against improperly seeking knowledge before he is properly prepared for it. Compare the story of man's first disobedience in the Garden of Eden, with the Masonic teaching concerning the way in which the light of knowledge is to be obtained. The "Light of a M.M." finally leads him to contemplate his inevitable destiny and guides his reflections to the most interesting of all human studies—the knowledge of him-self. The gradation is from physical light, through the light of knowledge to "darkness visible" which is spiritual perception.

- (4) As the subject matter varies, the pairs of opposites represented by the Mosaic flooring of the lodge acquire a different meaning appropriate to the subject matter of each degree.
- (5) The object aimed at in the first degree is to inculcate a contempt for worldly riches and grandeur and to lay a cornerstone of virtue and purity. The candidate is thus prepared for what he is afterwards helped to obtain by studying the liberal arts and sciences. By practising "universal beneficence and charity" and by a contemplation of "the intellectual faculty" he is prepared for the closing hour.
- (6) The main lesson of the first degree is at the N.E.C.—to give. The F.C. has to work in order to get his wages.

Corn is a symbol of plenty ; wine, of refreshment ; and oil, of happiness. By the time he comes to the evening of life he should have learned how to balance his giving and his getting, for he cannot take anything out of this world. In mechanics all forces are equal and opposite, balancing one another. Compare the effect of the centripetal force of gravity with the centrifugal force caused by the rotation of the earth on its axis, giving the opportunity of perfect equipoise to everyone standing on the earth.

- (7) The ways in which a Freemason is raised are indicated pictorially on each T.B. Esoterically Jacob's Ladder indicates the dreams and aspirations of youth. The winding staircase suggests the achievement which comes from personal effort. "We strive to ascend and we ascend by striving." But the f.p.o.f. constitute the very real assistance obtainable from a co-operative brotherhood.
- (8) The passwords are appropriately chosen because of their relationship to the subject matters dealt with.
- (9) There is no error here. Such was the original choice. The transposition in English freemasonry was an unfortunate decision and probably would not have been made if the brethren of Grand Lodge had had the general esoteric teaching in their minds at the time of the decision. At birth a child acquires a racial and frequently a national and religious status. He may be free-born, a commoner, etc. That is, he is "established" in various capacities. The second word indicates what he acquires in manhood—strength of frame, mind and character. The word for the third is lost, and a substitute is used. What is that which is lost? How came it lost? In several religions the idea of a search for the Ineffable Name is presented. The mystic quest is for something more than a mere word. It is for a genuine secret which we hope to find on or from the centre.
- (10) The glory in the centre of the universe is the sun. In the primitive or pre-religious era the art of mimicry was well exemplified. Men copied the supposed actions of the God whom they worshipped. The sun-worshippers of Egypt practised the rite of circumambulation around some central object. As

freemasonry arose in the northern hemisphere the imitative journey was made from East to West via the South. Hence the situation of the J.W. in the South, where he could observe the sun at its meridian and call the workers from labour to refreshment.

With the advance of scientific knowledge, men learned that there is a Deity Who made and controls the movement of the heavenly bodies. That Deity is represented by a S.S. It has been claimed that the original symbol for this second degree was the third letter of the Grecian alphabet, the form of which appropriately corresponds with the leading working tool of the degree.. But this tool would be useless to try and adjust rectangular corners of buildings if it were out of shape. How could the Craftsman prove it? Only by seeking the aid of a M.M., who proved it by his knowledge of the centre. The centre therefore is the point from which the operative M.M. could not err. The three W.T.'s of the Third Degree also exemplify the importance of the centre to the operative mason.

Similarly, the speculative mason is led to believe that the genuine secrets will be found on or with the centre. Here science comes to our aid. Men study the large wonders of the universe with a telescope, but there is an almost equal range of investigation in the things infinitely small for which the microscope and like fine instruments are used. The smallest thing in Nature was once thought to be the atom. But a more recent discovery is that the atom is composed of electrons and protons, revolving about some-thing called energy on exactly the same principle as that on which the planets revolve around the sun. That knowledge of the movements of the heavenly bodies and of every spark of matter composing them not only confirms our belief in T.G.G.O.T.U., but also suggests how the genuine secrets of a M.M. may be found.

- (11) The conception of a deity advances with the freemason (just as the conception has advanced with civilization and knowledge) until he reaches the conclusion that there is nothing grown or made by chance. The architect plans, the geometrician calculates, and T.M.H. controls all. In this conception a definite meaning is given to such references in the V.S.L. as "God dwelleth in us and we in Him." The All-Seeing Eye looks from the centre into a universe in which there are many races and religions and denominations all seeking Him. Freemasonry provides one common belief—and a universal brotherhood for all who do believe. The ways to God are as many as the breaths of the children of men. The further we are from the centre the greater our differences appear to be; the nearer we get to the centre the less they are. If T.G.M.O.T.U. appoints a place for all things and all men, how tolerant ought we to be of the faiths, the loyalties, the views and the frailties of others? Freemasonry does not deny admission to any man whatever his religious belief; it merely requires that he must believe in God and be loyal to his Faith. He must also be true to the laws of the State which affords him its protection, and should not lose sight of the allegiance due to the Sovereign of his native land. If his Church or his Sovereign forbids him to join in our fellowship, it is his misfortune that such obligations of loyalty prevent him from joining a lodge.