

THE
MASONIC EXAMINER:

A Monthly Medium of Information and Communication for

BRETHREN OF EVERY RITE AND DEGREE, RECOGNISED AND UN-RECOGNISED.

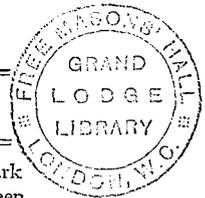
EDITED BY BRO. MATTHEW COOKE, P.M., P.Z., K.M., K.T., XXX., &c.

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TO ADVERTISERS.

All Advertisements in THE MASONIC EXAMINER will be set up in plain type, and no display or ornamental letters will be used.

ONE UNIFORM CHARGE of

Sixpence for every ten (or fractional portion of ten) words is adopted, from which there will be no reduction whatever.

Advertisements intended to appear in the ensuing month's issue must reach Bro. Matthew Cooke, accompanied by a cash remittance, at the rate stated above, *not later than the 24th. day of the current month*, or insertion cannot be guaranteed.

THE ARK AND MARK DEGREES.

NO useful purpose or real benefit to Free-Masonry would accrue from an investigation which merely tended to determine the priority of age of either the Ark, or the Mark, degrees, so it will suffice for our present purpose to admit that they were both in existence and commonly worked,—more frequently together than separate,—from, or before, the year 1780 to the year 1813.

At the latter date, when the Union of the two Grand Lodges took place and a Reformed Rite of English Free-Masonry was inaugurated, both the Ark and Mark degrees, with many others, were rejected and since that period have formed no part, or portion, of Free-Masonry as practised under the sanction of the Grand Lodge of England. Indeed the only extraneous degrees which the Reformed Grand Lodge of England acknowledges and tolerates are those of Templary. These it does admit and mentions in "The Articles of Union," in this comprehensive style, "degrees of the Orders of Chivalry," but however wide the interpretation of this clause may be, there cannot be a moment's doubt that neither the Ark, or Mark, degrees have a vestige of a claim to be included in it. Hence, both Ark and Mark are really un-recognised side degrees; non-essentials in English Free-Masonry, but pretty adjuncts which brethren, having time, means, and inclination, may harmlessly adopt.

For close upon a century past and until the present hour many lodges, especially some in the northern and midland counties, have given both these degrees in a series of four, known as "The Ark, Mark, Link, and Wressle," and the charge made for conferring them is thirteence halfpenny, from which they have long borne the title of "the hangman's lot," derived from the vulgar delusion that the same amount, thirteence halfpenny, is the wages of Jack Ketch.

Although discarded at the Union neither the Ark or Mark degrees were suffered to fall into total oblivion, but have been conferred, by fits and starts, as side degrees, through the action of zealous brethren and generally without the semblance of any other authority than that derived from personal transmission. Thus, with some few exceptions, to be noticed presently, they have come down to us and been preserved from extinction.

Somewhere about 1850 the Mark degree was, again, coming into favour and as the ceremony in "the hangman's lot" was and still is, of the most meagre description Bros. Henry George Warren and Hughes took it in hand and re-cast the ritual precisely in the same form in which it now exists. These, and other, brethren dissatisfied without being under some authority first applied to know if they could work in connection with the English Constitution, but this being found impracticable they then applied to the Grand Chapter of Scotland which body acceded to their request, and several Mark Lodges,—notably one known as the Bon Accord,—were opened and progressed favourably.

Sane brethren would have supposed that a legitimate governing body,—working the degree itself,—asked to take the supervision could not have been objected to by anyone. Nor was it until some few years after when it came about in the following way.

A small knot of Conservatives,—which title by-the-by is only a pseudonym for Tory "trimmers" more advanced in their opinions than Whigs and yet fearing to ally themselves with Radicals,—not seeing their way very clearly to preferment, did their best, or their worst (it matters little which), to embarrass Grand Lodge and turn an assembly of legislators into a veritable bear-garden. For some time this state of things was chronic but at last, after loud boasts of starting an opposition Grand Lodge to receive the euphonious name of the Grand Lodge of Wessex, and finding "that cock wouldn't fight," they took their drubbings regularly and changed their front. This "Observer Party," worsted in every encounter, their "Grand Lodge Club" a failure, ultimately made a dash at the Mark degree and secured it.

The Bon Accord lodge, chartered by the Grand Chapter of Scotland and to whom it owed its proffered allegiance, held a meeting at which three or four Mark brethren, not in the secret, were present and were requested to retire; this they declined to do and then those who were in the secret withdrew into another room and, after less than five minutes' absence, returned and told the three or four, before mentioned, that they had formed themselves into an Independent Grand Lodge and the presence of the three or four could be dispensed with. Of course nothing was left them but to go out, and the SELF-STYLED GRAND LODGE OF MARK MASTERS was thus born in 1856. Now let us turn to the Ark degree.

The Grand Council of Rites, sitting at Bath, from which body the original Grand Conclave of Knights Templar, in London, was formed in 1790, has always maintained its power in connection with the degree of Ark-Mariner and confers on those brethren who are its members the rank of "Royal Sovereign and Grand Commander of Royal-Ark-Mariners." Then, as we said before, there are the time immemorial lodges, who give the

Ark-Mariner in "the hangman's lot," and last, but certainly not least, comes Brother Morton Edwards.*

The powers under which Brother Morton Edwards has revived the Ark-Mariners are indisputable. So keenly is this felt that no stone has been left unturned by which he might be cajoled into parting with the right he holds. Flattery, intimidation, and every ruse have been adopted in turn, and he was on the point of giving way when we were introduced to him and showed him, in less time than it takes to write, the *Crime* it would be to hand over to those having no *locus standi* but their own sweet wills, a warrant under which they would have immediately emerged from a SELF-STYLED, to a REGULARLY CONSTITUTED, LODGE. This Warrant runs thus:—

"To all whom it may concern, We, the Grand Lodge of the most Antient and Honourable Fraternity of Ark Masons, granted by grandfather Methusaleh, who lived two hundred and fifty years with Adam, and died but a short time before the flood. After the flood it was communicated to Japhet and Shem, who convened Lodges under them, with full powers and instructions in all Orders of Masonry, and so handed down to all true Masons to the present time, and as a sure pledge and token of Divine Sanction to this our Masonry, the Great Architect of the Universe has condescended to place HIS bow in the Cloud, and said 'This is a token of my Covenant with you' [Ark Mariners] 'and your seed for ever.' Therefore, to all Worthy Brothers who have received the honour of being initiated into this and other degrees belonging to ARK MARINERS and Sanctioned by the Grand Lodges at present in England, to your honourable and noble Brothers we send GREETING.

"Whereas, it has been proposed and resolved that a Grand Royal Ark Lodge should be formed and established under the Sanction of His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, for which purpose His Royal Highness has been solicited to take the Grand Command of the said Grand and Royal Ark Lodge, that under his Royal Patronage those inestimable Masonic Institutions might be held. And as His Royal Highness has been pleased to signify his acceptance thereof, whenever said Lodge shall be in a proper and respectable situation to receive him and, till then, has deigned to grant leave to make use of his name in order to form and organise said Lodge with propriety, order, and regularity. To effect which laudable institution the Royal Brother, by virtue of the powers given to and vested in him at a Grand Royal Ark Lodge, held at the Bedford Arms, Bedford Square, on the twenty-fourth day of November, 1793, do hereby grant this Warrant to our Squadron, No. 3, to our Worthy Brethren, William Durisk, John Wilson, William Henry Colcott, and Isaac Hoare to form and hold a Grand Royal Ark Lodge at the Rose and Crown, Booth Street, Spitalfields, on the second and fourth Tuesday in each month, or at any other time, or elsewhere, on Emergency, &c., &c., &c., not exceeding ten miles from St. Paul's, London, for the purpose of conferring the above mentioned Degrees to such Brethren as they, in their wisdom and prudence, may deem meet, with this proviso, that they admit none unless agreeable to the following restrictions, viz:— For every Initiation into the Royal Ark degree, Five Shillings and Threepence; for the Degrees of Mark Man, Mark Master, Excellent and Super-Excellent, Five Shillings and Threepence; for those of Knights of the Red Cross, Knights Templars, Mediterranean Pass, &c., &c., &c., Ten Shillings and Six-

* It cannot matter two straws to the subscribers to THE MASONIC EXAMINER what degrees its Editor has taken. But that there may be no partiality suspected on his part, he begs to state he is not an "Ark-Mariner," but he is a "Mark Mason," under the Scottish Constitution. He has nothing whatever to do with "Mitzraim," "Memphic," the newly-imported burlesque called the "Ancient and Primitive Rite," nor the equally novel importation of poor dear Rob. Morris's "Cryptic Masonry." He merely makes these personal admissions for the purpose of guarding his readers against any supposition they might entertain of his being in identity with, or in favour of, the degrees mentioned.—ED. MAS. EX.

pence. That they regularly attend the Grand Royal Ark Lodge at every Quarterly Communication, and then and there make due returns of all their Initiations made in any of the aforesaid Degrees, and see them duly registered by the Grand Secretary, and truly and justly paying the said Secretary Two Shillings for every Half-Guinea progressively, as above stated for the aforesaid Initiations. Concordant to the above stipulations I do hereby authorise and appoint W. H. Colcott, G. Scribe. Whilst the above instructions are properly adhered to, strictly pursued, and duly executed, this Warrant remains in full power, force, and virtue. When violated, by inattention, misuse, or abuse, then it is to be rendered null and void, and of no effect whatever.

"Given under our hands and seals this twenty-fourth day of November, in year of Our Lord, 1793; in the year of Masonry, 5793; and of the Grand Royal, 4143.

"Isaac Moseley, *Acting Grand Commander, Noah.*

"Isaac Hoare, *Deputy Grand Commander, Noah.*

"William Jones, *First Lieutenant, Japhet.*

"William Durisk, *Second Lieutenant, Shem.*

"Charles Sinclair, *Captain of Watch.*

"John F. Dorrington, *Grand Commander.*

Although the original document has been tampered with and bears the marks of four separate erasures, from the context which remains intact, these are of no consequence because they are simply the substitution of names of persons. The folly of a former possessor in affixing an old Grand Lodge seal in no way impairs the validity of the warrant, but only shows his bad taste.

How this warrant was held by Brother Dorrington; how he transferred the same, with several old minute-books and other memoranda, to Brother Morton Edwards, all inquirers may learn from the book of "Statutes and Regulations for Royal-Ark Masons." And now we come to as pretty a piece of ineffective diplomacy as ever was perpetrated.

Those of our readers who have followed us thus far will, of course, remember that the SELF-STYLED Grand Mark Lodge emanated from the apostacy of the Bon Accord Mark Lodge. That Lodge was simply a lodge to work the Mark degree: it never claimed to be possessed of any further rights. But last year its offspring, the SELF-STYLED Grand Lodge of Mark Masters, thought that by giving Brother Morton Edwards some paltry rank in its bosom it would get his powers, and the farce of drawing up a compact was gone through, meeting after meeting held, and the elected Grand Mark Master of the SELF-STYLED Grand Mark Lodge, when called upon, refused to ratify his share of the bargain. Before this, however, that astute functionary wished to be put into a position to get hold of this tantalising prize, and therefore, he was advised to take the degree of Ark-Mariner, so as to make all sure. Well! at a certain meeting, the Grand Mark Master of the SELF-STYLED Grand Mark Lodge put in an appearance, carefully bedizened with all the tinselled gew-gaws of his office and then went through the ceremony, *swearing allegiance to the superior degree*,—which he evidently did his utmost to acknowledge and honour, by appearing in his best clothes,—and, we rejoice to say it, is farther off than ever in getting a more genuine power to confer the Mark degree than he could derive from the apostacy of 1856.

The SELF-STYLED Grand Lodge of Mark Masters, aware of its unsatisfactory origin, has never ceased making frantic efforts to secure a recognition from any quarter, but in this it has been, hitherto, unsuccessful. It first tried the Grand Lodge of England, and, in an unguarded moment, succeeded in introducing the thin end of its wedge but, when the mischief was discovered, was immediately driven ignominiously away. Then the Irish Mark Masons were importuned but they would have nothing to do with it. Next it tried to ride the high horse and almost ordered the Grand Chapter of Scotland to withdraw the warrants from those Mark lodges which had asked that body to issue them. Finding this, too, unavailable, the SELF-STYLED Mark

Grand Lodge went upon another tack. It professed its readiness to enter into amicable relations with the Scottish Grand Chapter, and a correspondence, of some years, is still dragging its slow length along. Every now and then the SELF-STYLED Grand Mark Lodge confidently states that "in less than three months" the Grand Chapter of Scotland will recognise it. The treaty is prepared, and only waits for signature, but it seems quite to escape the petitioners that the Grand Chapter of Scotland possess a Scribe that, with all the talent at command of the SELF-STYLED body,—and no one who values truth will deny the talent and perseverance of, at least, one official which it is to be deplored is not exercised in some better cause,—yet with this talent at command the SELF-STYLED Grand Mark Lodge spins round like a tectotum under the thumb and finger of the Scribe in Edinburgh. Dance round about him as they will; shout defiance, supplicate, cajole, the Scotch Grand Scribe, nothing moved, hears all; smiles, and takes but little heed of threats, whining, or blandishments. But

"If the God,
Affects to nod,"

then peans of joy shake the spheres and the old saw is reiterated with glee; "Only wait three months longer and then you'll see"—a something past the comprehension of the SELF-STYLED Grand Mark Lodge,—a Scribe true to his obligation and the duties of his office.

On behalf of the SELF-STYLED Grand Mark Lodge war is declared. It has failed in its object of attaining genuine powers from the Ark and now resorts to the untradesmanlike formula of "No connection with any other house in the trade! Astounding bargains!! Now selling, at unprecedentedly low prices!!! The entire stock in trade of Brother Morton Edwards and Co. is submitted to the craft at a discount of FIFTY PER CENT. for cash."

Such being the mode of warfare these gentlemen (?) have originated, the readiest plan,—which we strongly counsel the other party to adopt,—is to meet them on their own ground and "spoil their little game," by setting forth that:—

"The proprietors of the Original Ark-Mariner, and several other superior degrees, respectfully invite customers to try their genuine unadulterated Mark Man and Mark Master, which is offered at a nominal price by the PATENTEES; and a full explanation of the method of working the INFRINGEMENT, by the SELF-STYLED GRAND MARK LODGE (seeking establishment), will be presented to every purchaser, GRATIS."

CORRESPONDENCE.

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The Editor does not hold himself responsible for the facts, or opinions, expressed by any correspondent. He reserves to himself the right of deciding when any subject shall be discontinued, and of rejecting such matter as he deems unsuitable to THE MASONIC EXAMINER. Every communication must be accompanied by the full names, masonic rank, and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, unless desired, but as a guarantee of good faith. These particulars will always be treated as a confidential trust, close tyled.]

SUMMING UP.

To the Editor of THE MASONIC EXAMINER.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:—My previous letters having remained unanswered, I am entitled to conclude that the statements therein contained are admitted by my opponents as true.

1st. The forgery of the pretended statutes of Frederick the Great.

2nd. The generally spurious nature of the Rite, and the contemptible nature of its Masonic pedigree.

I have now to exhibit how the present high Masonic functionaries stultify themselves, and yet have not even the wit to see that they are doing so.

These gentlemen in their regard for high-flown titles depreciate the old and genuine Rite of the Temple, as practised by the old York Conclaves and by the Council of Ancient Rites at Bath, to such an extent that they will not even sanction or recognise them, and yet these very same Puissant Magnates boast that their predecessors from whom they draw their title, received their degrees and powers from these same Templar Encampments which they despise. Can anything be more absurd? To find a parallel for their conduct we must fancy his Holiness Pope Pius the Ninth tracing his succession through Martin Luther and John Calvin.—Fraternally yours,
JOHN YARKER.

NOTES ON THE SYMBOLISM OF THE ROSE.

To the Editor of the MASONIC EXAMINER.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:—At page 10 of the MASONIC EXAMINER is a paper entitled "Notes on the Symbolism of the Rose," which is somewhat familiar to me. I fancy I have heard the same, or something very like it, at a Consecration of a Rose Croix Chapter where I attended. If this was the case I am desirous of knowing by what authority you claim it as your own, seeing you head the same "By the Editor"? I can scarcely imagine you are so far gone in opposition as to publish part of a ceremony you are jealously bound to guard, nor will I do you the injustice to think you prefer a claim to the authorship if you have it not. Still I cannot reconcile the two. I feel sure I have heard it, as I state, and yet "By the Editor," seems to controvert the possibility. I pause for an explanation, and remain, yours fraternally,
S. P. R. X.

[There is no difficulty in the matter. In 1864 the Editor of the MASONIC EXAMINER was requested by a member of the Sup. G. Council to write some notes on various portions of the Rose Croix ceremony and symbols, for the express purpose that the brother, so requesting, might be enabled to deliver a kind of lecture at the consecration of Rose Croix Chapters, or at other times when an opportunity presented itself. Accordingly the Editor furnished his friend with the "Notes on the Symbolism of the Rose" (printed at p. 10), and others on the Cross; the Eagle; the Pelican; Heredom; the Ancient and Accepted Rite; the Eighteenth degree; the Figures and Symbols of the ceremony; the Seven Circles; the Ladder of Perfection; the Mystic Rose; the Cubic Stone; and the Culminating Point. S. P. R. X. may, therefore, have heard the same and, if he has done so, he now knows who wrote it and why.—ED. MAS. EX.]

WHERE can I obtain the other portions that followed the "Symbolism of the Rose,"—printed in last month's MASONIC EXAMINER,—and of which, if I recollect rightly, there was a good deal more?
NOTTS, 18th.

[See the former reply. The other illustrations are in MS., but should they be sought by any number of our brethren we may, from time to time and as space occurs, print them in future numbers.—ED. MAS. EX.]

P. B. demands to know how an ostracised person dare print the "Symbolism of the Rose"?

[Simply for the reasons given above.—ED. MAS. EX.]

NOTES AND QUERIES FOR FREE-MASONS.

THE BEST CYPHER.

What is the best cypher and the most difficult to unravel?
SPES.

[There are several very good but we have lately come into the possession of one which is perfection. Without a knowledge of the key, which everyone can make different for himself, it cannot be discovered. We shall be happy to show it you.—ED. MAS. EX.]

THE TRYST.

The *Editor* will be obliged to any brother who will oblige him, for a few weeks, with the loan of a *perfect* copy of "The Tryst."

DERIVATION OF SIGNS.

The derivation of Masonic signs is a matter that has long engaged my attention and I think it may be worth while to offer a few of the observations I made upon them in a note.

Having access to a very extensive collection of antique gems, most of them of early Greek workmanship, I have been surprised at the large proportion where figures are portrayed, in which existing Masonic signs are unmistakably delineated. Thus, out of some seventy-four perfect figures,—I make no account of half-lengths, or less,—there were 3 of the E.A.; 1 (doubtful) F.C.; 8 M.M.; 2 R.A.; 4 Pelicans; 17 with crosses of various kinds; and one with a square, triangle, circle, point, and something else so damaged as to be unintelligible.

When I also call to mind the numerous paintings, by the old masters, which I have seen abroad, many containing signs which *must* have been purposely depicted, I cannot help fancying that the derivation of our Masonic signs may be traced to a very high antiquity, and that we use them so nearly, at present, to some of the examples I have seen, that they are identically the same.

Not having been in Egypt, nor well-versed in works on that country, I cannot undertake to say anything about it, but I think some of your readers, who know the books, might make trial and see how many figures they can identify in their knowledge of signs. Even if the suggestion turns out to be "a wild goose chase" I throw it out for those who would enter upon a new field of inquiry which may prove richer than expected.

Make any use of this, and put some name to it for me.

GNOStS.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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TO THE PUBLIC PRESS, BOTH ENGLISH AND FOREIGN.—*The reservation of the rights of reproduction, or translation, which we claim for our contents, we desire may be construed in the most liberal manner. If our contemporaries can find matter in our pages which they would transfer to their own, so long as they will quote it as extracted from THE MASONIC EXAMINER, they are heartily welcome to republish it and will have our thanks for so doing. We promise reciprocity. Where we quote we will always mention our informant by its recognised title. Our reservation of rights extends only to those who would use our information, and deprive us of the credit of its publicity, by inserting such matter without acknowledgment.*

ALL communications intended for publication in the ensuing month's issue must reach the Editor, Bro. Matthew Cooke, 13, Harpur Street, Red Lion Square, London, W.C., *not later than the 20th. day of the current month.* The rules under which such communications will be received are set forth at the head of the correspondence department, and no deviations from them can, under any circumstances whatever, be permitted.

No notice will be taken of anonymous communications. A letter without a signature will not be read. Rejected articles or letters cannot be returned and *all who send papers are advised to keep copies of them* as those unused will be destroyed.

We must require that all matter intended for the printer's hands be written in a legible and clear hand and on one side of the paper only, for no greater impediment can be thrown in the way of a compositor than "backed copy." A neglect of these necessary rules will entail the rejection of all communications not conforming to the recognised practice.

We have received so many letters containing information, expressions of commendation, and advice, that we take this method, while thanking each individual personally, to reply to all. In the olden time Petrarch, (Ep. 17, *sinu tit.*), thus de-

scribes venality and corruption. "The good are humbled and the wicked exalted. We see eagles creeping and asses flying; foxes in gilded coaches, crows on high towers, doves on dung-hills, wolves unchained and lambs fettered." And in our own time the parallel is equally obvious, for in *Tom Brown's School-days*, (chap. ix.) the author says:—"If the angel Gabriel were to come down from Heaven, and head a successful rise against the most abominable and unrighteous vested interest which this poor old world groans under, he would most certainly lose his character for many years, probably for centuries, not only with upholders of said vested interest, but with the respectable mass of the people whom he had delivered. They wouldn't ask him to dinner, or let their names appear with his in the papers; they would be very careful how they spoke of him in the Palaver, or at their clubs. What can we expect, then, when we have only poor gallant blundering men like Kossuth, Garibaldi, Mazzini, and righteous causes which do not triumph in their hands; men who have holes enough in their armour, God knows, easy to be hit by respectabilities, sitting in their lounging chairs, and having large balances at their bankers?"

TO MASONIC STUDENTS.—It is proposed to hold, during the season, a SERIES OF MEETINGS for the Discussion of Masonic Topics, and the Reading of Essays, or Papers, on any branch of the Subject. Tea and Coffee provided. Smokers to find their own weed. Brethren willing to join the friendly circle are requested, in the first instance, to forward their names and addresses to the *Editor* of THE MASONIC EXAMINER.

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