

The Ancients and Moderns

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IT is common knowledge that prior to 1813 the Craft had for many years been divided into two great sections, the Moderns and the Antients, and for the benefit of those brethren who have had no opportunity to study the matter on their own account, the following rough epitome by way of general information is given.

There is a legend that in 1716 "Four Old Lodges" in London, the author of *Multa Paucis* an anonymous work of about 1764 gives the number as six "finding themselves neglected by Sir Christopher Wren", with the assistance "of some old Brothers" met together at the Apple-Tree Tavern in Charles Street, Covent Garden, and "constituted themselves a Grand Lodge pro Tempore in Due Form"; and on "St. John Baptist's Day, A.D. 1717, the Assembly and Feast of the Free and Accepted Masons was held at the Goose and Gridiron Ale-house in St. Paul's Church-Yard."

In this humble fashion, without show or pretense, in a room at a Tavern about 22 feet long by 16 feet wide, the first Grand Lodge in London was, according to the account given by Dr. Anderson in his "New Book of Constitutions" [1738] thus formally "Constituted." Whilst it is now recognized that Dr. Anderson's "Story of the Craft", based on mythical tales and legendary traditions, is quite untrustworthy, yet his version of the actual origin of the Grand Assembly or Grand Lodge at London may or may not deserve some credence, for, after all it is the only one available for our consideration as there are no records prior to 1723, so what ever may or may not have happened in 1717 is left only to imagination.

Anderson was a Doctor of Divinity, a Presbyterian minister, a "dissenting teacher," a man of good standing and character. In 1738 he assures us that having-in 1721--been ordered [by Grand Lodge] to digest the old Gothic Constitutions in a new and better method, . . . "Montagu, Grand Master, at the desire of the Lodge, appointed fourteen learned Brothers to examine Brother Anderson's Manuscript and to make report," . . . which "said Committee of 14" . . . reported [in 1722] that they had perused same "and after some Amendments had approv'd of it: Upon which the Lodge desir'd the Grand Master to order it to be printed." The above refers to his First Book of Constitutions of 1723. -The following extracts from the actual minutes of Grand Lodge relate to his 1738 edition.

1735, Feb. 24. Dr. Anderson reported to Grand Lodge "that he had spent some Thoughts upon some Alterations and Additions" to his First Edition of 1723 -then "all sold off" - and G. L. "appointed a Committee to revise and compare the same &c."

1738, Jan. 25. "Bro. Anderson informed the [Grand] Lodge that he had sometime since Prepared a New Edition of the Book of Constitutions with several Additions and Amendmts which having been perused & (after some alterations made therein) Approved off by several Grand Officers was now ready for the Press and he therefore desired the Grand Master's Commands & the approbation of this Lodge for printing the same, which request was granted him."

His work having been thus checked and revised by his colleagues and contemporaries and approved by Grand Lodge, each student must now therefore form his own conclusions as to the credibility or otherwise that should be given to Dr. Anderson's statements relating to the above mentioned meetings of "the four old Lodges" in 1716 and 1717.

The members of this Grand Lodge of 1717 before long--for reasons hereinafter mentioned--became known as the 'Moderns,' whilst their subsequent rivals --who described themselves as the 'Antients' did not constitute their Grand Lodge before 1753 (although they first assembled as a Grand Committee in 1751); thus in point of time the 'Moderns' were as a body, thirty-four years older than the 'Antients,' it is therefore quite clear that both these titles are--colloquially speaking--misnomers. It is not very easy to explain in detail the exact reasons for the founding of this opposition Grand Lodge but some of the contributory causes appear to be as follows:

'OPERATIVE MASONS'

Prior to the formation of Grand Lodge in 1717, most of the Lodges were of humble rank, having as members many men of the working classes -including of course real 'Operative' Masons, although there were also some 'Speculatives' in their midst -for in those early days a Lodge almost invariably met at a Tavern or Inn, and was very much like a benefit society, members who were ill or in distress coming 'On the Box' for small payments in cash--pecuniary 'Relief' to brethren in need being then a constant feature. It was also quite usual for members not only to attend at the funeral of a deceased brother, but also to pay for the cost of interment when need required. This presence of the 'Operatives' in Lodges is made manifest from the fact that Grand Lodge in 1722 selected as their Grand Wardens, two working men, viz.: -'Mr. Joshua Timson,' a Blacksmith, and 'Mr. William Hawkins,' a 'Mason,' whilst the following mechanics were also appointed Grand Wardens, viz.:-'Jacob Lamball,' a 'Carpenter' in 1717; 'John Cordwell,' a 'City Carpenter' and 'Thomas Morrice," a 'Stone Cutter' in 1718; and 'Thomas Hobby,' also a 'Stone Cutter' in 1720.

The first Grand Master who was installed in 1717-one Anthony Sayer -was also apparently a man of limited means, for later in life he became Tyler to at least four lodges, and on two occasions applied to Grand Lodge for relief, in 1730 when 15 pounds were voted to him also 2.2.0 in 1741 from the 'General Charity,' whilst he also received assistance from various private Lodges. Bro. J. Walter Hobbs, L.R., in an exhaustive and valued paper read in 1924 before the Quatuor Coronati Lodge (entitled "Mr. Anthony Sayer") attempts to prove that Sayer was not only a "Gentleman" but also a person of some social standing--who might later on have lost his fortune in the "South Sea Bubble"; he however frankly admits that the evidence is not conclusive.

"NOBLEMEN AND GENTLEMEN" [1723]

Before long however a higher status was ruling amongst the so-called 'Moderns,' for Dr. Anderson in his Constitutions of the Freemasons [1723] tells us that "several Noblemen and Gentlemen of the best Rank with Clergymen and learned Scholars of most Professions and Denominations . . . frankly joined and submitted to take the Charges, and to wear the Badges of a Free and Accepted Mason, under our present worthy Grand Master, the most noble Prince, John, Duke of Montagu."

In 1738 Anderson expatiates further by stating "Now Masonry flourished in Harmony, Reputation, and Numbers, many Noblemen and Gentlemen of the first Rank desir'd to be admitted to the Fraternity, besides other Learned Men, Merchants, Clergymen and Tradesmen who found a Lodge to be a safe and pleasant Relaxation from Intense Study or the Hurry of Business, without Politicks or Party."

"UNATTACHED LODGES"

Human nature in 1724 was very like what we find it today and it is not only possible but quite probable that many of the "Operatives" and humbler members of a Lodge felt rather jealous of these richer men and their influence and desire for new methods of working. So glowing out of harmony with this changed condition of affairs they gradually left their Mother Lodges to form others more congenial to themselves. Some would also join Unattached or Independent Lodges which went by the name of St. John's Masons - St. John being the Patron Saint of the Craft - for we find that many visitors to the old Lodges often signed the attendance book or were entered by the Secretary as St. John's Men - they paying generally an extra visiting fee.

"IRISH MASONS"

Now from (a) these groups of poor Masons--discontented with the advent into the Craft of these so called "Noblemen and Gentlemen," also (b) from those brethren who objected to any alteration being made in their ancient Ritual, but more especially (c) from a band of Irish Freemasons who had settled in London -mostly in poor circumstances--came into being a new organization that in 1751 first worked by means of a Grand Committee, and in 1753 blossomed out into a new Grand Lodge whose members soon described themselves as Antient Masons holding out that they alone deserved that title because they practiced Masonry according to the 'Old Constitutions.' The late Bro. Henry Sadler, Librarian to Grand Lodge in his Masonic Facts and Fictions [1887] confirms the statement that the early members of the Lodges of the 'Antients' consisted mostly of Irish Masons, who were chiefly of the working class type. It is therefore obvious that speaking generally--the personnel of the Modern Lodges, was on a higher grade than that of the Antients. Quite apart, however, from the different social status of these brethren there were other important reasons which helped to cause a division of the Craft into two bodies.

ANDERSON'S FIRST CHARGE [1723]

The Old Charges make it clear that prior to 1717 the Craft had definitely accepted the Christian Faith as its first and abiding Land Mark; the constant and repeated 'Invocations to the Trinity' prove this to a certainty.--Perhaps in order to make 'Masonry Universal,' thereby allowing Jews to enter the Order-Anderson's 'First Charge' in his Constitutions of 1723 stated that a Mason, was "now" only required to be of that religion "in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves; that is to be good Men and true, etc." [This subject has been most ably elucidated and explained by Bro. J. E. Shum Tuckett in a paper read before this Society in 1922.] This serious alteration in our creed [as Bro. Vibert tells us in his excellent Story of the Craft] virtually de Christianized the tenets of Freemasonry, thereby making the Craft eligible to a professor of any faith-provided always that the candidate recognized the existence of a Supreme Being. It is clear that this startling innovation became a serious stumbling block to many of the old fashioned Operatives who had been accustomed to hear read in open Lodge the 'Old Charges,' constantly reminding them that the first and chief duty of a Mason was to be a True Man to God and the Holy Church. These men had also lived in the days when a regular and punctual attendance at their parish church was not only a duty, but an absentee--without valid excuse-became liable to fines or other penalties. In 1552 it was enacted by 5 & 6 Edward 6, c. 1., that if anyone without lawful or reasonable excuse absented himself from public worship (i.e., at the Parish Church) he became liable "on pain of punishment by the censures of the Church." This Act -though now obsolete -is still on the Statute Book, but was repealed - about 1846 - as regards 'Dissenters.'

PRICHARD'S 'MASONRY DISSECTED' [1730]

It is also obvious that the authority of the Grand Lodge of 1717 was not recognized universally. Certain old Lodges retained a position of independence and refused to accept what they considered was a new Constitution - keeping to certain ancient customs peculiar to themselves - and certain societies also arose professing to be Masons, but often merely using the name of the Craft as a cloak for political or even less worthy purposes. Enemies were also at work, various exposures of the Ritual being printed, purporting to tell the outside world the real secrets of the Craft--the most important being *Masonry Dissected*, written by one Samuel Prichard, described as "late member of a Constituted Lodge," which first appeared in 1730.

At length in the same year [viz., 1730], in order to meet these various difficulties and with a laudable desire to prevent 'cowans' and 'impostors' being 'Made Masons,' the Grand Lodge of 1717 allowed - or perhaps even advised - the Lodges under its jurisdiction to make certain variations in the Ritual. The following extracts from the Grand Lodge minutes of 1730 and 1739 refer to this matter: -

1730, Aug. 28. Dr. Desaguliers "recommended several things to the consideration of the Grand Lodge" . . . "for preventing any false Brethren being admitted into regular Lodges and such as call themselves Honorary Masons." "The D.G.M. Nathaniel Blakerby proposed several Rules to the Grand Lodge to be observed in their respective Lodges for their Security against all open and Secret Enemies to the Craft."

1730, Dec. 15. In order "to prevent the Lodges being imposed upon by false Brethren or Impostors," a member had to vouch for a visiting Brother "and the Member's name had to be entered against the Visitor's name in the Lodge Book."

1739, June 30. "The Complaint referred to by the last Committee of Charity concerning the irregular making of Masons was taken into Consideration."

1739, Dec. 12. "Ordered that the Laws be strictly put in Execution against all such Brethren as shall for the future countenance, connive or assist at any such irregular Makings."

It is generally believed that the principal changes effected by the Moderns were that they: -

- 1 Transposed the Words in the first and second Degrees.
- 2 Gave up the use of Deacons, or at any rate did not appoint them.
- 3 Omitted the Ceremony of Installation; (and later on)
- 4 Did not officially perform or even recognise the rite of Holy Royal Arch--said to be the completion or perfection of the third Degree.
- 5 Possibly also changed the steps, and generally curtailed the Ceremonies, relying chiefly on teaching the tenets of the Craft by means of Masonic Lectures, at least in certain old Modern Lodges the latter were always the chief and most essential feature of the work.

Unfortunately hostility soon arose between the Moderns and the Antients and increased as time went on, and for about seventy years they opposed each other bitterly. The dissenting and dissatisfied Lodges - which according to Sadler gradually became known as Irish. Lodges - insisted on retaining the established Ritual in all its details and soon began openly to state that those who had thus varied the ancient forms and ceremonies were scarcely worthy to be regarded as Masons. and so they dubbed them Modern Masons and claimed for themselves the title of Antient Masons, meaning thereby that they - and they alone - practiced Masonry according to the proper rites.

MODERNS AND ANTIENTS RE-MADE

To such an extent did this spirit prevail that if a Modern desired to visit an Antient Lodge, he had first to be Re-Made so as to become an Antient; similarly the Moderns were quite as strict on their part and would not allow an Antient to visit their Lodge unless he were first Re-Made so as to become a Modern.

Now, although the motive of the Moderns in thus varying the Ritual was perfectly honest and sincere-their desire merely being to prevent irregular Masons being made - yet in time they saw the error of their ways and practically admitted that their rivals - the Antients - had acted more wisely in retaining the Ritual in its fuller and original form.

REVERSION TO THE ANCIENT LAND MARKS [1809]

This is made clear from the fact that in 1809 the Grand Lodge of the Moderns officially passed the following resolution, viz.: -

"That the Grand Lodge do agree in opinion with the Committee of Charity that it is not necessary any longer to continue in force those Measures which were resorted to in or about the year 1739 respecting Irregular Masons, and therefore enjoin the Several Lodges to Revert to the Ancient Land Marks of the Society." (1)

This clear and important admission on the part of the Moderns that they had omitted to practice certain of the 'Land Marks' was the first serious step taken towards reconciliation. The next naturally was to try and discover what the true 'Land Marks' were and for this purpose a Lodge was formed for the express purpose of "Ascertaining and Promulgating the Ancient Land Marks of the Society," which became known as "The Lodge of Promulgation" [1809-11]. The result of their labours proving quite satisfactory, the Lodge of Reconciliation was then formed in 1813 which definitely agreed in 1816 upon a Ritual satisfactory to both sides.

THE "UNITED GRAND LODGE" [1813]

All difficulties being now removed, after much discussion and certain mutual concessions--of which it is only fair to state that the most important were made by the Moderns--a "Glorious Union" of these two sections of the Craft was effected, and on the 27th December, 1813, both Moderns and Antients ceased to exist and there arose instead The United Grand Lodge of Antient Freemasons of England, the Duke of Sussex being elected and enthroned as the first Grand Master. (2)

After this somewhat rambling--and admittedly quite incomplete--version of the origin of the Modern and Antients, let us turn our attention to the real purpose of this paper, viz.:--to discuss and inquire into the reasons why the Antients so persistently and continuously--from 1764 to say 1809--vilified and ridiculed the ceremonies and ritual of the Craft as practised by their opponents.

THE MODERNS

Laurence Dermott's Satire 1764

In the 2nd Edition (published in 1764) of Ahiman Rezon - which was the official text book of the Antient for half a century,- Bro. Laurence Dermott, the Grand Secretary of that section of the Craft, indulged in some rather severe criticisms when discussing certain items of the Ritual as practiced by the Moderns, and by way of an awful example (to prove some of his stories) actually singled out and especially referred to--though not by name--my own Mother Lodge, the Dundee Lodge, No. 9, at Wapping, London, E., now known as the Old Dundee Lodge, No. 18. It perhaps, therefore is not very unreasonable that the present writer - who has for over thirty years been a member of that Lodge, and is now its second oldest Past Master - should endeavour in a very humble way to investigate such allegations and put in some sort of defence to Dermott's charges, although as these were made 160 years ago, he fully realizes that the case is quite statute barred and the matter now but ancient history. This article is, however, written in the hope that other members of the Craft may derive some useful information on these interesting subjects that were evidently often discussed in the Society of the Antients. We shall commence by first making a few enquiries as to the author of these stories.

LAURENCE DERMOTT [1720--1791]

Dermott was an Irishman, born in 1720; he was made a Mason in Ireland in 1740 and working his way through the various offices was installed as W. M. of Lodge No. 26, in Dublin on 24th June, 1746. Leaving Ireland he came to London about 1747 and for some time was a comparatively poor man, for he told his own Grand Lodge on the 13th July, 1753, that "he was obliged to work 12 hours in the day for the Master Painter who employed him," and that therefore he would have no leisure time for the future in which to deliver the Summonses which up to that date had been his practice. His occupation of a Journeyman Painter betokens a very moderate income, but later on we learn that he improved in social status and carried on the business of a Wine Merchant at King Street, Tower Hill, London, E. He was a man of fairly good education, and his firm and distinctive signature reveals to some extent the bold and determined character which he undoubtedly possessed. He informs us that originally he joined a Modern Lodge in London [in 1748 -unfortunately up to now its identity is unknown,-but he soon threw in his lot (heart and soul) with the Antients and became their chief protagonist and sponsor for over thirty years. In 1752 he was appointed Grand Secretary of that body and retained that exalted position until his resignation in 1770,-in the next year [1771] he was elevated to the rank of Deputy Grand Master, acting in that capacity until 1787 when increasing ill health caused his retirement; a few years later, viz., in June, 1791, he passed to the Grand Lodge above, having devoted forty-seven years of a very active life to the services of the Craft for which he always had a great affection and regard.

His life in London was almost entirely spent in the Eastern portion of the great metropolis, for he reside for some years in King Street, Tower Hill, E., and his will dated 5th June, 1770, commences thus "In the name of God, Amen. I, Laurence Dermott of the Parish of Saint Botolph, Aldgate in the County of Middlesex, Wine Merchant, etc., etc."; he later on removed to Mile End with his wife where he remained until his death in 1791. (3)

HIS ACQUAINTANCE WITH WAPPING

Dermott's residence in the East End of London would make him very familiar with the locality of Wapping--then the busy and active Port of London--where the Dundee Lodge had met from 1739.

This Lodge--one of the oldest Modern Lodges in the world, having been Constituted 1722-23--was allotted in 1753, the Number 9 on the Register of the Grand Lodge of England, which number it held right up to the Union in 1813, when in compliance with the compromise then arrived at with the Antients it had to surrender its old number and from 1814 became No. 18 which distinction it still holds in 1924.

NOTES

- (1) The Committee of Charity fulfilled in those days the duties of the present Board of General Purposes of the United Grand Lodge of England.
- (2) This present article is written from the point of view of the Moderns, but it is only right to at once make the fullest admission as to the great debt the Moderns owe to the

Antients for preserving intact--against great opposition--much of the old (and perhaps original) working of the Masonic degree which otherwise might have been entirely lost.

(3) This information has been chiefly derived from an excellent pamphlet entitled Notes on Laurence Dermott, G.S., and His Work, written in 1884 by the late Bro. W. M. Bywater, who with Bro. Henry Sadler are the chief exponents of Bro. Dermott's Masonic career.

THE members of Dundee Lodge, No. 18, or No. 9, as it stood on the Register of the "Moderns," purchased in 1763 the freehold of a Warehouse in Red Lyon Street, Wapping, and letting out the ground floor and basement--at first for a school and later on as a general store--utilized two rooms on the first floor for the purpose of Lodge meetings, the smaller one being used as a Making Room and the larger one being used as the formal Lodge Room, which rooms when not required for Masonic work were often let for the purpose of public dances--to such an extent was this the practice that they became known locally as the Wapping Assembly Rooms. The Lodge Room was spacious and well adapted for a ball, being 44 feet long by 25 feet wide and 15 feet high. The author of *Multa Paucis* describes the building as Dundee Masons' Hall, Wapping, thus the Dundee Lodge, No. 9, must have had quite a vogue in those days and been well known in that neighbourhood. The Lodge Room was always well furnished, for in 1754 the paraphernalia was insured from loss by fire in the Union Fire Office for 200 pounds -which was increased to 300 pounds in 1777--whilst the Freehold building in Red Lyon Street was insured for 800 pounds in 1763 in "Hand-in-Hand" Fire Office, and in 1810 the building and contents belonging to the 'Dundee' Lodge, No. 9 at Wapping were insured for no less than 2,000 pounds in the Sun Fire Office. By way of contrast the late Henry Sadler informs us that the only paraphernalia possessed by the Grand Lodge of the Moderns in 1766 was a sword, possibly a Bible, a jewel or two and two books of records; but that it had neither regular furniture, jewels nor habitation; thus it was scarcely worth while insuring these from fire! In 1763 two oil-lamps were purchased to illuminate the entrance to the Lodge Room and on dark winter nights--especially when a public ball was in progress--the building must have been very conspicuous, and it is obvious from his own statements that Bro. Laurence Dermott was well acquainted not only with the exterior of the building in which the Dundee Lodge met from 1763, but also was well informed as to certain private features of the Ritual gained either from personal experience or else from stories received from visitors to the Lodge.

"HEARTY COCKS" AND "GOOD FELLOWS"

These were the jovial expressions by which Dermott described his opponents the Moderns when writing about their Masonic doings in 1764. In his capacity of Grand Secretary of the 'Antients,' he apparently felt that he was quite entitled to try and enhance the prestige and fortunes of that society by deriding and attempting to depreciate his rivals. It would almost appear, however, that he felt some little compunction in the matter and was rather uneasy as to whether his statements were too severe and might be considered unfraternal and not evincing a truly brotherly spirit--at any rate he adopted a very apologetic tone when he first opened fire upon those who were (after all) only conducting their Masonic life under the express authority and sanction of the Mother Grand Lodge of the world. The following is how he commences what he considered was his exposure:

"AHIMAN REZON [1764]

In the 2nd Edition of this book on p. xxiv, Dermott in his "Address to the Reader" states:

"Gentlemen and Brethren: -

"Several eminent Craftsmen residing in Scotland, Ireland, America, and other parts both abroad and at home, have greatly importuned me to give them some account of what is called modern masonry in London," and then says

"I cannot be displeased with such importunities because I had the like curiosity myself about 16 or 17 years ago [the 1800 Edition says "in 1748"] when I was first introduced into that Society."

[Note.- Dermott here tells us that--though Made a Mason in Ireland--he himself joined a Modern Lodge on his arrival in London, consequently he was well able to discuss the differences in their Ritual as compared with that of the Antients.] To show, however, that he had no real ill feeling in the matter, he then proceeded to say: -

"However, before I proceed any farther concerning the difference between antient and modern, I think it my duty to declare solemnly before God and man that I have not the least antipathy against the gentlemen members of the modern society, but on the contrary, love and respect them, because I have found the generality of them to be hearty cocks and good fellows (as the bacchanalian phrase is) and many of them I believe to be worthy of receiving every blessing that good men can ask or heaven bestow, I hope that this declaration will acquit me of any desire of giving offence, especially if the following queries and answers be rightly considered."

After which followed certain "Questions" and "Answers" seeking to prove that Masonry as practised by the Antients was more correct and genuine than that favoured by the 'Moderns.'

GENTLEMEN OF AMERICA [1764]

It is very interesting to note that Dermott states that he gives his information "to satisfy the importunities of my good Brethren (particularly the Right Worshipful and very worthy Gentlemen of America) who for their charitable disposition, prudent choice of members and good conduct in general deserve the unanimous thanks of the masonical world." The Grand Secretary of the 'Antients' appears therefore to have had some excellent friends amongst the brethren who were then practising Freemasonry in the Lodges working in the American colonies. Please note that in any quotations in this article taken from 'Ahiman Rezon' the italics have been inserted by the present writer.

Dermott then proceeds to explain to his readers a matter that only those who were in the habit of attending the Dundee Lodge could possibly be familiar with, for he

actually refers to a very prominent feature of their ceremonies. On page xxxii of the same Ahiman Rezon, Dermott states:

"I have the greatest veneration for such implements as are truly emblematical or useful in refining our moral notions, and I am well convinced that the custom and use of them in lodges are both antient and instructive, but at the same time I abhor and detest the unconstitutional fopperies of cunning avaricious tradesmen, invented and introduced amongst the Moderns with no other design but to extract large sums of money, which ought to be applied to more noble and charitable uses."

He then proceeds to tell his audience that the item that offended his Masonic taste-- and which he consequently "abhors and detests"-is none other than the symbol of the "Master's authority to Rule his Lodge", for he says, referring to the "Sword of State":

"There is now in my neighbourhood" [that means, near Tower Hill, London, E.,- where he carried on the business of a Wine Merchant -, but in his 3rd Edition of 1778 he is more explicit for he there says "There is now in Wapping," [meaning thereby "There is now in the Dundee Lodge, No. 9, at Wapping"] "a large piece of iron scrole work, ornamented with foliage, &c. painted and gilt (the whole at an incredible expense) and placed before the Master's chair, with a gigantic sword fixed therein, during the communication of the members, a thing contrary to all the private and public rules of Masonry; all implements of war and bloodshed being confined to the lodge door, from the day that the flaming sword was placed in the East of the garden of Eden, to the day that the sagacious modern placed his grand sword of State in the midst of his Lodge."

The following extracts furnish ample proof that this "Gigantic Sword" that so offended the Masonic principles of Laurence Dermott in 1778 [and also as far back as 1764] belonged to the Dundee Lodge, No. 9.

EXTRACTS FROM TREASURER'S CASH BOOK

1761, June 26. "By Cash pd. Bro. Gretton -

for Repairing Ye Sword, etc." - 10. 19. 0 Aug. 13. "Paid Bro. Stevens his Bill-for Ye Iron for Ye Sword" - 15. 15. 0 do "Paid Bro. Noy's Bill Painting do" 3. 10. 0 30. 4. 0

Now, Bro. Henry Gretton, a jeweller was our R. W. M. in 1760 (he was referred to in the Minutes of G. L. of 28th Jan., 1767, see later on), whilst Bro. Thomas Noy, a painter, was Master in 1765.

The suggestion of Bro. Laurence Dermott is that these two "cunning avaricious tradesmen" had compelled their Mother Lodge to purchase this sword and iron stand and have it gaily painted merely to extract monies from their brethren that should have been devoted to charity; but as we had 59 members and the total income of the Lodge in 1761 was 114 pounds the brethren were well able to bear the expense - although it must be admitted that 30 pounds was a large sum in those days. However, in order to rebut Dermott's suggestion that this money was wasted and could have been better applied in charity, it may be here stated that the annals of the Dundee

Lodge give ample proof that "Relief" was constantly voted at "Lodge Nights" in sums varying from 1 ls. Od. to 5 5s. Od. in many cases to applicants who were not even members of the Lodge. The brethren also granted donations towards the funerals of their poorer members, whilst certain brethren--who became incarcerated in prison for debt--were also relieved; a few items by way of illustration are here mentioned.

EXTRACTS FROM THE RECORDS OF LODGE, NO. 9

1759, Dec. 27. "Paid into the hands of Sir Joseph Hankey & Co. [Bankers] for the Widows and Orphans of those slain at Minden and Quebec," "Paid towards Clothing the French Prisoners," "Pd. Advertising the 2 last Donations,"

[The above incident refers - inter alia - to the capture of Quebec from the French by Major-General James Wolfe on the 13th Sept., 1759, when - in the moment of victory - he fell mortally wounded on the heights of Abraham. The surrender of Montreal soon followed and with it all the Province of Canada. There must have been some special need here for assistance for Dr. Samuel Johnson in 1760--to help the cause - wrote an "Introduction to the Proceedings of the Committee for Clothing the French Prisoners."]

1762. "Pd. Br. Harrison for his Trouble to get Br. Bride into Greenwich Hospital"; 2. 0 1762, Mar. 11. "Recd. Cash of Bro. Halley Borwick, his Donation for the Benefit of Poor Brothers of this Lodge," 2. 2. 0 1766, Feb. 10. "Pd. as a gift to Jos. Hankey & Co. for the sufferers at the Great Fire in Barbadoes," 30

[A subscription list was opened in the Lodge, 30 members subscribing this 30 pounds; we do not read of similar generous gifts on the part of the Antients !]

1767. "Br. Croke having been previously helped, was Relieved with 1. 1. 0 on his promise of never troubling this Lodge again."

do. Mch. 26. "2. 2. 0 to be sent to the Quarterly Comm. the Master to have the Use of the Jewels." 1774, Nov. 24. "Bro. Peter Batson now a Prisoner in the Marshalsea relieved with 2 guineas." 1783, Feb. 27. "Br. Sandwell being now a Prisoner in the King's Bench was relieved from this Lodge with 2. 2. 0." 1807, Feb. 12. "A Petition was read from Br. Cathro, confined in H.M. Goal of Newgate for Debt from Misfortunes in trade to be Relieved with 2 guineas."

A MASONIC SYMBOL

But the real answer to Bro. Dermott's accusation, however, is that our Sword of State thus exhibited in open Lodge - fixed by its hilt in a massive wrought Iron Stand which was suitably painted and decorated with foliage in gilt - was merely used by our Brethren as a symbol of the absolute authority of the R.W.M. to Rule over his Lodge. This Sword - still extant - is a handsome weapon, double-handed with blade 38in. long, the hilt 10in., while the guard is 9 1/2 in. wide. The identity is absolute - No. 9 was then the premier, practically the only Modern Lodge at Wapping--an on one side

of the blade, near the hilt, are the words "Dundee Arms Lodge, Wapping, No. 9." [Note.- In 1761 when this sword was bought and renovated, the Lodge met at the Dundee Arms Tavern.] The symbols marked on the blade are chiefly of a martial character, consisting of swords and flags: - in several places the initials "G.R." appear on the flags, and as the sword was damascened in 1761 these clearly refer to King George III. [It was thanks chiefly to assistance kindly rendered by Bro. W. J. Songhurst, P.G.D. (the erudite Secretary of the 'Quatuor Coronati' Lodge) that the writer was enabled in 1918 to identify this interesting relic of our Masonic past; Bro. Songhurst was also the first student to draw my attention to some of the weird statements in Ahiman Rezon which thereby led to the preparation of this paper.] This sword - which was used as a tyler's sword from 1835 to 1918 - is now kept for better preservation in a mahogany box, presented on 4th Nov., 1919, jointly by the writer of these notes and by another P.M. of the Lodge. This rare Masonic curio is therefore a direct connecting link with the inner life of an old Modern Lodge, thus severely criticized by Bro. Laurence Dermott in 1764 and 1778.

OTHER SWORDS OF STATE

Various other old Lodges also owned swords and stands which were used in a similar manner. An old Yorkshire Lodge [Const. 1793] still possesses and makes use of a 'Flaming Sword' - fixed in a wooden stand placed on the right side of the W.M.'s Pedestal,-which remains with its naked blade uplifted during the whole time the Lodge is at Masonic labor. Bro. Welsford, P.A.G.St.B. informs me that in 1923, two 'Flaming Swords' [also with naked blades fixed upright side-by-side on a stand] were placed near to the Master's chair during the working of the ceremonies in two old Lodges in the North of England; clearly relics from the days of old.- It is really difficult to understand the merit of Dermott's objection to the use of a sword in Lodge in 1761. It was the continuance of a well known custom, for we are told that at the Grand Lodge Feast held at Merchant Taylor's Hall on 24th June, 1724:- "In the Procession round the Table, there preceded the Grand Master The Sword carried by the Master of the Lodge, to which the Sword belonged."

In 1731, the Grand Master [the Duke of Norfolk] presented Grand Lodge "with the old Trusty Sword of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, which was ordered to be the Grand Master's Sword of State for the Future"; and this sword is still borne by the Grand Sword-bearer before the Grand Master, or his representative at all meetings of Grand Lodge, and during the entire proceedings it is laid - in its scabbard - on the altar before the Grand Master.

The Lord Mayor when attending the city churches in his official capacity, used also to be attended by his Sword-bearer, carrying the civic Sword of State, which was fixed by the side of his pew (in special sword rests) during divine service. This old custom is still observed provided the sword-rests are extant; the blade, however, is now safely ensconced in its scabbard.

Bro. Dermott's criticism on this point seems therefore to be idle and captious for it can be safely asserted that the brethren of the Dundee Lodge committed no breach of Masonic law or custom when they thus symbolically used their 'Sword of State' in 1764.

"DRAWING THE LODGE ON THE FLOOR" [1764]

Immediately following his reference to our 'Sword of State' Dermott proceeds to cast ridicule on another old custom [viz., that of 'Drawing the Lodge on the Floor, in chalk and charcoal'] which had been practiced by the Moderns certainly since 1726 - doubtless earlier still - and was a regular feature of the Ritual in the Dundee Lodge from 1748 to 1812. In 1764 - when Dermott wrote his remarks - the tyler, on the Lodge nights when a candidate was made a Mason (previous to the ceremony) invariably drew the Lodge on the floor in chalk and charcoal, receiving for such work a special fee of 2s. 2d. for each making, so Dermott's statement that the tyler sometimes received "ten or twelve shillings" for thus "Drawing the Lodge" when four or more candidates were made at a time is substantially correct. To the writer, however, the sarcastic way in which this portion of the ceremony was referred to by Dermott seems rather like "playing to the gallery," his object clearly being to bring the Moderns and their Ritual into ridicule; his remark as to the "two sign posts" thus 'Drawn upon the floor' of course alludes to the emblems of the two Masonic columns, marked and described as "J" and "B" in accordance with instructions received from the Grand Lodge of the Moderns.

"JAMAICA RUM AND "BARBADOES RUM

The following are Dermott's own words in his Ahiman Rezon [2nd Edition, 1764] p. xxxii:-

"Nor is it uncommon for a tyler to receive ten or twelve shillings for drawing two sign posts with chalk &c and writing Jamaica (rum) upon one, and Barbadoes (rum) upon the other, and all this (I suppose) for no other use than to distinguish where these Liquors are to be placed in the Lodge."

Such an ironical statement - especially proceeding from a wine merchant - seems not only in bad taste but rather overdrawn, and it makes one wonder as to whether at this period the Antients in their Assemblies - when they made a Mason - used themselves to draw the Lodge in chalk and charcoal or did they instead instruct their candidates as to the symbols of the Craft by means of the actual working tools of the Craft or by emblems depicted on a floor cloth, or did they leave them still in ignorance on such vital and important matters ?

A few extracts from the Cash Books of No. 9

1749. "Pd Tyler and Drawer"... .. 2. 0 1764. "Pd Cash to the Tyler" ...
..... . 2. 2 1795, Apl. 9. "Pd Tyler's Fees for 4 Makings"10. 0 1799, Aug. 8.
"Pd. Br. Mills ,[Tyler] for Form ing 6 Lodges" 15. 0

A LITTLE LEWIS AND CAPSTAN

Dermott in the same Ahiman Rezon [p. xxxii] again seems to try and invent an excuse to poke fun at his opponents, for he dilates as follows:

"And it is pleasant enough to see sixty or seventy able men about a little Lewis and Capstan etc, erected upon a mahogany platform (purchased at an extravagant price) all employed in raising a little square piece of marble, which the weakest man in the company could take between his finger and thumb and throw it over the house."

Here Dermott is ridiculing the practice the Moderns had of exhibiting the Perpend or Perfect Ashlar on a tripod placed on the S.W.'s pedestal. It is interesting to note that the following extracts taken from the records of Lodge, No. 9, show that in 1746 our Brethren possessed one of these items that so aroused the satire of the Grand Secretary of the Antients. This appears from a list of paraphernalia;

1746. "1 Triangle with Blocks, Lewis, Crabb, etc, 2 Stones, and 1 Marble Block."

The 'Old Dundee' Lodge, No. 18, still possesses and uses regularly at its Lodge Meetings a very old and similar tripod (made of brass) erected on a mahogany platform, perhaps the original that was purchased in 1746. It may even possibly be the actual article that so offended Dermott in 1764 ! Bro. Songhurst in 'A.Q.C.,' Vol. xxxv, p. 82, also calls attention to the fact that Dermott ridicules the 'Moderns' for using such apparatus.

1754, Apl. 11. Resolved that "A New Pel pend Ashler Inlaid with Devices of Masonry valued at 2. 12. 6 be purchased."

It is perfectly clear that the Lodge "at Wapping" referred to in 1764 by Laurence Dermott was the 'Dundee' Lodge, No. 9, for it met there from 1739 to 1820 (a period of 80 years) and was practically the only Lodge in that neighborhood at that date.

"APRONS ' [CIRCA 1717?]

Dermott in the same book, p. xxxi, has now a far more serious charge to make against the Moderns for he there says (speaking of the period soon after the Grand Lodge of 1717 was Constituted):

"It was proposed" [i.e., by the Moderns] "that no brother (for the future) should wear an apron. This proposal was rejected by the oldest members, who declared, that the aprons were all the signs of masonry then remaining amongst them and for that reason they would keep and wear them." [Dermott here suggests that the motive of the Moderns was that they objected to appearing as Mechanics or as Operative Masons; he adds, however, the following statement] "It was then proposed, that (as they were resolved to wear aprons) they should be turned upside down in order to avoid appearing mechanical. This proposal took place and answered the design, for that which was formerly the lower part was now fastened round the Abdomen, and the bib and strings hung downwards, dangling in such a manner as might convince the spectators, that there was not a working Mason amongst them. Agreeable as this alteration might seem to the gentlemen, nevertheless it was attended with an ugly circumstance; for in traversing the lodge, the brethren were subject to tread upon the strings, which often caused them to fall with great violence, so that it was thought

necessary, to invent several methods of walking, in order to avoid treading upon the strings."

The third edition of Ahiman Rezon [1778] contains the following foot note:

"After many years observations on those ingenious methods of walking up to a brother &c, I conclude, that the first was invented by a Man grievously afflicted with the Sciatica. The second by a Sailor, much accustomed to the rolling of a Ship. And the third by a man, who for recreation or through excess of strong liquors, was wont to dance the drunken Peasant."

Are we to take Dermott seriously? If so, it may well have been that a few Lodges - or perhaps only a few members of such Lodges-consisting of men of exalted rank or dignified professors in art and literature, might have - at first - declined to wear a garment that (even although only intended as a symbol) might affect their pride, in that they should even be asked temporarily to wear an apron -often soiled by stains of 'porter' or 'punch' - in such a way that in daily life would only be used by an Operative Mason; they may have fairly argued that being merely Speculatives they ought to be absolved from what to them may have appeared an indignity. However, we have no certain knowledge on this point but such a custom certainly was not prevalent and it is clear that the Dundee Lodge, - consisting of many tradesmen engaged in nearly every description of business life - was not one of the offenders, if so, we should expect that Dermott would again have singled it out by way of example as he certainly did concerning two or three of his other objections. The records of the Dundee Lodge contain many items proving that aprons were constantly bought for the use of its members and also that the Lodge itself - when required - was often "New Cloathed" with fresh aprons at the cost of the Lodge funds. This is evidence that our ancient brethren wore their aprons seriously and in accordance' with the custom of the old Operatives; a few illustrations are here given.

Extracts from the Minutes of No. 9

1750, Sept. 13. Bro. Lane proposed "That the Box in which we formerly put our Aprons in should be given to the Maid Servant of this House [i.e. The Dundee Arms Tavern, Wapping], 2nd by Bro. Banson, 3rd, 4th and 5th." 1752, Dec. 14. Bro. Lane's proposal for "New Cloathing the Lodge carried in the Affirmative."

Dec. 28. "That Ye Past Masters' and Ye Secretary's Aprons be lined."

1755, Apl. 10. "That a convenient Nest of Boxes be provided to hold the Aprons in an Alphabetical Order and that the Master and Wardens procure the same."

1764, Nov. 22. Resolved "That this Lodge be new Cloathed with Aprons"; "That the Past Master of this Lodge have Aprons bound with the same Ribbon as they wore their Meddals." Extracts from the Cash Books

1755. "Paid for 2 Doz . Aprons" [1s. 4d. each] ... 1. 12. 0

1764. "Pd. for Gold Fringe for the Steward's Apron" 2. 6

AND now the most important criticism that Dermott ever made against the Moderns has been left to the last, and it is indeed a serious accusation that deserves and requires careful thought and consideration.

It is from the same medium of communication. In Ahiman Rezon, 2nd Edition, page xxx, he tells the Antients and his readers generally, that soon after 1717 the leading authorities of the Grand Lodge of the Moderns--which would include such eminent Masons as George Payne, G. M. in 1718 and 1720; Dr. Desaguliers and Dr. Anderson--came to rather a startling conclusion as to the best method to be adopted when a Candidate was made a Mason in a Modern Lodge; the following are Dermott's own words:

"Hence it was ordered [i. e., by the Moderns]. that every person (during the time of his initiation) should wear boots, spurs a sword, and spectacles." Dermott further adds "we are told that from this improvement proceeded the laudable custom of charging to a public health at every third sentence that is spoken in the Lodge."

Dermott adds a foot-note in his 3rd Edition of 1778, to this effect:--"This may seem a very ludicrous description of making freemasons. But Mr. Thomas Broughton, master of the lodge No. 11, London, declared that he was present in a modern Lodge not one mile from the Borough of Southwark, when two or three persons dress'd in liveries with shoulder tags, booted and spurr'd, &c., &c., were initiated into modern masonry; and upon enquiring who they were, he was told they were servants to Lord Carysfoot, then Grand Master of modern Masons."

The question immediately arises, was Dermott talking of an actual fact within his own knowledge, or was he merely in veiled language and skilled metaphor trying to inform the Antients that when a Candidate was Made a Mason according to the Ritual of the Moderns he was not properly prepared? None knew better than the Grand Secretary of the Antients that he must only speak of esoteric matters in vague and mysterious words, not understandable by the outside world--for had he not titled his own book Ahiman Rezon, or a Help to a Brother, and as Shewing the Excellency of Secrecy, etc., etc. Perhaps in this instance Dermott may have been partly narrating the truth--so far as regards Spectacles,--for from an incident that is recorded in the minutes of the Dundee Lodge it seems reasonable to believe that up to 1766 our Brethren when they Made a Mason allowed the Candidate to see much more than is lawful in these days. The story is as follows: It was at that period an established custom for the Grand Master of the Moderns occasionally to make visits of inspection to Lodges under his jurisdiction and in 1766 the Dundee Lodge was thus honored with a State Visit.

The following extracts from the Minutes of No. 9 speak for themselves, and show our ancient method of Making a Mason: 1766, Feb. 13. "Lodge Night. Bro. Clarke [R.W.M.] signified that Lord Blayney and the Officers of Grand Lodge intended paying us a visit very soon, on which account he proposed that No Visitors should be admitted on that Night, Carried Nem. Con. Likewise Bro. Elliott proposed that every Member have Notice in his Letter, the Night that the Grand Officers come down, 2nd and carried Nem. Con.

Apl. 24. "Lodge Night. Br. Williams informed the Lodge that he had received a letter from Bro. Ripley, Secretary to the Grand Lodge intimating that for certain reasons the Grand Master thought proper to postpone his Intended Visit till after the Grand Feast."

May 22. "Lodge Night. On this Night the following Visited the Lodge and their names we duly entered in the Minute Book, viz: "Lord Blayney, R. W. Grand Master; Col. John Salter, Deputy Grand Master; Thomas Dyne, S. Warden in the room of Br. Edwards; Rowland Berkeley G. Tr.; Samuel Spencer, Gd. Sec.; Francis Johnston, G.S.B., and a Steward."

There were 67 Members present, also 13 Brethren "Useing the Sea": a total of 80 Members of the Dundee Lodge. [No visitors were allowed this night.]

The work done on this memorable occasion was as follows:

1766, May 22. "This Night agreeable to a proposal of last Lodge Night, Mr. Henry Bird was Balloted for, Accepted and Made a Mason for which Honour he paid 2. 2s. Likewise Mr. Holman, proposed by Captain George Dear to be Made a Mason, he Useing the Sea, was Balloted for, Accepted and Made a Mason, for which Honour he paid 2. 2s."

REFRESHMENTS FOR THE GRAND OFFICERS

Hospitality was shown to the visitors in those days as in these; food, wine, punch and Music [French Horns] were evidently provided.

1766, June 12. Paid "By Cash to Musick". . 3. 3. 0
July 3. "Pd. Bro. Cordell his Bill".. 9. 6. 0
do. 10. "Pd. Mr. Bothell, the Cook". . 7. 0 6 [for pastries, &c.]
July 10. "The Bye-Laws were omitted, as was Read the Night the Grand Officers was present."

Now, in 1766 the 1st and 2nd Degrees were given on the same evening--this practice was continued up to 1809--but it is quite clear from what follows that the method of 'Preparing the Candidate,' was not in accordance with the usual custom; Lord Blayney therefore felt it incumbent upon him to write on the subject.

REQUEST OF LORD BLAYNEY TO 'DUNDEE' LODGE, NO. 9

1766, Aug. 28. Verbatim extracts from the minutes: "Likewise the Grand Master ordered Bro. Edwards, the Grand Senior Warden, to desire That upon Making a Mason, he may be [sic] agreeable to the Method practiced in most other Lodges."

The Brethren discussed this matter in open Lodge and the following was their reply:

1766, Sept. 11. "The Minute of the last Lodge relative to [sic]

[Sic] the Persons when they were Made Masons was put up this Night and carried by a Majority at it should continue according to our Antient Custom."

This was an important meeting and there were present 25 Members, 4 visitors, and one Member "Useing the Sea." The sheet containing entries for the Lodge Night of 23rd October, 1766, and also of a Bye Lodge of 27th October, 1766, has been cut or torn out of the Minute Book, apparently by the Secretary; doubtless it referred to the dispute over the ceremonial work, which had been called in question by Lord Blayney, the Grand Master; at any rate, it is the only sheet that has been cut out or deliberately removed from the numerous records.

1766, Nov. 27. Resolved "That we should have a Feast as usual on St. John's Day, and that the Grand Officers be Invited. Tickets for Members, 5s., Visitors, 7s. 6d." Dec. 27. Feast Day. Present 47 Members; 4 "Useing the Sea," and 4 Visitors, including Bro. Alleyne [a Grand Officer]. "R.W.M. [Nath. Allen] proposed that there be a Committee appointed consisting of the Master, Wardens, Past Masters, Treasurer, Secretary and Stewards to consider of an Answer to the Dep. Grand Master's Letter and other business relating to this Lodge."

Serious matters needed discussion or they would not have appointed all the officers to serve on this Committee. Evidently the Secretary had written a reply to Grand Lodge that our Brethren declined either to abandon their Antient Custom or to change their Ritual even although expressly requested to do so by the Grand Master. It is clear that on receipt of this the Lodge had been requested to send representatives to the Committee of Charity [the predecessors of the Board of General Purposes] to discuss the matter and deputed two Past Masters to attend and uphold our contention. As a result they apparently lost their temper and insulted the Committee who then resolved on stern measures and threatened to erase the Lodge.

CONFLICT WITH GRAND LODGE [1767]

Our Brethren saw the gravity of the position, and on Dec. 27, 1766, authorised this special committee to deal with the matter and they quickly decided not only that the Lodge should express regret but also to comply with the reasonable requirement of Grand Lodge; and the controversy ended amicably as shown by the following verbatim extract from the minutes of Grand Lodge, dated 28th January, 1767:

"A Memorial from the Dundee Lodge was Read, Praying that for the Reasons therein alledged, their Constitution might not be forfeited pursuant to a Resolution of the last Committee of Charity, but that they might be permitted to retain the same and promising all due obedience for the Future. The Question being put, whether they should keep their Constitution or not? It was carried Unanimously in their Favour. Ordered That a Letter be wrote to the Master of the Dundee Lodge, directing him to acquaint Brs. Gretton and Maddox (who attended on behalf of the said Lodge at the last Committee of Charity) that it is expected they attend at the next C.C. and make a proper submission for their Misbehaviour at the last, otherwise that they will be expell'd the above named Lodge; and not be permitted to visit any other Regular Lodge."

The writer's thanks are further due to Bro. W. J. Songhurst, P.G.D., for kindly supplying the above extract from the original minutes of Grand Lodge. At this meeting of Grand Lodge on 28th January, 1767, Col. John Salter, D.G.M., was in the chair supported by seven other Grand Officers and doubtless the Master and Wardens of the Dundee Lodge were in attendance to support and explain their Petition. Bro. Wonnacott, the Grand Lodge Librarian, also furnished the writer with the following verbatim extract from the Minutes of the Committee of Charity, thus completing the story and showing that the terms laid down by Grand Lodge were duly fulfilled.

1767, Ap. 8. "This Night Bros. Gretton [and] Maddox attended and made proper Submission and were restored to favour."

As regards the two Brethren who were thus rebuked by Grand Lodge, Bro. Henry Gretton was W.M. in 1760 [he was a jeweler and repaired our Sword of state in 1761], while Bro. William Maddax [or Maddock] was W.M. in 1764; presumably they had defied the Committee, as a result they had to apologise and the Lodge had "to promise all due obedience for the Future."

What then was the special item in the Ceremony of Initiation, that so offended Lord Blayney, who stated that it was not "agreeable to the Method practiced in most other Lodges"; the Grand Master here admits that the Modern Lodge did not all agree on this point, showing there was no uniformity of working; but whatever the distinctive feature was, the Brethren of the Dundee Lodge had evidently practised it for so many years that they described it as our Antient Custom, and rather than abandon it ran the serious risk of a collision with Grand Lodge. The writer now ventures to make the following suggestion: In those far off days it was often the custom to Initiate the Candidate robed in a White Gown, for the records of several old Lodges refer to their Gowns and Drawers. In 1837 the Old Dundee Lodge had 3 Candidates for Initiation and the Lodge ordered the Tyler to furnish Three Flannel Dressing Gowns which were purchased at a cost of 3 6s. Od. These gowns were made of white serge or flannel (and had a deep hood at the back), fastened at the neck with tapes--no buttons--and had wide sleeves. They rather resembled the white gown of a Carthusian monk and were preserved as Masonic curios by the Lodge for many years and were often handled by the present writer, but in 1904, having become old and decayed they were--by order--destroyed by the Tyler. Is it not therefore possible that the deep hood of the White Gown used to be drawn over the head of the Candidate during the ceremony of Initiation ? If so, this perhaps would fully explain the interesting and important controversy that the Dundee Lodge had with the Grand Master, Lord Blayney in 1766.

Extracts from the Records of Lodge, No. 9

1837, Feb. 7. "Paid Tyler for 3 Flannel Gowns" ...3. 6. 0

Dermott in 1764 closed his "Address to the Reader" by stating:

"There are many other unconstitutional [and perhaps unprecedented] proceedings which (to avoid giving more offense) I pass over in silence [and shall content myself with shewing the apparent state of ancient and modern masonry in England at the time of this present writing, i.e., July 1778], and hope, that I shall live to see a general

conformity and universal unity between the worthy masons of all denominations. This is the most earnest wishes and ardent prayers of

Gentlemen and Brethren,

Your most sincere friend, obedient servant and faithful brother,

Laurence Dermott, Secretary."

The words italicised by the present writer were added by Dermott in his 1778 Edition. Dermott died in 1791; twenty-two years later his wishes were fulfilled for in 1813, the happy and complete union of these two great sections of the Craft took place.

SUMMARY

One must not judge Dermott's satire from the standpoint of 1924--when all ill-feelings between the Moderns and Antients have long been forgotten--but his book--Ahiman Rezon had a large audience (in America as well as in England) for nearly 50 years and his--shall we say exaggerated--statements must have tended to inflame the feelings and warp the judgment of the Antients, causing many of them to consider the Masonic life and Ritual of the Moderns as being quite irregular and unworthy of the Craft. It is evident that Dermott never regretted his unkind references to the inner life of the Dundee Lodge for his stories as to (1) our Sword of state and (2) payment to our Tyler of excessive fees for Drawing the Lodge on the floor were repeated in the various Editions of Ahiman Rezon of 1778, 1787, and also after his death (in 1791), Bro. Thomas Harper, D.G.M. of the 'Antients' repeated these offensive remarks in the further Editions of 1800, 1801, 1807 and 1813.

It is therefore quite clear that the high officials of the G. Lodge of the Antients were equally culpable, as they evidently fully approved of Dermott's accusations and by their tacit acquiescence ratified and confirmed them; one therefore feels justified in stating that the 3rd Duke of Atholl, who was G.M. of the Antients from 1771 to 1774,--and who was also G.M. of Scotland in 1773--approved and endorsed Dermott's calculated and continued hostile criticism of the Moderns and their Ritual; the same comment applies to the 4th Duke of Atholl [G.M. of the Antients 1775-81], and also to the Earl of Antrim, their G.M. from 1783 to 1791 (especially the latter, who had occupied the important post of G.M. of Ireland in 1773 and 1779). Bro. J. Heron Lepper in his "Fraternal Communications," an excellent paper read at Manchester in 192 informs us that in 1776 "Antrim, G.M." . . . "attended a Modern Lodge in London and subscribed the sum of twenty guineas towards the building fund of the hall in Great Queen Street, being quite unaware at the time that there was any difference between Antient and Modern Masonry"; and yet he was supposed as G.M. to know his Ahiman Rezon by heart!

The Grand Lodge Library possesses an excellent example of the Ahiman Rezon [1807 Edition] hand somely bound in crimson morocco, and Bro. Wonnacott, the Grand Lodge Librarian informs me that this copy was for some years used by the Grand Lodge of the Antients, right up to the very last meeting of that Society, and is also the identical copy that was used when the Duke of Essex was re-obligated in 1813. These

facts are stated on the first page in a note in the handwriting of Dr. Thos. Crucefix which also says that the book was presented to Bro. Crucefix in 1833 by Bro. Edwards Harper, a former Grand Secretary of the Antients.

NO REPLY BY THE MODERNS

And yet in spite of these severe and repeated tacks on their Ritual, the Modern Grand Lodge - as far as we know - never deigned to make a reply, whilst the Dundee Lodge (who must have been aware of these hostile criticisms, specially directed against their Masonic working) treated the matter with contemptuous silence. Instead of wasting time by a word warfare, our Brethren busied themselves in working up one of the most prosperous Lodges on the side of the Moderns, for a list printed in 1810 (the zenith of their prosperity) shows that in that year the Dundee Lodge - which was a great maritime Lodge - possessed 109 ordinary members and no less than 261: "Seamembers" whilst its property was insured for 2000 pounds.

The writer does not venture to assert that all Dermott's statements are inaccurate; on the contrary his stories about (a) the user of the 'Sword of State' (b) the special payments made to the Tyler and (c) the use of the "little Lewis and Capstan" are quite correct. No, no, it is rather the venomous and exaggerated way in which these matters are made to appear that naturally - in 1924 - arouses the anger (real or assumed) of a very humble representative of the successors of the Dundee Lodge.

People "who live in Glass Houses" should not throw stones; the following episode proves that Dermott's own section of the Craft had also imperfections for some of the so-called Antients were perfectly willing to Make a Mason for the very trifling and unworthy consideration of a leg of mutton for supper, whereas the lowest fee charged by the Dundee Lodge for Initiation into the 1st and 2nd Degrees was 2. 2. 0, and 5s. 0d. extra if - and when - the Candidate took the 3d of a Master Mason.

LEG OF MUTTON MASONS [1752]

Bro. Bywater tells us on p. 11 of his Notes on Lau. Dermott and his work that the following extract-taken from the proceedings of the Grand Committee the Antients-- appears in Dermott's own handwriting, dated 4th March, 1752: "Complaints made against Thomas Phealon and John Mackey, better known by the name of 'leg of mutton Masons.' In course of examination it appeared that Phealon and Mackey had initiated many persons for the consideration of a leg of Mutton for dinner or supper to the disgrace of the Ancient Craft. That Mackey was an Empiric in Physic and both impostors in Masonry."

If Dermott had only let the world a little more into the secrets of some of the inner workings of the early Lodges of the Antients, it might have very much discounted his own satirical observations as to the methods and Masonic life of the Moderns. It is pretty obvious that jealousy prompted Dermott in many of his criticisms against the Moderns; speaking generally about 1763 the Lodges of the Antients were not financially strong and the prosperous condition of the Dundee Lodge evidently raised his spleen. To illustrate this, Lodge No. 9 had 59 members in 1761 and 88 in 1764.

The ordinary Lodge income in 1761 was 114 pounds and there was a balance in hand on 1st January, 1762, of 37 pounds. In 1764 the ordinary Lodge Income was 360 pounds [of which 103 pounds was for making fees received from new members] and the balance in the Treasurer's hands on 1st January, 1765, was 96 pounds. The receipts from the "Master's Lodge" held weekly (as a favour or indulgence) during the six winter months [October to April] in 1764 amounted to over 27 pounds, in weekly sums varying from 18s. 6d. to 2. 1. 0; at which Lodge meetings there is good reason to believe that the ceremony of Holy Royal Arch was performed. In addition the members of the Dundee Lodge raised in 1763 about 800 pounds by voluntary subscriptions to pay for their new Freehold premises at 'Red Lyon Street,' Wapping, with the necessary improvements and furniture. This unusual condition of prosperity of an old Modern Lodge "in my neighbourhood" [to use his own words] may account for some of his vitriolic attacks on their working !

However, in spite of his severe criticisms Dermott was a jovial, good fellow and it can be safely asserted that he had many excellent friends amongst the Moderns who perhaps did not take him seriously and felt that they could afford to pass over his attacks with good humoured contempt--whilst the Regular Lodges improved in strength and importance.

Dermott was evidently not a total abstainer, he carried on business as a wine merchant at Tower Hill, E., and doubtless--in accordance with the custom of those days supplied certain Lodges of the Antients with rum (required for punch) and also 'Red Port,' then a favorite beverage. That Dermott could appreciate a glass of good wine seems apparent from the fact that he was a martyr to gout, for he himself asserted in 1770 that Br. Dickey, the Deputy Grand Secretary, resigned his post "when he (Dermott) was so ill in the gout, that he was obliged to be carried out of his bed (when incapable to wear shoes, stockings, or even britches) to do his duty at Grand Steward's Lodge." This story, however, he did not include in his Ahiman Rezon!

DERMOTT'S MUSICAL TALENT

Dermott was musically inclined, and very fond of singing at the meetings of his Grand Lodge but that he was not always popular among the Antients is proved by the fact that in 1752 four of their members accused him of having "actually sung and lectured the Brethren out of their senses," but in 1753 the W.M. in the chair at an Emergency held at the 'King & Queen,' Cable street, Rosemary Lane, thanked him for his last new song and "hoped that the applause of his Brethren would induce Br. Dermott, G.S., to compose another against the next st. John's Day."

GRAND MASTERS OF SCOTLAND

The following point seems to deserve some consideration, viz., that from 1721 to 1753 the Moderns had as their Grand Masters members of high degree, including four

Dukes, nine Earls, eight Lords and two Viscounts; four of these exalted officials had also been Grand Masters of Scotland, how therefore could Dermott say--with any sincerity--that the Ritual of the 'Moderns' was not in harmony with the best traditions of the Craft; surely some of these Grand Masters would have personally objected if there had been just cause for complaint. Whatever may be the final verdict of Masonic students on the value to be placed on Dermott's statements, it is quite clear that the Craft is much indebted to him for thus letting in a flood of light upon the Masonic customs and ceremonies as practised by the Moderns--or some of them--prior to the Union in 1813.

In conclusion it is only fair to say that--in spite of his aggressive hostility to the Moderns and their Ritual, persisted in right up to his death in 1791--Dermott was a very sincere Mason and gave nearly 50 years of a busy life to advance the interests of the Antients, that section of the Craft to which he devoted all his energies and undoubted talents. On page 16 of his 1st Edition of Ahiman Rezon [1756] Dermott to his infinite credit (considering the rough age in which he lived) expresses this lofty sentiment, viz., that a Mason should "not only perform his Duty to his great Creator, but also to his Neighbour and himself: For to walk humbly in the sight of God, to do Justice and love mercy are the certain Characteristics of a Real, Free and Accepted Ancient Mason." The writer therefore desires to end these remarks with the kindest thoughts to this worthy and great Mason--the chief protagonist and champion of the Antients--and in accordance with the time-honored maxim:

"De mortuis nil nisi bonum"

to close this rather discursive - but he trusts not entirely irrelevant -essay.