

THE CAUSES OF DIVERGENCE IN RITUAL
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THAT THERE ARE divergencies in ritual, every masonic traveler soon becomes aware. Before he gets into the lodge in a foreign jurisdiction the look upon the faces of the examining committee, the awkward attempt to fit two divergent systems of work one to the other while neither party can go into explanations, shows at once that, while each is confident of himself, something is wrong. This comes out particularly in a matter as fundamental as the modes of recognition. Some jurisdictions letter and divide or syllable the word and divide or syllable the pass. In other jurisdictions the pass is given at once but the word is divided or syllabled. And if our masonic traveler were to go upon the continent of Europe and to find a lodge which his home authorities recognized, he might, as is well known, come upon an unfamiliar substitute word. But, staying upon this side of the water, when he got into the lodge he would as like as not find a greater or less number of officers than those he had come to know in his home jurisdiction, he would be not unlikely to find a radically different practice of opening and closing, and he would be sure to find differences of detail here and there in the work. The matter of opening and closing is a striking example and will suffice for my purpose. In some jurisdictions the practice is to open a lodge of Entered Apprentices or of Fellowcrafts or of Master Masons as the case may be and then to declare the particular lodge open as such. Other jurisdictions insist that this is wrong and that the particular lodge is to be opened as Entered Apprentices or as Fellowcrafts or as Master Masons. Such jurisdictions, however, open the lodge immediately on this or that degree without reference to any preceding degree. In still other jurisdictions this is deemed wrong, and the lodge is ceremoniously opened successively from the lowest degree to the one in which work is to be done and closed in inverse order.

One is tempted to ask at once, what are the causes of the foregoing divergences and of many others that might be named? It is always dangerous to generalize, but I venture to suggest six causes for your consideration. These are:

- Masonry was transplanted to this country while the ritual was still formative in many respects in England.
- There were several foci, and, as it were, several sub-foci, of Masonry in the United States, from each of which was transmitted its own version of what it received.
- The schism¹ of Ancients and Moderns which obtained in England in the last half of the eighteenth century, led to two rituals in this country during the formative period of American Masonry, and later these were fused in varying degrees in different jurisdictions.
- It was not until the end of the eighteenth century in England and not until the first quarter of the nineteenth century in this country that literal knowledge of the work was regarded as of paramount importance. Moreover, complete uniformity of work does not obtain in England, where two distinct schools perpetuate the work as taught by ancient masonic teachers of the first part of the last century.
- New Grand Lodges were formed in this country by the union of lodges chartered from different states and these unions gave rise to all sorts of combinations.
- Each jurisdiction, when it established a Grand Lodge, became independent and preserved its ritual as it had received it or made it over by way of compromise or worked it out, as a possession of its own.

On the other hand two unifying agencies had no little influence, namely, the ritual of the Baltimore Convention (1843) and the Webb tradition zealously propagated by Morris in the middle of the nineteenth century. This tradition and Morris's propaganda were made effective especially through the institution of Grand Lecturers or Grand Custodians of the Work, as they are variously called in our several jurisdictions. These agencies gradually stopped insensible variations in the rituals. But they also gradually stereotyped each local work and gave it permanency in the form in which the first local Grand Lecturer found it or made it. For the student of American masonic ritual soon comes to learn that profound changes have sometimes to be traced to the idiosyncrasies of masterful Grand Lecturers.

Looking at the causes of divergence in ritual more in detail, the chief points to note are that of the thirteen original states, some got their Masonry in the period of transition, from 1723 to 1738, in which ritual was formative, indeed one might even say fluid, and that the remainder got their ritual in the period of the great schism,¹ in which there were two contending Grand Lodges in England and hence two rival rituals.

First, then, as to organized Masonry in America prior to 1738. Here, at the outset, we are confronted with the phenomenon of what may be called spontaneous lodges. For it must be remembered that down to the beginning of the era of Grand Lodges in 1717 there was not the fixity of organization which now prevails. Any group of Masons, anywhere, were competent to congregate themselves in a lodge and work without warrant or charter. After the organization of the Grand Lodge of England it was some time before that body was able to establish itself as paramount and put an end to the practice of spontaneous lodges or turn the more stable of them into lodges existing from time immemorial. Hence, with great deference to the learned legal argument of our Most Worshipful Grand Master [Melvin M. Johnson, 1871-1957] in your *Proceedings* for 1914, it seems by no means clear historically that there is any other test of the legitimacy of a spontaneous lodge prior to 1738 than whether it succeeded, in common phrase, "in getting by." What compels us to take account of this phenomenon is the undoubted existence of what was evidently such a spontaneous lodge in Philadelphia as early as 1731, with existing records from 1731 to 1738. It is not unlikely that there were spontaneous lodges of this sort in Virginia also at an early date. And there are grounds for believing that in this Commonwealth the organized Masonry under authority of the Grand Lodge of England was preceded by spontaneous lodges of the same sort, which, however, did not become permanent because of the early setting up of a Grand Lodge.

The first institution of an organized masonic body in America, under authority of the English Grand Lodge, was, as you all know, the establishment of St. John's Grand Lodge in Boston in 1733. The St. John's Grand Lodge formed under the deputation of 1733 has been the great focus of Masonry in this country. In addition, organized Grand Lodge Masonry came into Georgia from England at some unknown date just prior to 1735; into Pennsylvania from Massachusetts in 1734; and into South Carolina from England in 1736 and from Massachusetts in 1738. Thus by 1738, in addition to spontaneous lodges of the old type in two or three of the colonies, the English Grand Lodge Masonry, which ultimately prevailed, had become established in four colonies including all but one of those in which spontaneous Masonry of the old type had appeared. But this period from 1723 to 1738, in which American Masonry had its beginnings, is a period of transition, a period of struggle on the part of the Grand Lodge of England for control of Masonry. It was not until 1738 that the days of the old seventeenth-

century type of lodge or assembly were definitely over; and the system of three degrees, as we now know it, seems to have been established during this same period.

All other masonic organizations in the thirteen colonies than those above referred to date from the period of the great schism¹ in which the so-called Ancients and so-called Moderns were contending, namely, 1747 to 1813. One need not say that the ritual of the two rival Grand Lodges was in its main outlines the same. Yet there were important differences of detail and notably the ritual of the so-called Ancients was much more ornate. In Massachusetts and in South Carolina there were both Ancient and Modern Grand Lodges under the authority of the English Ancient and Modern Grand Lodges respectively, and the existing Grand Lodges in those jurisdictions represent fusion of the rival Grand Bodies after the Revolution. In Pennsylvania there was a Provincial Grand Lodge of Ancients and there were lodges under the authority of the Moderns. The present Grand Lodge represents a fusion of these elements. In Virginia lodges of each type united to form the existing Grand Lodge.

But Massachusetts was a great center of dispersion before the fusion and Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia have been centers of dispersion of the first importance since the fusion. When it is remembered that the fusion of rituals took place in varying degrees in these different jurisdictions, an important cause of divergence will be readily perceived. It would take too long to go over the transplantation of Masonry to each of the original thirteen states in detail. Suffice it to say that of the four important centers of Masonic activity, Massachusetts, as a disseminator of Masonry represented chiefly the so-called Modern Masonry of the older English Grand Lodge, although Massachusetts Masonry of today is a fusion of Modern and Ancient elements; Pennsylvania and Virginia disseminated a fusion of the Modern and the Ancient; while North Carolina was a purely Modern jurisdiction, its Grand Lodge representing a union of Modern lodges some under English authority and some deriving from Massachusetts. It will be seen, therefore, that on the whole Modern influence preponderated in the origin of American Masonry.

A second group of jurisdictions represent the first movement of Masonry from the original foci in the thirteen colonies. These are Maine, which derives from Massachusetts since the fusion; Vermont, which derives from the Grand Lodge of Ancients in Massachusetts before the fusion; Ohio, which derives from Massachusetts, from Connecticut, a strictly Modern jurisdiction, and from Pennsylvania; Indiana, which derives from Ohio and from Kentucky, which latter represents Virginia after the fusion; Michigan, which derives from the Ancient Grand Lodge of Canada and from New York, which since the Revolution was a strictly Ancient jurisdiction; Kentucky, which derives from Virginia; Tennessee, which derives from North Carolina, a purely Modern jurisdiction; Alabama, which derives from North Carolina, from South Carolina, and from Tennessee; Mississippi, which derives from Kentucky and from Tennessee — thus representing Virginia and North Carolina; Louisiana, deriving from South Carolina, from Pennsylvania, and from France; Florida, deriving from Georgia and from South Carolina; Missouri, deriving from Pennsylvania and from Tennessee, representing, therefore, the fusion in Pennsylvania and the Modern Masonry of North Carolina; Illinois, deriving from Kentucky and so representing Virginia; and the District of Columbia, deriving from Maryland (a fusion of Modern Masonry from Massachusetts and from England direct with Ancient Masonry from Pennsylvania), and from Virginia.

In this group the noteworthy jurisdictions are Ohio and Missouri, which stand out as the great secondary centers of masonic dispersion.

A third group of states represents a further movement of Masonry westward, in which, as it were, the first-hand and second-hand English Masonry were fused in different degrees. These are, Wisconsin, deriving chiefly from Missouri; Minnesota, deriving from Ohio, Wisconsin, and Illinois; Iowa, deriving from Missouri but affected largely by the commanding authority of Parvin, raised in Ohio and a zealous advocate of uniform work; Arkansas, deriving from Tennessee and from Mississippi, and so resting ultimately on North Carolina and Virginia; Nebraska, deriving from Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa but much influenced by a Grand Custodian of the work from Ohio; Kansas, deriving from Missouri; and Oklahoma, deriving from Kansas, each therefore variants of a fusion of Pennsylvania and North Carolina; Texas, deriving from Louisiana; North and South Dakota, deriving from Minnesota and Nebraska; and a curious sub-group representing in varying degrees, directly or indirectly, Missouri and Ohio, namely, Montana, deriving from Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado; Wyoming, deriving from Nebraska and Colorado; Colorado, deriving from Kansas and Nebraska; and Utah, deriving from Montana, Kansas, and Colorado.

Fourth, a noteworthy group is to be seen on the Pacific coast. California received Masonry from the District of Columbia, from Connecticut, and from Missouri and formed a Grand Lodge as early in California history as 1850. This, it will be seen, represents a fusion of Connecticut, Missouri, and Virginia but under circumstances that gave rise to local peculiarities. Nevada, 1865, and Oregon, 1851, got their Masonry directly from California; and Washington, 1858, from California by way of Oregon. Summing this matter up, four types of jurisdiction in respect to masonic origin may be seen in the first group of states considered.

The Moderns are represented in varying degrees by New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, North Carolina, and Georgia. Of these New Hampshire and Rhode Island derive chiefly from the Massachusetts Grand Lodge of Moderns, although there were lodges of Ancients in each. Connecticut and North Carolina derive from the English Grand Lodge of Moderns and the Massachusetts Grand Lodge of Moderns, though the Massachusetts Grand Lodge of Ancients established Lodges in Connecticut. Georgia derives from England. The old Massachusetts St. John's Grand Lodge prior to the fusion, which had the chiefest share in this group, was the principal focus of Masonry in the United States and its influence especially through North Carolina and Virginia was predominant in giving to the beginnings of Masonry in this country a distinctively Modern character.

A second group represents the Ancients alone, namely, New York, where Masonry after the Revolution came from the English Grand Lodge of Ancients and New Jersey which derives from New York. This group has had little or no influence in spreading Masonry to other jurisdictions except as the Webb tradition was affected by the circumstance that he was raised in a Lodge chartered by the Ancients and his active work began in New York.

A third group represents a mixture of Ancient and Modern elements. In this class we must put the present Grand Lodge of Massachusetts where both elements came directly from England and the Grand Lodge of South Carolina where both elements came from England and both from Massachusetts. South Carolina has had some little influence in the further development of the work in this country, partly through direct propagation but more through the writings of Dr. Mackey.

A fourth group represents Ancient and Modern Masonry mixed with other elements. Notable in this group are Pennsylvania, which received both from Massachusetts and had also an unknown element; and Virginia, which received both from England and both from

Massachusetts but also has an unknown element. These states have had very great influence in the propagation of Masonry in the United States. Maryland, representing a mixture of the Modern derived from Massachusetts and from England, with Pennsylvania Masonry, has had a scintilla of influence; and Delaware, representing a mixture of the English Ancient Masonry with that in Pennsylvania, has had none at all.

Passing now to the second great group of states which was examined above, this may be divided into four subgroups. The first represents a predominant Modern influence. Here we may classify Ohio and what might be called the Ohio family of jurisdictions; the North Carolina element, in the great North Carolina-Pennsylvania family; and Tennessee, which received Masonry directly from North Carolina, a truly Modern jurisdiction, and to some extent spread Masonry in the states to the north and west. In the second sub-group we may put Michigan which has had no great influence in propagating Masonry. In the third sub-group we may put Maine, Vermont, and Florida which represent a fusion of Ancient and Modern Masonry; Maine and Vermont through the present Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, Florida through a fusion of lodges established by Georgia and by South Carolina. In a fourth sub-group we have Ancient and Modern mixed with other elements. This is represented by the Pennsylvania element in the North Carolina-Pennsylvania family and in what might be called the Missouri sub-family, and the Virginia element in Kentucky, Illinois, and in the California family.

With respect to the third class of states as taken up above we may note, first, what I have already called the North Carolina-Pennsylvania family, in which we have a mixture of a predominating Modern element with one made up of a fusion with the Ancient and Modern. Second, the Missouri sub-group of this North Carolina-Pennsylvania family, namely, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, and Oklahoma, and what might be called a Missouri-Ohio variant in Idaho, Montana, Colorado, and Utah. Third, a derived group from the two former, with some admixture from without. In this group Ohio has been a strong influence. Here again the pedigree is preponderatingly Modern. Minnesota, Nebraska, and the Dakotas are to be included in this group.

Finally, there is the California family, predominantly Modern in pedigree but mixed with a fusion of the Ancient and Modern, namely, California, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.

Putting this in a different way which may bring the situation out more clearly, the Ancient element by derivation predominates in New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Michigan. It was the stronger element in the fusion in Massachusetts, and is notable in Maine, Vermont, South Carolina, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

There is a secondary Ancient element in what might be called the Virginia family, Kentucky, Illinois, and the Virginia element in the California family. Also there has been a slight Ancient element through Pennsylvania in the North Carolina-Pennsylvania family.

The Modern element by derivation predominates in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, North Carolina, Georgia, and Ohio. It is a large element by derivation in the Ohio family, in the North Carolina-Pennsylvania family, and hence in the Missouri sub-family, as it might be called, and in the California family. On the whole, if no other factors than derivation had been at work, American Masonry would have been more nearly the Modern Masonry of

eighteenth-century England than the English Masonry of today in which the more elaborate and ornate ceremonial of the Ancients was largely substituted.

We have seen that one prime cause of divergence in ritual is that the ritual was transmitted orally from different masonic centers and in these centers often represented fusions of different rituals. Next we must note that even in these centers themselves ritual was not fixed in the modern sense till later. Our present-day conception of letter-perfect knowledge of a ritual whose every word is fixed and settled down to the dotting of i's and crossing of t's has its origin at the end of the eighteenth century when the supremacy of Grand Lodges had been incontestably established and each of the rival Grand Lodges had its definite ritual. In large measure we owe this conception to Preston, who labored diligently for precision and uniformity in the lectures. From the lectures it spread to the work at large, and exact memorizing of every detail word for word became a masonic virtue. We now take this to be a matter of course. But that it was not a matter of course at one time is shown by the case of Dr. Oliver. Oliver's father was Master of a lodge at Peterborough in 1801. He was remarkable, as all contemporary accounts testify, for minute and exact knowledge of the ritual. That this, which we expect of every Master today, as it were *ex officio*, was remarkable in 1801, speaks for itself. But it is even more significant that Oliver, who was trained carefully by his father to this same letter-perfect knowledge, was himself thought remarkable and had something to do by his example and by his writings (especially his identification of the Landmarks with the ritual) in establishing the doctrine that it is the duty of the bright Mason to know his work word for word.

If as late as 1801 Masons who were letter-perfect were remarkable even among Masters of lodges, it must be apparent that the work brought to the several jurisdictions in America from the same Grand Lodge in England at different times and by different persons must have differed in its details. It must be apparent also that the work which spread from different masonic centers in the new world at different times and by the agency of different persons likewise varied more or less in important details. Thus from 1733 to 1770 the Modern Grand Lodge of Massachusetts had established lodges in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. We have good reason to suspect that the details did not reach each of these jurisdictions precisely the same. Indeed there is reason to believe that letter-perfect Masons were at least as rare here as they were in England at the same time and there was no central agency of control in this country. It is obvious, therefore, that derivation from the same source in the eighteenth century does not at all guarantee uniformity of ritual. As Preston and his followers made it the correct thing in England to know the ritual accurately, so Webb, who shares with Albert Pike the distinction of being the great American ritualist, made critical attention to detail the correct thing in America. Webb's work was done between 1797 and 1819, and it was not till about 1825 that thorough, critical, literal knowledge of the work came to be appreciated. Indeed a generation later the revival fostered by Morris found more than one jurisdiction in a condition where every lodge was largely a law to itself in this respect. But before 1825 Masonry had so spread that Grand Lodges had been set up in Maine, Vermont, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Missouri, Illinois, and the District of Columbia. Some of these new jurisdictions, such as Ohio and Missouri, were themselves active agents in propagating Masonry. In other words, the secondary centers of Masonry in the United States had become established before fixity of ritual in every detail had been put upon a firm basis, and these centers to some extent fixed their ritual parallel to and along with the

older centers. Consequently when jurisdictions of the third generation, as it were, derive from the same center of the second generation, it does not follow that they got exactly the same ritual—and this quite apart from the inevitable changes involved in oral transmission. Those who carried Masonry across the continent in the forepart of the nineteenth century were much more concerned with the substance than with the form. Oral transmission will account for the interchange of the good archaic “wittingly” and the more intelligible “willingly,” which is so common. But it will not account entirely for the interchange of “wayfaring man” and “seafaring man,” which is no less common, or for the almost complete lack of accord in the details of the search by the Craftsmen which a study of American ritual will reveal. As to these one may only say that those who transmitted the ceremonial knew the general character of the plot that was to be acted and more or less of the details of the dialogue. But they had not learned and very likely had not felt bound to learn every word of the dialogue so as to give its details precisely the same on every occasion. Thus we get another basis of divergence. Even after the work came into a new place there was no assurance at that time that it would be transmitted exactly as it was received.

To sum up the foregoing discussion:

- (1) The work received in different parts of this country from England at different times was not necessarily the same and must often have varied considerably;
- (2) the work transmitted from the same masonic center in this country to different places at different times, particularly in the eighteenth century, and to some extent in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, was not always the same and often differed in important details;
- (3) the work when so received did not remain exactly as received, but, with the lax modes of work and lax modes of transmission which prevailed so widely until the influence of Webb, of the Baltimore Convention, and of Morris made for strictness and accuracy, wide fluctuation in detail was possible and even common.

Accordingly when the system of Grand Lecturers became established a great deal depended on the individual views of those who first held these offices and the extent to which they could induce Grand Lodges to go with them. Unhappily many zealous brothers who held office as Grand Lecturers were extremely dogmatic and sought to improve the ritual on *a priori* or analytical grounds rather than to ascertain just what had been received.

But, it will be said, the foregoing will account for changes in a word or phrase here and there and even for changes in the tenor of the dialogue. But it will hardly account for such wide divergences as those in the modes of recognition, in the officers of the lodge, and in the mode of opening and closing. To understand these wide divergences, we have to bear in mind that the standardizing of the ritual in the last half of the eighteenth century involved making a great deal as well as selecting and standardizing. The acting of the ritual, instead of merely communicating it, as a regular thing, involved not merely a settling of details, but a manufacture of details. What this means may be illustrated if you compare the drama of the third degree, as told in the lecture in that degree, in almost any of our jurisdictions, with the actual ceremony as acted in the same jurisdiction.

We must turn to history for an explanation. The evidence of the old *Charges* and the evidence of seventeenth century accounts of those who, having been made Masons, recorded the fact in their diaries, show pretty clearly that the ordinary course in the seventeenth century

was to communicate the whole of Masonry at one sitting. There were at most “parts” of one ceremony rather than separate degrees with separate ceremonies. These parts go back to a prior ritual of two parts — (1) reception of the apprentice; (2) passing or raising this apprentice to a fellow of the craft or master. The most plausible hypothesis on all the evidence seems to be that the two degrees of Entered Apprentice and Fellowcraft as we now know them, represent a division into two of the Apprentice’s part, while the Master Mason degree and the Royal Arch or Elect and Perfect Mason (according to the rite chosen) — *i.e.*, the communication of the true word — represent a division of the Master’s part — of that part, which, when received, made one a fully qualified Mason. In the seventeenth century we have abundant evidence that all this was commonly done at once — and that it was done not by acting out all the details, but rather in the way in which the higher degrees are often communicated today — by obligating the candidates, explaining the words, passes, and modes of recognition, and reading over the old *Charges* to him, with the Legend of the Craft and what we should now call the Lectures.

Even after the revival, for a long time this mode of working seems to have obtained. Thus in Dr. Stukeley’s diary under head of January 6, 1721, he tells us that he was made a Mason on that day and that he was the first who had been made for many years. His diary adds: “We had great difficulty in finding members enough to perform the ceremony.” If in 1721, four years after the revival, with four lodges and a Grand Lodge in London, it was hard to find members enough who knew the ritual well enough to communicate the whole to Dr. Stukeley at one sitting, it must be evident that the Grand Lodge had to settle a great deal authoritatively, along settled lines, it is true, but without settled details to guide it. The oft-cited testimony of the old brother who told Dermott that Payne (second Grand Master), Desaguliers, and others were the inventors of Modern Masonry may well have some foundation in this — that they fixed for the Modern Grand Lodge what prior thereto was only fixed in its general lines. Thus we may understand how it comes that the three degrees of Craft Masonry the world over follow the same general lines and yet differ so widely in all the details. But to come back to the system of degrees: I can only summarize the evidence. The first point is that the absence of uniformity as to degrees is very clear during the whole period down to 1738. The Grand Lodge records show that it disciplined where it could, exhorted where it was not expedient to discipline, and sought to produce uniformity by example, while its own practice was still fluid and formative. In the next place, there is no clear mention of three degrees down to 1730, and even that year, in the defence of Martin Clare to the attacks upon the Grand Lodge in Prichard’s *Masonry Dissected*, it is assumed as a matter of course that there were but two degrees. All the prior literature, *e.g.*, Anderson’s *Constitutions* of 1723 and Drake’s speech at York in 1726, as well as the old *Charges*, speak of two degrees, Apprentice, or after 1723, Entered Apprentice, and Fellowcraft or (not and) Master. That Fellowcraft and Master were synonyms at that time seems absolutely established by lodge records, contemporary allusions, and the whole masonic literature of the time. There were two “parts” as they were called, (1) the Apprentice Part, and (2) the Master’s Part. The latter was often omitted as a formal ceremony and the secrets simply communicated, as is done so often in our higher degrees today. Not, let us remember, that any part of the substance of the three degrees is new. The antiquity of every part of each degree is as well established as the fact that there was a change in the mode of working them. What has been shown is that between 1723 and 1738 there grew up a “new way of communicating the old secrets” by splitting the Apprentice Part in two, appropriating to one part the name of Entered Apprentice and to the other that of Fellowcraft, and giving to the Master’s Part the degree of Master Mason. The first record of

this in Scotland is in 1735, and many Scotch lodges long after continued in the old way, as their records show. In Ireland, it came in in 1738 in the wake of the second edition of Anderson's *Constitutions*. In England, it was recognized by Anderson in 1738 as fully established, although Clare in 1730 used the old phrases. Somewhere in those eight years the practice in England became settled.

Let me repeat — all this does not cast the least doubt on the antiquity of the Master's degree or, as it used to be called, the Master's Part. It simply means that the exact details of the ceremony by which different Grand Lodges in different parts of the world now require the degree to be conferred were fixed somewhere between 1723 and for the newer American Grand Lodges sometimes even later. As to the antiquity of the degree itself, I can only refer you to the discussion by Ball in *5 Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, p. 136. Ball's discussion seems to show clearly not only that what we now know as the third degree existed long before the era of Grand Lodges, but that, to use another's words "having passed through a long decline, its symbols had been corrupted and their meaning to a great extent forgotten when the degree itself—then known as the Master's Part — was first unequivocally referred to in any print or manuscript to which a date can be assigned — *i.e.*, 1723." Unhappily those who wrought for a certain ritual in the second half of the eighteenth century did not have the learning to restore these symbols, to undo these corruptions, or to avoid further corruptions or confusions of their own. And in like manner in American Masonry we have, for like reason, developed some further corruptions and confusions of our own. Some of these are traceable to known sources, as for example, the monument in the lecture of the third degree, which is an unhappy anachronism of Webb's. The well-merited criticisms of Albert Pike in the first three lectures of his *Morals and Dogma*, though based wholly upon considerations of scientific symbolism, have proved to be entirely borne out by the history of the symbols of Craft Masonry as subsequent writers have been able to work it out.

If it took so long to standardize the degrees, to determine that the work was to be done in three degrees and to fix the details of each, it was not to be expected that matters of less importance should get fixed before the era of local Grand Lodges, each with full sovereignty over all details. Accordingly many things passed into permanent subjects of dispute which might well have been settled at least for the whole English-speaking Craft if there could have been a union of Ancients and Moderns in England prior to the Revolution or if the Revolution had not put an end to the hegemony of the Grand Lodges of England and left our several American Grand Lodges to settle so many things each for itself and each in its own way.

One striking example is to be seen in the grand honors — "Those peculiar acts and gestures by which the Craft express their homage, their grief or their joy on important occasions." It is common to lay down — *e.g.*, Mackey so states — that the grand honors are of two kinds, the private and the public. He then tells us that "the private grand honors of Masonry are performed in a manner known only to Master Masons, since they can only be used in a Master's Lodge. They are practised by the Craft," he goes on, only on four occasions: When a masonic hall is to be consecrated, a new lodge to be constituted, a Master-elect to be installed, or a Grand Master or his Deputy to be received on an official visitation to a lodge. They are used at all these ceremonies," he adds, "as tokens of congratulation and homage." He then proceeds to describe minutely the public grand honors or as some call them the funeral honors and to explain when they are given.

All this sounds clear and convincing as he expounds it. But there are several things to remark about it:

- In many Grand Lodges homage to the Grand Master is done by making the signs of the degrees.
- In some jurisdictions the signs of the degrees are reckoned the private grand honors.
- In some jurisdictions the three times three to which Mackey evidently refers are considered public grand honors.
- Some notable jurisdictions deny that there are any public and private grand honors respectively.

The American distinction which Mackey discusses is quite unknown to the United Grand Lodge of England. But the ceremony of the raising of the hands and beating of the breast which Mackey describes took place at the masonic funeral of James Anderson in 1739, as we learn from a newspaper of the day. The reporter was impressed very much by what he saw and described it carefully. There are jurisdictions, however, in which quite another mode is used on this occasion instead.

Here we have a case where the practice was not settled and each jurisdiction had to determine its own course. Probably Webb's *Monitor* and Mackey's *Encyclopedia* made for uniformity and influenced more than one of our jurisdictions.

Many such cases might be cited. But perhaps I have said enough to make my point. A useful parallel might be drawn from American law. After the Revolution we received the common law of England as the foundation of American law. But the common law of England was still formative on many most important points. *E.g.*, the reception of the law merchant was not complete till some time thereafter. Lord Mansfield had still many years before him in his work of turning the custom of merchants into the common law. Again, the crystallization of equity, begun so well by Lord Hardwicke in the eighteenth century, was not complete till the long chancellorship of Lord Eldon in the first decade of the nineteenth century and James Kent in New York was able to divide the honor with him. Thus the fixing of the common law went on parallel in England and America for a generation after the Revolution and we worked out many things in our own way and many of our states worked out the same things in different ways. The same thing happened in Masonry. We received the English Masonry of the eighteenth century as the foundation. But English Masonry as we received it was not a fixed and fully developed system at every point. In more than one place it was still formative and when we broke off our masonic allegiance along with our political allegiance after 1776 that great unifying agency, Preston's *Illustrations*, was but fairly off the press. Thus we did much parallel with English Masonry, in the way of fixing the details. Each of our Grand Lodges has had to some extent to work out in its own way the dialogue and the setting of the noble story which the Middle Ages handed down to the eighteenth century and the latter century endeavored to reconstruct and restore from the corruptions of a long era of communication rather than working — of reading or describing rather than acting.

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1. Note debunking of schism theory: Henry Sadler, *Masonic Facts and Fictions*, London : Diprose & Bateman, 1887.