

The Meaning and Origin of the Royal Arch

by

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In this paper I would like to face up to one of the difficulties which confronts every Research Lodge, one in fact that we encounter so often in the Craft. It is this. When we set out to instruct and educate, we find ourselves “preaching to the converted”. Our addresses in Craft Lodges on the meaning and philosophy of Masonry, are delivered to those who know something of it through their attendance at Lodge. We should in fact, be talking to those who are absent, the back-sliders and non-attenders who so badly need a stiffening of their Masonic backbone and an indoctrination with the real principles of the Craft.

With all this in mind I have sought for a subject which is not normally treated in Craft Lodges, or available to those who have not gone beyond the Master Mason’s Degree. I want to speak to you on the subject of Royal Arch Masonry, its history, its importance, and as far as can be done in this Degree, its meaning. For Masonic education, to be at all complete, must include a study of the Royal Arch, and those who truly seek to spread the Masonic gospel should be armed with a knowledge of this supreme and ancient Order of the Craft.

Some of you who listen to me tonight or who read this paper later, will be active Royal Arch Masons. To you I say that the more you know of this all important branch of the Craft, the better you will be equipped to translate the full meaning of Masonry in your own lives and in those of others.

Others among you may have taken your Chapter Degrees and thereafter have lost interest in them. If that is the case, I hope I can help you to realise a little of what you are missing.

Still others there will be who for some reason have never taken the Chapter Degrees. I can only say in your case that, by accident or design, you have missed the innermost teachings and the ultimate meaning of our Craft.

The three Craft Degrees do of course contain a vast, in fact almost a never ending field for the Masonic student. They give him a complete code of moral conduct with which to face the trials and tribulations of life. In other words they teach him how to live with himself and his fellow men and to use to the full advantage of humanity, the talents with which he has been blest. They show him, in short, how to live a better life.

The Meaning of the Degrees of Freemasonry

Let us look for a moment at each of the three degrees.

The First, traditionally, represents our Masonic birth. It shows the Candidate coming into a Lodge for the first time, a rough ashlar direct from the quarries of life. Rough he is indeed, yet still an ashlar selected as fitted for the refining processes of Freemasonry, a stone sound at core which can therefore be chipped and dressed into the final polished form of the perfect ashlar.

The task of the First Degree, then, is to show, the Candidate the tools whereby he can gradually bring about that transition from rough to perfect, a task which will take him a full lifetime of endeavour and will not be completed this side of the grave. The tools he is given are the rules of moral conduct and good living which come to us in the W.T.’s, the address in the N.E. Corner, and above all in the Charge after Initiation.

So, having been given the tools, he passes to the Second Degree and there learns of his responsibility to use his every endeavour and smallest talent to pursue the lessons of the First Degree. As the First was his Masonic birth, so the Second is his Masonic life and in the central symbolism of the W.T.’s, he finds the lessons of perseverance and struggle which alone can carry him safely through the pitfalls of life. The Parable

of the Talents, and his duty to use to the full the gifts wherewith he has been blessed, are ever before him in the teachings of the Second Degree.

He comes then to the Third, the most difficult of the three degrees to understand. I believe it is often misunderstood as being a death and resurrection Degree, teaching us, in the words of the Ritual, "how to die". I suggest to you that it is nothing of the sort but that, like all Masonic teaching its meaning is symbolic.

It does not teach the reality of actual death and what comes after but rather a figurative death, followed by that reunion with our brethren of which the Ritual speaks. This figurative death is no more than the death of our former selves and a rebirth into that better and finer state which a proper attention to the lessons of the first two degrees has taught. Our rough ashlar is becoming smooth as, phoenix-like, we rise from the ashes of our former selves into that state of refinement and nearer perfection which is the aim of Craft Masonry. We are taught to do better, during our lives, the things that all men must do. But I repeat, it is the things of *this life* with which Craft Masonry is concerned. Nothing is taught of our responsibilities beyond that point except the essential requirement that we must believe in the Deity and look to Him for comfort and support. No enlargement of this duty appears and the O.G. is only symbolic. A careful study of the Light of a Master Mason will support that claim.

Think now for a moment of your ritual. The brethren go forth in search of the genuine secrets of a Master Mason. In other words they seek an answer to the riddle and mystery of life. Are they successful in finding it? We all know they are not. Far from anything so fundamental, they achieve only a set of moral rules, represented in concise form by the F.P.O.F.

This is the point at which the inadequacy, or perhaps more properly the incompleteness of the Craft degrees becomes apparent. Surely the search of Masonry is for something far deeper and more enduring than that. After all Confucius, and a long line of moral philosophers since his day, have given us sound moral precepts and have done it satisfactorily with none of the secret and symbolic methods of teaching that Masonry adopts. If that were all we sought, our organisation would fall far short of what is sensible and reasonable.

No, Brethren, there are far greater and wider truths to be had in Freemasonry, and they come to us not in the Craft or preparatory degrees, but in the final and Supreme Degree, that of the Holy Royal Arch. Holy it is and rightly called and the lessons it teaches will give us no substituted secrets. For when the supreme moment of the Royal Arch Degree is reached, Freemasonry has fully and completely justified its existence. The genuine secrets of the whole Craft are at last laid bare and we see before our eyes its final lessons and its ultimate teachings. In the Craft degrees we learn of our brotherly duty to our neighbour; in the Royal Arch we are surely instructed in our final duty towards our God. How can we, as true Freemasons, satisfy ourselves with less than that?

Pure Antient Masonry

Such then is the symbolic aspect of this all important question. Let us now consider the official view of the Craft itself.

The mother Grand Lodge of England found it desirable, at the union of the two Grand lodges of the Antients and the Moderns in 1813, to establish for all time a firm basis for future working. To this end it declared that for its purposes, pure antient Masonry consisted "of three degrees and no more; viz., those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch".

This I suggest is a most significant statement, one made at the very time when degrees were being woven into their final form and when the foundations of modern Speculative Freemasonry were being established. The wise men of the day who, with infinite tact and wisdom, had accomplished the seemingly impossible and welded the two warring factions of the Craft into an harmonious and purposeful whole, had a clear picture of the Craft and its degrees and did not doubt that the Royal Arch was part of "pure antient masonry". To them it ranked with the three Craft degrees, not as an extra degree but only an Order and

therefore part of and not additional to them. Thus to the Grand Lodge of England the Royal Arch did not appear as a separate unit but as an essential part of the whole Craft picture and such it has remained to them to this day.

When the Grand Lodge of New Zealand was formed in 1890 the approach was a little different. The main principle was adopted in that the Royal Arch group of degrees were given official recognition along with the Craft degrees as comprising “pure antient Masonry”, but they were granted official standing as separate degrees with us. This means they were not merged as part of the Craft degrees but stood separate and alone—a natural development of the seventy-seven years of Masonic usage since 1813.

The decision of 1890 was in due course confirmed in our Book of Constitution and is now set out in Rule 326. The years since 1890 have seen a proper consolidation of the principle. The pure antient Masonry we work in New Zealand is therefore now well established as comprising both Craft and Royal Arch degrees and there appears no likelihood of any change in the foreseeable future.

Whence Came Our Royal Arch?

Let us now look at this question of “pure antient Masonry” in an endeavour to discover the true origins of the Royal Arch. The term “pure antient Masonry” was used at the Union of 1813 and apparently was meant to infer that the Royal Arch had subsisted from time immemorial as was claimed also for the Craft degrees. But it is well known that the Third Degree came only after 1720 and certainly no Royal Arch Degree was being worked for some years after that date. Only the First and Second Degrees existed, and were worked either separately or together, which, is not clear. The Hiram legend was specially written, probably in the main by Dr. Anderson, with the intention of giving more substance and appeal to the Speculative Craft. The decade 1720 to 1730 saw this new Third Degree established though not yet widely worked.

The Royal Arch development followed on the heels of the Third Degree though it was apparently not until the decade 1740 to 1750 that it began to take substance. This does not dispose of the possibility that some aspects of both Third Degree and Royal Arch teachings may have come into the work of the lodges during earlier years, but in that case, they would have been very elementary and certainly H.A.B. would not have appeared. Should this be so, then both Third Degree and Royal Arch can be said to come down from time immemorial but the case is, at best, a very thin one. As far as the Royal Arch is concerned, I can only say that Masonic researches have so far been quite unable to discover any evidence to support the claim. I suggest it is far more likely that it developed and came to maturity in the second quarter of the century.

It is a fact of course that prior to 1717 the Craft was Christian in character, having inherited the Christian approach from the old MS. Charges, even back to the 14th century. Owing to the disturbed social conditions in England at the time and the violent disagreements that developed on religious issues, the new Grand Lodge found it desirable to de-Christianise the degrees, requiring instead only a belief in the GA. This minimum belief was eventually set out in the old “Charges of a Freemason” which appear today in our Book of Constitution and require that a man “believe only in the glorious Architect of heaven and earth and practice the sacred duties of morality”. Thus a belief in God was substituted for the antient Christian belief, and we can well imagine that many ardent Christians would have regretted sincerely the removal of their beliefs from the ritual. So serious may this have been in their minds that they may well have cast about for ways of retaining Christianity in their Masonry, even though it was forbidden to them in the three Craft Degrees. This is where the Royal Arch appears to have provided the bridge.

There is little doubt that early Royal Arch working was Christian in character and for many years it showed a definitely Christian aspect. Old Testament stories wholly Jewish and dating back considerably before Christ, were woven together with events which came long after the Christian era. In fact it was not until the ritual revisions of the early 19th century that these Christian elements were substantially removed, though not completely. Today, I believe, there exist Chapters which still use the opening verse of the Gospel according to St. John instead of similar Old Testament verses with which Royal Arch Masons are well acquainted. Even St. John’s words however, were not essentially Christian as they are known to have come to him from pre-Christian days.

I cannot carry this question any further in this paper but merely seek to establish the fact that while the Craft ritual was de-Christianised in the 1720's, the earliest Royal Arch ritual of which we have any knowledge was definitely Christian. My assumption is that it was not developed until the 1740's and was intended to provide for the needs of those Christians in the Craft who most actively regretted the action of the new Grand Lodge in de-Christianising the Craft degrees.

If this theory is tenable, it is clear that the Royal Arch ritual dates back no further than about the fourth decade of the century, and even if some of its elements should have come down from the previous century, they could have been no more than ideas that were put into shape between 1740 and 1750. Certain it is that by this latter date, the Royal Arch was in existence in England and records remain of early workings at that time.

Unfortunately those records do not go so far as to show how mature the early Royal Arch ceremonies were but it is fairly certain that they were being worked in the Craft Lodges themselves, possibly at Sunday Meetings and later open only to those who had "passed the Chair". This means of course that only Past Masters, or those who had been given the virtual Chair degree, could then take the Royal Arch Degree, a practice which continued for a good many years.

There were at that time around London, a number of "Masters Lodges", the functions of which are far from clear. It does seem though that they were set up to work the Third Degree rather than the Royal Arch as has been sometimes suggested. The position would apparently have been something like this; the new Third Degree, which had been written by Dr. Anderson and others soon after 1720, would at first be unknown outside a very small circle. Only they would be familiar with the ritual; only they could have seen it worked. No lodge of Promulgation such as we had in London in the next century had been established to demonstrate officially the new working. Thus it would have been beyond the capacity of the ordinary Lodges to exemplify it and for some years they would have confined themselves to the first two degrees.

This is apparently where the Masters Lodges came in. Most of the Lodges at first continued to work only the First and Second Degrees, but a few set up Masters Lodges, complementary or supplementary to the main Lodge and designed to work the Third Degree. Only "Masters" knew the legend and could attend and so the Masters Lodges came to have a somewhat different identity from the parent Lodge. At first, the Masters were comparatively few in number and the majority were still only Second Degree Masons, but by the fourth decade more and more brethren became qualified in the Third Degree and it was worked as part of the activity of the ordinary Lodges. By 1740 they would have taken over completely.

The Masters Lodges, with no real work left for them, thereupon disappeared for a number of years. I have found no indication that in those early years they had anything to do with the Royal Arch, though what happened in the Masters Lodges which appeared later in the century, may be quite another matter. One thing is however certain and that is, that in the early years there were many Christian survivals in Lodge working and it is possible that Christian ritual references in the Masters Lodges could have been the real forerunners of the Royal Arch.

It should be said in passing that the Royal Arch was being worked in America by 1753 and in fact the earliest actual minute of such a working has come to us from America. There seems nothing to suggest however that Royal Arch originated there. Apparently Ireland had it some time before this and records mention it before 1744.

Antients and Moderns

A strange chapter in our Royal Arch history now develops, one that may have held it back for many years and which became a point of acute difference between the two opposing factions.

All Masonic students are familiar with the struggle that arose between the Antients and the Moderns from the 1750's until the turn of the century.

The original Grand Lodge had made undoubted progress but by the middle of the century there were still many unattached Lodges which went their own way and ruled their own affairs. A new factor appeared when the Irish famine of 1727-1740 resulted in many poorer Irishmen moving to England and in particular to

London. Here some of them banded together to form their own Lodges on the Irish pattern and working the ceremonies as they knew them. By 1751, five such Lodges totalling 80 brethren, Lodges which had not attached themselves to the old Grand Lodge, formed themselves into a Grand Committee and two years later were calling themselves a Grand Lodge.

Thus was born a second and rival Grand Lodge which soon found itself violently opposed to the first. Under its very capable and active Grand Secretary, Laurence Dermott, an Irish Mason who had come to London from Dublin, it set out to preserve ancient customs and landmarks which it claimed were not being observed by the older Grand Lodge. To the latter it gave the name of the Moderns, and, claiming its own workings to be the original ceremonies of the Craft, called itself the Antients.

One of the points of variance was the Royal Arch Degree. The Moderns developed an official antipathy towards it and refused to have anything to do with it. The Antients on the other hand considered it of the greatest value, in fact one of the “time immemorial” ceremonies of the Craft, the Very root, heart and marrow as they called it, of their Masonry. As a result, it became the fourth official degree in their Craft Lodges and as soon as they had properly established themselves, it was worked consistently. With this extra attraction, their Grand Lodge, formed in 1753, in due course obtained a very useful selling point to encourage candidates to join the Antients instead of the Moderns in order to obtain the Royal Arch Degree.

Furthermore, as both Ireland and Scotland had become interested in the Royal Arch, for this and other reasons they found themselves on much more friendly terms with the Antients than with the Moderns. Clearly the situation which was developing could not have been to the liking of the Moderns, and some of their early initiative was slipping away from them.

This did not, however, throw them into the arms of the Royal Arch—far from it. Their attitude was well summed up in the words of their Grand Secretary in 1759 when he declared that the Society of the Moderns was “neither Arch, Royal Arch, or Antient”. To this view they adhered and the Royal Arch was not officially allowed in the Craft Lodges of the Moderns. The tide was, however, beginning to set in favour of the Royal Arch, and a compromise was forced upon them, one which enabled the Grand Lodge to preserve its traditional attitude and yet allowed its members to enjoy the privilege of the Royal Arch. In 1766 Lord Blayney, Grand Master of the Moderns, issued what was termed a Charter of Compact, setting up a separate Grand Chapter, operating in harmony with the Grand Lodge of the Moderns, and working the Royal Arch Degree in independent and specially constituted Chapters.

In this way the Moderns made it possible for their members to be exalted in the Royal Arch Degree, but ensured that Grand Lodge itself had nothing to do with it. It is recorded by Bernard Jones that the Grand Secretary in 1767 officially wrote as follows:

“The Royal Arch is a Society which we do not acknowledge and which we hold to be an invention to introduce innovation and to seduce the brethren.” Yet that same Grand Secretary had himself been exalted the previous year and remained an active Royal Arch Mason!

The next move was now in the hands of the Antients. Their advantage over the Moderns was gradually slipping away with the formation of the Moderns’ Grand Chapter in 1766 and they decided, perforce, that they too must have a Grand Chapter. With them, however, the situation was different. They liked and respected the Royal Arch and had no need to keep it at arms length. Instead of forming a separate Grand Chapter they nominated Grand Lodge to be also a Grand Chapter and the two bodies were virtually indistinguishable. Indeed their Grand Chapter as such had little substance, kept virtually no minutes and ruled no separate chapters, for with the Antients, the Royal Arch was still being worked in the Lodges themselves. This did not mean that the Royal Arch did not prosper with them for the Lodges may well have produced more candidates for the Degree than separate Chapters would have done. It did mean though that the Grand Chapter was little more than a name, had no real work and little authority.

About this time a small number of Masters Lodges made their re-appearance under the Moderns. It is not very clear what they did and certainly they would not have worked the three Craft degrees, as the Craft Lodges were by now quite capable of working the Third Degree themselves. It has been suggested that the Royal Arch was their main activity but no evidence of this has been produced. It seems more likely that they

conferred the Chair Degree, "Passing the Chair", which was a qualification for the Royal Arch with the Antients and which became increasingly in favour with the Moderns.

In any case, Masters Lodges disappeared by the time of the Union, and so ceased to be a factor. The Antients had never used them, though they continued to insist on the Chair qualification long after the Moderns had ceased to do so. The qualification was formally removed by decision of the United Grand Lodge in 1823, though it was some time before it became completely obsolete.

The Union

As the century moved to its close, the Royal Arch continued to evoke admiration and affection from the Antients but disapproval from the Grand Lodge of the Moderns. To a degree this was still the situation in 1813 when the Union of the two Grand Lodges took place, and as a result the Union seems to have left the Royal Arch out on a limb, an orphan and nobody's responsibility. Even when a United Grand Chapter was inevitably formed in 1817 with the official support of the United Grand Lodge, the situation was not much better and for years there was little enthusiasm or efficiency in its work. The Royal Arch for some time remained the Cinderella Degree, and it was not until the nineteenth century was almost half gone that administrative troubles began to disappear and the Royal Arch was really put on a sound basis.

In Ireland and in Scotland the Degree developed at about the same time as in England, though the Irish and Scottish Grand Lodges, like the Moderns, were both averse to it. This is a strange situation when we remember that it was the Antients, the Royal Arch lovers, and not the Moderns, who were friendly with Ireland and Scotland. However, the situation changed in both countries and the Royal Arch overcame early disfavour to make substantial progress. By the end of the eighteenth century it was being substantially worked in both jurisdictions. Official recognition and organisation followed much later than in England, but came eventually and the degree was finally launched in its present forms.

The last hundred years have seen remarkable progress and today it is a flourishing and I believe an essential part of the Craft, both here and under the three Mother Constitutions.

Conclusion

The modern organisation of the Royal Arch degrees is a study much too large for this address. I can do no more than mention the wide field of interesting and instructive degree work which is available in New Zealand to a Royal Arch Mason. Not only does he take part in the working of the three degrees of the Royal Arch group, the Mark, the Excellent and the Royal Arch itself, all thoroughly absorbing and completely different from the three Craft degrees, but he can in addition take the various side degrees that are worked in the Royal Arch Chapters. These are the Royal Ark Mariner and the Red Cross of Babylon, the latter comprising three different sections or points. Finally the Cryptic degrees, worked by Cryptic Councils under the control of Grand Chapter, are available only to Royal Arch Masons.

Truly this is a rich field for one who likes and understands beautiful and symbolic ritual.

Important progress was made in New Zealand when the Royal Arch Chapter of Research was formed. Yet its transactions are available only to Royal Arch Masons and not to those who have progressed no further than the Craft degrees.

This simple explanation of Royal Arch history and meaning is intended for those Master Masons who have not yet grasped the joy and privilege of becoming Royal Arch Masons.

I hope it will encourage some to do so.

COMMENTARY

R.W. Bro. V. F. Howell, Prov. G.M.: I would like to con- gratulate V.W. Bro. Glenie on the paper which he has given tonight. Some of you may think it is unusual to talk about the Royal Arch in a Craft Lodge but as he has explained it is part of the Craft degrees and is endorsed by Grand Lodge. As you know there is no prohibition against soliciting candidates for Royal Arch but I would advise you brethren, that if you are going to solicit, you select those whom you think will be genuinely interested, because as in the Blue, in the Royal Arch we have those who come in and fade away again. Why that is I don't know; it is rather hard to understand. You can perhaps understand a brother taking the blue degrees and finding that it doesn't suit him but when he has taken the three degrees in the Blue he knows that Freemasonry is about, or has a fair idea, and I can't quite understand why he goes on taking further degrees if he is not interested enough to continue his active membership of it. You very often hear this in the R.A. The candidate is told that the R.A. is not so formal as the Blue and the result is to make him think "Oh well, it's all the better for that." Perhaps in a way this is alright, but I think it can be carried too far, in that he thinks, well, it doesn't matter and in some the ceremonies are not worked well. I think that is fatal, because if the ceremonies are not worked well it does not impress the candidate or the brethren or comp. who are listening to it and perhaps that could be one reason why they don't continue with it. You see that, unfortunately, in a lot of cases in the R.A. degrees, they *are* not so efficiently worked as are the first three degrees. I think that is a great pity, so if there are any 1st P. here tonight I would put that forward.

V.W. Bro. C. E. Tanner: I would like Bro. Glenie on his very interesting lecture. It is not the easiest lecture to prepare, but one I would say, of great importance to anyone who thinks there is any value in Freemasonry. I have been a member of the R.A. for 25 years and for quite a long stretch of my life I have felt that I have preferred it to the Craft Masonry. Today, I'm not quite sure whether I do or not; there is so much to delve into in that masonic teaching. I do feel that V.W. Bro. Glenie has brought something forward tonight of interest to younger masons because I feel that if you wish to make advancement in masonic knowledge, that seems to be incumbent upon every mason if he is to live up to his obligations. In England the Mark degree is part and parcel of a man's craft membership and when you reach the third in New Zealand and learn that you are working with s.s. I think it behoves you to endeavour to find out what are the genuine ones and the only way you can is by working through R.A. As our Prov. G.M. has said, so many go in but do not stay, which means of course that it is only curiosity and not for the purpose of advancement. Of course curiosity brings a lot of fellows into the Craft lodges too. I was interested to learn why V.W. Bro. Glenie should speak on this subject tonight, because at the present time I am compiling a lecture mainly for F.C. from which degree advancement is made to R.A. and I wish to thank you Bro. Glenie for some further material which will help me in my efforts to make the brethren feel that there is something worth striving for in R.A. and urging them to become members in pursuance of the encouragement of the M.W. the G.M. when he was here last year.

Bro. J. Penny: As a visitor, and as a P.P. of both Constitutions in the South and North Islands I must say how very much I enjoyed this lecture and in that connection would suggest R.A. masons should be very sure that the working of the R.A. is well carried out as has already been mentioned this evening. I think to a very great extent and in fact do not personally see that there should be a great deal of secrecy between M.M.s. I would be in order in saying that in the oldest ritual there is a trace of Christianity included in the opening, one of the collects of the Anglican communion service being used. There is an old piece of ritual which is printed in various books of reference in which the corner-stone which is rejected by the builder is used in the R.A. ceremony and refers to the Craft itself. I don't think they will ever succeed in getting Christianity out of Freemasonry. There is one question I would like to ask our V.W. Bro. without disclosing anything I think should not be disclosed to M.Ms. in view of what has been said tonight. "Why does the Supreme Grand R.A. Chapter of New Zealand allows its Charters to be used for the side degrees of the R.A. Mariner, which unlike the other side degrees has, so far as I can see nothing whatever to do with R.A. Masonry either historically or in time?" This is a problem which I have been trying to solve for some years.

V.W. Bro. Glenie: In my experience these degrees are started by one or more individuals. I think that's a fair statement of the position and it had a definite application in New Zealand when for instance they started

the Cryptic degrees. They were started by one individual who conceived the idea that we in New Zealand could now work Cryptic degrees: the same thing applied in Scotland and so on. Now, having said that I think it's fair enough to say that someone would decide that it was desirable to start the A. Mariner degree and also decide how to administer it. It was quite obvious that they couldn't start what I understand they have in England, a separate organisation, or rather a Grand Lodge of Ark Mariners, because there wouldn't be enough Ark Mariner Lodges to be organised by it, there might be only one or perhaps two, and therefore it was simply a matter of administration. Quite obviously it wouldn't be done by the Blue—Craft Masonry—I would think that they wouldn't want it, and it was simply pushed under the banner of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter. I would say that it was probably just as simple as that there was no other place for it.

W. Bro. R. Sturmey: I would like to compliment V.W. Bro. Glenie on his lecture and particularly on his daring. When some M.Ms. are questioned by younger masons on matters such as the R.A. and so forth, in fact on any masonic point, this is what sometimes happens. If the particular M.M. does not know the answer he simply shrugs him off as though it were something he shouldn't ask and puts a mysterious veil around the whole question. This confuses the masonic student who wishes to acquire more information and if he is not of a persevering, enquiring mind, he is liable to be side-stepped by that aura of, "that's tabu, that doesn't concern you," "there's plenty of time for you to learn that," and all that sort of response. I do hope that as a result of this lecture, we can come out into the open and let M.Ms. know just where they can go and where they can improve their knowledge by joining or accepting R.A. Masonry. It has always been a wonder to me when M.Ms. take their third and are told they have received the s.s. the number who do not follow on and ask where the genuine ones are. It's amazing the number who do not wish to acquire status and I do think that a lecture such as our worthy brother has given tonight will indeed spur the thought amongst the M.Ms. not to become just stewards perhaps, but to further their knowledge on this great path of ours. With regard to the Ark Mariner position. I do think that there is a Christian link with the Ark Mariner movement, where Bro. Glenie has said the R.A. was Christianised many years ago. I think that Christian link has been well founded and those who have gone through have found that there is a definite link which ties up with the other degrees such as the 18th. The whole ties up and really one has to go to these degrees to find the meaning of things you see in the second degree and third degree T.Bs. and until you take the higher degrees you do not get a complete understanding of what has gone before.

R.W. Bro. F. J. Aldous: I would like to congratulate V.W. Bro. Glenie on his very interesting lecture tonight. So far as I am concerned I did not anticipate that such a lecture would be given in the Lodge. Probably the reason why a number of our brethren do not belong to the R.A. is that we are taught "never to attempt to ... or ... the S... etc." As librarian of the Research Lodge I do not feel like giving a M.M. books on higher degrees, as there is a lot of information there which I'm not sure that they should get, but I am very pleased that this lecture has been given here tonight. I think too, that when they find that they have to learn so much, that that is a deterrent with some who join. It's a big problem now to get members to take office in R.A. and I too, am surprised that more of those who have been furnished with the s.s. do not go further, and have also noted that when some do find them, that's all they want, but that part is not the end of masonry.

W. Bro. A. R. Carley: As one of those on the outside I would like to pay my tribute to V.W. Bro. Glenie for his lecture tonight. It appears quite evident to me that nothing but good can come out of such a lecture as we have had tonight. Reference has already been made to the fact that we could have had a greater attendance of MMs, but that will be taken care of to some extent when the lecture is printed and circulated. I have known several brethren who have been members of R.A. and they have sold as far as they possibly could that branch of Freemasonry. V.W. Bro. Glenie tonight gave the Alexander Moncur Niblock Memorial Lecture and in that sense I think it was very appropriate because our late respected brother was deeply interested in the R.A. I can recall a remark of his to the effect that you do not know what you are missing and having heard the lecture and the discussion I feel that a good number of those present have been favourably impressed, that the lecturer has proved a good salesman for R.A. and trust that his efforts will meet with the success they deserve.

W Bro. R. C. Pickett: V.W. Bro. Glenie is to be congratulated in two ways, firstly for the time spent in preparing and the splendid manner in which he delivered the address, and secondly in travelling such a long

distance to pay us the honour of delivering this our Memorial Lecture to our late Bro. Rev. Alexander Niblock. I was very interested in R.W. Bro. Howell's remarks so far as the so-called informality of R.A. Masonry is concerned and the reference which he made to the ritual work. I quite agree with him that too much emphasis should not be placed on the informality or so-called informality of the R.A. degrees because the ritual does lose some of its significance if that is done and I for my part would like to see a little more formality with Chapter work. As a young mason I will say this, that no man's masonic education is complete until he has taken the R.A. degree. I was fortunate to have taken my R.A. degree before becoming Master of my Craft Lodge and was very thankful that I had done that. If I could make a recommendation to any M.M. or officer of a Craft lodge it is that take his R.A. degree before he goes into the chair of his lodge.

V.W. Bro. J. H. Beesley: First of all I would like to say how very pleased I am to have seen and heard the lecture delivered. Previous speakers have mentioned that there is a gap between the M.M. and the R.A. mason. Personally I don't think there is. When we became E.A. we were given a copy of the Book of Constitution and in that we are told on p. 144 that E.A., F.C., M.M. and E.C. of R.A. Degrees are recognised as pure masonry by the Grand Lodge of the New Zealand Constitution. I don't know what the Irish or Scottish Constitutions have but there it is for all masons of the New Zealand Constitution to see for themselves, and they must be curious about it. To be quite candid I was, and in due time was asked to become a member of the R.A. Chapter. It so happened that I did, but I think a lot of masons have the idea that unless they are asked they cannot join. I found the lecture most interesting, particularly as this point was well covered.

W. Bro. H. Bayliss: The lecture has set my mind at rest with regard to something that happened a number of years ago. A number of the brethren of my own Lodge suggested that when we had nothing much to do, there were quite a number of brethren who had no idea of what was happening in Taranaki outside Craft masonry. I don't know how they knew, but they were aware that I was interested in the other degrees and asked me if I would give a short talk on those that were based in Taranaki and the import of them. I approached that with some trepidation and although I did not go quite as far as the lecture tonight I was able to explain briefly the various degrees that were worked in the area, both non-Christian and the Christian degrees. It was wonderful the number of brethren who came to me afterwards and said how pleased they were because hitherto they had been completely in the dark. I can assure you that many of those brethren are very prominent in the other degrees in Taranaki today. As I have said, I was anxious at the time but did not give anything away: there was a Rose Croix in Stratford in those days. I was very pleased to hear our lecturer quote much more efficiently than I was able, but I do feel now that I was on right lines and the appreciation expressed to me at the time showed that they were genuinely pleased to get the information. I feel that any brother here tonight will appreciate the knowledge they will gain by joining the other degrees.

Master, W. Bro. W. Marr: When I was told the address was to be on the R.A. I was quite frankly somewhat shocked, wondering how it would work out with half the attendance of brethren to whom the R.A. was merely a name. I gave the matter a great deal of thought and came to the conclusion that the Research Lodge is indeed bound to accept any information and any paper which will prove to be enlightening on any aspect of Freemasonry anywhere in New Zealand or in Taranaki. V.W. Bro. Glenie has shown and was able to blend Craft Masonry with the R.A. and we have listened to a very good paper indeed delivered in a manner that was very impressive. It is always a problem for a Grand Lecturer to find something new to give either to a Research Lodge or indeed to any other lodge. On this occasion we have had something new covering the R.A. and Craft Masonry. V.W. Bro. Glenie, on behalf of the Research Lodge I would like to express our deep appreciation of your travelling here from Auckland to deliver the Niblock Memorial Lecture. I can assure you that it has been deeply appreciated by the brethren present and will be appreciated by many more when published. We wish you a safe journey home and trust we may have you back again some time in the future.

V.W. Bro. Glenie: Thank you W.M. and thank you brethren for your very kindly welcome.