REMARKS ON THE SIXTH, OR MOST EXCELLENT MASTER'S DEGREE.

By Thomas Smith Webb - 1813

NONE but the meritorious and praiseworthy; none but those who through diligence and industry have advanced far towards perfection; none but those who have been seated in the Oriental Chair, by the unanimous suffrages of their brethren, can be admitted to this degree of masonry.

In its original establishment, when the temple of Jerusalem was finished, and the fraternity celebrated the cape-stone with great joy, it is demonstrable that none but those, who had proved themselves to be complete matters of their profession, were admitted to this honour; and indeed the duties incumbent on every mason, who is accepted and acknowledged as a most excellent master, are such as render it indispensable. that he should have a perfect knowledge of all the preceding degrees.

One of the following passages of scripture is rehearsed at opening, accompanied by solemn ceremonies:

PSALM xxiv.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness; thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory. Selah."

PSALM cxxii.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace he within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good."

The following passages of scripture are also introduced, accompanied with solemn ceremonies.

2 CHRON vi.

[Then said Solomon, The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. But I
have built an house of habitation for then and a place for thy dwelling forever.

And the king turned his face, and blessed the whole congregation of Israel, (and all the
congregation of Israel stood:) And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath
with his hands fulfilled that which he spake with his mouth to my father David, saying. Since
the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt, I chose no city among all the
tribes of Israel to build an house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I any man
to be a ruler over my people Israel; but I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be
there: and have chosen David to be over my people Israel

Now was it in the heart of David, my father, to build an house for the name of the Lord God
of Israel. But the Lord said to David my father, Forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build
an house for my name, thou didst well in that it was in thine heart; notwithstanding, thou
shalt not build the house; but thy son, which shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build
the house for my name. The Lord, therefore, hath performed his word that he hath spoken
for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, as the
Lord promised, and have built the house for the name of the Lord God of Israel; and in it
have I put the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, that he made with the children of
Israel.

And he stood before the altar of the Lord, in the presence of all the congregation of Israel,
and spread forth his hands; For Solomon had made a brazen scaffold of five cubits long,
and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and
upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel,
and spread forth his hands toward heaven, and said,

O Lord God of Israel, there is no god like thee in heaven, nor in the earth; which keepest
covenant and shewest mercy unto thy servants that walk before thee with all their hearts;
thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him;
and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day. Now,
therefore, O Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father, that which thou hast
promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of
Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way to walk in my law, as thou hast walked
before me. Now then, O Lord God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken
unto thy servant David. But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold,
heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee; how much less this house which
I have builded!) Have respect, therefore, to the prayer of thy servant, and to his
supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant
prayeth before thee; that thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the
place whereof hast thou said that thou wouldest put thy name there; to hearken unto the
prayer which thy servant prayeth towards this place.

Hearken, therefore, unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which
they shall make towards this place; hear thou from thy dwelling place, even from heaven;
and, when thou hearest, forgive.]

[If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon, him to make him swear, and
the oath come before thine altar in this house. Then hear thou from heaven, and do and
judge thy servants, by requiting the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head;
and by justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness.

And if thy people Israel be put to the worse before the enemy, because they have sinned
against thee, and shall return and confess thy name, and pray and make supplication
before thee in this house. Then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the sin of thy
people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest to them and to their

fathers.

When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee;
yet if then pray towards this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin when thou
dost afflict them; Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of
thy people Israel, when thou hast taught them the good way wherein they should walk: and
send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.

If there be dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting or mildew, locusts or
caterpillars; if their enemies besiege them in the cities of their land; whatsoever sore or
whatsoever sickness there be: Then what prayer or what supplication soever shall be made
of any mail, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall know his own sore, and his
own grief; and shall spread forth his hands in this house: Then bear thou from heaven thy
dwelling place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose
heart thou knowest; (for thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men;) that they may
fear then, to walk in thy ways so long as they live, in the land which thou gavest unto our
fathers.

Moreover, concerning the stranger, which is not of thy people Israel, but is come from a fair
country for thy great name's sake, and thy mighty hand and thy stretched-out arm; if they
come and pray in this house; Then bear thou front the heavens, even from thy dwelling
place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all people of the
earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as doth thy people Israel; and may know that this
house, which l have built, is called by thy name.

If thy people go out to war against their enemies, by the way that thou shalt send them, and
they pray unto thee toward this city which thou host chosen, and the house which I leave
built for thy name; Then hear thou from the heavens their prayer and their supplication, and
maintain their cause.

If they sin against thee (for there is no man which sinneth not) and thou

be angry with them,
and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land
far off or near; yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive,
and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we leave
done amiss, and have dealt wickedly; if they return to thee with all their heart and with all
their soul, in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray
toward their land which thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which thou hast
chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name; Then hear thou from the
heavens, even from thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain
their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.

Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attent unto the
prayer that is made is this place.

Now, therefore, arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place, thou and the ark of thy strength;
let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.

O Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed; remember the mercies of David thy
servant.]

2 CHRON vii. 1- 4

[Now, when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and
consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house.
And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord
had filled the Lord's house.

And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord
upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground, upon the pavement,
and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth
forever.]

Charge to he delivered to a brother, who is accepted and acknowledged as a Most Excellent Master.

Brother,

"Your admittance to this degree of masonry is a proof of the good opinion the brethren of this lodge entertain of your masonic abilities. Let this consideration induce you to be careful of forfeiting, by misconduct and inattention to our rules, that esteem which has raised you to the rank you now possess.

"It is one of your great duties, as a most excellent master, to dispense light and truth to the uninformed mason; and I need not remind you of the impossibility of complying with this obligation without possessing an accurate acquaintance with the lectures of each degree.

"If you are not already completely conversant in all the degrees heretofore conferred on you, remember that an indulgence, prompted by a belief that you will apply yourself with double diligence to make yourself so, has induced the brethren to accept you.

"Let it therefore he your unremitting study to acquire such a degree of knowledge and information as shall enable you to discharge with propriety the various duties incumbent on you, and to preserve unsullied the title now conferred upon you. of a Most Excellent Master."