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When he gave this paper in March 1990, Bro Henderson was not yet Master of his research lodge and had not yet had the inspiration which resulted in the formation of the research council, but from this visit and a reciprocal visit to Melbourne the following year the ideas developed for importing overseas speakers, forming the council, and instituting the Kellerman Lectures. And in the section on continental Masonry may be seen the beginning of the idea of 'European concept' lodges, such as Lodge Epicurean and Lodge Amalthea, which is proving so successful in Victoria.

Note: *This paper was delivered verbatim, without reference to printed text, and transcribed from an audio recording, with subsequent minor revision by the author, and only minor editing.*

OVERSEAS MASONIC ODDITIES

by Bro Kent Henderson

I am going to take you all on a world tour, run you around the world Masonically and give you a bit of an inkling as to what happens in other jurisdictions. You may form the opinion that what happens overseas is rather strange, rather different from what we do here in Australia, but I want you to remember one thing, that if an overseas brother came to your lodge, I can guarantee you that he would find us considerably odd, too. So it works both ways.

Where do I start? Let us start in America.

American Masonry is in a lot of ways quite different from that in Australia. For a start there are 51 Grand Lodges, one for every State in America. Of course, we have the same system in Australia, with one Grand Lodge for every State. American Masonry is relatively strong, with a large Masonic population. It tends to be very outgoing and Americans not infrequently have marches in Masonic regalia down the streets and involve the community in a very big way. They are rather pleased to let the world know all about Masonry, and the result of this, over time, has been that the Craft in America is pretty well understood in the community. They possess a great many Masonic hospitals and Masonic institutions, doing a lot of work in the charitable area which, of course, reflects very favourably on the Craft.

The actual workings of an American lodge and their ways of doing things are quite different to us in many ways, but in my observations let me note that is no such thing as American Ritual, per se. Each Grand Lodge has its own ritual, although for the most part they are relatively similar from State to State.

On average an American lodge will meet twice a month—effectively fortnightly. One meeting is generally known as the *Stated Meeting*, the other as an *Emergent* or *Emergency Meeting*. Practices do vary between States, but this is largely the norm. The *Stated Meeting* is a bit like a committee of Past Masters, or Committee of General

Purposes, of a lodge in Australia. It fulfils a similar purpose in managing or running the lodge. Put into our context, it would be akin to an Australian Lodge Committee meeting being a tyled meeting for administrative purposes only, with all members entitled to attend and participate. Their 'committee' is thus a committee of the whole. The lodge, for the *Stated Meeting* will open in the third degree, and close in the third degree. Aside from welcoming visitors, the matters dealt with are the ordinary business such as minutes and correspondence, committee reports, ballots, etc. It's a bit like us opening the lodge here, doing the correspondence and treasurer's report, and packing up and going home. In some States they will also work a ceremony as well on the 'Stated Meeting' nights, but it is uncommon. Two weeks later they then hold their other (*Emergent*) meeting, where they actually work a degree ceremony. Of course, this assumes the lodge has work. If not, then a lodge may only meet once in a work-free month, holding its Stated Meeting only.

In an American lodge you are not considered a member until you have taken the third degree. Thus, you cannot vote until you are a Master Mason. This is easily arranged by virtue of the fact that stated meetings are held in the third degree. When a lodge holds an emergent meeting, it will generally open with the degree to be worked. Thus, if they are working the second degree they will open and close in that degree. They don't go up and down through the degrees as we do in Australia. The Americans also have an interesting habit of only doing half the ceremony at one time. For example, if they were working a second degree ceremony, they would commonly take candidate(s) up to the end of the Obligation and then call the lodge off. Thereupon, they retire, have their 'festive board' (although they don't use the term) in the middle of proceedings, they will come back inside and go on to finish the ceremony, and close the lodge. In the third degree, it is not unusual to have quite a big banquet in the middle, whereas otherwise it just might be a cup of coffee and a biscuit. I know some brethren, particularly over here, that would give some very interesting charges in the third degree ceremony after the festive board! Happily, that is not a problem in America, because almost without exception the American lodges are dry—no alcohol. Their third degree ceremony tends to be somewhat more boisterous than ours, I will add.

The layout of an American lodge is a bit different, too. The Master sits in the East, like all Masters, and the Wardens sit in the same positions. They have an altar in the center of the lodge, similar to the Irish Constitution.

The Principal Officer is, of course, the Master and he wears a hat. It's a top hat in most jurisdictions but in some it gets down to berets and stetsons and ten-gallon hats and that sort of thing. The whole purpose of the hat is that every time the name of the Great Architect is mentioned in the ceremony, the Master stands up and doffs his hat. Brethren, do you know how many times the name of the Great Architect is mentioned in our ceremony? Think about that one. I would not like to be the Master of an American lodge!

The main floor workers of an American lodge are not the Deacons. In fact the Deacons have not all that much to do in the lodge room. They do a little bit of the ceremony, but not much. It is the Stewards who do all the floor work. The Junior Deacon sits inside the lodge and is effectively the Inner Guard as we would know the role. They have lots of interesting offices too, like an electrician (he controls the lights) and the ritualist (the prompter).

As this journey is around the world, we will leave the United States of America and cross the Atlantic Ocean to arrive in the British Isles. I think we'll start with the Irish. There is nothing odd about the Irish is there brethren? Actually the Irish ceremony is not too dissimilar to ours. The only thing I think is odd about the Irish is that they don't get to read a ritual book. For those who are not aware of it, under the Irish Constitution you are not, officially at any rate, the printing of the Ritual is not permitted. All learning must be from ear to mouth and mouth to ear. Lodge Officers have to attend very extensive Lodges of Instruction to actually learn the ceremony, and candidates similar instructional gatherings to become proficient for promotion.

Digressing back a bit, America is much the same. Most American Grand Lodges do not permit the publication of a printed ritual in any form, although a minority permit their ritual to be printed in code or cipher, so before you learn the ritual you have to learn the code.

Let's cross the Irish Sea to England. There is not too much odd about the English is there? Actually, their ceremonies are very similar to ours, even more so with the Victorian ritual, which is closer to English-type ritual than the South Australian. Actually, the English have a substantial number of different rituals in use. They have lots of different names, like *Emulation*, *Oxford*, *West End* and *Logic*. There are about fifty different rituals used in English Constitution lodges and, with just a couple of exceptions, they are all pretty similar. However, it is most unwise to get into an 'argument' with an English Mason regarding one ritual or another. The protagonists of each version tend to be quite staunch, be assured.

The only thing I find odd or different about English lodges is not so much what happens inside but what happens outside. Unlike us here in Australia they always have a full festive board 'banquet' or 'dinner', particularly in London, whereupon members sit down to a three or four course meal and pay for the privilege, at about £16 currently, the going rate in London, I believe. You can work that out in our currency, but it's good food. What they do when they sit down at their festive board is a 'sort of toast' which is called the 'taking of wine'. It is not a toast situation like we are used to at our festive boards. What occurs is that the Director of Ceremonies (DC) gavels and says: 'The Master would be pleased to take wine with his Wardens' and the Master will hop up and the Wardens get up, glass in hand. They may (but not always) have a polite word to each other, a sip a mouthful and sit down. Almost immediately, the DC says: 'The Master would now be pleased to take wine with his Deacons.' So up the Master gets and up the Deacons get, and so on: 'The Master would be pleased to take wine with the Visitors'; 'The Master would be pleased to take wine with the Visiting Masters'; 'The Master would be pleased to take wine with the Grand Lodge Officers'; and on it goes. Well you can imagine some of the Masters after all this!

Then, after they have finished the meal—'taking wine' occurs during the meal—they start the official toasting. The first toast is the Most Worshipful Grand Master His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent. Toast number two, the Most Worshipful Pro Grand Master. Toast number three, the Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master. Toast number four, the Right Worshipful Assistant Grand Master and Grand Lodge Officers present and past—and they are only warming up. Toast number five, The Right Worshipful Provincial

Grand Master. Toast number six, the Worshipful Deputy Provincial Grand Master. Toast number seven, the Worshipful Assistant Provincial Grand Master and Provincial Grand Lodge Officers present and past, and we are not even out of Grand Lodge yet. After the Master, and the candidate(s), and the visitors are toasted, we finally get to the Tyler's Toast.

Let us cross the English Channel and go over to the Continent. Before I talk about Europe, I want to give you an idea of Continental Europe, Masonically speaking. Generally it's got a number of interesting characteristics. I suppose the first thing about Continental Freemasonry one should appreciate is that it seems to have two main characteristics. First, it tends to be fairly exclusive and second, it tends to be relatively secretive, by our standards. Almost all countries in Europe possess a Grand Lodge. Subscriptions tend to range between \$300 to \$1000 per year. Hands up all the people in this room who are prepared to pay this sort of money per year to be a member of a lodge! A lot of money by our standards, isn't it?

Actually some of the older brethren in the room might be able to remember back to before the Second World War when the annual dues to be a Freemason in Australia were around £5.5.0 or £6.6.0 a year. Now what was the average weekly wage before the Second World War, about £5.5.0 or £6.6.0 a week? What is the average weekly wage today in Australia, about \$600 a week? Your fees haven't gone up at all, in fact, they've gone down and down and down, comparatively speaking, over the years. Remember that next time your annual dues go up! It's rather expensive, you may think, to be a member of a Continental lodge. As a result of course, one of the many reasons membership of a Continental lodge tends to be relatively exclusive is simply because not everybody wants to pay \$300 to \$1000 a year to be a member. It tends to restrict membership to some extent to those who can afford it. There are some jurisdictions which are even more exclusive. For instance, Greece. In Greece, if you want to be a Freemason, one must usually hold a university degree before they will consider you.

In a typical Continental lodge the membership tends to be about 25, maximum. You will find that the Master will invariably be a high court judge, a captain of industry, or otherwise well placed in society, and the bulk of the members will be professionals or academics. Continental lodges are not worried about membership. We worry quite often in Australia at the lack of attendance at lodge meetings and lack of membership expansion. In Europe they couldn't care less about membership in terms of quantity. The biggest Grand Lodge in Europe is the Grand Orient of Italy, which has currently about, from memory, 28,000 members. However, most Grand Lodges in Europe tend to be about 6000 to 9000 members strong.

Most Continental lodges contend that attendance at a lodge meeting is compulsory. If you don't turn up for two meetings in a row without a very good excuse, they may suspend your membership. If you don't up at three meetings in a row without a very good excuse they may revoke your membership. People tend to go to lodge. Membership attendance is pretty good, and as a result they tend to have a greater involvement in the lodge. Generally, every member has a job or a role to play. The new Entered Apprentice, just joined the lodge, is immediately made a Steward in many lodges. France is possibly the only exception, which tends to be considerably more *English* in style than the rest of

Europe, depending upon the rite an individual French lodge works.

I remember the last time I was in England, I was talking to a brother from Norway. He told me that only two resignations had been received in his lodge in the last 50 years. There had been deaths, of course, but only two resignations.

In many European lodges there is no progression in office from Inner Guard to the Chair. In a large proportion the Master will be elected from among senior members of the lodge and will stay in office until he resigns or dies. In some Continental lodges, such as in Scandinavia, the Master is elected for life. There is no *Installed Board* like we have, although the Master in many Continental lodges will be given the secrets of the chair, as we know them, in a separate ceremony before he is installed. They generally do it in one big group, as installations in most Continental jurisdictions tend to be at the same time of the year. So, in analogous South Australian terms, they would take all the Adelaide Masters-Elect, together in one meeting, and give the lot of them the secrets of the chair.

In some jurisdictions the choice of Master is not open to the brethren to select him. Normally what will occur if there is a vacancy in the Office of Master, the Grand Lodge will choose a small number of brethren from the lodge, to stand for election. The lodge will subsequently vote out of the Grand Lodge nominees as to who will be their Master. Effectively then, the Grand Lodge decides who will be the next Master. As there is no progression through the chair, a Junior Warden may be there for a long time. He might be there for three years and then do a turn as Junior Deacon, for example.

The other main characteristic I was talking about before is secrecy. In Australia, our Grand Masters constantly urge us to go out into the community and make Freemasonry better understood. Look at our Masonic Homes, look at our Masonic Hospitals, look at our charitable acts. Aren't we marvellous. Join us! Continental Freemasonry is exactly the reverse. It is generally 'not done' in Europe for a Freemason to enlighten any other person as to the Masonic or supposed Masonic membership of another person. Indeed, it is rare in Europe for a Freemason, outside of lodge, to admit that he is in fact a Freemason.

A bit different from us! Why is it? You only have to look back at European Masonic history to get some sort of idea as to why they tend to be so secretive. For example, during the dictatorship of General Franco he managed to imprison, and in some cases execute, 20,000 people for Masonic or supposed Masonic membership. The Roman Catholic Church up until recent times has been quite anti-Masonic. A lot of Europe is Catholic.

One of the worst individuals, as far as Freemasonry goes, was a fellow by the name of Hitler. In his time as master of most of Europe, as well as wiping out every Jew he could lay his hands on, he did exactly the same thing with every Freemason he could grab. Before the Second World War there were 100,000 Freemasons in Germany. Today, 50 years on, there are only 21,000. Hitler almost succeeded.

So now you can perhaps get some inkling, brethren, as to why our continental brothers tend to be somewhat more reticent when talking about Freemasonry. To put it in a local context, if somebody in Adelaide had been shot in the last 20 or 30 years for being a Freemason, or hanged, or gassed, I would tend to suggest most of the brethren here tonight wouldn't be seen on street corners in regalia.

The processing of candidates in most Continental jurisdictions is interesting. They have many applications, a lot of people want to get in. Funny about that. When you make something exclusive people want to join. You make something cheap and easy to join, nobody wants to. Have we done that in Australia, I wonder?

In Europe, they generally take about twelve months to decide whether they are going to let a proposed candidate into their lodge. In some countries, they take his photograph, do a *curriculum vitae*, and pin both on a wall in the Temple building. If this were such a continental lodge room, you would have walked in tonight and seen all these mug-shots all over the wall on the way in. Now, if you were walking past, tonight, and saw a photo of Mr Fred Nerk on the wall and thought he was unsuitable, all you would have to do is pull his photograph off the wall. Mr Fred Nerk's candidature was just terminated. Usually, the whole process of interviews, including interviewing the wife, takes about twelve months.

I suppose the really 'odd' thing about European Freemasonry that sticks in my mind is the emphasis they have on teaching about Freemasonry. Something the Lodge of Research here is about. Let's take our newly initiated brother who has just joined a continental lodge. In order to be passed to the Second Degree he will have to produce a paper, a written paper, and present it to the lodge on his understanding of the first degree. Having done that, he would then be considered for the second degree. In Europe the minimum time-lapse between degrees is 12 months. Once you are a Fellow Craft, dare I say it, you will again have to produce a paper on the role of second degree, and produce an oral lecture on your understanding of the degree. The same process applies from the second to the third degree. On average in Europe, it takes five years for an Entered Apprentice to become a Master Mason, a long period of time by our standards.

The other thing is the Continental lodge itself. By and large, the lodges meet weekly for nine months of the year. They don't do degree work at every meeting, generally only once a month, as we do. The other three meetings are to enable discussion and the presenting of papers. They have a lot of lectures and discussions, but by the time the newly initiated brother is five years down the track, he has served and has participated in literally hundreds of lectures and discussions on Masonic subjects. By the time he becomes a Master Mason he knows a lot about Freemasonry and what it teaches.

How many times do we raise a Brother to the third degree and never see him again? It doesn't happen in Europe—they tend to retain their membership. They are very choosy who they let in, but by the same token they don't fall out the back door either. Remember our Brother from Norway and his two resignations. They appreciate, I suggest, far better than we do, that Freemasonry is a moral and ethical education society, whose prime duty is teach. The educated stay, the uneducated leave.

All right, now let's cross to the north of Europe and briefly consider Scandinavian masonry, which I have already touched on. In Scandinavia they work The Swedish Rite of eleven degrees. The 11th Degree is also a civil order awarded by the King of Sweden, and holder of this particular degree gets to wear its insignia in public. There are only about 30 holders of this particular degree in all of Sweden, which gives you an idea of how prized it is in Masonic circles. In most Scandinavian countries, particularly Sweden, the King himself, or a member of the royal family, tends to be Grand Master.

I think I have talked long enough to give you an overview of the oddities of the Masonic world. As you will appreciate, Freemasonry in other countries is different in many ways. However, I will add that when you take the third degree in Scandinavia or America or Britain, you go through the same sort of things as you would if you go through the third degree here. They might do it somewhat differently, or strangely from our perspective, but they get to the same point. Freemasons universally are taught the same system of morality and ethics as we have been taught here in Australia.

So, Masonically, we are all different, but also all the same.

A hearty vote of thanks was extended to Brother Henderson, who then responded to questions and comments.

Comment: *I am amazed that in your tour of the world you mentioned England and forgot the landlord.*

Response: I forgot Scotland!

Right on!

But there is nothing odd about the Scottish. I do remember visiting a lodge in the Scottish Highlands, where four candidates did the third degree together. I can't tell you much about that, since we are in the first degree, but it was a lot shorter than we do it. There are about five different rituals in Scotland and the ceremonies vary a little bit, but they are fairly similar among themselves.

Scottish lodges have a very relaxed festive board called a 'Harmony', and mostly involves drinking whisky and singing songs! You have a good night at a Scottish lodge. As a rule, they only have a formal festive board for Installations.

*I have read your book, **Masonic World Guide**, and found it very useful indeed when I went to Hong Kong, but not so useful in Fiji. I couldn't get in touch with any lodge there. But it was helpful in Singapore. There, I found that if you want to have a quiet look at the lodge room, you go between 10 and 11 o'clock in the morning, or the caretaker will not let you in. He'll let you in the bar, but not the lodge room.*

You mentioned that banquets in England cost around £16 per head. As a visitor, do you pay that, or does a member of the lodge pay for you and refuse your offer of reimbursement?

I found proving to be different in other jurisdictions. Here it is usually done by a Past Master, but in Singapore the Junior Warden did it.

In England the current charge for a banquet meal is about £16. London gets the bulk of the overseas visitors. If you go to Freemasons' Hall, wanting to visit a lodge, you say you'd like to visit a lodge that night and they will give you a card to attend, no problems. In that sort of situation, it is up to you to pay. However, the usual custom in England is for a member to invite a guest, and in those circumstances you will invariably be invited to stay for the festive board and the member pays. In quite a few lodges, particularly outside London, if an uninvited guest turns up, the convention is that the Master pays—unless you are a frequent visitor. You should at least offer to pay. If you don't, they won't

ask you; you can freeload if you wish. Just remember that the Master usually pays out of his own pocket!

As for proving, you should have absolutely no difficulty anywhere you go in the world, although it does vary. In America it is usually the Tyler who proves you. In English lodges it can be a Warden or a Past Master. On the continent it may be anybody. [*There followed a discussion on signs and words, and methods of proving.*]

I went to a lodge in Cincinnati and found they had started earlier than advertised.

The Tyler said: 'I'll get the Master to come out and prove you'.

And the Master came out from the ceremony and he picked up a Volume of Sacred Law and handed it to me and I thought to myself, what shall I do with this, so I just took it.

He said: 'If you were an American I wouldn't let you in because you have failed in the method of being proved in this jurisdiction.'

Heavens knows what it was, he didn't tell me. However, since I was an ignorant South Australian he took me in and we sat down and there was a ceremony going on. Everybody was just in ordinary street clothes, very casually dressed.

I said to him: 'Didn't you say you were the Master?'

He said: 'Yes',

and I said: 'Who's that?'

He said: 'That's the Junior Warden. He's doing the ceremony.'

The junior warden was sitting there with the hat on and he did the ceremony. Well, a couple of blokes got up and wandered over, leaned on the secretary's desk and chatted to the secretary and went back to their seats. A couple went to the toilet and came back again, and they gave the secrets while all this was going on, with people having a chat around the place. That was the atmosphere of it. It was the most shocking experience I have ever seen in Freemasonry.

When it was finished we went out of the lodge room, stood around a table, one plate of sandwiches, a cup of coffee, bang, bang, home. We were gone in five minutes and that was my first experience of American Freemasonry.

An odder event which I saw in Canada were four candidates being initiated together; the conductors for the ceremony were their proposers, not the Deacons.

My experience of being proved on that trip around the world was a little more onerous than you have indicated. In Bristol they sent out a Past Master who took me in a little room and said: 'We'll start in the Installed Master's degree.' And that's where he started to prove me. I'd only been a Master of a lodge about a year and I didn't find it very easy to prove that I was a Freemason in the Installed Master's degree. I thought it was an unusual place to start.

Those are just three experiences that your comments about oddities aroused my memory tonight.

Americans tend to be what we would call slack. There is no dress standard in America like we have. Throughout the world, a dark lounge suit will be accepted for admission as a visitor. In America, open neck shirt and slacks, which we would not accept, are quite normal. It also seems that the further south you go, the more relaxed it becomes. It does not go quite so far as singlet and thongs.

As to the other point raised by Bro Martin, the Americans and Scots do tend to ask a lot of questions. As a knowledgeable Freemason, you should have no problems in answering them.

I went to a lodge in Nairobi last year and I brought my travelling certificate from the Grand Lodge of South Australia and presented this to Provincial Grand Secretary, who said: 'I've left my glasses home but it looks good from here.'

At a recent communication in South Australia we presented a commission to one of our brethren to be the representative of the Grand Lodge of Cuba. Can we be in fraternal relationships with the Grand Lodge in Cuba?

It is an interesting situation. Cuba is the only communist country in the world with a regular Grand Lodge. Not only is it a regular Grand Lodge but we recognise it. Currently, membership in the Grand Lodge of Cuba is around the 20,000 mark and they've got something like 300 Lodges. They exist with Castro but they've never been close friends. Castro, for some reason I've never been able to get to the bottom of, has not suppressed Freemasonry. I suppose that's something to be said for Castro. I am not convinced that Freemasonry operates totally independently, but from all reports I have had it does operate regularly. To talk about regularity and recognition would probably take three hours, so you will just have to accept what I say. However, having said that, just as an aside to that, you will be very pleased to know that the Grand Lodge of Hungary was reconstituted a couple of months ago and there are big moves afoot for the Grand Lodge of Czechoslovakia to be reconstituted, now that those countries are no longer Communist. Before the Second World War they both had regular and recognised Grand Lodges, so that makes it easier. We don't recognise them as yet, so wait a little while until the Grand Master says OK to visit them, a couple of years down the track.

I am a member of the Duke of Leinster Lodge, here in Adelaide, the only Irish Lodge in Australia. I visited a lodge in Ireland and they wore sports jackets and trousers, and I thought this is a long way from what we wear.

We, the Irish, conduct our Installation entirely in the first degree, except for the board. Now is that done elsewhere or are we the only ones to do it?

The conducting of the installation ceremony depends entirely on where your ritual came from and, more importantly, *when* it came. Australian lodges conduct the Installation mainly in the second. You do it in the first degree, and the Americans do it in the third. The variations, and the historical reasons for them, are quite complex, and I would rather discuss it privately, if we can find the time.

You mentioned the apparent frivolity that exists in some of the ceremonials in American lodges. Did you have any experience with the so-called ceremonial degree teams comprised of American full-blooded Indians who performed these ceremonies in tribal dress and over which they wear their regalia? I believe they conduct their ceremonies with all sincerity and any suggestion that they may be theatrical or frivolous is greatly frowned upon by their particular jurisdiction. Have you had any experience of that?

I am afraid I may have misled you. I must certainly say that American Freemasonry is not

frivolous. There are differences between jurisdictions, but Freemasonry is taken quite seriously. I hope my comments have not given the wrong impression. American ceremonial is more relaxed than ours and the movements are not so militaristic as those we are used to.

The Red Indian (or Native American) ceremonial teams come from the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma. This State used to be called the *Indian Territories*. There are more full blood Indians settled around there than elsewhere.

A few years ago I went to lodge in Hobart and the candidate has to recite the obligation of the previous degree before going into the next degree. And before he could get his Master Mason's certificate, he had to recite his third degree obligation. Does that still apply?

It still applies in Tasmania. The degree of efficiency required around the world varies considerably. In Victoria and South Australia, a candidate has only a handful of set questions to answer, and even then may require prompting, perhaps almost every word, and is still promoted. That shouldn't happen, but it does in Victoria. On the other hand, in some constitutions, particularly in some American jurisdictions, the candidate will need to know up to 80 questions. He will not necessarily be asked all 80 but he doesn't know which ones he will be asked, so he must know the lot. They're really hard on proficiency. In Continental lodges if you are not proficient you have got absolutely no hope of getting up to the next degree. If you can't present your paper and answer questions, you will not go up to the next degree.

One of the problems we have in Australia is that the candidate does his third degree and we never see him again. In America the problem is the candidate never gets to the third degree, because he can't—or can't be bothered to—learn the 80 or so questions he's got to learn to get to the second degree, let alone the third.

Are the charges of the Junior Warden as long elsewhere as they are in the South Australian constitution?

The charges vary between constitutions. The charges with which you are conversant may not be used in another constitution, or may be delivered in another degree.

How many constitutions still retain the penalties within the obligation and how many have deleted them and put them in other places?

The English have taken them out. The Scottish and Irish, I understand, have taken them out. All the Australian constitutions have done so to some extent. Many of these now refer elsewhere to the 'traditional penalty'. They have not been removed in Continental constitutions.

There seem to be two schools of thought about the real work of Masonry. One is that it is to improve man's relationship with God. The other, which I more subscribe to, is that it is to improve man's relationship with man, and then the other will naturally follow. All my understanding of Freemasonry is that it universally espouses brotherhood. Travelling throughout Australia with the Army and otherwise, I have been to lodges of farmers, soldiers, bankers, judges, and so forth, a wide variety of professions and degrees or

stations of life. What worries me a little with Masonry on the Continent as you describe it is the cost of dues and the exclusiveness of it. Brethren who have been overseas have said that they have been to Lodges and they've been treated warmly, however. Is there a problem with a person who is, for example, a bank clerk visiting a lodge in Italy or Greece and meeting with people who are extremely wealthy, who have had to work possibly much harder than we have to get into lodge and stay there—is there genuine equality in Masonry throughout the world?

A very good question. The easy answer to your question is that Masonry is a Universal Brotherhood and you will be accepted wherever you go. I much prefer to go to Lodge in Europe than in England, because they make such a fuss of you. But I have been treated very well wherever I have visited.

What about the American Negroes?

This is a changing situation. Broadly speaking, there are two separate divisions of Freemasons in the United States, Blacks and Whites. There is a whole second set of Grand Lodges called Prince Hall Grand Lodges, and for 200 years the Whites have generally refused to recognise the Blacks. We recognise the Grand Lodges of Whites and not the Blacks. But the situation is changing. Last year, the two Grand Lodges in Connecticut recognised each other, allowing visits to each others' lodges and Grand Lodges, but the White Grand Lodge of Louisiana has withdrawn recognition from the White Grand Lodge of Connecticut because of it. We shall have to wait and see whether the others follow Connecticut's lead, or Louisiana's, and hope that brotherhood will triumph.