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The Masonic Thoughts of Joseph Fort Newton

Iowa Research Lodge No. 2
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Joseph Fort Newton 1880-1950

By Tom Eggleston-Grand Secretary, Grand Lodge of Iowa

> "Gentle, gracious, and wise, its mission is to form mankind into a great redemptive brotherhood, a league of noble and free men enlisted in the radiant enterprise of working out in time, the love and will of the eternal."

Those words from the gentle soul and the velvet pen of Brother Joseph Fort Newton hold an honored space – carved in the magnificent front wall of the world famous Iowa Masonic Library in Cedar Rapids. Those words and thoughts along with many other words and thoughts of this man who continually strove to make this world a better place and to promote a true brotherhood in religion are the subject of this book.

This is a book of excerpts from various orations of our distinguished brother. The written word, however, *can never* reflect the absolute spell of Brother Newton's voice. We quote these words form his London associate Maude Royden — "More than once Dr. Newton preached in the City Temple (London) in so small a voice, almost in whispers, that scarcely anybody in that auditorium heard every word...

...In those days of the First World War thousands of young Americans were in England training how best to lay down their lives on the fields of Flanders. When Dr. Newton appeared before those acres of youth he would begin his address with large, round, syllables, but after a while he would relapse into that whispering voice of his. When he had finished he would leave thousands of those youths quietly sobbing within themselves, having rapt them away into regions beyond this world. I have always believed that he did his greatest work while in my country with his talks to all those young soldiers."

So may each person, as he reads this book, be "rapt away into regions beyond this world."

Without doubt Brother Newton's most well known literary work was his blue lodge classic "The Builders" (which was to be given to each Iowa initiate). Newton also was the first editor of the official publication (The Builder) of the National Masonic Research Society in Anamosa, Iowa. That same society became the parent of the Masonic Service Association (now headquartered in Silver Springs, Maryland).

The famous London (England) tabloid, "The Master Mason," was also under the editorship of Brother Newton for a number of years.

Born in Decatur, Texas on July 21, 1880, Brother Newton received his Masonic Degrees in Friendship Lodge No. 7 in Dixon, Illinois. He affiliated with Mt. Hermon Lodge No. 263 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa on September 2, 1909. Between that date and his February 3, 1944 affiliation with University Lodge No. 51 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Brother Newton led a distinguished Masonic career. He served the Grand Lodge as Grand Chaplain and Grand Orator from 1911 through 1913. He was coroneted a 33^{0} Mason (Scottish Rite) on Oct. 20, 1933 and served as Grand Prelate of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States.

At the time of his death, January 24, 1950, he was a member of University Lodge No. 51 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

We started this preface with a famous quote from our distinguished brother — allow us to close with another — from the velvet pen of Brother Joseph Fort Newton:

> "When is a man a Mason? When he can look out over the rivers, the hills, and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope, and courage..."

ADDRESS ON MASONRY

JOSEPH FORT NEWTON

Now, when either all the world is half mad or half of it is wholly mad, any sort of gathering in behalf of good neighborship ought to be received with enthusiasm.

It has seemed to me that one of the easiest commands of the Teacher of Gallilee to obey, is that command to "Love your neighbor as yourself." Only the incorrigible egotist ever found it difficult to obey it; only the man who has no sense at all, much less a sense of humor, ever stumbled at that command. For if God has given a man the saving grace of humor, which is the sense to see things as they are—a right perspective and proportion to keep everything in its place, including himself—he will have no difficulty in loving his neighbor. It is a lack of humor which inflates our egotism, when we do not see our neighbor for what he is, a fellow soul, a fellow pilgrim of the infinite.

And so, to promote good neighborship, good feeling and a better understanding, this Lodge of Masons has invited you to gather as neighbors and friends. This is just the air in which to discuss, if I may do so for a little, what Masonry is and what it is trying to do in the world.

I am very glad to be present in order to tell all these ladies the secrets of Freemasons. Because knowing something about one lady, I know that all of them are eager to know such things. And ladies, if you wish to know—and if there is anything you enjoy more than knowing things, it is reading fiction—if you will read Tolstoy's "War and Peace", you will find there an elaborate description of the initiation into a Masonic Lodge. Unfortunately, it won't tell you much that actually happened, but it will tell you in a most unforgettable way of the spirit and teachings of Masonry. With the world rocking and shaking with war, this is the appropriate

time in which to read that mighty book.

Now the great secret of Masonry is that it has no secret whatsoever. It had better been called The Open Secret of the world. If it retires to its lodge and does its work in the quiet and privacy thereof, it is the better to teach with parable, symbol and emblem the great truths that are to the human world what light and air are to the natural world.

In primitive society there were four institutions, three of which are well known to us; with one, however, many are not familiar. There was the home, the cornerstone of society and civilization. It was crude, as all things were in the early morning of the world, nevertheless it contained within itself the prophecy of that enshrinement of beauty and gentleness into which you and I were born, and which remains the center of our lives. There was a temple of prayer, which was not a material temple, but a rude altar of stone, uplifted by the very same impulse, the very same instinct for the eternal which uplifts the great people. The rites of early worship were sometimes bloody, grotesque and terrible, yet through the very horror of it all, there were glimpses of light. A light that never was on land or sea; a kindly light which the poet has interpreted and which our sweet singers have also interpreted this evening. Then there was the State. Beginning with the patriarchal form of government, passing thence to the tribe, the tribe fused into the nations and the nations into the great empires that met in clash and conflict, leaving trails of skeletons across the earth. The State too, was crude, yet it had the rudiments of our patriotic devotion to our Republic.

But there was another institution, concerning which I will remind you, it was called the Men's House. It was a secret institution and if you are interested, as some of you no doubt are interested enough to read about it, you may find it thoroughly discussed by a man of great powers, in a book called "Primitive Secret Societies." Every tribe, every na-

tion in the world owes its civilization largely to the Men's House, into which a young man was initiated, when he came to maturity. He was intitiated into the law, custom, tradition of his people. In order to receive such initiation, he had to undergo certain tests to prove himself worthy, by reason of his virtue and his valor, to be entrusted with this secret traditional lore of his people. Methods of initiation differ in different time and different ages, but they have nevertheless, a certain resemblance. The idea of the test is to find out whether a man is worthy and will not betray.

The instruction in this secret lore in that Men's House we can trace all down the ages until it came to be associated with the great constructive art of architecture. Man could not become a civilized creature, until he had learned to build a settled habitation. He built the home, the house for his family, a temple for worship, and a memorial for his dead. The Men's House, in its growth and development, came at last to be associated with the builders, the architects. We trace its pathway through the far Eastern artificers in Asia Minor, who built temples, theatres, shrines; through Greece; through the builders of the temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, thence East into India, and west into Rome. We identifiy them in the Roman collegia, particularly the Roman College of Architects, whose emblems have come down to us and much of whose story we know. From that society came the noble order of cathedral builders which we follow all through the mediavel times.

If you have been interested in the story of great cathedrals, you may have wondered why no one of them is associated with the name of any great architect. They were not built by any one architect. They were not designed by any one master hand. They were the creation of an order of men so working together, in such fraternities, with such just sense of the sanctity of their art that they cared not at all for individual aggrandisement or ambition. Thus they traveled

through the years, building these poems of beauty and of prayer which still consecrate the world.

With the decline of cathedral building we can trace these builders through the German stone masons and the English rough masons, as they were called. With the decline of Gothic architecture the order of cathedral builders declined somewhat until the great London Fire, when it was revived to build St. Paul's cathedral, and indeed to build practically the whole of London. Thereafter it kept its integrity, and continued its tradition, not as an order of practical architects, but as we call them , speculative masons. Laying aside the tools of actual architecture, they became builders in another sense, using their emblems and tools as symbols of great moral and spiritual truths. They became a fraternity who wished to build upon the earth a kingdom of righteousness and of good will.

What, then is Masonry? In the first place, I am very happy) say that it is in no sense a political party. The old charges nd constitutions of free masonry forbid the discussion of olitics within its lodges. Individual masons have their political opinions; but as masons or as a lodge or masons, we never participate in politics. There has been in our history an anti-mason political party, not a masonic political party. This came about with a fever of fanaticism, all of a sudden in the early days of our Republic, with a trumped up charge of lodge crime. Nobody ever proved that it happened at all. But as one of the most consummate politicians has confessed in his life story, "It was a good enough charge until after the election." By his shrewd manipulation he made this order a target of political fury for a number of years. Henry Clay was defeated for the presidency because of that fanatical assault upon Masonry. But the defeat of Clay led afterward to the election of Andrew Jackson, who was an enthusiastic member of this order and Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee.

While we are in no sense a political party, it does not mean that masonry has not had a profound influence upon the history of our Republic.

I do not forget that the Boston Tea Party was planned and executed by masons. I do not forget that the man who led that party was Warren, who fell at Bunker Hill, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. I do not forget that the Convention which framed our Declaration of Independence, with four men out of the room, could have been opened on the Third Degree of Masonry. I do not forget that the first President of this Republic was a Master Mason and Master of a Masonic Lodge, and that he was sworn in office by the Grand Master of New York upon a Bible taken from the altar of a Masonic Lodge. I do not forget that most of his commanders in the War of the Revolution were also Masons. The spirit of this order, and its fundamental principles, as I shall outline them very briefly, were written into the organic law and constitution of this Republic.

On what ground can I justify to myself a love of this land more than of other lands? Because we are wiser than other folks? Not at all. Because the sky is a little bluer here than elsewhere? No. Because we are a kind of melting pot of all races and all nations? There might be more reason in that. I once heard Secretary Hay say: "I was born in Indiana; I was brought up in Illinois; I was educated in Rhode Island; I learned my politics in the District of Columbia, my diplomacy in Asia. The first of my ancestors whom I remember was an Englishman who was half Scotch and a German woman who was half French. Of my immediate progenitors my mother was from Rhode Island, my father was from Kentucky. In the midst of all this bedlam of origin and experience, I can only put on an aspect of deep humility in any gathering of favorite sons, and modestly confess that I am nothing but an American." Now, most of us here tonight could almost repeat those words, with differences here and

there of detail and say "We are nothing but Americans," and that is enough.

I can justify my love of the United States, and our flag in this way. Every nation, every race, has a spirit—unique, particular, peculiar, and by that token it has a ministry to render to universal humanity. The Holy Land, where walked the blessed feet which we follow so far off, was not as large as Illinois, not nearly so large nor half so rich. It was rugged and rough, much of it barren, aye, it was a troubled land, more troubled by far that Belgium is today. Not once nor twice, but seventeen times was its captial destroyed and its country laid waste. More than once its people were carried away to captivity and the land left desolate. Yet out of the rugged and tormented little land, kicked to and fro like a football between rival empires, what contributions came to mankind. It gave us that Book which has in it the sunrise and sunset, birth and death, and all that lies between and beyond; the Book which comprises all the advance of the ages, and remains the greatest modern book. It gave us the strongest, whitest, sweetest soul that the earth has ever known.

Greece was a small country, girt about by still seas and overhung by blue skies; but consider what it gave to the world in art, in philosophy, in drama, in poetry. Broken bits of Greek art are the despair of artists even today. Rome was only a city crowning its seven hills; yet it flung long, stony roads to the ends of the earth and brought their ends together and ruled the world. Rome is finished, but she has left us her genius for organization and her jurisprudence.

So, when we call the roll of the races and the nations, asking each for its contribution to humanity, it appears that each nation has made some contribution, however great or small and has given something unique to increase the fabulous wealth of human culture.

Now our Republic is a spirit unique, and by some par-

ticular token of service renders to humanity a contribution to make history. What is that spirit, what is that service? Fifty years ago on a little platform, on the battlefield of Gettysburg when that field was being consecrated as a cemetery, there stood a man from Illinois, tall angular, homely, but wondrous in his sweetness and earnestness. In his prophetic wisdom, he stated once and for all the reason for the existence of this Republic; what it means to the history of mankind: "that government of the people, for the people, by the people shall not perish from the earth." This is our contribution to the history of mankind, and the spirit of our Republic found its most perfect incarnation in Lincoln of Illinois.

As Masonry is not a political party, so it is not a church, unless we use the word "Church" as John Ruskin used it. He said: "Wherever one hand clasps another helpfully and hopefully, there is the one, true holy mother church." If we use it in that sense, then we might describe this order as a church. But using the word church in its more exact and specific sense, it ought to be said and made perfectly clear that Masonry is not a church of any one religion. It finds good in all religions. It lays emphasis upon that which is common to all religions, that which underlies all sects and overarches all creeds, and though it is not a religion it has preserved some things that are indispensable to the advance of religion. One of them is the right of every human soul to seek for the truth, by which every man must be guided, and to look up from the lap of truth into the face of God, and be free.

All through its history Masonry has stood for liberty in thought, and freedom, friendship and fraternity in religion. Today we are seeing the fulfillment—the rapid and remarkable fulfillment of this long cherished dream. Some of us who are still young remember when the duty of the pulpit apparently was to prove that every othr pulpit was

wrong. Some of us have listened to such discourses until we are tempted to think that all the other church steeples, save our own, ought to be pointing the other way. How changed is the spirit of today. Now if churches continue on what is common to all of them, it may be necessary in a few years for Satan to invoke the anti-trust law in order to protect his business. Perhaps it will be as ineffective in that case as it seems to have been in some others.

Above all creeds that divide, all bigotries that becloud, Masonry has tried to write the one universal gospel of the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the moral law, the Golden Rule, and the hope of life everlasting.

Think for a moment, of the state of mind and of faith in 1717. The moral degeneration of England at that time was pitiful, almost unbelievable. John Wesley was a mere lad; he had not yet come with his magnificent and cleansing abandon. How inconsequential that England seems as we look back upon it; how petty, torn into sects and schisms, sects so small that some of them might have been called insects. Bishop Butler sat in his castle with hardly a hope surviving. Spiritual dearth and deadness everywhere. Bigotry and animosity almost unthinkable.

It was at that period that the order of Free Masons took its present form, and announced to the world its platform in some such words as these: "Once it was proper to oblige men to the religion of the country where they lived, whatever that religion might be, but now it is thought more proper to oblige them only to that religion in which all men agree; to be good men and true; men of honor and honesty, without regard to denomination or persuasion, whereby Masonry becomes the center of union among persons who would remain at at distance." If these words had been written yesterday they would be remarkable enough, but when we remember the time they were written, when we see them against the background of the year 1717, they become

memorable in the history of the world. You can see how prophetic they were of the religious situation today.

The religion in which all men agree. This is the religion that is talked in the masonic lodge. Therefore men of every religion, sect and church find welcome at this altar, and there confess their own God, the Father of all. They meet as brothers not as sectarians, not as members of parties. The mission of this order is not to divide men but to unite them, to refine and exalt their faith, to turn them from the semblance of life to homage for truth, for duty, for character, to establish them in attitudes resulting in all the relations of fellowship of life.

Masonry never invites anyone to come to its altar, never invites any man to join. Its only invitation is the presence of its influence in the community making for sweetness and for love, and the character of the men who belong to it. If these do not invite, then it extends no invitation. When a man seeks admission to its rites and degrees, he is received if found worthy of that honor. It has never shed blood. It has never persecuted. It has never willingly brought sorrow to the heart of any woman, nor tears to the face of any little child. It has one purpose, to remove the misunderstandings between men and make them friends, to teach man to know his fellow man, believing that when they know each other they will love each other. Charles Lamb said: "Don't introduce me to that man, if I know him I will have to love him and as it is I enjoy hating him." Those of you who know Charles Lamb know how to misinterpret that sentence. Think of Charles Lamb hating anybody! Think of Charles Lamb hating anybody! Nevertheless he touched the truth, if we know another it is very hard to hate. The tragedy of the world is not that men are ignorant, not that they are poor, for who is wise and who is rich? It is that they are strangers. My friends, when men come to know each other it is very hard for them to hate.

The masonic lodge, according to our symbolism is a prophecy to the world that the spirit that obtains in the Masonic Lodge will be diffused throughout the world. When this symbolic prophecy is fulfilled and the world becomes like a Masonic lodge there will be no dark wars to scourge it such as are tearing Europe to tatters and leaving it a heap of ruins today. If the men who brought on this war, instead of conducting a diplomacy of deceit had met around the altar of a masonic lodge, not one of them would have drawn the sword against another. The way out of war is by promoting and deepening fellowship and good will among men, without regard to race or religion, or condition in life. Above all races, above all religions, above all royalties is humanity, greater than all of them.

Any order that toils as Free Masonry toils to promote a sense of the unity of humanity, of the relationship in heart and mind and soul of every living man and ever living woman, has a mission benign in behalf of the future of mankind. Because this is the spirit of Masonry, it grows rapidly in this Republic, where a man is valued not for his religious opinions, nor for his political affiliations, but for his manhood. The truth in everlasting music has been sung by Robert Burns, who was never so happy as when presiding over a Masonic Lodge.

Naturally then, in a country where Saxon, Teuton, Slav and Celt all mingle and live in peace, march together in the same industrial armies, worship together at the same altars, eat together out of the same dinner pails. In a country where such a spirit prevails, the order of Free Masonry appeals to a young man entering its temple gates. Naturally the elect of our Republic seek its fellowship and the teaching of its initiation and degrees. When a young man comes reverently and sincerely to the altar of this Men's House, and receives its great and simple teachings, takes it to heart, exalts it in his character, then he will be a better citizen, a better

husband, father and friend.

Our reforms do not succeed, because we have not enough good men to make our dreams come true. That is the whole trouble. Therefore, when Masonry seeks to make men better, purer of heart, more sympathetic and kindly, she is working on the foundation of all good things, making every hope more secure, every sacred thing more sacred. She is not the enemy of the church, but the helper of the church.

When we think of what is going on in Europe, we realize that the very qualities that are being used in the war if used and directed in the cause of peace, would bring a new day upon the earth.

These qualities are magnificent generalship, farseeing sagacity, power of organization and the spirit of comradeship whereby the youth of Europe go singing and jesting to their death. These are the very best qualities; generalship, not in behalf of war but in behalf of peace, in behalf of those who are to live here upon the earth after we have fallen. Farsighted sagacity, that makes wise and just laws for the right ordering of society social engineering that will build bridges whereby the better inheritance of the past may be passed on to the future. And with this generalship a new spirit of comradeship, which values a man for his manhood alone and loves him because he is akin to ourselves. This is the spirit that will yet change this world from a world of strife and woe and cheerless misery into a place worthy of Him who has made it.

"Come, clear the way, then clear the way:
Blind creeds and kings have had their day
Break the dead branches from the path:
Our hope is in the aftermath—
Our hope is in heroic men,
Star-led to build the world again.
To this even the ages ran:
Make way for brotherhood—make way for man."

The Romance of Freemasonry

Right Worshipful Brother
Joseph Fort Newton, d.d.

It is both an honour and a very great happiness for me to be here this evening to greet this extraordinary assembly of our brethren. It is the third time that I have visited Toronto. The first time I came in 1910. As a very young man I came to ask the late Goldwin Smith to write me an introduction to the life of President Lincoln which I was engaged in preparing. He received me very kindly when I told him what I was doing and he promised to do what I asked. Unfortunately, death did not allow him to fulfil that promise. It was at that time that I first had a glimpse of your beautiful City.

It seems to me that a new City has arisen since I was here twenty-five years ago. As I remember it then, the old Queen's Hotel stood where this magnificent hotel stands now. It is a brilliant city and I am deeply grateful to you for this cordial welcome.

It is a great Grand Lodge, the Grand Lodge of Canada, in the Province of Ontario, and I am happy to know something of its history, not only in that brief and concise and beautiful work of M.W. Brother Herrington, but also in the larger volumes of the late Brother Ross Robertson. I don't know of any Masonic research can surpass the works of the late Brother Robertson in the carefulness with which he arrived at his conclusions and conditions in the enchanting style in which he wrote. He wrote, as did Brother Herrington, only in much briefer form, part of the romance of Masonry in this great Dominion. It is indeed a happiness to be here at the unveiling of a great portrait,—a portrait of a man who takes his place among the noble Masons who have ruled over this jurisdiction. One of the towering figures

of this Grand Lodge is that of Brother Wilson. Nobody can read the history of this Grand Lodge and not realize what a truly great Mason he was. (Applause) He was wise with the wisdom of astuteness, patient as a negotiator over the union of two jurisdictions in the same territory, and one of the most prolific speakers of English that I can recall in the leadership of our Brotherhood. It is a grief to me not to meet Worshipful Brother Ponton this evening. We have been friends for many years and I officiated for him on a most interesting occasion in my church in New York City some years ago when he was married again. He is a very brilliant Mason and I think the best fraternal correspondent in the western hemisphere. I knew he had been ill and had suffered an accident but I had so much hoped that he might be present this evening. I hope the brethren who are near him will convey my greetings and remember me to him with special affection. This is a wonderful assembly and I like your spirit of fun and frolic. We do not have as much fun in our lodge as it is mostly made up of old Masons. I want to talk to you this evening, if I may, on the 'Romance of Masonry.'

The great introduction to which you have listened will show you my interest in Masonry began before I was born and I owe it to the life of my father. Yes, it is true, that from the earliest years when I heard that history it warmed my heart. It filled me with a strong urge and put such a stir in my heart that I wanted to follow it from my earliest boyhood. It showed me a great brotherly love to the wives and orphans of many unfortunate fellows. And as I have gone on through life and have seen more of the cruelty of the world and of the unbelievable hardness of the human heart, I have realized that Masonry is one of the great poems of the world. It is romantic in its origin.

I remember very well asking for admission to the Brotherhood when I was a young minister. When they were

good enough to allow me to enter, I seemed to be in a whispering gallery where voices were trying to speak to me out of the past and tell me wise and good and beautiful truths. I wondered if the men in that lodge realized the full meaning and the far-echoing and haunting meanings of the symbols round about them. I wondered if they realized that they had in their hands the shadow of something great and wonderful and I wanted to know all about it. And in the evening, after I had received the third degree of Masonry, I asked if there was any book that would tell a young man all about what it is and whence it came and what it is in the world today. Nobody seemed to know of that kind of book. Then I asked the Master a lot of questions. He was a good man and a good Master and knew a good deal about Masonic Law, but he was not widely enough informed of the story of Masonry.

Then I moved to Iowa. Far back in the history of that Grand Jurisdiction, the first Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Iowa in some way induced the Grand Lodge to appropriate the magnificent sum of five dollars to start a library. He did not stop. He kept at it again and again until he built one of the greatest Masonic Libraries in the world. Some of you Masons have visited it. If you want to do any research in the field of Masonry, that is the place to do it. He had the genius of a book collector and how he got some of the books without being arrested for housebreaking, nobody was ever able to understand. And there it was,—right at my door. About the same time I became Grand Chaplain and having told this story about a desire for this book, the Grand Lodge asked me to write such a book for the Grand Lodge, and I did. Going back and back and back, sifting all kinds of wild legends, I sought to find the real facts about real Masons and put them forth in an understanding way. That little book appeared in 1914 and has gone all over the Masonic world. It is the only book that has the

imprint of a Grand Lodge. Later, while living in England, I did more research and went through it for mistakes and then brought out a revised edition. It was translated into Dutch and used as a text in the Netherlands. It was also translated into Swedish and was used in the same way. It is printed in Portugese and Syrian and in German and there is a copy in almost every Masonic Lodge all over the world. So it has gone from place to place because the need I felt had evidently been widespread, and for the past thirty years I have tried to do two things; first to induce Masons to know more about Masonry; second, to convey knowledge to them that they may be able to know more intelligently of the constructive life of truthful Masonry. Yes, it is a romance. It was romantic in its origin. Let me sketch it briefly.

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The world has cracked up and gone to pieces, not for the first time nor for the last, with wars and then stretches of peace and re-organization all in our generation. The cozy, comfortable world of the Middle Ages was shattered by the Revival of Learning. It was broken up politically by the advent of nationalism, by the people of the north outside of the old Roman Empire. It was later upset by the Industrial Revolution and still later by the march of the victory of modern science. The Roman Catholics gave to the men of the Middle Ages a shrine that still stands. It may be found useful again. We have found today, in the breaking up of the Middle Ages, that they had two commanding philosophies of life but with the breaking up of the Middle Ages, as far as is realized, we created our modern world, and from among them—Free Masonry, instead of a response of an unformulated aspiration.

It was in a very casual way that a few conceived the idea of the Grand Lodge. There never was such a thing before. They did not know they were doing anything great,—and

that is the way it was done. They never sat down and planned the thing deliberately. They didn't even keep any minutes of the proceedings of the famous evening. No minutes were kept for some little time. None were published until 1723. I have great pleasure in reminding you that the constitution of Freemasonry was written by a clergyman. That is why it has never been amended. (Applause) Of course that clergyman was a Presbyterian. When I read the constitution it sounded like a product of a General Assembly.

The first Grand Lodge was established midway between the journals of John Fox, the Quaker, and John Wesley, the Methodist. That is a chronicle that broadens out like a picture of that century. I used to take a copy in my pocket when I went all over England just to see if I could find a place he had not been. It was a curious England. It was a time of moral decline and you remember the famous sermon describing the moral slump and chaos where the churches were empty and the clergy were sometimes drunken.

Yes, it was a time when the very depth of hidden human need was met by some divine response and as at all times when real religion is at altogether too low an ebb people argued about religion and pummeled each other with Bibles to get the better of the argument. When men have nothing real to argue about, they argue about religion. Our William Penn gave that epigram. When they do that, they do it in the name of religion,—that which religion forbids. The country was cut up and divided into religious sects so small that you have to call them insects. It was at that time when Anderson sat down and wrote that article in which he said, "In olden days Free Masons were obliged to be of the religion of the country in which they worked." Now the religion of Masonry is that in which all good men agree—agree to be good men and true; men of honour and of honesty. And they agree that each Mason may follow the dictates of his own conscience; may practise the religion of his own choice.

And so they made Masonry a centre of union to those who would otherwise be kept at a distance,—a centre of friendship.

That was the purpose of the organization as set forth in our Constitution—a great centre of friendship and a focus of fellowship to bring men together that they may know and understand and therefore love each other. It was not our desire to reform the world but just to make friends of men in the world,—bring men a little closer together so that each could feel the heartbeat of the other and sit down and sing together and learn to be friends.

Brethren, there is nothing that this distracted world needs now more than the making of friends among men. No wonder in that time of loneliness men were ready to be drawn together as they will be shortly again. The end of the world has come and that is what has brought us now very close to the end of the human world. No wonder the romance of Masonry grew so fast. It was needed. Men underneath their sectarianism wanted to be friends as I believe they do in their hearts today in spite of high walls and fortifications. I believe if we knew what is going on in the hearts of men we should discover that their deep hunger is for a greater friendship for each other. I believe that the religion we need is one of great friendship and good will. So Masonry grew because it was needed, because it ministered to something that men must have.

It grew so fast that at one time there were four Grand Lodges in England. There was a Grand Lodge of all England and two subordinate lodges. They had contests,—these two lodges, and the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge loved to write letters to these lodges and encourage them along. I have read some of the letters he wrote and he really loved the men with whom he was engaged in contest. After all, it was a contest between these two lodges and not a conflict. There was rivalry, but no wrangling. That is as it should

be between Masons and when I read the letters he wrote to the men I knew he had the heart of a true Mason, and I love him for it. One Grand Lodge adopted the British Army and the other the Navy and between the two they spread all over the face of the world. They brought it to this country and Massachusetts and Pennsylvania are still debating which has the honour of being the oldest Grand Lodge. Living in Pennsylvania, I must take the side of Pennsylvania, of course.

We had a great debate with Massachusetts and Maine not so long ago. The beauty of the debate was that they both happened to be right, each from his own point of view. Massachusetts is right in saying that they had the first lodge (in Boston) and Pennsylvania is right in saying that they were the first constituted lodge under the jurisdiction of the British obedience. But the first lodge in Pennsylvania was born in 1731 of which lodge Benjamin Franklin was Master in 1734. It was authorized in 1735 by the Grand Lodge of Ireland. But we had a good time arguing it out. I do not know whether you would be interested in part of the romance in the making of the Republic to the south, in what we call the War of Independence and you call a disruption of the Empire. It was largely due to Freemasonry which was the only intercolonial network through which the thirteen jealous colonies could possibly work together. It was not easy to get a system that would get the colonies to work together. They had no common form of government. The Church could not do it. It was divided. In New England you might be turned out in the snow with the hope that you might freeze to death. You might be hung by the society of friends on Boston Common. It was a very unfortunate thing to be an Anglican in New England in those days. On the other hand, if you lived in Virginia in the south, and were a Methodist, you had an equally hard time. You had to pay higher taxes. They even had a law on the statute books per-

mitting the burning of heretics. They never enforced that law because they were much too interested in fox-hunting to bother and so the law was never enforced. Those conditions are true of every one of the Commonwealths of our Republic. I could tell you almost without end of my Mother Lodge in Texas. We had a revolution of our own in Texas and set up a Republic. We defeated the Mexican army.

My Mother was born in Texas when it was a Republic, before it was even a part of the United States. And if you go to the capital city of that State you can see the French Embassy there where the Ambassador of France lived. Holland Lodge was the Mother Lodge out of which grew the Grand Lodge of Texas. The public school system of Texas was revised in Holland Lodge. The men that carved out the Commonwealth, who organized and framed the law, were members of Holland Lodge. Or take King Solomon's Lodge. They did the same thing in that Commonwealth. Or St. John's Lodge in Philadelphia. They did the same thing. This is the way the public schools of New York were established. The Grand Lodge conceived the idea of a school, free, for underprivileged children. After awhile it grew out of all bounds and beyond the powers of the Grand Lodge and was then taken over by the State. But I dare say that it was true in this Dominion, that the men who set up these institutions of liberty, schools for greater enlightenment,—and I might say that this was not an easy thing to do,—were men of our Fraternity, brothers and builders. Masonry has always made men. It is a great romance, I tell you. If I had the time to follow it through with you this evening, I believe you would all agree with me that it is a great romance. I want the young men here to go back to their places, realizing what a great tradition they stand for. Among the most precious of spiritual possessions of the English-speaking people is the human spirit and enterprise of Freemasonry. It is a shining tradition. It has been a shining

tradition wherever it has gone, as you will have learned from the remarks made by the Grand Master of Quebec this evening. It is a tradition of life and liberty and loving-kindness which some are trying to tear down today.

If it has been a romance in the past, will it be equally as romantic in preserving the inheritance of my fathers and yours and our common race? Think of what would happen to civilization if the first thing to be destroyed is the Masonic Fraternity.

They tried to destroy it in Switzerland last year and made a cunning attempt to do so but fortunately were thwarted. If Masonic Lodges are the first thing to be closed, the second thing is the Christian Church. They stand or fall together because both rest on the same faith and the same dignity of human beings. When one falls the other falls, too. When man loses faith in himself he loses the sense of his own worth to his race and to his God. He loses the vision of his own rights that are imbedded in his nature, placed there by God and, if democracy of this kind goes down, Christianity follows it. This is the desperate cynicism of our day. Civilized society is endangered by the sudden and unaccountable advent of a spirit,—sinister and ghastly and ruthless. The old Caesarism was much different. There was dignity and law and jurisprudence in the old Roman Law and there were many great lawyers. We are in the grip of blind idealism. It is a time of great danger in history as you well know. Culture is in the eclipse. The toms-toms of war are heard incessantly. It is not a time to be nervous. It is not a time to lose hope. But, if the civilization that was built up so patiently is to be preserved and passed on, it will take all the fortitude and spiritual vision of Freemasonry, with the Christian Church, to take a great part in that enterprise.

Temporarily, at least, we have suffered along with the Christian Church, along with the universities, along with all those lovely and beautiful agencies and institutions that have

been built up for the refinement of mankind.

Some of us feel a little discouraged. We are sick of the world in which we live. We want to get out of the net in which we are caught. We would like to have a little rest before beginning again to join hands with like-minded men and women to rebuild the temple of liberty and culture and reason and kindness which these incredible nitwits have torn down. It will take a long time to rebuild it, but it must be done, and it will be done when sanity returns to this insane world.

Three years ago a book was written in which the writer said: "These things are behind us: human sacrifice, religious persecution, the subjection of woman, punishment without trial, torture by responsible authority, irresponsible government, the right to go to war regardless of treaties."

These things, the writer said, are behind us! No, they are right before our eyes! No optimist is worth his salt who does not see everything that the pessimist sees.

That is the kind of world in which Masonry with its gentleness, its loving kindness, its patience, its spiritual faith and its moral philosophy, is trying to build. At least it can build men up in spiritual strength and moral integrity, so that if the world cracks up we need not crack up too.

Edward Gibbon, in "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," gave five reasons for the collapse of that civilization which plunged the world into the Dark Ages. It was a great empire, perhaps the greatest the world has ever known, when the genius of the Caesars picked up the jigsaw puzzle which Alexander the Great had left, and made a Roman Empire. It was the first time the world had unity based upon law and not merely upon force. Wherever the Roman legions went they made roads, they set up scouts; and to this day their jurisprudence is a precious legacy of our race.

Why did the Roman Empire collapse? For five reasons,

as Gibbon read the record:

First, the rapid increase of divorce; the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, the basis of human society.

Second, higher and higher taxes and the spending of public moneys for bread and circuses.

Third, the mad craze for pleasure; sport becoming every year more exciting and more brutal.

Fourth, the building of gigantic armaments when the real enemy was within, in the decadence of the people.

Fifth, the decay of religion, faith fading into a mere form, losing touch with life and becoming impotent to guide it.

It looks like an untouched photograph of much of the life of our time, does it not, brethren?

Some of our people are very much afraid lest the alien "isms" which infest the earth may affect our body politic with some germ, red or black or some other color. They have a right to be afraid if these trends which brought Rome down cannot be arrested.

Christianity grasped the crumbling, classic world when Rome fell, reshaped it, and saved its culture. But if that faith grows dim in our hearts, what hope have we for our own civilization?

This is a dark picture. To be truthful, one must paint it so. The misgiving in my own mind is back in your minds, too, as I well know. Who knows his way out? Who can see through the mist and the fog?

But, brethren, we believe in God. We are taught that, as one of the first as well as one of the last lessons that Masonry teaches. To me the present world situation is a complete and overwhelming demonstration of the truth and validity of the principles for which Masonry and the Church stand. It is not because men have obeyed those principles that the world is what it is. No; it is because those principles have been repudiated.

It was a great German poet who said that the history of the world is the judgment of the world; and the history of today is the judgment, based on the word of God, that the world is on a wrong basis, going in a wrong direction, and "unmerciful disaster follows fast and follows faster."

Everything that is not built up on the truth will fall down. A lie cannot stand. The moral order of the world, the moral order of the universe, is against the social and political order of the world.

That is the great hope, to me, and the only hope I have left.

During the year two charming brethren wrote an open letter to me in the press. A most courteous and kindly letter it was, in which they referred to my talk some time ago asking for a "united Masonry in a divided world." They said many interesting things, some that I did not know—and it is better not to know so many things than to know some things that are not so! But it was a most gracious letter; and one of their criticisms, if so gentle a chiding could be called a criticism, was that I put entirely too much religion into Masonry.

That may be so, brethren; but I cannot help it. God put religion into Masonry. It is one of the forms of the spiritual life, one of the most beautiful forms; and outside of my home and the house of God it has my devotion as nothing else has. Do we not need such a great world fraternity as this? Built of spiritual faith; the faith of God the Eternal. The God who is the reason for our existence. The explanation of our being. The consecration of human life,—the faith of man; made in His own image and endowed with a spark of spiritual God-fire.

We need faith in life itself. Not once when I was a young man did I ever hear anybody ask the question,—"Is Life Worth While?" Not once. There were things in life that we did not like in those days, but it never occurred to us to

question the value of life itself. I remember the shock that came to me in reading a book entitled "Is Life Worth While?" The question which so many young folks ask in a mood of futility and despair. And I remember, too, the inspiration I got in reading an essay written by an old and grand teacher. He said, "Yes" if you make it so it will be worth while. You will not find it to suit you, you must make it suit you. Take the raw stuff of life and give it shape. That struck a thought and a response in my heart. Always life is worth while if hearts are sound and true. But it will take heroic hearts and well established hearts to stand and keep their poise through the devastating influences that swirl about us in our time.

I go out a great deal with young people and I talk with them and I know something of what is going on in their hearts. I believe the mood of futility is beginning to ebb. I saw that reflected recently in the youth conference which has just been recently adjourned. They were confused. What they wanted to do was not to be "anti" this and "anti" that and "anti" the other thing. They did not want to pass resolutions condemming one idea or another but only to be positive, to have aspirations for the things for which we stand. Our principles are the basis of our civilization and it is not necessary to be "anti" this and "anti" that. They wanted to live up to those principles and stand by them, and make them fruitful in our own society.

That is the best effect of democracy on your side of the border or on ours. And speaking of that border,—it is invisible but so many Canadian clergymen are coming down and taking the finest churches in the United States that I am in favour of a patrol along that border!

I don't want to seem pessimistic because no Mason has a right to be that. No man who believes in God will lose hope nor will he let any other man lose hope. God is our great hope. This is His world. It is in His hands. It has not slipped out of His hands and it will not. We are at the end

of an era; in the chaos and confusion that always attends another era which is about to be born. It will be different. It will not fit your fashion or mine, perhaps, but our business is to know what way God is going and to get things out of God's way. I love the story about Lloyd George as told in the biography of my friend, Mr. Spender. One night in his room, during the World War, the men of Scotland Yard warned him to be very careful of plots and movements to take his life. When he heard that he burst out singing a Welsh hymn. If you ever in your life heard singing,—he could sing just like an angel! Many a sing-song I have had in his home. When he had finished singing his hymn the men near said to him, "You don't seem to be alarmed by this information." He replied, "Not at all, I love it. When in time of tumult I am happy because I remember a saying of an old Welsh Preacher that when there is tumult and overturning in the town, Brothers, it means that there is a vast divine movement above. Something new is trying to break into human life—some word that God is trying to speak to us."

That story has done me no end of good. I cannot quite hear the word that God would speak for the new time which we are entering. It may be that not any of my associates can hear it. Our mind is too full of the past to listen to that newer word, but I believe, with Emerson, that there will be minds and hearts to hear that newer word, when dictators will be "gone with the wind,"—when there will be a re-birth of the human soul,—with the spark of God-fire.

Liberty and justice and human society will be organized on a higher basis—something nearer the spirit of Freemasonry and the faith of the Christian Church.

Let me tell a story and close. It is a true story, not one of those yarns that you brethren sometimes tell. *(Laughter)* It is a story that has done me a great deal of good, and it may perhaps explain to you why I have not left my religion outside of the Lodge. It is a story of Toscanini, that great

master of the orchestra. His favorite piece is the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven. He insists that his orchestra rehearse it piecemeal, each group of instruments playing its part alone: and he is very exacting about it. Then they must all play the symphony together. One day the orchestra had a piecemeal rehearsal. Then in a hushed hall they played that mighty melody gathered and grew until every man was lifted higher and higher because that melody seemed to come from the heart of God; when it was finished the first violinist said to the second violinist, "If he scolds us after such perfect playing, I will jump up and push him off the platform."

But Toscanini did not scold. As the last note died away he stood like one transfigured, with a terrific emotion in his heart. He exclaimed, "Who am I— Toscanini? I am nobody. Who are you? Nobody. I am nothing; you are nothing. It is Beethoven. He is everything?"

Who are you, brethren? Nobody. Who am I? Nobody. I am nothing. It is God; and He is everything.

THE MISSION OF MASONRY

Today we have erected a bronze tablet marking the site of the first lodge of Masons in the territory of Iowa. Such a memorial of our fathers, the pioneers, is in accord with the fitness of things. It bespeaks a sense of history, a vision of the past out of which the present has come to flower, and from whose wise and prophetic sowing the fruit of the future will grow. We honor ourselves by thus recalling the men of other days, but we also lay upon ourselves the obligation to labor, as they labored, with forward-looking thoughts, while establishing more firmly the work of their hands. Others have labored; we have entered into their labors, and it behooves us to continue that sacred history.

Those sturdy men who set up the altar of Masonry on the frontier of this commenwealth were prophetic souls. They were men of faith who builded better than they knew, as men of faith always do. They believed in the future, in the growth of large things from small beginnings, and in the principles of Masonry as the true foundation of society and the fortress of a free state. They knew that the Masonic lodge is a silent partner of the home, the church, and the school house, toiling in behalf of law and order, without which neither industry nor art can flourish, and that its benign influence would help to build this commonwealth in strength, wisdom, and beauty. Therefore they erected their altar and kindled its flame; and having wrought in faithfulness, they died in faith, obeying the injunction of that master poet who said:

"Keep the young generations in hail,
Bequeath to them no tumbled house!"

Time has more than fulfilled their dream; the facts have outrun their faith. If men see, after death, what passes on this earth, what a picture now lies spread out for their rejoicing vision. They behold not only our lakes, hills, and

rolling prairies, our rivers running to the sea, our cities shining in the sunlight, trains moving to and fro like shuttles in a loom, park like farms dotted with homes, school houses and children at play, temples of prayer and the sleeping places of the dead; but also the march of ideas, the growth and flowering of principles, the unfolding of truths, the increase of liberty, justice and fraternity among men, and the mystic ties of memory uniting the present in which we toil with the past in which they labored and fell asleep. Their greatest happiness must consist in seeing their good influences widening out from year to year, as rivulets widen into rivers, and shaping the current of history, as our influence, for weal or woe, will help to shape the times to come.

Under the spell of such a vision we may well pause, look before and after, and ask ourselves the meaning of this fraternity, and its mission among men. One of the most impressive and touching things in human history is that certain ideal interests have been set apart as especially venerated among all peoples. Guilds have arisen to cultivate the interests embodied in art, science, philosphy, fraternity, and religion, to train men in their service, to bring their power to bear upon the common life of mortals and send through that common life the glory of the ideal, as the sun shoots its transfiguring rays through the great dull cloud, evoking beauty from the brown earth. Such is Masonry, which unites all these high interests and brings to their service a vast, world-wide fraternity of free men, built upon a basis of spiritual faith, whose mission it is to make men friends, to refine and exalt their lives, to turn them from the semblance of life to homage for truth, righteousness and character. Forming one great society over the whole globe, it upholds every noble and redeeming ideal of humanity, making all good things better by its presence, like a meadow that rests on a subterranean stream. He who would reckon the spiritual posses-

sions of our race must take account of the genuis of Masonry, and its ministry to the highest life of man.

The very existence of such a great historic fellowship in the quest and service of the ideal is a fact eloquent beyond all words. It is like some lofty mountain uplifted in the midst of the years, at whose feet the generations come and go, whose air sweetens the world, and whose peak assembles the vagrant clouds and invokes showers of refreshing. Apparitions of a day, what is our puny warfare against ingorance and evil compared with the warfare which this venerable order has been waging against them for centuries, and will wage after we are gone. More than an institution, more than a tradition, more than a society. Masonry is one of the forms of the Divine life upon earth. No one may ever hope to describe a spirit so benign and beautiful, an influence so quiet, so unresting, so persistent, and so gracious. That task belongs of right to the genius of poetry and song, by whose magic those elusive and impalpable realities which hallow the world find embodiment and voice. All that one can do is to state the faith of Masonry, its philosophy, the basis of its demand for freedom, and its plea for universal friendship.

I.

On the threshold of the Masonic lodge every man, whether prince or peasant, is asked to confess his faith in God the Father Almighty, the Architect and Master-builder of the world. That is not a mere form of words. To be indifferent to God is to be indifferent to the greatest of all realities, that upon which the aspiration of humanity rests for its uprising passion and desire. No institution that is dumb concerning the ultimate meaning and character of this universe can last. It is a house built upon the sand, doomed to fall when the winds blow and the floods beat upon it. No human

brotherhood that has not its foundation in a Divine Fatherhood can long endure. It is a rope of sand, weak as water, and its fine sentiment quickly evaporates. Life leads, if we follow its meanings and move in the drift of its deeper conclusions, to one God as the ground of the world, and upon that ground Masonry lays its corner-stone. Therefore, it endures, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

That reverent and enlightened faith from which, as from a never-failing spring, flow heroic devotedness, moral self-respect, authentic sentiments of fraternity, inflexible fidelity and effectual consolations, honor in life and hope in death, this great order has in all times religiously preserved. Ardently and preservingly it has propogated it through the centuries, and in our age more zealously than ever. Scarcely a Masonic discourse is pronounced or a Masonic lesson read, by the highest officer or the humblest lecturer, that does not earnestly teach two extremely simple and profound principles—love of God and love of our fellow man. That is the one true religion, and it is the very spirit of Masonry, its light and power, its basis and apex. Upon that faith it rests; in that faith it lives; and by that faith it will conquer, putting the doubts and bigotries of men to shame with its simple insight, and the diginity of its golden voice.

Of no age, Masonry belongs to all time; of no religion, it finds great truths in all. Indeed, it holds that truth which is common to all elevating and benign religions, and is the basis of each; that faith which underlies all sects and over-arches all creeds, the sky above and the river bed below the flow of mortal years. It is not a religion, still less a cult, but it is a worship in which all good men may unite, that each may share the faith of all. It does not undertake to explain or dogmatically to settle those great mysteries which out-top human knowledge. Beyond the facts of faith it does not go. With the subtleties of speculation concerning these truths, and the unworldly envies growing out of them, it has

not to do. There divisions begin, and Masonry was not to divide men, but to unite them. It asks not for tolerance, but for fraternity, leaving each man free to think his own thought and fashion his own system of ultimate truth. Therefore, all through the ages it has been, and is today, a meeting place of differing minds, and a prophecy of the final union of all reverent and devout souls.

In the olden time one man framed a dogma and declared it to be the eternal truth. Another man did the same thing; then the two began to hate each other with an unholy hatred, each trying to impose his private scheme of the universe upon the other, and that is an epitome of some of the blackest pages of history. Against those old sectarians who substituted intolerance for charity, persecution for friendship, and did not love God because they hated their neighbors, Masonry made perpetual protest in a voice which is now becoming the eloquence of the world. A vast change of heart is now taking place in the religious world, by reason of an exchange of thought and courtesy, and a closer personal touch, and the various sects, so long estranged, are learning to unite upon the things most worth while and the least open to debate. That is to say, they are moving toward the Masonic position, and when they arrive Masonry will preside over a scene which she prophesied from the beginning.

At last, in the not distant future, the old and bitter feuds of the sects will come to an end. Our little systems will have their day and cease to be, lost in the vision of a truth so great that all men are one in their littleness; one in their victorious assurance of "the ultimate desencey of things, and the kindness of the veiled Father of men." Then men of every creed will ask, when they meet:

"Not what is your creed?
But what is your need?
What is your vision of the meaning of this infinite uni-

verse, luminous and dark, glorious and terrible, in which we live? Then Masonry, having fulfilled a part of its sublime and prophetic mission upon earth, will rejoice. High above all dogmas that blind, all bigotries that blind, all bitterness that divides it will write the eternal verities of the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the moral law, the golden rule, and the hope of a life everlasting!

II.

Out of this simple faith grows the philosophy which Masonry teaches in signs and symbols, in pictures and parables. Stated freely, stated sympathetically, it is that behind the pageant of nature, in it and over it, there is a Supreme Mind which initiates, impels, and controls all. That behind the life of man and its pathetic story in history, in it and over it, there is a rightous will, the intelligent conscienc of the Most High. In short, that the first and last thing i the universe is mind, that the highest and deepest thing i conscience, and that the final reality is the absoluteness of love. Higher than that faith cannot fly; deeper than that thought cannot go.

There is but one real alternative of this philosphy. It is not atheism, because the adherents of atheism are too few, and its intellectual position is too precarious ever to be a menace. An atheist is an orphan, a waif wandering the midnight streets of time, homeless and alone. Nor is the alternative agnosticism, which in the nature of things can be only a passing mood of thought, when, indeed, it is not a confession of intellectual bankruptcy, or a labor-saving devise to escape the toil and fatigue of high thinking. It trembles in perpetual hesitation, like the donkey equi-distant between two bundles of hay, starving to death but unable to make a decision. No, the real alternative is materialism, which played so large a part in scholarly circles fifty years ago,

and which, defeated there, has betaken itself to the field of opportunity and practical affairs. This is the dread alternative of a denial of faith, a blight which would apply a sponge to all the high aspirations and ideals of our race. According to this dogma, the last things in the universe are atoms, their number, dance, combination and growth. All mind, all will, all emotions, all character, all love is incedental, transitory, vain. The sovereign fact is mud, the final reality itself is dirt!

Against this horror Masonry has in every age stood as a witness for the soul, in the war of the mind against dust, in the choice between dirt and Deity, it has allied itself on the side of the great idealisms and optimisms of humanity. It takes the spritual view of life and the world as being most in accord with the facts of experience, the promptings of right reason, the voice of conscience, and the vision of the soul. It dares to read the meaning of the universe through what is highest in human nature, not through what is lower; to assert that the soul is akin to an eternal spirit, and therefore deathless as God its Father is deathless. Think of what it means to say that. It means that what a man thinks, the manner of his feeling, the character of his activity and career are of vital and ceaseless concern to the eternal God. It means that we are not shapes of mud placed here by chance, but sons of the Most High, citizens of eternity, and that there is laid upon us an abiding obligation to live in a manner befitting the dignity and worth of the soul.

Here is a philosophy which lights up the world like a sunrise, evolving meaning out of mystery, and hope out of what would else be despair. It brings out the colors of human life, investing our fleeting mortal years—brief at their longest, broken at their best—with enduring significance and beauty. It gives each of us, however humble and obscure, a place and a part in the stupendous historical enterprise; makes us fellow workers with the Eternal in His redemptive making

of humanity, and binds us to do His will upon earth as it is done in heaven. It subdues the intellect; it touches the heart; it begets in the will that sense of self-respect without which high and heroic living cannot be. Such is the philosophy upon which Masonry rests; and from it flow those bright streams that wander through and water this humar world of ours.

III.

Because this is so; because the human soul is akin to God, and is endowed with powers to which no one may set a limit, it is and of right ought to be free. Thus, by the logic of its philosophy, not less than by the inspiration of its faith, Masonry has been impelled to make its historic demand for liberty of consicence, for the freedom of the intellect, and for the right of all men to stand erect, unfettered, and unafraid, equal before God and the law, each respecting the rights of his fellows. What we have to remember is, that before this truth found embodiment in any political constitution it was embedded in the will of God and the constitution of the human soul. If the Magna Charta demanded rights which government can grant, Masonry from the first asserted those inalienable rights of man derived from God the Father of man. Nor will it ever swerve one jot or tittle from its ancient and eloquent demand till all men, everywhere, are free in body, mind and soul.

Never did this truth find sweeter voice than in the tones of the old Scotch fiddle on which Robert Burns, a Master Mason, sang, in lyric glee, of the sacredness of humanity, and the native divinity of human nature as the only lawful basis of society and the state. That music, heard long before in every Masonic lodge, went marching on, striding over continents, and trampling kingdoms down until it took form in the declaration of independence and constitution of this

republic, over whose birth Masonry presided and with whose growth it has had so much to do. It was not an accident that the Boston Tea Party, with its protest against taxation without representation, was planned in a Masonic lodge and executed by its members. Nor should we forget that the convention which framed our constitution, with four men absent, could have been opened in form as a Masonic lodge. The fathers of this nation, inspired by Masonry, dared to assert the divine right of man to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to secure which governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

So it has been all through our national history—of which, if you are not proud, you ought to have public prayers said for you next Sunday—and today this great order, with its plea for liberty, equality, and fraternity is worth more for the safety and sanctity of this republic than both its army and its navy. At every turn of events, when the rights of man have been threatened by enemies open and obvious, or subtle and insidious, Masonry has stood guard. In time of conflict she has softened the horrors of war, and in time of peace her altar light has shone as a signal fire along the heights of liberty, keeping watch over the principles wrought out by the blood and prayers and tears of our fathers. Not only in our own land, but everywhere over the broad earth, when men have thrown off the yoke of tyranny and demanded the rights that belong to manhood, they have found a friend in the Masonic order. Nor must we be less alert and vigilant today when, free of the danger of foes from without, our republic is imperilled by the negligence of indifference, the seduction of luxury, and the shadow of a passion-clouded, impatient discontent, whose end is madness and folly.

"Love thou my land, with love far-brought
From out the storied past, and used
Within the present, but transfused
Through future time by power of thought."

Some day, when the cloud of prejudice has been dispelled by the searchlight of truth, the world will honor Masonry for its heroic service to freedom of thought and the liberty of faith. No part of its ministry has been more noble, no principle of its teaching has been more precious than its age-long and unwavering demand for the right and duty of every soul to seek that light by which no man was ever injured, and that truth which makes man free. Down through the ages—often when the highest crime was not murder, but thinking, and when the human conscience was dragged as a slave at the wheel of the ecclesiastical chariot—always and everywhere Masonry has stood for the right of the soul to know the truth, and to look up unhindered from the lap of earth into the face of Him in whose great hand it stands. Not freedom from faith, but freedom of faith, has been its watchword, on the ground that as despotism is the mother of anarchy, so bigoted dogmatism is the prolific source of scepticism.

Against those who would fetter thought in order to perpetuate an effete authority, who would give the skinny hand of the past a scepter to rule the aspiring and prophetic present, and seal the lips of living thinkers with the dicta of dead scholastics, Masonry will never ground arms. Her plea is for government without tyranny and religion without superstition, and as surely as the suns rise and set her fight will be crowned with victory. She fights not with force, still less with intrigue, but with the power of truth, the persuasions of reason, and the might of gentleness, seeking not to destroy her enemies but to win them to the liberty of the truth and the fellowship of love.

IV.

For, if there be a God at all, who is the life of all th
was, is, and is to be, that God must be the Father of all

mankind; and if we are all born into this world by one high wisdom and one vast love, then we are brothers to the last man of us, forever. For better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part, men are held together by ties of spiritual kinship, sons of one eternal Father. Upon this spiritual kinship, sons of one eternal Father. Upon this spiritual fact must rest every real human fraternity, and it is the basis of the age-old plea of Masonry not only for freedom, but for friendship among men. And, though long delayed—

"It's comin' yet for a' that,
And man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that."

Our human history, saturated with blood and blistered with tears, is the story of man making friends with man. Society has evolved from a feud into a friendship, by the slow growth of love and the welding of man first to his kin, and then to his kind. The first men who lived in the red dawn of time lived every man for himself, his heart a sanctuary of suspicious, every man feeling that every other man was his foe, and therefore his prey. So there was war, strife, and bloodshed. Slowly there came to the savage a gleam of the truth that it is better to help than to hurt, and he organized clans and tribes. But tribes were divided by rivers and mountains, and the men on one side of the river felt that the men on the other side were their enemies. Again there was war, pillage, and sorrow. Great empires arose and met in the shock of conflict, leaving a trail of skeletons across the earth. Then came the great roads, reaching out with their stony clutch and bringing the ends of the earth together. Men met, mingled, passed, and repassed, and learned that human nature is much the same everywhere, with hopes and fears in common. Still there were many things to divide and estrange men from each other, and the earth was full of bitterness.

Not satisfied with natural barriers, men erected high walls of sect and caste, to exclude their fellows, and the men of one sect were sure that the men of all other sects were wrong—and would be lost. Thus, when real mountains no longer estranged man from man, mountains were made out of molehills—mountains of immemorial misunderstanding not yet moved into the sea. Barriers of race, of creed, of caste, of habit, of training, and interest separate men today, as if some malign genius were bent on keeping man from his fellows, begetting suspicion, uncharitableness, and hate. All through the ages men were unfriendly, and, therefore, unjust and cruel, largely because they were unacquainted.

"Here lies the tragedy of our race;
Not that men are poor;
All men know something of poverty;
Not that men are wicked;
Who can claim to be good?
Not that men are ignorant;
Who can boast that he is wise?
But that men are strangers."

In the meantime—and, verily, it was a mean time—Masonry, the oldest and most widely spread order, was toiling in behalf of friendship, uniting men upon the only basis upon which they can ever meet with dignity, each lodge an oasis of equality and good-will in a desert of feud and strife. At its altar men met as man to man, without vanity and without pretense, without fear and without reproach, held together by common vows to the right, as tourists crossings the Alps tie themselves together, so that if one slip and fall all may hold him up. Its tie of friendship—peculiar, particular, and unique—was like those tiny fibers running through the glaciers, along which sunbeams journey, melting the frozen mass and sending it to the valleys below in rivulets of

blessing. Other fibers were there, but none more far-ramifying, none more tender, none more responsive to the light than the mystical tie of Masonic love. No tongue can tell the meaning of that gentle tie binding men together, no pen can trace the influences that traveled along it, melting the hardness of the world into pity.

Toward a great friendship, long foreseen by Masonic faith, the world is slowly moving, amid difficulties and delays; and today the sun looks down and sees men everywhere getting together, as though the race were fast becoming a vast league of sympathy and service. Of that day, which will surely come, when nations will be reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, humane in the practice of wisdom; when no man will ride over the rights of his fellows; when no woman will be made forlorn, no little child wretched, by bigotry or greed, Masonry has ever been a prophet. Nor will she be content until the various threads of human fellowship are woven into one mystic cord of friendship, encircling the earth and holding the race in unity of spirit and the bonds of peace, as in the will of God it is one in origin, history, and end. Having outlived empires and philosophies, having seen generations appear and vanish, she will yet live to see the travail of her soul, and be satisfied—

"When the war-drum throbs no longer,
And the battle flags are furled;
In the parliament of man,
The federation of the world."

V.

The Mission of Masonry! Years have fled, like hooded figures in hurried march, since our fathers set up their altar on the frontier, kindled its light and fell asleep, but the spirit and purpose of this ancient order remain. The forms of beauty into which the earth is rushing today are not the forms

that greeted their eyes in 1840; the aspect of the sky has changed a thousand times since their eager and faithful vision looked up into it. Time has swept us on the wave of advance into a new world with wider horizons, mightier aspirations, and vaster obligations. But life is the same, unchangeable save for its onward march, the earth abideth, and the sky, though like a fleeting tent, is built anew after the same eternal model. Just so, though the forms of life alter, and new times demand new methods, the truths of faith and immutable duty of doing good abide.

The Mission of Masonry! He who would describe that must be a poet, a musician, and a seer—a master of melodies, echoes, and long, far-sounding cadencies. Now, as always, it toils to make man better, to refine his thought and purify his dream, to broaden his outlook, to lift his altitude, to establish in amplitude and resoluteness his life in all its relations. All its great history, its vast accumulations of tradition, its simple faith and its solemn rites, its freedom and its friendship are dedicated to a high moral ideal, seeking to tame the tiger in man, and bring all his wild passions into obedience to the will of God. Unwearyingly it holds aloft, in picture and in dream, that temple of character which it is the noblest labor of life to build in the midst of the years, and which will outlast time and death. It has no other mission than to exalt and ennoble humanity, to bring light out of darkness, beauty out of angularity; to make every hard-won inheritance more secure, every sanctity more sacred, every hope more radiant.

The Mission of Masonry! When the spirit of this order has its way upon earth, as at last it certainly will, society will be a vast league of sympathy and justice, business a system of human service, law a rule of beneficence; the home will be more holy, the laughter of childhood more joyous, and the temple of prayer mortised and tenoned in simple faith. Evil, injustice, bigotry, and greed, and every vile and

slimy thing that defiles humanity will skulk into the dark, unable to endure the light of a juster, wiser, more merciful order. Industry will be upright, education prophetic, and religion not a shadow, but a real presence, when man has become acquainted with man and has learned to worship God by serving his fellows. When Masonry is victorious every tyranny will fall, every bastile crumble, and man will be not only unfettered in mind and hand, but free of heart to walk erect in the light and dignity of the truth.

Such is the ideal, and by as much as are true to it, by so much are we loyal to the benign mission of Masonry upon the earth. Fidelity to all that is holy demands that we give ourselves to it, trusting the power of truth, the reality of love, and the sovereign worth of character. For only as we incarnate this vision in actual life and activity does it become real, tangible, and effective. God works for man through man and seldom, if at all, in any other way. He asks for your voice and mine to speak His truth to man, for your hand and mind to do His work here below—sweet voices and clean hands to work His will and make liberty and love prevail over injustice and hate. The most precious wealth in the world is the wealth of established character; it makes all our moral currency valid. Not all of us can be learned or famous, but each of us can be pure of heart, undefiled by evil, undaunted by error, noble and true, faithful and useful to our fellow souls. Life is a capacity for the highest things. Let us make it a pursuit of the highest—an eager, incessant quest of truth; a noble utility; a genuine worth, a lofty honor, a wise fredom—that through us the Mission of Masonry may be yet further advanced.

"I go mine, thou goest thine;
Many ways we wend,
Many ways and many days,
Ending in one end."

The Ministry of Masonry

SOMETHING in this scene, something in the words of my dear friend, appeals to me very deeply. So gracious a greeting evokes feelings beyond my words, and I understand what Lord Tennyson must have felt when, looking out upon the sea and listening to its voices, he cried:

"I would that some tongue could utter
The Thoughts that arise in me."

Once upon a time, as my friend has said, I tried to talk to you as best I could on The Mission of Masonry, its faith, its philosophy, its demand for freedom, and its plea for universal friendship.

But the more I brood over the mystery of this order, its history, its genius, its possibilities of ministry to the higher human life, the more the wonder grows, the higher the horizon, and the longer the vistas that unfold. Let me beseech you, then, to lend me your hearts while I tell you a little more of the meaning of Masonry as it has grown up in my heart. Studying Masonry is like looking at a sunrise; each man who looks is filled with the beauty and glory of it, but the splendor is not diminished. Over all alike its ineffable wonder falls, subduing the mind, softening the heart and exalting the life.

I.

The better to make vivid what lies in my heart, let recall a scene from one of the great books of the world, War and Peace, by Count Tolstoi—a name that should be spoken with reverence wherever men assemble in the name good-will. He was, if we except Lincoln, the tallest soul, the most picturesque and appealing figure who walked under our human sky in the last century. This book, the greatest of its kind known to literature, makes one think of a giant

playing with mountains, tossing them to and fro as though they were toys; so powerful is it, so vast in its sweep, so vivid in its panorama. Its heroine is a whole nation—the beautiful, strange, tormented land of Russia. We see its lights and shadows, its wide expanse, and its quiet hamlets; its people at work and play, in peace and war—now hovering like a shadow on the heels of their enemies, now fleeing in terror in the glare of their burning cities. What a picture of the tumult of nation, and the vicissitudes of life, in the light the Napoleonic invasion!

One of the arresting figures of the story is Count Pierre Bezuhov—in whom Tolstoi has shown us one side of his own soul, as in Prince Andre he has unveiled the other. Pierre is the richest man in Russia, owning vast estates, including both the land and the serfs on the land. Like so many young noblemen of his day, he has lived a wild, sensual, dissolute life, careless alike of the rights and wrongs of his fellows. He was married to a beautiful, bewitching, sensual woman, whose paramour he has just killed in a duel. On his way to St. Petersburg he falls in with an old man, simply dressed, but with the light of a great peace in his face. The stranger addresses the Count and tells him that he has heard of his misfortune, referring to the duel resulting in the death at his hands of the lover of his wife. He is aware, too, as he goes on to say, of the wild, sin-bespattered life the Count has live, of his way of thinking, of his pride, insolence, and ignorance. The Count listened to these severe words, he hardly knew why—perhaps because he heard in them an undertone of sympathy, the accent of a great pity, and what he heard in the voice he saw in the kindly face.

On the hand of the old man the Count noticed a ring, and in it the emblem of the order here assembled. He asked the stranger if he was not a Mason. Whereupon the old man, looking searchingly into the eyes of the Count, said that he belonged to that order, in whose name he extended to

him the hand of a brother man, in the name of God the Father. At the mention of name of God a smile curled on the lips of the count, who said:

"I ought to tell you that I don't believe in God." The old Freemason smiled as a rich man, holding millions in his hand, might smile at a poor wretch.

"Yes, you do not know Him, sir," said the stranger. "You do not know Him, that is why you are unhappy. But He is here, He is within me, He is in thee, and even in these scoffing words you have just uttered. If He is not, we should not be speaking of Him, sir. Whom dost thou deny? How came there within thee the conception that there is such an incomprehensible Being?

Something in the venerable stranger, who spoke earnestly as one who stood in the light of a vision, touched the Count deeply, and stirred in him a longing to see what the old man saw, and to know what he knew. Abject, hopeless, haunted by an ill-spent life, with the blood of a fellow-man on his hand—his eyes betrayed his longing to know God. Though he did not speak, the kindly eyes of the stranger read his face and answered his unasked question:

"He exists, but to know Him is hard. It is not attained by reason, but by life. The highest truth is like the purest dew. Can I hold in an impure vessel that pure dew and judge of its purity? Only by inner purification can we know Him."

Finally, the old man asked the young nobleman if he would not like to look into the mysteries of Masonry. Not so much what the stranger had said as what he was—his gentle, austere, benign spirit, that had in it something of the Fatherhood of God—made the Count say, "Yes." The stranger asked him to report at a certain room in St. Petersburg, where he would be introduced to those high in authority among Freemasons. Meanwhile, what the gently stern old man had said sank into the soul of the hitherto heedless young nobleman; and when he reported at the

lodge room and was asked, as every man is asked, the one indispensable question: "Do you believe in God?"—something deeper than his doubts, something higher than his scepticism spoke within him, and he answered, "Yes."

There follows a detailed description of his initiation, which those who are not Masons may be curious to read. Unfortunately, it tells them nothing of what takes place in a lodge room on such occasions; but it will show them the spirit that live and glows on the altar of Masonry. No one but a Mason could have written it; and while the chain of evidence is not quite complete, I am safe in saying that, as with Count Pierre in the story, so with Count Tolstoi himself, it was Masonry which first lifted him out of the pit of atheism and sensualism, set his feet upon the Rock of Ages, and started him toward the city of God. Does this not suggest to us the deeper meaning of Masonry, its higher ministry, and the service it may render to the inner life of man?

II.

What is Masonry? What is it trying to teach? What does it seek to do? Above all, what can it do for the man who receives it into his heart, loves it, and lives in the light of it? What profound ministry may it render to the young man who enters its temple in the morning of life, when the dew is on his days and the birds are singing in his heart? Let me try to answer these questions this summer afternoon in the spirit of Count Tolstoi, who must hereafter be numbered with those prophets and bards—with poets like Goethe and Burns, musicians like Mozart, patriots like Mazzini and Washington—who loved this historic order. Such names shine like stars in the crown of humanity, and none with truer lustre than that of Tolstoi who was a teacher of purity, pity, and peace among men.

Time out of mind Masonry has been defined as a system

of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols. That is so far true—far enough, indeed, to describe a world-encircling fellowship and its far-ramifying influence. But it is not of the extent of Masonry that I wish to speak this afternoon, but, rather, of its depth—its service to the lonely inner life of man where the issues of character and destiny are determined, for good or ill. No more worthy purpose can inspire any order than the earnest, active endeavor to bring men—first the individual man, and then, so far as possible, those united with him—to a deeper, richer fellowship with spiritual reality. Since this is the purpose of Masonry, let us inquire as to what it is, whence it came, and how it seeks to reach the souls of men where the real battles of life are fought, now with shouts of victory, now with sob of defeat.

It is true that Masonry is not a religion, still less a cu but is has religiously preserved some things of highest im portance to religion—among them the right of each individual soul to its own religious faith. Holding aloof from separate sects and creeds, it has taught all of them to respect and tolerate each other; asserting a principal broader than any of them—the sanctity of the soul and the duty of every man to revere, or at least to regard with charity, what is sacred to his fellows. Our order is like the crypts underneath the old cathedrals—a place where men of every creed, who long for something deeper and truer, older and newer than they have hitherto known, meet and unite. Having put away childish things, they find themselves made one by a profound and child-like faith, each bringing down into that quiet crypt his own pearl of great price—

"The Hindu his innate disbelief in this world, and his unhesitating belief in another world; the Buddhist his perception of an eternal law, his submission to it, his gentleness, his pity; the Mohammedan, if nothing else, his sobriety; the Jew his clinging, through good and evil days, to the one

god, who loveth righteousness and whose name is 'I AM;' the Christian, that which is better than all, if those who doubt it would only try it—our love of God, call Him what you will, manifested in our love man, our love of the living, our love of the dead, our living and undying love. Who knows but that the crypt of the past may yet become the church of the future?"

There have been great secret orders, like that represented here today, since recorded history began; and no man may ever hope to estimate their service to our race. In every age, in every civilized land—from the priest of Isis on yonder side of the Pyramids, to the orders of Eleusis and Mithras in Greece and Rome—we trace their silent, far-reaching influence and power. The Mysteries, said Plato, were established by men of great genius who, in the early ages, strove to teach purity, to ameliorate the cruelty of the race, to refine its manners and morals, and to restrain society by stronger bonds than those which human laws impose. Cicero bears a like witness to the high aim of the same mystic orders in his day. Thus in ages of darkness, of complexity, of conflicting peoples, tongues, and faiths, these great orders toiled in behalf of friendship, bringing men together under the banner of faith, and training them for a nobler moral life.

No mystery any longer attaches to what those orders taught, but only as to what particular rites, dramas, and symbols were used by them in their cerenomies. They taught faith in a God above, in the moral law within, heroic purity of soul, austere discipline of character, justice, piety, and hope of a life beyond death. Tender and tolerant of all faiths, they formed an all-embracing moral and spiritual fellowship which rose above barriers of nation, race, and creed, satisfying the craving of men for unity, while evoking in them a sense of that eternal mysticism out of which all religious were born. Their ceremonies, so far as we know them, were stately and moving dramas of the moral life and the fate

of the soul. Mystery and secrecy added impressiveness, and fable and enigma disguised in imposing spectacle the simple, familiar, everlasting laws of justice, piety, and hope of immortality. As Cicero said, the initiates of the Mysteries not only received lessons which made life tolerable, but drew from their rites happy hopes for the hour of death.

Masonry stands in this tradition; and if we may not say that it is historically related to those great ancient orders, it is their spiritual descendant, and renders the same ministry to our age which the Mysteries rendered to the olden world. It is, indeed, no other than those same historic orders in disguise; the same stream of sweetness and light flowing in our day—like the fabled river Alpheus which, gathering the waters of a hundred rills along the hillsides of Arcadia, sank, lost to light, in a chasm in the earth, only to reappear in the fountain of Arethusa. Apart from its rites, there is no mystery in Masonry, save the mystery of all great and simple things. so far from being hidden and occult, its glo lies in its openness, its emphasis upon the realities whic are to our human world what air and sunlight are to nature. Its secret is of so great and simple a kind that it is easily overlooked; its mystery too obvious to be found out.

Our age resembles in many ways the age which saw the introduction into the world of the teachings of Jesus. To one who regards mankind with tenderness, a time like this is full of hope, but full of many perils also. Men are confused, troubled, and strangely alone. Anything is possible. Forms of faith are changing, and many are bewildered—as witness the number of those running to and fro, following every wandering light, and falling, often, into the bogs of fanaticism. Oh, the pathos of it! A strange indifference has settled over the world, but underneath it there is a profound, unsatisfied hunger. There is a mood today which soon will utter a cry, and it will be a cry for more vivid sense of God: that is our hope. Yet that cry many fling many a soul upon

the bosom of doubt and despair: that is our fear. Amidst this peril, Masonry brings men together at the altar of prayer, keeps alive faith in the truths that make us men, seeking, by every resource of art, to make tangible the power of love, the worth of beauty, and the reality of the ideal. Who can measure such a ministry, who can describe it!

III.

Let me strive to make it all more vivid by recalling a parable translated by Max Muller from the lore of the East. The gods, having stolen from man his divinity, met in council to discuss where they should hide it. One suggested that it be carried to the other side of the earth and buried; but it was pointed out that man is a great wanderer, and that he might find the lost treasure in the other side of the earth. Another proposed that it be dropped into the depths of the sea; but the same fear was expressed—that man, in his insatiable curiosity, might dive deep enough to find it even there. Finally, after a space of silence, the oldest and wisest of the gods said: "Hide it in man himself, as that is the last place he will ever think to look for it." And it was so agreed, all seeing at once its subtle and wise strategy.

Man wandered over the earth for ages, searching in all places, high and low, far and near, before he thought to look within himself for the divinity he sought. At last, slowly, dimly, he began to realize that what he thought was far off, hidden in "the pathos of distance," is nearer than the breath he breathes, even in his own heart. Here lies the deepest ministry of Masonry—that it makes a young man aware of the divinity that is within him, wherefrom his whole life takes beauty and meaning, and inspires him to follow and obey it. No hour in life is more solemn and revealing than that in which a man learns that what he seeks he has already found, else he would not be seeking it. Once a man

learns that deep secret, life is new, and the old world is a valley all dewy to the dawn, aglow with beauty and athrill with melody.

There never was a truer saying than that of Thomas Carlyle when he said that the religion of a man is the chief fact concerning him. By religion he meant, as he went on to explain, not the creed to which a man will subscribe or otherwise give his assent; not that necessarily; often not that at all—since we see men of all degrees of worth and worthlessness signing all kinds of creeds. No, the religion of a man is that which he practically believes, lays to heart, acts upon, and knows concerning this mysterious universe and his duty and destiny in it. That is in all cases the primary thing in him, and creatively determines all the rest; that is his religion. It is, then, of vital importance what faith, what vision, what conception of life a man lays to heart, and act upon. It is as a man thinks in his heart whether life be wort while or not, and whether the world be luminous or dark.

Let me show you that is so. Optimists and pessimists live in the same world, walk under the same sky, and observe the same facts. Sceptics and believers look up at the same great stars—the stars that shone in Eden and will flash again in Paradise. Thomas Hardy and George Meredith were contemporaries and friends—one looking out over a dismal, shadow-haunted Egdon heath, under a sky as grey as a tired face; the other a citizen of a world all dipped in hues of sunrise and sunset, with a lark-song over it! Clearly, the difference in all these cases is a difference not of fact, but of faith; of insight, outlook, and point of view—a difference of inner attitude and habit of thought with regard to the worth of life and the meaning of the world. By the same token, any influence which reaches and alters that inner habit and bias of mind, and changes it from doubt to faith, from fear to courage, from despair to sunburst hope has wrought the most vital and benign ministry which a mortal

may enjoy in the midst of the years.

Every man, as each of you can testify, has a train of thought on which he rides when he is alone. The dignity and nobility of his life, as well as its happiness, depend upon the direction in which that train is going, the baggage it carries, and the scenery through which it travels. If, then, Masonry can put that inner train of thought on the right track, freight it with precious baggage, and start it on the way to the city of God, what other or higher service can t render to a man? That is just what it does for any man who will give himself to it, bringing to him from afar the old wisdom-religion—that simple, pure, and lofty truth wrought out through ages of experience, tested by time, and found to be valid for the life of man. Whoso lays that lucid and profound wisdom to heart and acts upon it, will have little to regret, and nothing to fear, when the evening shadows fall.

High, fine, ineflably rich, and beautiful is the faith and vision which Masonry gives to those who foregather at its altar. By such teaching, if they have the heart to heed it, men become wise, knowing that all evil ways have been often tried and found wanting. By it learn how to be both brave and gentle, faithful and firm; how to renounce superstition and yet retain faith; how to keep a fine poise of reason between the falsehood of extremes; how to accept the joys of life with glee, and endure its ills with patient valor; how to look upon the folly of man and not forget his nobility—in short, how to live cleanly, kindly, calmly, opened-eyed, and unafraid in a sane world, sweet of heart and full of hope. It may not be a substitute for religion, but he who makes it a law of his life, loves it, and obeys it, will be most ready to receive the great passwords of religious faith. Happy the young man who in the morning of his years takes his simple and high wisdom as his guide, philosopher, and friend!

IV.

Such is the ministry of Masonry to the individual—lifting him out of the mire and setting his feet in the long, white path marked out by the foot-steps of ages; and through the individual it serves society and the state. If by some art one could trace those sweet, invisible influences which move to and fro like shuttles in a loom, weaving the net-work of laws, reverences, sanctities which makes the warp and woof of society—giving to statutes their dignity and power, to the gospel its opportunity, to the home its canopy of peace and beauty, to the young an enshrinement of inspiration, and the old a mantle of protection; if one had the pen of an angel then might one tell the story of what Masonry has done for Iowa. No wonder George Eliot said that eloquence is but a ripple on the bosom of the unspoken and th unspeakable!

What is it that so tragically delays the march of man towar that better social order whereof our prophets dream? Our age and land are full of schemes of every kind for the reform and betterment of mankind. Why do they not succeed? Some fail, perhaps, because they are imprudent and ill-considered, in that they expect too much of human nature and do not take into account the stubborn facts of life. But why does not the wisest and noblest plan do half what its devisors hope and pray and labor to bring about? Because there are not enough men fine enough of soul, large enough of sympathy, noble enough of nature to make the dream come true. So that when Masonry, instead of identifying itself with particular schemes of reform, devotes all its benign energy to refining and ennobling the souls of men, she is doing fundamental work in behalf of all high enterprises. By as much as she succeeds, every noble cause succeeds; if she fails, everything fails!

Recall what was passing before the eyes of men in this

land fifty years ago today. What gloom, what uncertainty, what anxiety—Gettysburg less than a month away! The very life of the republic hung in the balance! Think of those first three days of July, 1863, when fifty-four thousand young men, the flower of our future, lay dead and wounded—piled in heaps of blue and grey, quivering with pain, their white faces turned to the sky! Nor was that all. Far away in northern towns and southern hamlets, sad-faced women heard, now with shrieks, now with dumb, unutterable woe, the long roll-call of the dead! What man who has a heart, or who cares for the future of his race, does not pray that such scenes may never again be witnessed on this earth! What can prevent a repetition of the horrors of war? Nothing but the growth in the hearts of men of the spirit of justice, freedom, and friendship which Masonry seeks, quietly, to evoke and inspire! If our fathers had known each other in the sixties as we know each other today, there would have been no civil war! So it will be the world over, when man comes to know his fellow-men as he learns to know them and love them at the altar of this order. Then shall be fulfilled the song of those who sang "peace on earth among men of good-will!"

Again, no one need be told that we are on the eve, if not in the midst, of a stupendous and bewildering revolution of social and industrial life. It shakes England today. It makes France tremble tomorrow. It will alarm Germany next week. The questions in dispute can never be settled in an air of hostility. If they are settled at all, and settled right, it must be in an atmosphere of mutual recognition and respect such as that which Masonry strives to create and make prevail. Whether it be a conflict of nations, or a clash of class with class, appeal must be made to intelligence and the moral sense, as befits the dignity of man. Amidst bitterness and strife Masonry brings men of capital and labor, men of every rank and walk of life together as men, and nothing else,

at an altar where they can talk and not fight, discuss and not dispute, and each may learn the point of view of his fellows. Other hope there is none save in this spirit of friendship and fairness, of democracy and the fellowship of man with man.

Even so it is in religion—that kingdom of faith and hope and prayer so long defamed by bigotry, and distracted by sectarian feud. How many fine minds have been estranged from the altar of faith because they were required to believe what it was impossible for them to believe—and, rather than sacrifice their integrity, they turned away from the last place from which a man should ever turn away. No part of the ministry of Masonry is more beautiful and wise than its appeal, not for tolerance, but for fraternity; not for uniformity, but for unity of spirit amidst varieties of outlook and opi nion. God be thanked for one altar where no one is aske to surrender his liberty of thought and become an i distinguishable atom in a mass of sectarian agglomeration. What a witness to the worth of an order that it brings together men of all faiths in behalf of those truths which are greater than all sects, deeper than all dogmas—the glory and the hope of man!

When is a man a Mason? When he can look out over the rivers, the hills, and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope, and courage. When he knows that down in his heart every man is as noble, as vile, as divine, as diabolic, and as lonely as himself, and seeks to know, to forgive, and to love his fellow man. When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, yea, even in their sins—knowing that each man fights a hard fight against many odds. When he has learned how to make friends and to keep them, and above all how to keep friends with himself. When he loves flowers, can hunt the birds without a gun, and feels the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laugh

of little child. When he can be happy and high-minded amid the meaner drudgeries of life. When star-crowned trees, and the glint of sunlight on flowing waters, subdue him like the thought of one much loved and long dead. When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without response. When he finds good in every faith that helps any man to lay hold of higher things, and to see majestic meanings in life, whatever the name of that faith may be. When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something besides mud, and into the face of the most forlorn mortal and see something beyond sin. When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope. When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellow man, with his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of a song—glad to live, but not afraid to die! In such a man, whether he be rich or poor, scholarly or unlearned, famous or obscure, Masonry has wrought her sweet ministry!

The Patriarchs

Surely the idea of such an evening as this was most happy. There is a day set apart in honor of our Mothers—God bless them!—and no one would detract one iota from its sanctity and beauty. But it has remained for this Lodge to dedicate a day to our Fathers, and especially to the fathers of Masonry into whose labors we have entered, and of whose prophetic sowing we are reaping the harvest. Of a truth, we honor ourselves when we meet and pay tribute to men who did so much to make Masonry what it is.

Some do not well know that there was a time, and not so long ago, when it was a courageous thing for a man to be a Mason. Prejudice against the Order was intense, often fanatical, and our gentle Craft was held by many to be dangerous fraternity, as if its innocent secrets harbored dark designs. How different it is now. Today our order is

everywhere honored, and our gates are thronged with young men eager to enter its ancient fellowship. What has brought about this change of feeling and attitude toward Masonry? More than all else it is due to the quiet dignity of the men of the order, and the noble way in which they have shown what Masonry is in their lives. Nearly every man here, if asked directly, would admit that he was drawn to Masonry by the quality of its men. After all, the greatest influence of Masonry in the world, is the silent, eloquent influence of character.

It may be interesting to some to know that such an evening as this recalls one of the oldest traditions of the order. If you will look into the Old Charges—the tittle deeds of Masonry, and a part of its earliest ritual—you will see that among the duties required of a young man entering the order, was that he respect the aged. When, after a period of decline, the Grand Lodge of England was organized in 1717, who presided over the assembly? In the scanty records of that scene it is set down as significant that the Gran Lodge came to order with "the oldest Master Mason in th chair." Indeed, it seems clear that the impulse by which the scattered Masons of the time were drawn together into closer union, came, as Anderson suggests, from "a few old brethren"; and during the critical period of transition, it was the old men who guided the Craft. For the first Grand Lodge, so far from being an innovation, was in fact a revival of the old quarterly Assembly, and was intended to preserve the ancient usages of the order. So that our meeting this night in honor of the veterans of the Craft, has the sanction, not only of our own finer feeling for the fitness of things, but of the long tradition and custom of the order.

When is a man old? Age is said to be a matter of feeling, not of years, but old age seemed to come upon men earlier in former times than it does now. At the age of forty-nien Shakespeare sold his holdings in the London theaters, retired from active live, and went back to Stratford. Dr.

Johnson felt himself old at forty, and Lincoln at the age of forty-eight spoke of himself as old and withered. The Roman senate was an assembly of old men, but there was a law that no senator over sixty should be called to his duties, lest his failing mind bring harm to the Republic. But it is different with us today. With us a man is intellectually in his prime at sixty, and many do their best work much later. Gladstone, at seventy, was just entering the second volume of his biography.

When is a man a patriarch? Let me tell you. Old age is that period when one sees the limit of life, whether it be at twenty, fifty, or eighty; when he sees clearly, what once was covered by mists: a grave full of songs unsung, hopes unrealized, and ambitions unachieved. There are men, not yet thirty, who are asking the ultimate question: "What is the use?" These are the old men—old of heart, world-weary, smitten with palsy of soul, and gray with a sense of futility; these are the unburied dead. Think of a man asking such a question in a world where sunsets are like sacraments, and the hush and solemnity of the dawn is like the smile of God! Think of finding life flat, stale and unprofitable in a world where the incredible is an everyday fact, and the impossible is always coming true—a world where there is truth to seek, love to consecrate, and hope forever building its great Arch of Promise! Such a man has come too early to the sear and yellow leaf.

Also, there are men far along in years—walking down the western slope where the shadows lengthen towards evening—who are eager and alert of spirit, happy and forward-looking, their faith undimmed, their zest of life unabated. These are not old men. There is in them a foregleam of the immortal life. Years have piled up betimes, but they have kept their faith firm, their feelings buoyant, their sympathies active, and their interest in life fresh and vivid. How fine it is to see a man grow old reverently and

beautifully, his heart aglow with the soft light of eventide and the glory of the star-crowned night! It is not strange that such men enjoy the authority of influence and counsel, of wisdom and prophecy, which Cicero held to be the trophies of age.

Each of the seven ages of man, as Shakespeare marked them, has its uses, its joys, its disadvantages, and its compensations. He is a wise man who takes life as it is, each degree as God confers it, each experience in its season—youth with its flaming visions, age with its serenity. For age is opportunity not less than youth, albeit in another form. Old age, to be sure, has its disadvantages and perils. Failing strength, stiff joints, "the lean and slippered pantaloons, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste"—these are familiar enough. Often it weakens the tenacity of memory, but if we can manage to forget what is not worth remembering, that might be enviable. With few exceptions—like Sophocies and Tennyson—age clips the wings of imagination; but it also cools our passion which befogs and perverts reason. Ag is clariflying, and may attain, as Milton said, to "somethin of prophetic strain."

At least, it belongs to age, in a life well spent, to look upon the world with calm and wise vision. As Plato said in his Republic, old age "certainly has a great sense of freedom and serenity"; but he added, "the cause is to be sought, not in the ages of men, but in their tempers and characters." That is to say, it is quality and not the quantity of life that counts for most. The fact that a man has lived on this earth three score years and ten does not mean, necessarily, that he is either good or wise. Some men are as foolish in age as they were in youth. Doubly foolish is he who, living to grow old, has not learned the priceless value of virtue, and the wisdom of love. Time alone brings neither honor nor wisdom.

An eastern king offered a reward to the one who would tell him the saddest thing on earth. There were three com-

petitors in the contest. One said it is unrequited love; another that it is the death of the young; and the third, who won the prize, that it is old age and poverty. I do not believe it, unless by poverty you mean that pitiful penury of soul which makes the gloaming of life so desolate. No; the saddest thing on this earth is old age and sin—an old man crass, crafty, hard, cynical, and impure! Great God! rather than come to such an end, let me die tonight, in the morning of life, my work hardly begun!

When we are young we draw checks on the Bank of the Future. Some men go on doing this, unable, it seems, to live year in an year out upon their current income. Not many of those checks are cashed at full value. There is nearly always a heavy discount, and more often they come back to us for lack of funds. When we are old we draw our checks on the Bank of the Past. Whether they are cashed or not depends on how thrifty we have been in laying up that treasure which neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. More precious than rubies is a wise faith purified by trial, a conscience void of offense, and the memory of years spent in purity, honor, and service. When a man comes to the end the only things he does not regret, and would not recall if he could, are the kind words spoken and the deeds done in love of God and his fellow men. At that hour an empty alabaster box, with which he has anointed some friend in need, counts for more than all the gold in all the hills!

"Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life
For which the first was made;
Our times are in his hands
Who sayeth, 'A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God;
See all, nor be afraid."

What has Masonry to teach us about immortality? Instead of making an argument, it presents a picture—the oldest,

if not the greatest, drama in the world—the better to make men feel what no words can ever tell. It shows us the tragedy of life in its most dismal hour; the forces of evil, so cunning yet so stupid, tempting the soul to teachery—even to the ultimate degradation of saving life by giving up all that makes it worth our time to live. It shows us a noble and true man smitten, as Lincoln was, in the moment of his loftiest service to man. It is a picture so true to the bitter, old, and haggard reality of this dark world that it makes the soul stand still in dismay. Then, out of the shadow there rises, like a beautiful white star, that in man which is most akin to God—his love of truth, his loyalty to the ideal, his willingness to go down into the night of death, if only virtue may live and shine like a pulse of fire in the evening sky.

Here is the ultimate and final witness of the divinity and immortality of the soul—the heroic, death-defying moral valor of the human soul! No being capable of such a sublime cacrifice need fear death or the grave.

"What has the soul to lose
By worlds on worlds destroyed?"

It is the old, eternal paradox—he who gives his all for the sake of the truth shall find it all anew. And there Masonry rests the case, assured that since there is that in man which makes him hold to the moral ideal against the brute forces of the world; that which prompts him to pay the last full measure of devotion for the sanctity of his soul; the God who made him in His own image will not let him sleep in the dust! Higher vision it is not given us to see in the dim country of this world; deeper truth we do not need to know.

"There are more lives yet, there are more worlds waiting.
For the way climbs up to the eldest sun.
Where the white ones go to their mystic mating,
And the holy will is done.

I shall find them there where our low life heightens—
Where the door of the Wonder again unbars,
Where the old love rules and the old fire whitens,
In the Stars behind the stars."

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