

Masonic Material.

We commend the following excerpts from the able address of Charles Griswold, Grand Master of Minnesota, to our Masonic readers:

"A few words with reference to making Masonry all that it is capable of being made to ourselves and to others. He has studied Masonry to but little purpose who does not know that its teachings are not only wholesome and beautiful, but such as every man should follow in order that he may attain to his highest good and usefulness. No better code of morals, no higher and more perfect standard of true manhood can anywhere be found than Masonry presents; and that it has been, and is to-day, a great power for good, no one that is at all familiar with its history and present workings will deny; but it is also true that this power is but imperfectly developed and applied, and hence it comes that Masonry falls far short of accomplishing for ourselves and the world all that it is capable of doing. How may this defect be remedied? It were folly to attempt a full answer to this question here; but we would invite attention to a few points: and, first look well to your material. It is not my purpose under this head to enlarge upon the importance of rejecting the vicious and the vile, for, whatever may be the practice, all are willing to concede—that 'none should be admitted to our ranks who are not moral and upright before God, and of good repute before the world;' and that great good would result from a more thorough application of this principle, no one will question; but what we wish to say is that not all good men, so called, should be permitted to enter our Lodges. There are many persons in our society of whom nothing bad can be said, and yet nothing very particular good. They are simply harmless—what we sometimes term 'good fellows,' but their goodness is almost wholly negative in its characteristics; they never interfere with the rights and comforts of others, neither are they active in sustaining those rights. Such men may, in one sense, be harmless, and yet, in any society, are usually loads to carry, dead weights that hinder the progress of the ship. We have too many of this kind already, and we should see well to it that their number is not increased. Men! Men that are positive! Men of action! Men of backbone! are what Masonry needs to-day more than anything else. It is not enough that those who participate in our mysteries are such as will refrain from the commission of outrageous crimes, or from trampling, in their indecency, the most common rules of morality under foot; but they should be alive, earnest and active in their co-operation in every good word and work. Committees of investigation can do no better work for the Fraternity than by presenting us with more men, and fewer 'good fellows' so called. Again, Masonry is highly symbolic in its teachings.

"He, then, who is fit to enter our Lodge should be a lover of symbolism; but so many men very good in other respects, are utterly deficient at this point. Such should never be permitted to enter a Masonic Lodge: for that which to us is so beautiful is to them insipid and meaningless; and when they come among us, ten chances to one if they do not turn away in disgust, and either relapse into indifference, or eventually be found among our most active and bitter opposers. We might as well try to organize a successful choir out of persons who have neither taste nor voice for music, as to build up a successful Lodge out of those who are incapable of appreciating symbolic teaching.

"Again, when candidates knock at our doors for admission, institute a thorough and careful inquiry in reference to their motives. Ascertain whether they come 'unbiased by friends, and uninfluenced by mercenary motives,' or whether they have mistaken the Masonic Institution for a kind of trades union, and wish to join because, as merchants, they wish to sell a little more butter and cheese, or a few more yards of calico; or, as lawyers, to increase their practice; or, as politicians to secure votes. Learn, if possible, whether they are 'prompted to solicit the privileges of Masonry by a favorable opinion conceived of the institution, a desire for knowledge and a sincere wish of being serviceable to their fellow creatures,' or whether they come hoping to prostitute our Order to their own selfish ends and purposes. I was reading not long since, of a certain man of intelligence, a physician by profession, who had found his way in to the Lodge and attained to the responsible position of Senior Warden. When asked by a Brother how he liked Masonry, he replied that he did not think it of very much account; he could not see that his practice as a physician had been enlarged any by it. 'But,' replied the other, 'did you suppose because you joined the Lodge every member was obliged to get sick for your particular benefit, or that Masonry was intended to point you out as the only and proper one to be employed as a physician?' This man is a fair type of many who come with an utter misconception of the high and holy aims of Masonry. Let all such be kept outside the Lodge, for if permitted to enter they will drag Masonry in the mud, and help to make it a hissing and a by-word.

"Again, when good material is put in your hands, see that it is not spoiled by bungling workmen. It is often said and with much truth, that first impressions are the most lasting. Nowhere do we see this more fully exemplified than in Masonry. The impressions made upon the mind of the candidate, as from time to time he receives Masonic Light, will go with him through all his Masonic life, and will do more to make him a good worker and a devoted Mason, or the opposite, than, perhaps, all other influences combined. Masonry has a ritual, than which there are none more beautiful; and when properly rendered, it is capable of exerting a powerful influence, and making deep impressions of good. But he does not render it properly who simply learns the words and is blind to the important thoughts they are intended to convey, or who says his part in a humdrum or a light flippant way. What every one should do, from the Steward to the Worshipful Master, is to study his part well, until he has not only words but ideas, and drinks in so deeply the spirit of every utterance that he can throw his whole soul into the work of the hour. But how often do the workers in our Lodges go through with our ritual as though they wished to see how meaningless they could make it; and if, perchance, any of its inherent beauties and solemn truths do, in spite of the wretched rendering, make deep impressions and inspire noble resolves, at the close by the light and jocular manner in which they refer to what has passed, they seem to try to dispel all serious impressions, and give the newly admitted brother to understand that what has just transpired is nothing more than a very fine play.

"Again, how often have I sat by in misery while degrees were being conferred, because our ritual was really being murdered by the bungling manner in which it was given, and when, afterwards, I learned that the candidate had not only

failed to see anything attractive, but had gone away feeling that he had been the victim of a huge sell, I did not wonder. Frequently from good material thus spoiled is recruited the vast army of non-affiliates. Brethren, see to it that your work does not turn that which in itself is beautiful and grand into a miserable farce."

Hotel Bills of the Past.

Several years ago I arrived at a country hostelry situated in the neighboring town of runney. Staying a week or two I asked my bill when the time of my stay was at an end.

"Well, what do you think it is worth?" said my landlord.

"Oh, I don't know; you keep the hotel—what is the charge?"

"Well—come, let's crack."

So the bellows was taken from its nail, as was then so frequently the custom, each party chalked what he thought it worth. Looking at the figures, finally the landlord said:

"Well, about 20 cents for meals and 20 cents for lodging."

Wondering, I paid him. Next year happening in the same town, I stopped at the house of a friend, and meeting my "chalking" landlord of the year previous he said:

"I did a wrong thing by you last year I charged you too much. You see 20 cents a meal ain't much, but then 3 times 20 is 60, for meals and 20 is 80, and 7 times 80 is \$5.60 a week; and that's an awful sum."—*Cor. Boston Advertiser.*

Be Kind to the Poor.

Ah, be kind to them! Ye who have never felt the bitter pangs of hunger, who have never passed through the dreary winter with chattering teeth and limbs palsied with cold, who have never prayed for the sweet forgetfulness of sleep, to shut out for a brief season the frost whose icy breath struck a chill to your heart, and who have never been a prey to the canker-worm of grief and misery, which all these sufferings entail, we pray you, be kind to the poor!

Be kind to the poor. Earth has more sorrow than the heat can contain, more of suffering than frail nature can bear. The widow, left to toil and struggle alone amidst the desolation of bereavement appeals in tones more eloquent than words for your sympathies and aid. The helpless orphan brought into the world and left alone by the relentless hand of death, claims your guardianship and protection. And as you expect a continuance of the mercies and blessings of Heaven, so in this wise be merciful to others; then shall the gates of plenty and honor be open to you, and the pillow of peace kiss your cheek.—*Dalton Enterprise.*

Ten Good Maxims.

1. I have gone into farming to make it pay.
2. This crop shall be good, but the next shall be better.
3. The soil shall be kept up, and, if possible, made better every year.
4. I shall endeavor to find a market for such crops as draw least upon the fertility of the soil.
5. A proper rotation of crops is a matter of great importance to the progressive farmer.
6. Useful knowledge is never dear at any cost, provided it is genuine; yet it need not be expensive.
7. An attractive home is one among the best things a farmer can provide for his children.
8. A mind well stored with practical knowledge is worth more to the young person just starting out in the world than a princely estate.
9. A small library of useful books at the farm house has saved many a young man from becoming a prodigal son.
10. The man, though "born of poor parents," if possessed of average capacities and perseverance, has become rich. There is little excuse for an industrious, frugal, persevering and progressive farmer to remain poor.—*Progressive Farmer.*

[From the Dalton Enterprise.]

The Human Voice in Singing.

Science itself admits that it can neither create artistic talent, nor supply the want of it, but only furnish it with aids. With the whole inner nature of music, no forms of thought or reflection have anything to do with it. "It is a reason above reason," it is the revelation of our inmost life in its most tender and refined process; it is the ideal of the arts, it appeals direct to our consciousness.

Melody dwells deeply in human nature, and forms for itself a religious culture. A celebrated writer and author remarks: "Let me write the songs for a nation and who shall make their laws?" Give plenty of songs to a nation, and you will have very little use for laws and courts of justice. Bad people have no songs, good people have; and wherever we hear songs, we know that there is no danger to be apprehended, no matter in what portion of the globe we may find ourselves.

The most savage tribes celebrate their festivals with some kind of song, or rather noise, as an expression of their devotion or joy; and the more cultivated nations of ancient times (the Greeks) cherished music and song as the ethereal vehicle of their poetry and regarded it as the chief aid in the culture of the soul. Music originally embraced the entire circle of science, as well as elegant arts comprehending every thing which was poetically considered from the language and accomplishments of "Parnassus," through all the varieties and departments of "Hellenic" learning.

Hermes (Greek) defines music to be the general knowledge of order; which was also the doctrine of "Plato," who taught that everything in the universe was music. Everything, spiritual or ideal, requires a certain form, which, in its material as well as its structure, may be more or less perfect, but it will always have to submit to those eternal laws to which all that lives is subject.

Science has already done a great deal to assist the formation of musical forms of art. Mathematics and physics have established the principal laws of sound. Philosophical inquiries have succeeded in discovering the eternal and impregnable laws of nature upon which the mutual influence of melody, harmony and rhythm depend, and in thus giving to composition fixed forms and laws which no one ventures to question.

But for the culture of the human voice in singing, science has done but very little as yet. Science can do but little for the improvement of singing, and nothing for the culture and preservation of the voice in singing. In thorough bass, harmony and composition, science has it all to do.

In singing we employ three different agents in order to produce a desirable result; viz:

1st. In the physiological view of the vocal art, we have to deal with the quality and strength of the organ of singing in the art of uttering sounds and under the variations of sounds that take place in certain tones, the register of being transcendent.

2nd. The physical side comprehends the correct conduct and control of the air flowing in vibrations of sounds from the lungs through the trachea, and the position of the different glands and parts of the mouth, which serves, as it is, as a sounding board to the voice.

3d. The aesthetic of vocal art, and the spiritual inspiration of the sound comprise the whole domain of music and poetic as well as artistic beauty.

Time, and the limited space of a newspaper, particularly in a weekly, where so much has to be crowded in one issue, forbids my going further with this interesting subject; but I may at some future time endeavor to furnish another article in condensed form with the hope of benefiting some one.

HENRY SCHÖELLER,
Musical Director Dalton Female College.

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