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POETRY.

To-Day.

Only from day to day
The life of a wise man runs;
What matter it's seasons far away
Have gloom or have double suns?

To climb the untried path,
We lose the roadway here,
We swim the rivers of woe
And tunnel the hills of fear.

Our feet on the torrents bristling,
Our eyes on the clouds afar,
We fear the things we think,
Instead of the things that are.

Like a tide our work should rise,
Each later wave the best,
To no row for ever flies,
To-day is the special best.

Like a sawyer's work is life;
The present makes the flow,
And the only field for strife
Is the inch before the saw.

ADDRESS

OF

GEORGE W. BLOUNT,

GRAND MASTER,

AT RALEIGH, DEC 6TH, 1875.

BRETHREN OF THE GRAND LODGE
OF NORTH CAROLINA.

It seems but yesterday when we were last here assembled. Yet another year has passed, and with it how much of good and evil—how much of joy and sorrow, of success and reverse, of prosperity and adversity, it were fruitless to endeavor to detail. Wisdom dictates that we profit by our experiences of sorrows, adversities, and reverses by a proper application of the means suggested by those experiences to their remedy in the future, and that we rejoice at the measure of prosperity, success and joy which hath fallen to our lot, both as men and as Masons. The thanksgiving to the Almighty, our common father, which we have just rendered, through our Grand Chaplain, met, I hope, a hearty and sincere response from every heart,—thanksgiving for our preservation, for the blessings of life which He has bestowed, and especially for having permitted so many of us to reassemble, from all parts of our jurisdiction, around the Altar of Masonry to enjoy the highest and purest of earthly pleasures, the communion of brethren. Let our prayers ascend for His blessing upon our present convention, that he may guide our deliberations, and strengthen and support us by the power of His might, to the end that our Order may be enlarged in usefulness, encouraged in its mission, and the name of the Most High exalted and glorified in us.

While we greet each other and joy at our re-union, while we feel the warm, fraternal grasp—in the midst of rejoicing we sorrow for that the grasp of many whom we loved, and whose memory we revere, is now that of the icy hand of death.

Past Grand Master, Clement H. Jordan, Joseph H. Separk, Grand Tiler, and Thomas W. Dewey, Grand High Priest, have been claimed by the Grim Monster, to them we hope the kind messenger sent to translate them from this troublesome, transitory existence, to that blissful eternal one, where the Supreme Grand Master of Heaven and Earth is Lord of all, in whose presence is joy forever more. At every re-union we have to mourn for some of our loved ones; in every annual address there is the obituary. Every day death claims some for his own. His sway is universal—his claims take no denial.

"No spot on earth but has supplied a grave. And human skulls the spacious oceans have." While we are taught to regard Death as the pilot who shall guide our barques through the narrows into the Haven of rest—the broad Ocean of Eternity—and his coming as the "prelude of repose, the dawn of bliss, the twilight of our woes;" yet 'tis a dread and awful thing to die, and there are few who can contemplate it with other than feelings of horror and dismay.

"Let us then, in view of the unsubstantial nature of all human pursuits, the certainty of death, the uncertainty of life, not fail to improve the opportunity which these reflections present—of preparation for Eternity"—we know not upon whom the icy hand may next fall.

I have not been able to obtain sufficient data from which to make suitable mention of P. G. M. Jordan, whose private worth and high Masonic character demands more than a passing notice. The Grand Lodge will pay proper tribute to his memory.

Brother Thomas W. Dewey died in Charlotte, on the 4th of August, last, in the meridian of his life and in the midst of his usefulness. He had just been elected to the position of Grand High Priest of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of North Carolina. I well remember the last time I saw him; how full of hope he was of a joyful re-union at Charlotte next June. Within two months he joins the departed. A zealous Mason, a genial, whole souled Companion, a prompt, upright business man, a public spirited, useful citizen, few men had more or warmer friends—few who so well deserved them.

Brother Joseph H. Separk, our last Grand Tiler, died on the ——day of ——1875. Though in subordinate position in the Grand Lodge, yet he was universally beloved by the Fraternity, and by all who knew him, and in our heart he held a high place. By his inflexible integrity, sterling worth and indomitable energy he raised himself from the position of a poor apprentice boy to that of highest esteem in the hearts of his fellow citizens. He was once selected by the political party to which he belonged as candidate for the position of Superintendent of Public Works, and at the time of his death was Mayor of the city of Raleigh. As a pri-

vate citizen, a public man, a Mason, and a member of the church he had the confidence and respect of all who knew him.

DECISIONS.

The correspondence of the Grand Master has been quite voluminous, the greater part unimportant to the Craft in general. Much of it might have been saved had the correspondents availed themselves of the means of information which might have been reached by the slightest investigation. A large number of the questions presented had their solution in the Uniform Code of By-Laws adopted for Subordinate Lodges, a larger number in the Constitution, By-Laws, Resolutions of the Grand Lodge, and a great many had previously been decided by my predecessors.

I will submit a few of the decisions made by me, for the purpose of having them reviewed by the Grand Lodge:

1. In answer to inquiries made by five Masters of Lodges, I held that no man so maimed as to be unable to learn, teach and exemplify the work could be made a Mason. Hence the loss of a leg, or arm, the sense of seeing, hearing or feeling, would disqualify.

2. To a large number, as to the status of non-affiliates, I replied by referring to the resolutions on the subject passed by the last Grand Lodge; which gives them no right save that of petition.

3. That dimitts granted before the passage of the resolutions above referred to, with the condition precedent as before required, did not sever the connection of the brother holding it, from the Lodge granting, until the condition had been complied with. That his membership still existed, intact, with the Lodge granting, which carried mutual obligation of the member to the Lodge and the Lodge to the member.

4. That a Mason having taken a dimit before the last session of the Grand Lodge with the intent to affiliate with a Lodge nearer his place of residence, or to join in petition for dispensation for a new Lodge, is not debarred of any right he may have of preferring charge, or having difficulty between himself and a member of the Lodge with which he proposes to affiliate investigated, before he offers to affiliate.

5. A Mason dimitted since last Grand Lodge cannot prefer charges against an affiliate, but he may give information which should be acted upon by the Lodge, if the nature of the offence be such as to work scandal or reproach to the Fraternity; but not if the charge be to gratify a private animosity or avenge a personal pique or individual quarrel.

6. To several inquiries answer was made that neither the W. Master, Senior or Junior Warden, after installation could resign or dimit, and in one case, where the W. M. had done so, I declared his action contrary to Law, and that of the Lodge in accepting and granting as null and void, and directed that the rec-

ord be expunged. The Master so acting did so, I am satisfied, believing that his action was warranted by law, and for the best interests of the Craft, and was influenced by circumstances which he deemed justifiable. He is one for whom I have high personal regard, and whose Masonic worth is known and has been recognized by this Grand Lodge. He protests against my action. To the Grand Lodge I submit my decision for confirmation or reversal.

7. That a motion to "lay on the table" is admissible in Masonic bodies, according to invariable precedent and general parliamentary law.

8. That Lodge rooms should be used exclusively for Masonic purposes. Their use for balls, parties, &c., should be forbidden. Joint proprietorship with other Societies is not favored, though this may be regulated by each Lodge according to its circumstances and surroundings.

9. That a Subordinate Lodge may proceed to receive and act upon the petition for affiliation of a Master Mason whose Lodge has become defunct, without the certificate of the Grand Secretary, as provided by resolution passed by the last Grand Lodge, upon the exhibition of satisfactory evidence from the Grand Secretary that such certificate cannot be given by reason of loss of the records by fire, or otherwise.

10. That the jurisdiction of Lodges in adjoining villages, is, in respect to the villagers, confined to their own corporate limits. As to material outside or beyond the town lines the rule as to proximity by nearest route of travel, prevails; so the Lodge situated in Salem cannot use material resident in Winston (an adjoining town) without the consent of the Lodge in Winston.

11. Non payment of a debt, by one brother to another, unaccompanied with any fraudulent intent, is not sufficient grounds on which to base a charge of unmasonic conduct.

The unfortunate circumstances of a brother should call for commiseration rather than a visitation of punishment.

12. The only prohibition as to investment or appropriation of the funds of the Lodge, is as to those derived from initiation fees. Therefore a Lodge may appropriate funds arising from dues or subscription to the purchase of stock in the Masonic Temple Association.

13. Accused cannot testify in his own behalf, the Lodge may hear his statement, giving to it such weight as it deserves.

The testimony of a freedman is competent, taken as the testimony of other profanes. As to the credibility of any testimony the Lodge must be the judge, from the character of the witness, his demeanor, and general bearing on the stand.

14. That testimony taken in a civil suit is not competent, and cannot be read in evidence against one accused of Masonic crime in a trial by a Lodge. Nor can the letters of a non-resident in answer to

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