

J. H. Bain (B. L.)



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THE TRUE MASON'S DUTY.—What can be more divine than the moral precepts of Masonry? What more sublime than Charity—the soul and essence of Masonry? To love your neighbor as yourself; to love your Creator without reserve; to love even your enemies; to forget injuries; to pardon offenses; to conquer evil with good; to be joyful with those who are happy; to weep with those in affliction; to enlighten those who are in darkness; to reclaim those who have strayed; to judge not rashly lest ye be judged; and to assist the unfortunate, are among the duties we are called upon to fulfill by the action of our Masonic vows. We are not to measure the riches nor talents of our neighbor, but to dispense our gifts to those who lack them. Not to advance our own interests, but rather to sacrifice them to the general good of humanity. We are to be good, true, compassionate, affable, generous, merciful and clement. To be a faithful subject in the country where you live, respect the laws, a constant friend, a worthy husband, a good father, a tender, respectful and submissive son, a careful and vigilant master, full of charity toward all, and favor and countenance all honest intentions. Show me a world of true Masons and I will point you to the peaceful abode of innocence and happiness.—Columbia Courier

Happiness Consists in Love.

As the affections are the noblest ingredients in human nature, so the elevation and happiness of a human being mainly depend on the right bestowment and ample exercise of these affections—that is self-sufficient and self-seeking—that is to keep all the affections to one's self—is the meanest and most miserable predicament a creature can be in. The home—instead of a fine spirit—much more the desolate chamber of a sinful heart—does not contain resources enough for its own blessedness. The soul must go out from itself, if it would find materials of joy. And just as its happiness depends on going out from itself, so its elevation depends on its going up—depends on its setting its affections upon something higher than itself, something nobler or holier or more engaging. The main part of a true religion is the right bestowment of the affections. When they are set on the things above they are set as high as a seraph can set his. They are set so high that they cannot fail to lift the character along with them, and make him a peculiar character whose ends in living are so lofty.—James Hamilton.

Stumbling Blocks.

Under this head may be classed no inconsiderable portion of the Fraternity who are Masons but in name and profession,—not in fact and by the keeping of the law of Masonry. All such, of whatever rank and condition, who are without understanding of, or respect for, the obligations they have assumed, are stumbling

blocks in the way of Masonic advancement and prosperity. Masonry presents certain principles that are intended to be the rule and guide for the conduct of its members. Let these principles cease to be respected and have weight,—let them be habitually violated in word and in deed and the result will be that the Institution is wounded in the house of its friends and suffers under the very worst hindrance to any true progress. The worst foes with which Masonry has to contend at this time, are not the critics and opposers, who stand on the outside and make their weak attacks on the character and purposes of the organization, but rather those identified with the Craft, whose eyes and ears are holden that they do not discern the real meaning of the Masonic system, and who are practically neglectful of its primary obligations. It occurs to us to mention three classes of such stumbling blocks.

1. The discourteous Mason. The grace of courtesy is commonly ranked among the minor virtues, yet it has its place among the essentials to true and worthy living. This gentle virtue is especially set forth and recommended by the whole spirit and tenor of the Masonic system, which has regard, not alone to the planting of the sterling qualities of integrity in the moral nature, but likewise to the applying of the finishing graces and adornments of humanity. The first duty of every Mason is to be a gentleman in the broad full meaning of the word; and if he will but keep the unwritten law of the Craft in this respect he will be most likely to be a means of help, and not a hindrance, to the progress and prosperity of the Institution. But the discourteous Mason is a constant reproach to the Fraternity. His intercourse with his brethren takes on the character of a gross harsh demeanor; he is wholly without consideration for the feelings of other people, and there is nothing gentle nor affable in his treatment of his friends and associates. The man who is rough and bearish in his ways, who despises or neglects the amenities and courteous attentions which have such blessed efficacy to sweeten the cup of human existence, can hardly fail to bring some reproach on the Institution with which he is connected, no matter how honest he may be in purpose and real life.

2. The uncharitable Mason. Charity is one of the grand watchwords of the Masonic Institution; a charity which means kindness of heart, benevolence of purpose, and the rendering of help with a free open hand to those who may be in need. The teachings and traditions of the Craft point in this direction most unmistakably. Line upon line, and precept upon precept are given, to impress upon the novice his obligation as a Mason to be generous, kind hearted and benevolent, not only in his relations with his Brethren but in the broader relations of human intercourse and society.

When therefore, we see, as is sometimes the case, a member of the Fraternity who is mean and stingy, hard and exacting in all his dealings with his fellow men, we say at once he is a stumbling block in the way. A Mason who ignores the duty of benevolence is an anomaly. A Mason who always turns a deaf ear to the call of charity, has never been baptized into the spirit of the Institution, no matter how far he has progressed in its mysteries, or how many of its honors and titles have been heaped upon his head. If his neighbors and the world say of him, "he is selfish and mean," such an one brings reproach upon the Craft, inasmuch as his life is at variance with the tenets of his profession.

3. The profane Mason. Profanity is a vice that prevails to a fearful extent in all ranks and classes of society, yet it is a habit which ought not to attach to the true gentleman—or the true Mason. Profanity offends the feelings of others, is a useless practice, besides being a violation of the law of God. Surely here are sufficient grounds for its condemnation. When we meet a foul mouthed Mason, cursing and swearing at every breath, we are sure that we encounter a stumbling block that is of no slight consequence. It will surely count as some thing against the progress of Masonry if, beginning and ending with God as it does, it yet fails to impose upon its membership any sort of decent respect or reverence for the great and sacred name. We have heard irreverent speech and profane utterance even within the Lodge room, and have heard devout lessons of grandest import rehearsed in the use of the ritual by those who in their daily conversation were accustomed to use the most irreverent speech. Does not Masonry suffer from the conduct of such as these? Are they not sad stumbling blocks to its best and highest prosperity? As has been said: "when profane swearing becomes consistent with the teachings of Masonry, let us cease to clothe ourselves with the lambskin, let us break the pot of incense and quench its flame; let us remove the All seeing Eye, and the Book of the law from the Lodge; let us knock out the foundations of the Masonic edifice, and suffer it to fall to the ground, a mass of ruins."

Reader do you belong to one or the other of these classes we have named? If so, for your own sake, as well as for the sake of the Institution which, perhaps, you sincerely love, suffer the word of exhortation that you change your course and be no longer a cause of offence or stumbling to any.—Freemason's Repository.

The Cedars of the Temple.

It is indisputable that all the cedars, which were so freely used in the erection of the Temple, were brought from Mount Lebanon, some one hundred miles north of Jerusalem. It was the very remoteness of this noble tree, combined with its

majestic height and sweeping branches, that made it, one may almost say, an object of religious reverence. To the Jews the Cedar of Lebanon was a portent, a grand and awful work of God. The epithets they applied to it were: "The tree of the Lord; the cedars which he had planted; whose light is like the cedar, with fair branches; with a shadowing shroud; of an high stature; his top among the thick boughs; his highest exalted above all the trees of the field; his boughs multiplied; his branches long; fair in his greatness; in the length of his branches," etc. etc. It is said that the clergy of the Greek Church still offer up mass under the cedar tree and that the Arabs call it the Tree of God.—Sinai and Palestine

—The Mississippi river has again overflowed its banks, and threatens great danger to farming and other interests.

—A dispatch from Columbia, Tenn., announces the death of Hon. A. O. P. Nicholson chief Justice of the State. The deceased had been prominently in public life for many years, and was U. S. Senator in 1840.

—Columbus, Ga., claims the position of the Lowell of the South. She is now running 35,000 spindles and 1,000 looms, besides many iron and other industrial enterprises. The city was destroyed in 1865, and all these have been replaced since with Southern money.

—English shipbuilders have just completed several ironclad gunboats for the Argentine Republic. They are of the most powerful class, draw eight feet of water, are fitted with twin screws, and have a speed of about ten knots an hour. Each carries a 26½ ton 11 inch rifled gun, which is loaded by hydraulic machinery.

—During the anti-Masonic excitement while our energetic Brother Lorenzo Dow was on his way to the Lodge room, one evening, he was followed by a lot of anti-masons, who were reviling him. Just before he ascended the steps he turned round to them and very quaintly observed "whither I go ye cannot come."

—It is a singular fact that the first writer on the subject of Freemasonry who ventured to hint at the existence of a historical connection between the Fraternity of Freemasons and that of Stonemasons, was the Abbe Grandier, who was not a Mason. While engaged in preparing his History of the Cathedral of Strassburg (published in 1782), he had occasion to examine the archives of the Cathedral, and various manuscripts therein preserved, and the study of these led him to assert the identity of the elder Stonemasons with the later Freemasons.—Keystone.