

## SECOND DAY'S, NIGHT SESSION.

SCOTTISH RITE CATHEDRAL,  
New Orleans, La., February 6th, 1923.

The M. W. Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Louisiana, after prayer by the Rev. Brother Caleb B. K. Weed, Grand Chaplain, was called from refreshment to labor by M. W. Ira W. Sylvester, Grand Master, this Tuesday evening at six-thirty o'clock.

## - GRAND LODGE OFFICERS PRESENT.

All of the Grand Lodge Officers were present and in their respective stations.

One-hundred and seventy-seven Lodges and a quorum being present, M. W. Grand Master Ira W. Sylvester, declared the Grand Lodge open for business.

## ORATION.

Rev. Brother W. S. Slack of Oliver Lodge No. 84, then delivered the following Oration:

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Officers of the Grand Lodge and Brother Masons:

When the request of the Most Worshipful Grand Master was made to me that I should be the orator on the occasion of this Annual Communication, in compliance with that instruction which I had learned in the several degrees conferred upon me, I assented. Conscious was I of the honor bestowed, but blissfully ignorant of the duties imposed upon me by this acceptance—of the solemn responsibility that is mine in presuming to address a gathering so Masonically enlightened as is this, and daily more conscious have I become of my unfitness to stand before you in the role of orator of the evening.

To be honored along with those great palladins of Freemasonry, who in the past have addressed you from this rostrum, is indeed a high privilege, and one that I feel myself unworthy to assume. That I, ignorant as I am, should presume to address you on matters with which you are so familiar, and I so inexperienced, seems to me presumption developed to the "Nth degree."

In glancing over the record of Proceedings of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of this, my native State, I find, that some sixteen years ago one, who was afterwards honored with the highest office within this Jurisdiction—Most Worshipful Grand Master L. E. Thomas introduced a motion which was unanimously passed by the Grand Lodge, "That at each Annual Grand Communication of the Most Wor-

shipful Grand Lodge there be appointed by the Grand Master-elect a suitable member of the Craft, who shall at the next Annual Communication, on the second night of the Session, deliver an appropriate Masonic address for the edification of the Craft, and to advance knowledge in our well beloved and mystic art."

"There were giants in those days," some of whom, we thank God, are still with us, men whose names, faces and deeds are charms to stir Masonic memories in our breasts—Most Worshipful Charles F. Buck, A. C. Allen, A. G. Brice, L. E. Thomas, E. H. Addington, and others, all of whom have brought honor to the Order, and have comforted themselves in such measure as to be esteemed most highly by all who know them whether initiate or profane.

The reading of that timeless definition of "What Masonry is and its Objects," by perhaps the greatest of all American Masons, one of our Southern heroes—General Albert Pike has brought further to mind my ignorance and incompetency of utterance of the "sublime principles" of that Order, whose origin is wrapt in mystery, but whose teachings handed down from the dim and yet forgotten past have lightened the paths of many of this world's greatest patriots and sons, and produced in their train blessings to those without as well as within our Order.

A very compelling injunction is found in the oration of our late lamented Most Worshipful Grand Master, Hon. Robert R. Reid, in memory of whom the portals of our buildings are even now draped in the sombre mourning color of the Order; who when arising from a bed of sickness to go to labor in that school of religious instruction where for many years he had taught a class lessons based on the great light of Masonry—the Bible—was on the morning of Sunday, January 7th, "called from labor to refreshment." In it, speaking in his modest way of his lack of capacity to instruct those before him, he lays down this dictum which is worthy of observance by those who serve on this and like occasions, let him, he says, "confine his speech to what he has to say—and be brief."

Putting to one side then any effort to instruct with regard to the origin or antiquity of our esteemed and venerated Order, since its origin is involved in the mysterious fashions of the past, and the deepest and most profound students of Masonry are at variance among themselves as to the exact time when the bright beams of light Masonic first shone upon earth, I dare not surmise or offer any suggestion as to the cause of its origination. We KNOW that it is of very great antiquity; for we are told that when Cleopatra's Needle, the great monolith that is standing in Central Park, New York City, and which is given a date more than five centuries earlier than that of the building of King Solomon's Temple to Jehovah in Jerusalem, that when that ancient granite monolith was moved there were found under its base certain emblems and symbols that only Masons and those learned in our art could decipher.

But for us, this suffices, "Masonry is not great because it IS old—but it is old because it IS GREAT." We venerate it not because of that antiquity, precious though it may be, and is to us on account of its past, but it has a past because it was of proven value to those who learned and lived according to its precepts, and today are bright lights in its firmament of the past.

There are three thoughts, Brother Masons, I would remind ourselves, your speaker as well as his hearers, that are among the marked characteristics of our Order:

1st. The Tolerance of Masonry.

2nd. The Teachings of Masonry in respect to Constituted Authority.

3rd. Masonry's duty to the Orphans of Masons.

First, Tolerance, in this day of unrest, when the heat and passion stirred by the torrid flames of war have not yet cooled and the flames then ignited have not an active war, with an active enemy to engage with, are lapping about us seeking flesh fuel to devour, it is perhaps often, too often the case that we have forgotten the teachings of our beloved Order, and may have allied ourselves with those not learned in our Masonic precepts, and regardless of the teachings of the sages of all ages, whether the negative teachings of those who went before, or the positive command of the Master Prophet of Galilee, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," and we would meet hatred with rancor, bitterness with bitterness, distrust with suspicion, so that evil passions become engendered, friends become alien to each other, and communities which should be united find themselves resolved into quasi hostile camps.

An Order, which invariably before committing to the intransigent the obligation binding him the more securely to it gives the assurance that the assumption of this vow \* \* \* G \* \* \*, \* \* \* cannot by virtue of its constitution, its age long teaching of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, make distinctions in Creed or profession, but like the Samaritan of old should pour its healing balm of the wine of richest benediction, and the water of purity of intention into the wounds of a world still reeling from the effects and the debauchery of war.

Second, Respect to Constituted Authority. As an Order, in the words of our great leader and spokesman, General Albert Pike, "Masonry is an advocate of the common people, in those things which concern the best interest of mankind; hates insolent power and impudent usurpation. It pities the poor, the sorrowing, the disconsolate. It would fain raise and improve the ignorant, the sunken and degraded. It is the Preacher of LIBERTY—FRATERNITY and EQUALITY. Of a decent and well regulated LIBERTY, based on Law and guarded by an inviolable Constitution, under which the

rights of the individual and the minority are as secure as those of the majority; of LIBERTY, that is not License, nor Anarchy, nor Licentiousness, nor the Despotism of Party; by which men are free, but not too free; of FRATERNITY, in that sober sense which regards men as children of a common Father, to be loved when good, pitied and not hated when bad, persuaded and not persecuted when in error; of EQUALITY, in the eye of the Law, in political rights and in the rights of conscience. \* \* \* But its mission is not to engage in plots and conspiracies against the Civil Government. It is not the fanatical propagandist of any creed or theory. It contracts no engaging alliances with any Sect of Theorists, dreamers or political philosophers. It sits apart from all, in its own calm dignity and simplicity—the same now, as when the foundations of the first Temple at Jerusalem were laid.

"It recognizes the truth of the proposition that necessity, as well as abstract ideal RIGHT and JUSTICE, plays a part in the making of laws the administration of government and the regulation of relations in Society; and rules, indeed, in all the affairs of men. It knows that FREEDOM follows FITNESS for freedom, as the consequence follows the cause; and that no people will be REALLY free until they are FIT to govern themselves. Therefore, it does not preach sedition nor encourage rebellion by a people or a race, when it can only end in disaster and defeat; or, if successful, in bloodshed and barbarism, and, at last, a worse servitude than before."

These solemn words of the Great High Priest of Masonry come to us with compelling force. Masonry stands for law and order; for one and all, rich and poor, no special privileges, no immunity before the courts, but for the support of the true and whole-hearted rule, "of the people, by the people, for the people."

Third, The Orphaned Charges of Masonry. Masonry teaches us by its sublime symbols and impressive words many striking and wonderful lessons.

It tells us, that "the cradle and the grave are in close juxtaposition."

How often does the yawning grave envelope the body of a tried, true and upright Mason, who for reasons good, or not so good, has left unprotected the tiny occupants of the cradle. How often has the cry of the helpless gone up to The Father, because they were sore distressed "of those whose angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

How often have the widows of our Brothers cried out in the agony of their bereavement and grief—"O, what will become of his little children, my babes, my little ones?" And the only response has been the CHARITY dispensed by friends within and without the Order.

Does it not seem fitting NOW, Brother Masons, that this great and prosperous Order, which is set "to assist all who are unfortunate,"

should turn its attention to the speedy erection of a HOME for the orphaned dependents upon our Order.

Are there not now, children in this State, even today, who because of the absence of such a HOME to which they have a RIGHT to enter, a RIGHT the same as Birthright, and not as a Charity, to enter, are today "farned out" sent to the Asylums of those who willfully or in reality ignorant of our high teachings, condemn us, and would fain instill prejudices in their infant minds, or are left to the cold mercies of a pre-occupied world, receiving help only in a financial way from our Order, and living along without the faintest conception of what Home life means?

Who can measure the good to be derived from such a Home? Who knows the value of the soul of a child? Are there any scales so exact that they can measure it? What potentialities lie hidden in the breast of the child of the lowliest home? Who can tell what geniuses yet remain to be brought out, what value to Society the most unpromising mite of humanity left struggling alone, might by the assistance of a real Masonic Home become? Shall we of the Jurisdiction of Louisiana fail in this duty to our Brethren?

Picture to yourselves the last scene in the life of a Brother, as it may be taking place even NOW, a Brother rich in God's heritage of children, faithful in his adherence to Masonic principles, but poor in this world's goods. The fiat of death has suddenly gone forth. With starting eye and quaking heart he gazes into the future. Tossing with the fever, he sees beside him his anxious wife and their helpless offspring. He dreads what the future has in store for them, when soon he is called hence and will no longer be able to supply that support which his willing hands and anxious brain afforded them. He knows that the oldest is not old or strong enough to take charge of the others while the mother goes out to labor, and the Order, his Order, our Order has not made provision in a Home for the care of such as these. Thus we come face to face with the problem as it is before you.

How different would be this scene, had we a Home to which by Right these helpless ones could go. A HOME, not an Asylum. A refuge from life's chilling blast, where love, joy and peace abounds, and the glory of Service to GOD and His little ones bears tribute to the practice of the precepts of our Order, for there in that Home the life of the child is safeguarded and developed into efficient good for Society; and from being a great liability he has become the great asset of the future.

But, Brother Masons, if I shall practice what I preach, I must needs be brief. I have said my say. I have brought back to you the instruction of our great leaders. As Masons we must do "Good work, true work, square work," and this is best done in the spirit of Toleration, of Obedience to and support of Constituted Law, and in Mercy to the Orphans dependent upon this great Order. Thus shall

we labor, to this end we shall strive. Our reward is sure. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." (Rev. ii. 17). And thus doing our three-fold duty we shall certainly hear those thrilling words from the Omnific Judge, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

At the conclusion of the Oration the appreciation of the Grand Lodge was expressed by a resolution of thanks, which was unanimously adopted.

#### SELECTION OF SITE FOR MASONIC ORPHANS HOME.

The hour set for the consideration of the subject matter of the reports of the Trustees of the Masonic Orphans Home having arrived, the Grand Master declared nominations for the site in order.

Alexandria, New Iberia, Lafayette and Arcadia were placed in nomination. The Grand Master appointed W. Brothers M. A. Quilty of Lake Charles and H. A. Swasey of New Orleans as tellers, the balloting resulting as follows: Alexandria received 458 votes, New Iberia 65, Lafayette 26, Arcadia 44. Upon motion, duly seconded and carried, the selection of Alexandria was made unanimous. When the result was announced, the Grand Master declared Alexandria selected as the site for the New Masonic Orphans Home.

#### COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

The resolution appended to the report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence at the last Annual Grand Communication, came up for action and it was decided that this Grand Lodge maintain an attitude of non interference in Mexican affairs until the different Grand Lodges in the Federal District agree upon some plan of union and concerted action.

#### RESOLUTION BOARD OF MASONIC HALL DIRECTORS.

The following resolution appended to the report of the Board of Masonic Hall Directors was unanimously adopted:

Resolved: That for the purpose of putting into execution the joint resolution of the Committee on Masonic Law and Jurisprudence and the Committee on Audits and Accounts, presented at the last session of the Grand Lodge, the appraised value of the Masonic