

An
ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

Dedication of the Shriners' Hos-
pital for Crippled Children

AT

SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA

ON

FRIDAY, APRIL 20th, 1923

BY

LEE E. THOMAS 33°

Past Grand Master, and one of the Representatives of
El Karubah Temple

AN ADDRESS

Delivered at Dedication of Shriners' Hospital for Crippled Children

BY LEE E. THOMAS, F. G. M.

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Officers of the Grand Lodge, Imperial
Potentate, and Members of the Nobility, Brethren and Friends:

I assure you that I esteem it indeed a high honor to have been selected by the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons of the State of Louisiana to deliver the oration appropriate to this great occasion. It has been my privilege to deliver many addresses in the past on various Masonic subjects, but I do not believe that I have ever participated in any exercises fraught with so much interest and which were so far reaching in their ultimate consequences as the dedicatory service in which we have just participated today. I feel a sense of profound unworthiness to measure up to the cause that has brought us together and to lay upon your hearts the tremendous responsibilities that devolve upon you and me in connection with this great enterprise of establishing and carrying forward these humanitarian institutions intended for the relief of suffering humanity and to give the crippled children in America an equal opportunity in the race for life. I sincerely trust that God may give me wisdom to speak aright and understanding wherewithal to challenge and hold your attention.

BEGINNING HOSPITAL WORK.

I am proud that El Karubah Temple through its Representatives took part in the discussion before the Imperial Council at Des Moines, Iowa, in June, 1921, when the great body of the Nobility of America was somewhat like sheep who had gone astray and when their minds had been very much perturbed as to the right course to pursue. I have always pinned my faith to this proposition in fraternal matters—"the average brother has his heart in the right place and if you can show him what is right and what is best and what his duty is, he will not hesitate to walk in that path.

It is true that at Des Moines there was some confusion among the workmen of the Temple; some brethren thought a mistake was possibly made at Portland, Oregon, when the Imperial Council responded to the splendid appeal made by the then Imperial Potentate, our beloved Noble Freeland Kendrick and they desired to re-trace their steps, but the great body of the Nobility, recognizing the duty devolving upon them to alleviate suffering humanity and to champion the cause of the weak and recognizing the fact that the Shrine hitherto had done nothing except to have a good time for their own amusement, they overwhelmingly responded and endorsed the report of the majority of the committee and placed the 500,000 Shriners of America in solid phalanx behind this great movement that will redound to the everlasting glory and honor of the Ancient and Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine. To God be given all the glory and praise for this great forward step.

At the last session of the Imperial Council a resolution was unanimously adopted requiring that at the future laying of the cornerstone and dedication of these mercy houses the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted

Masons should be fraternally requested to perform that function. Responding to this courteous invitation, our Most Worshipful Grand Master, with the officers of the Grand Lodge, has most cheerfully responded and set the seal of the approval of the great brotherhood upon the work which we are here undertaking to do. We are proud to have our Masónic Grand Lodge do this work and while it is true that all Masons are not Shriners, at the same time it is also true that all Shriners must necessarily be Masons and whatever success follows any great undertaking by the Shrine, it indirectly reflects honor and credit upon the Masonic Brotherhood.

MISSION OF MASONRY—SERVICE.

Masonry, my brethren, is service. Too many of us have been inclined to advocate **speculative Masonry** only by which we are taught "to act upon the square, keep a tongue of good report, maintain secrecy and practise charity." There is a wider field of activity for our work. We must be **operative Masons** in the broad field of humanity, if we are to occupy the proper sphere marked out for us according to the teachings of this venerable institution. For that reason, it seems proper in this connection that something should be said concerning what is Masonry and its mission. I shall not undertake to answer this question negatively, except to say that it is not an insurance society, nor is it a club to encourage Bachchanalian revelry, festivities and good fellowship. It is not a dogmatic religion although it is so far interwoven with religion that it lays us under obligation to pay that rational homage to the Deity, which at once constitutes our duty and our happiness.

Masonry is a scientific moral institution that teaches its lessons by symbolism and allegory. There is scarcely a single object in nature from which it does not draw some moral truth and apply it to our every day life. It is a moral principle working through an organization of lodges and whose teachings are "peace on earth, good will to men". It is a combination of one order of three sovereigns, "of right over force, of intelligence over prejudice, of brotherhood over self-hood." It presents objects heroic in the highest sense and which can only serve to inspire Masons, true builders of the Eternal Truth, with a resolution as omnipotent as are the obstacles to the upbuilding of all things mightier than men. We care not whence it came, but we know that from the garnered truths by it let fall upon the fallow ground of ages gone, have grown the mighty facts of religion, science and morality that will live through all the ages yet to be. What matters it to us here whether this Order of the Square, the Level and the Plumb comes from the Syrians or the Chaldeans or the Egyptian Priests or from the Hebrew Land of Kings and Prophets or from Grecian Academy or from the Roman Collegii Fabrorum. We care not whether the mysterious pyramids still testify to its eternity for you know and I know that this, our Faith, is a sublime and practical moral force and this force is the parent of all other earthly forces.

MAN IS TEMPORAL—MASONRY ETERNAL.

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sence and will live forever, and thus, although the Temple of Solomon constructed by so many celebrated artists escaped not the unsparing ravages of barbarous force, Free Masonry has still survived. "The Attentive Ear received the sound from the Instructive Tongue and the Mysteries of this Fraternity have been lodged in the repository of Faithful Breasts."

We know that many of the valuable monuments of antiquity have crumbled into dust and where those beautiful spots once adorned the earth, the sands of deserts now cover them, but the music that fell from the lips of Hiram, the Builder, still lingers on the lips of thousands. Like a beautiful stream rippling over the rocks and crags of superstition and prejudice, this Order of ours has flown down through the ages bringing gladness and hope to the weary traveler while it sings ever and anon the same sweet song of devotion and untiring love to humanity.

In the dawn of the human race and possibly when the morning stars sang together, this mystic Order arose among the Nations of the Earth and has driven away the darkness of superstition and flooded the Earth with the enlightened knowledge of right and truth everlasting. The dark clouds of ignorance and prejudice have sought to deluge us, but by the blessed ark, "Trust in God", we have been brought down to this good day.

The Masonic Order is no artificial idol of a departed age, no ineffectual bauble born in superstitious darkness and religious dismay, no pretentious relic of despair born in the captivity and dragged forth from the ruins of the dark ages. No, my friends, it is the happy reverse of all this. It is the embodiment of all that would be perfect in the spirit and aspirations of men. It is an Institution whose duty it is to stoop to the unfortunate, to hear their every cry and to help them, to rescue and relieve. Majestic from its mercy, venerable from its antiquity, uplifted without pride, and lovely even in its frown. It is a kingly figure, compact and grand, and fronts with face of welcome a weary world, and in answer to the universal cry for help it extends its "Lion's grip" that shall prevail.

There are many objects and purposes to which the Masonic Institution is devoted and I am proud of the fact that the various Masonic organizations have awakened to their sense of duty.

MASONRY STANDS FOR ENLIGHTENMENT.

Masonry stands for the education of the masses of the people of this country. She stands for free schools and public education. We do not believe that error can long triumph when an enlightened conscience is left free to combat it. Masonry has flourished, and Nations prospered when the minds of the people were left free. In all countries where learning and freedom have arisen superior to intolerance and fanaticism, our Order has been supported by the Wise and patronized by the great. Liberty, equality and fraternity are written upon the forefront of our every temple. I am glad that Masons in America are waking up to the sense of their obligation in this connection. The Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite and the Grand Encampment Knights Templar are both devoting time and money to the great cause of public education and enlightenment of the people. In America more than all other Nations, it is absolutely necessary that the people should be educated and that an intelligent electorate should guide the destinies of this "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave". In our Country, more than all others, the responsibility for good government or the odium for bad government rests upon the individual

citizen whose sovereignty lies beneath his hat crown. For these reasons our great Masonic Bodies are devoting much time and money to this great cause.

MASONRY STANDS FOR LAW AND ORDER.

Next, Masonry stands and has always stood for law and order and obedience to the constituted authority of government. We are opposed to tyranny and despotism, whether religious or political, but we believe in absolute subordination to those who have the authority over us. We are under no obligations to either defend or protect criminals from the consequences of their evil doings.

At a great ceremony in Birmingham a year ago, our Brother, President Warren G. Harding, said, "I want to tell those of you who are not Masons that there is not anything in the ritual or oath of Masonry that any free, righteous or just American could not be proud to subscribe to and be the better citizen for it. Some wrong impressions in regard to the Order have gained circulation, but I know I am a better citizen for being a better Mason. In the great cares and duties of my office, I find myself heartened and my courage strengthened because I know that this great Fraternity stands ready to give of its all for the preservation of law and order."

MASONIC FRATERNITY A PATRIOTIC INSTITUTION.

Next, it is our duty to be patriotic citizens. When we look over the history of America and see the galaxy of bright stars that glitter in the coronet of Masonry, it makes us proud of our Country and proud that Masons have taken such a conspicuous part in laying the foundation stones of this Republic that was baptised with their tears and consecrated with their precious blood. When I hear the critics of this Order of ours talk disparagingly of Masonry and of what it has done, I wish to say to them that during the eventful struggle of the American Revolution that not a battle was fought, not a victory won, not a trophy gained, not a deed of fame emblazoned upon the face of the national escutcheon but the name of some Mason mingled with the remembrance. I want to tell the critics all this and methinks the still living voices of these departed philosophers, statesmen, patriots and heroes as they rise from the closet council and ensanguined battlefield sufficient to still the voices of calumny forever.

But, my brethren, we cannot rest upon the wonderful achievements of our forefathers. It is true they shed glory upon the history and traditions of our Country, but it remains for you and me to do our work so that those who come after us may point with some degree of pride to what we have accomplished in our day. For this reason, I am proud that the Grand Lodge of the Masons of Louisiana will soon construct a Masonic Home to care for the Orphan Children, around whom it is their duty to extend the arm of Masonic charity and protecting care.

No Mason has the right to be content by simply living a life of ease and selfishness and become entirely indifferent to the wants of others. He who sits unconcerned amidst it all, perhaps enjoying his own comforts and luxuries and contrasting them with the hungry and ragged around

him, is not contented and must have lives not for himself but a claim upon his

For this reason the Shrine of North America has a duty and are each to alleviate the suffering and give them an opportunity, said, "Men in numbers confer benefits as possible, and in your nature

The Shrine should never be abandoned to ignorance and that in respect to education and development benefit as was it the art of progress the act we do at homes and become will bless our Country heard in the halls of the weak and They may indeed their abilities may be bringing to make strong

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him, is not contented but only unfeeling and brutal. The true Mason must be and must have a right to be content and he can do so only when he lives not for himself alone, but for others who need his assistance and have a claim upon his sympathy.

WHAT THE MYSTIC SHRINE IS DOING.

For this reason, I am proud of the fact that the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of North America are awakening to the measure of their Masonic duty and are each contributing the small sum of Two Dollars a year to alleviate the suffering of thousands of crippled children in this Country, and give them an equal opportunity in the race for life. Someone has well said, "Men in no respects so nearly approach to the Deity as when they confer benefits on others". It is our duty to serve and do good to as many as possible, and there is nothing greater in your fortune and nothing finer in your nature than that you should be desirous of doing this.

The Shrine is today constructing eleven of these miracle houses and it should never be forgotten that in the poorest unregarded child that seems abandoned to ignorance and vice may slumber virtue, intellect and genius and that in rescuing him from the mire and giving him the means of education and development, the Shrine may confer on the world as great a benefit as was given it by John Faust, the boy of Mentz, who revealed to it the art of printing. No, my Nobles, we never know the importance of the act we do and here from this hospital may emerge girls to grace the homes and become the mothers of the future sons and daughters that will bless our Country. From here boys may go forth and their voices be heard in the halls of Congress or upon the hustings championing the cause of the weak and pleading for those who are unable to help themselves. They may indeed be diamonds in the rough and we cannot tell what possibilities may be wrapped up in their frail bodies which our Order is seeking to make strong.

The daughter of Pharaoh little thought what she was doing for the human race and the vast unimaginable consequences that depended on her charitable act when she drew the little child of the Hebrew woman from among the rushes that grew along the banks of the Nile and determined to rear it as her own. Yet she reared Moses, the great Lawgiver of Israel, and who led the children of God out of the land of Egypt and the House of Bondage. How often has an act of charity costing the doer little, given to the world a great painter, a great sculptor, a great musician, a great inventor. How often has such an act developed the ragged boy into a benefactor of his race. For there is no law, thank God, that limits the returns that shall be reaped from a single good deed.

The small two dollars contributed by each Shriner in America makes a great sum that is being used for the establishment of equality of opportunity and its everlasting results will only be unfolded when the Great Kingdom of God shall be revealed in the last days. It is our duty to protect the feeble against the strong, to value friends more than riches or fame, and gratitude more than money or power. It is your duty and mine to be liberal and those who render charitable assistance to innocent and helpless wards like these whom God has sent to us as a test of our charity, will bring its reward when the Great Book shall be opened and

we shall be judged according to the things we have done here. Yes, my brethren, let us rise to a realization of our opportunity and reflect glory and credit upon this Institution that we love so well.

WE LIVE FOR OTHERS.

The true Mason labors for the benefit of those that are to come after him and for the advancement and improvement of his race. That is a poor ambition that contents itself within the limits of a single life. All men who deserve to live at all desire to survive their own funerals and to live afterwards in the good they have done mankind, rather than in the writing that lasts even the longest upon the sands of human memories. Most men desire to leave some work behind them that may outlive their day and brief generation. This is the instinctive impulse given of God and is the surest proof of the soul's immortality and of the radical difference between man and the wisest brutes. To plant the trees that after we are dead shall shelter our children is as natural as to love the shades of those our fathers planted. For this reason, we as Masons are proud to have taken a part in the erection of this great institution that will live after we are gone, to mete out its benedictions to the human race, that our Order may live in the hearts and affections of the children who have been benefitted and in the memories of their fathers and mothers who in their heart of hearts will say, "God bless the Mystic Shrine for what it has done for me and mine."

That which we say and do, my brethren, if its effects last not beyond our own lives is of slight importance. That which shall live after we are dead is the only act worth doing. The desire to do something that shall benefit the world when neither praise nor obloquy will reach us when we sleep soundly in the grave is the noblest ambition entertained by man. To sow that others may reap, to project our good influence far into the future and to live beyond our time, to bless with the glorious gifts of charity, beneficence, healing, light and liberty, those who may never individually know our names, nor care in what grave our ashes repose, is the proudest destiny of a man and a true Mason.

So, you see, my brethren, the mission of our institution is to lift mankind into a higher and more spiritual atmosphere, to make them law-abiding and patriotic citizens and to lead them toward the goal of ideal manhood—to alleviate the sufferings of humanity, and to do something practical and beneficial to the human race. A far more noble and glorious purpose than simply hewing timbers and squaring stones is ours—that of fitting immortal nature for its home in the skies. Builders are building for a century, but Masons are building for eternity. Painters paint only for a generation or so, Masons are painting for everlasting years to come. The great pyramids of Egypt took the work of a hundred thousand men many years to construct and yet after all they are only monumental piles beneath whose shadows kings might rest. Yes, they were only mausoleums in which the bones of Rameses and Pharaoh and King Tut of long ago could repose in imperial magnificence. We are not building for the dead but for the living, that they might be fitted to soar aloft in the realms of ethereal bliss while we undertake to make the world better because we have lived in it.

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Looking down the dim vista of the past, a glorious record is ours. It has been beset by trials and conflicts that no other fraternal organization has ever experienced, yet it, the great mother of them all, has emerged with a radiance undimmed and untarnished and facing a future more glorious than ever.

I consider this one of the greatest days that Shreveport has ever experienced in the fact that we are dedicating an institution that will be consecrated to the work of benefitting the poor unfortunates of our land and Country. It is our proud boast that this hospital in its work of love and mercy is not confining its operations exclusively to Masons, but its usefulness is for the benefit of the wide, wide world without distinction as to religious creed or faith. It is also our proud boast that this institution will not accept one single cent of pay for the service that it is rendering to humanity. It is for the relief of the poor people of this Country, who have had the misfortune to be entrusted under God's Providence with the care of a child deformed, maimed or crippled whom they did not have the financial means to relieve. All such will be most cordially welcomed here where they will receive the sympathetic care and tender nursing of the very best nurses that skill and training affords. Here they will receive the treatment of the very best surgeon, whose knowledge and experience have fitted him to render the very best service applicable to all such cases. Just think of the wonderful possibilities of this institution and the good it is meting out to suffering humanity and I say that it is indeed a proud day for Shreveport that the Shrine has seen fit to locate this great hospital here in our midst where it shall receive our tender loving care, our solicitude for its future, our prayers for its success and our sympathy and co-operation whenever needed.

Yes, my brethren, it is a great day and I am proud of the opportunity afforded me to express this joy on behalf of our citizens and all the Masons of Louisiana for the honor conferred in having erected this institution in our midst. Yes, we are proud of what Masonry has done and it is our hope and expectation that we may continue to advance to still greater achievements in the future.

A VISION OF THE FUTURE.

Sacred history tells us that the Patriarch Moses was not permitted to enter the Promised Land, but just before he closed his eyes in eternal rest, the Heavenly Father led him to Mount Pisgah's lofty height and there permitted him to view the Land of Canaan with all of its ineffable glories and splendors and then an Angel kissed his spirit away into the Celestial City, while the Angel Michael was left to guard his body on the summit of Nebo's Mount.

So, standing today on the pinnacle of the present century, I think I can review the record of our Noble Order with all its trials and struggles, now happily ended, and at the same time I can bend down as Elisha of old and catch the mantle of inspiration and prophecy and look into future which dazzles with a radiance as bright and glorious as the everlasting promises of God. His smile is upon us and we shall go forward with a faith undaunted, to the triumphant consummation of our fondest hopes and aspirations.

So let us live and act that by the Masonic application of the principles of our art, we shall be permitted to raise for ourselves an imperishable monument of virtue, charity and morality and when this living present shall have become itself the dead and distant past, the student of Masonic lore, standing as I do now and discoursing to generations yet unborn, shall find in us an example worthy of imitation in this good work we have done and derive new inspiration from the contemplation of the faded but not forgotten glories of the historic past.

“Long may this glorious Order stand for God, for home and native land,
My Brothers, round your altar true, resolve to purge your lives anew,
Until to bear a Mason's name will mean to bear heroic fame.
The atheist foemen still are strong; let Masonry repel this wrong,
And, to defeat this shameful flood, stand firm and help the Church of God.
That, when our labors here are o'er and we too hear the Boatman's oar,
We clasp with joy his welcome hand and sail out to the Sunrise land,
To hear, when the brief race is run, the Master's plaudit, “Child, well
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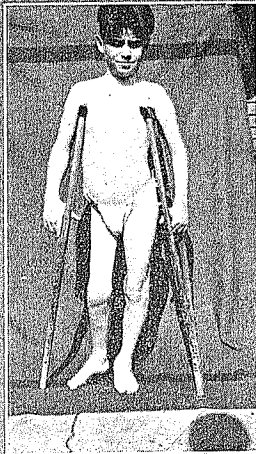
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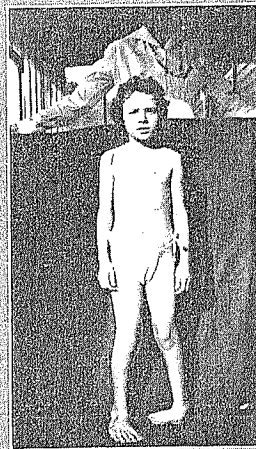
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BEFORE
BYRON BAYNE
Admitted Oct. 24, 1922



AFTER
BYRON BAYNE
Dismissed Dec. 30, 1922



BEFORE
NETTIE SHELTON
Admitted Sept. 22, '22



AFTER
NETTIE SHELTON
Dismissed Jan. 4, 1923

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."