



"If any man attempts to haul down the American Flag, shoot him on the spot."

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Masonic Address.

Delivered before Plattsouth Lodge, No. 6, A. F. & A. M., and Nebraska Chapter, No. 3, R. A. M., at an Installation of officers, St. John Evangelists' Day, 1867.

BY REV. G. CHARLES BETTS, 32°

RI W. P. G. M., M. E. H. P., Worshipful Master, Ladies and Brethren.

I cannot more worthily preface the remarks I shall make, (which the Committee of Arrangements dignify by the title "Oration") than to laud the name, extol the sagacity, the skill, the wonderful knowledge of human nature, the profound acquaintance with Masonic nature of that most fortunate, most felicitous of committees, the Committee on By-Laws; who in their amercatory care, inserted this clause in our By-Laws.

Each member of that Committee ought to be awarded every year, an unbounded supply of oysters and a large silver table-spoon, and his name handed down to posterity in connexion with Mackey on Masonic Jurisprudence and Mrs. Hale on The Art of Cooking.

On these happy occasions, when the dreadful Tyler does not stand between the assembled Lodge and the rest of the world, when all the horrible machinery that timid good people say we Masons keep is laid away out of sight, and we meet together "on the level," and with all that makes life lovely—our wives and sisters and daughters—around us, partake of the generous good things, and witness the solemn induction into office of those elected to preside, we at least breathe the atmosphere of Masonry and rejoice—even though we cannot set foot on the Planet—that we can view these wonderful stars (the officers with the incomprehensible names) and discover that they shine no more brightly at a distance than within the immediate precincts of the Lodge.

To-day we witnessed the installation of the officers of a Lodge of a Fraternity the oldest in the world. Here in the heart of the western empire, whose birth day is but yesterday, is a living working organization claiming kinship with the Lodges of the dim past.

You know with what reverence we stand beneath some immense structure, and gaze with awe upon its vast proportions—its towering grandeur—where stately columns robed in the gathered weeds of age, sustain the gothic pile, whose dim aisles, try covered walls and deserted cloisters speak of the wonderful past. More pretentious and showy indeed, are the mansions of last year, bespangled and bespattered with the tinsel and finery of depraved taste, but who looks twice at them? While the grizzled, time-worn edifices that real wealth and immense labor constructed, that have sustained the shock of years and the tempests of centuries, rear their honored heads proudly above these dwarfs, as kings among men, and we involuntarily bow before them.

All men love relics—they cling to the past, they don't know what is to come, and so they hold tenaciously to what they think they do know something of. And this is not only true of the ancient sleepy, lazy nations, as we sometimes call them, of the old world, but humanity is the same everywhere, and Young America in jaunty cap, incipient moustache, and go-ahead-in-a-hurry principles, loves to carry about a bit of lava from Mt Vesuvius, a cane from the Cedars of Lebanon, a tobacco box made from the wood of the ark—and any other post or ante-diluvian remains he can lay his fingers on.

We love the past—and it is well we do—it teaches us to reverence the great that are gone, and think charitably at least, of the less important; and gives us Faith in the present and the future. So not only Masons, but the better part of men generally think of this Ancient and Honorable Order. Time makes the learning of the past almost foolishness, but to Masonry it adds Wisdom. Time weakens most things, but to Masonry it gives strength. Time defaces the figure and molds

and molds the works of the past, but to Masonry it vouchsafes Beauty.—So that on these wonderful pillars, Wisdom, Strength and Beauty our edifice is erected never to be destroyed.

Masons honor the past because they honor God—they think there is reflected upon their order, the image of some of his attributes, and the grace of obedience to some of his commands.—Among the former, Unchangeableness, Universality and Stability. Among the latter, Faith, Hope and Charity. And even as the blessed Apostle said: "of these the greatest is Charity;" and he whose memory we commemorate to-day, made it the burden of his life song. So the humble boast of Masons always and everywhere is Charity to all Mankind. Masonry is not a system of meaningless rites in which candidates are put through a sort of Military drill, with no apparent object in view beyond the initiation fee, but in all its Ceremonies there is a majestic symbolism of the truest morality, and a soul stirring epitome of knowledge. Masonry is not a system of Philosophy, but the seven wise men of Greece, with all the sages of all time past, never perfected, a scheme of, more useful maxims or truer logic.

Masonry is not a system of Theology, but it is ripe with all that teaches true religion. Masonry is a link, however, between earth and heaven, for it takes of the stones of the one and builds there with a house to the other.

But people say to us: You have so many bad men amongst you. Yes, we confess it, we have, and they are very bad Masons, and we are just as sorry for it as you are. But, speak low, dear friends, don't say too much about it, for I assure you there are so many bad men everywhere that we really fear if a thorough investigation was instituted we could not tell where it would end. Besides, I really pity those very good people who are afraid to touch a bad man. I can allow a good deal for nervousness but cannot say much for their Christianity. Suppose there are bad men, what is my mission as a Mason and as a Minister, and yours to men and women, but to go to him and say, My dear brother "I love you too well to suffer you to injure yourself and me so much;" and if he should say—how do I injure you? why tell him "you are preventing me from either benefiting you or being benefited by your society." This is Masonry. We keep it as pure as we can, and if a black sheep gets in, we try with the best patented testator, Brotherly Love, to change his color, and never until he proves himself very obstinate do we begin to pluck out the wool, and when we do, it is by a hair at a time, so that we may hurt him as little as possible.

And this is Christianity, too, as taught by St. John the Evangelist.—"Let us love one another." Let us "pluck the mote out of our own eye." Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." Had Masonry not existed how many bad men there are that would have been much worse. How many good men that would have been bad. But my bad brethren, wherever you are in this hall, I am not excusing you. Do not, I beg of you, shield yourselves behind the mantle we cover you with. If we are charitable enough to hide your faults, be you honorable enough not to blame us with them. If you are bad, you know Masonry never made you so, and never would have knowingly permitted you to pass her tyled door. And just because you sneaked in through absolute perjury—and now we are trying to make the best of a bad bargain—and loving you against your deserts—please do not be towards also, to permit people to imagine we made you bad men. Take advantage of our generosity, and wipe out the reproach to the Order by instant reformation. But let me be understood when I say that I am not soliciting anything for Masonry. I am not mentioning objections in order to refute them, so that I can come to any one in the audience and say: "Now please be a Mason." Masonry asks nothing from the world, not even to be let alone. She stands complete in herself; deeper than the hieroglyphics upon the rocks of her birth place is her name—proud and triumphant—engraven upon the world's history. Her

light has fallen wherever the foot of man has fallen, on this globe. Her councils have been powerful in the most potent of counsels. Her influence has stayed the firmest rock that governments have builded on. Her love has stretched its wide arms over bloodiest battle fields and reverently planted the Acacia above the dead of every name. God bless our noble Order.—Its maxims, and emblems alike, are overflowing with all that is good and noble and lofty in thought, word or deed. There is no figure upon our walls nor legend in our story that does not point to Him.

My brethren—"LET THERE BE LIGHT." How many Masons there are that were never brought to light!! The beginning of a new Masonic year, is of course a time of great importance to us. We are to be ruled and guided and counseled and taught by new men. We always hope for the best. Let us also labor for the best. We have pledged ourselves to be true to them and they to us; but they are like children; their early steps must be assisted. You must hold out your hands and say—"I am with you my officers, in all your laudable efforts." Hold out to them the sweetmeats of your love and approval, to lure them on in their trying and often unpleasant task. They are to govern you, but they want to do it as your children sometimes govern you, by kisses and soft endearments. And if you encourage them by your constant presence and ready help, all will be well.

Plattsouth Lodge, No. 6, bears a splendid reputation among the other Lodges on the roll of the Grand Lodge. That this is so, is due in the main to the unwavering fidelity, uniring zeal, great courtesy and eminent ability of our beloved brother, Worshipful Past Master Duke. I would be untrue to the heartfelt affection, the warm love of his brethren, if I did not thus publicly refer to his devotion to the craft and unremitting attention to the duties of his office while Master of this Lodge. For three years he has filled this station with honor; and were it not for his own modesty and truly Masonic desire to prefer another, he would have worn the Master's jewel again.

We have always met "upon the level" and we part in the relation of Master and brethren "upon the square." "We have travelled long together, Head to head, and heart to heart, Both through fair and stormy weather, And 'tis hard 'tis hard to part." But the lessons we have been taught will linger with us, and in rallying around our new Master and Wardens we will remember that they also have been tried and found faithful. They have purchased to themselves these good degrees by their fidelity and zeal, and we will not only acquiesce in the Ceremonies of this hour, but stand by them like brethren, giving them all the aid our constant support can give. I certainly wish that every Mason had a five pointed star always about him, to help remind him of the solemn and touching lessons it teaches, and which, always needed, is never more useful than at a time such as this.—And since Masonry ever points to something higher, we have here to-day and sharing in these festivities a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, to the highest office in which P. M. Duke has been elected. The name of R. W. Brother Wheeler must be closely connected with the history of Nebraska Chapter, No. 3, as a firm friend, constant promoter, and able expounder of Masonic principles. Universal testimony to his honorable Masonic standing is before us, in the high office he has held in the order, the highest it could give him. He retires from the position of M. E. H. Priest of this Chapter with the love of all his companions.

Companions of the Royal Craft, remember the words you bear upon your brow; carry them also in your hearts. Let the mark of a master workman be upon all you do or say. Let the fervor and devotion of a Most Ex. Master ever gain you the blessed approval of Him, before the light of whose glory all Masons prostrate themselves. And may you, by the help of your great guide, journey safely over the rough and rugged road that lies before every pilgrim in this wilderness, escaping, so far as may be, the falling timbers of

pain, and the crumbling walls of ruin, and by the help of your blessed Signet at last safely pass the veils of this troublesome world into the land of everlasting light, to the presence of the Supreme Grand Council, where the increase of unceasing praise burns day and night. And should you in your earthly career be beset with the storms of life, and darkness and misfortune gather around you, let the words of Masonry comfort you. Your trust is in God, your faith is well founded, and brethren are willing with outstretched hands to shield and protect you.

And now my brethren, I have done I have purposely refrained from indulging in any of the usual flights of fancy common to the production known as "Oration." I designed and had time only for a short, and plain brotherly talk, as you must be aware that the descent from the etherealised region of a Masonic Oration to the creature comforts of a good Supper would be too rapid to be sufficiently graceful.—And yet I am not unmindful of what is due both to you, the subject, and the occasion; for as I had forty minutes assigned me, and I have occupied fifteen, I shall ask your indulgence and attention to a beautiful composition of Bro. A. J. Daganne of New York, as a fitting close to these interesting ceremonies.

THE WIFE'S PRAYER.—If there is anything that comes nearer to the imprecations of Naomi than the subjoined, we have not chanced to see it: "Lord, bless and protect that dear person whom thou hast chosen to be my husband; let his life be long and blessed, comfortable and holy; let me also become a great blessing and comfort unto him, a sharer in all his sorrows, a meet helper in all the accidents and changes in the world; make me ever amiable in his eyes, and forever dear unto him. Unite his heart to me in the dearest love and holiness, and mine to him in all sweetness and complacency. Keep me from all ungentleness, and discontentedness, and unreasonable passion and of humor, and make me humble and obedient, useful and subservient, that we may delight each other according to thy blessed Word, and both of us may rejoice in Thee, having our portion in the love and service of God forever—Amen."

COMMOTION IN THE NATURAL WORLD.—The last two months have given evidence of unusual agitation amid the forces of nature, as the following list shows: Oct. 9—Gale in Labrador; thirty vessels lost, and many lives. Oct. 29—Hurricane in Tortola. Oct. 30—Hurricane in San Domingo, Inagua, etc. Nov. 1—Hurricane in Hong Kong. Nov. 2—Hurricane at Calcutta. Nov. 3—Eruption at Vesuvius. Nov. 8—Tornado at Matamoros, Texas, less \$4,000,000. Nov. 14—Volcanic eruption in Nicaragua. Nov. 20—Earthquake at Tortola, St. Croix, St. Thomas, etc. Dec 1—Earthquake at Porto Rico.

Augusta Washington, a young colored man, attended, some twenty years ago, an academy in New Hampshire, where he won honors in study. Feeling the prejudice against his race in this country, he sought a home in Liberia. He now owns a fine farm of one thousand acres, under high cultivation, and well stocked with cattle and agricultural implements, and he is extensively engaged in the making and exporting of sugar and molasses. This enterprising farmer is also among the foremost men of Liberia; he is Speaker of the House of Representatives, and is held in high honor by both natives and emigrants.

An eastern paper says: "there seems to be, at the present moment, more indications of a general epidemic of cholera in 1868 than there were in the autumn of 1865 of a general epidemic in 1866." In proof of this it states that at Havana, Cuba, several hundred deaths have occurred; also thirty or forty deaths in Philadelphia Navy Yard; in the country parishes of Louisiana in New Orleans, in St. Louis, and on the vessels arriving at Quebec and New York.

Be kind to the Old.

We know not the author of the subjoined article, but specially commend it to our youthful readers:

"O, be kind to those in the autumn of life, for thou knowest not what sufferings they have endured, how much it may still be their portion to bear. Are they querulous and unreasonable? Allow not thine anger to kindle against them—rebuke them not, for doubtless many and severe have been the crosses and trials of earlier years; and perchance their dispositions, while in the 'spring time of life,' were more gentle and flexible than thine own. Do they require aid of thee? Then render it cheerfully, and do not forget that the time may come when thou mayest desire the same assistance from others that thou now renderest unto them.—Do all that is needful for the old, and do it with alacrity, and think it not hard if much is required at thine hand; lest when age has set its seal upon thy brow, and filled thy limbs with trembling, there may be found those who will wait upon thee unwillingly and who will feel relieved when the coffin lid has covered thy face forever. The old must soon pass from this to another world: Is it a world of bliss? Then though they have much to cheer them through the remnant of their earthly existence, be kind, very kind, to them, for they have many sorrows to endure, before they seek the abodes of happiness; have to pass through the 'valley and shadow of death' Is it a world of woe to which they are hastening?—Have they no hope of Heaven? Then be doubly cautious how thou addest a single drop to a cup already full; for surely they have enough to bear, if their prospects for both time and eternity are shrouded in gloom."

King Theodore, of Abyssinia, is evidently a man of more sense than he gets credit for being. His knowledge of the character of the European powers is good. It is reported that in a late conversation with M. Legraun, the Abyssinian King said: "I know the tactics of European governments when they wish to get possession of Eastern territory. They first of all send missionaries; then consuls to strengthen the missionaries; and finally battalions to strengthen the consuls. I am not a rajah of Hindostan, to be bamboozled in that way. I prefer to deal with the battalions first."

Wm. B. Schneider, the well known Tyler of the Masonic Lodges of Philadelphia, died there suddenly on the 19 inst. For twenty-three years past he has sat at the Masonic doors, and with unerring skill has recognized the faces and names of the Masons who presented themselves for admission. During that period hundreds of thousands have belonged to the Order, and he has known them all, and no matter how long their absence, has recognized them on presentation. Visitors from neighboring States he has also known and recognized in the same way, and this remarkable faculty has given him wide fame. He was born in Philadelphia in 1816, and succeeded his father in the position of Tyler.

J. R. Gilmore (Edmund Kirke) having separated from his wife, the parties met in Newark, Ohio, last week to divide the children. The husband and wife did not come together until the moment of the separation of the children arrived, when the scene was one of dramatic interest and passion. Two of the little ones were assigned to the care of the father, and a third to the mother, who is also permitted to pay weekly visits to the others. The domestic difficulties thus in some sense adjusted, have attracted considerable attention in Boston and elsewhere.

Two serious breaks have recently occurred in the Louisiana levees—one below Plaquemine, the other below Bayou Manchall. The country from there to Lake Ponchartrain and Jackson is in danger of being submerged. A large force of workmen has been placed on the latter break.—General Hancock has telegraphed for authority to place the famishing negroes at work upon the levees and to issue them rations.

The Des Moines Register states that Nebraska has now ten patients in the Iowa Insane Asylum.

Response from the Executive Com-municated.

There is trouble among the female advocates of woman suffrage. The other day Lucy Stone disowned Mrs. Stanton and George Francis Train. Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton publishes a card in reply—a sharp card—in which she says:

"I went to Kansas as an individual, with no official action of the American Equal rights Association, with no instructions as to my utterance or affiliations, without being supplied by that body with either brains or money, having no communications with it whatever as to my movements, opinions, plans or purposes. Edwin A. Studwell chairman of the Executive Committee of a Woman's Suffrage Association, repudiating Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony on their own life work, is very much like Plymouth Church repudiating Henry Ward Beecher, or the Presbyterian Synod, trying his venerable father for heresy—it is simply ridiculous.

From Lucy Stone's known probity of character, her signature to the above card must have been unauthorized, as she has never been the Secretary of that association, Susan B. Anthony being corresponding, and Henry B. Blackwell being recording Secretary. As Lucy Stone so far repudiates the old ideas of Blackstone, that "husband and wife are one and that the one husband," as never to have taken Mr. Blackwell's name, she could not so far sacrifice his individuality as to claim the office to which he was appointed.

Mrs. Cunningham, who will be remembered as connected with the famous Bardell tragedy in New York, is before the public in San Francisco as plaintiff in a divorce suit with her latter day husband, Mr. W. C. Hyde, and the lovers of scandal anticipate a rare treat in forthcoming developments. This woman has resided in San Francisco and elsewhere on the Pacific coast ever since her escape from the gallows, occasionally appearing in court under one name or another.

The Maine Farmer recommends country ladies to take a medium sized pumpkin seed, carefully cut out the meat on the under side, put a narrow strip of fur around the edge, and fasten the string to the sides and they will have a bonnet in the pink of fashion. The broad end of the bonnet should be worn in front to keep off the sun and wind.

It is wittily suggested that Dickens has as yet reached only two-thirds the height he may yet attain. For as yet, he has shown his proficiency in two R's; Readin' and 'Rittin'. There still remains for him the wide field for achievement presented by 'Richmetic.

The following paragraph is floating around through the eastern papers: Wolves have recently appeared in large numbers in Leavenworth, Kansas, and the inhabitants are frightened.

Slavery still continues in Kentucky. They call it apprenticeship, but it is not worth while to differ about names. Colored persons, mostly children and youth, bound as apprentices under the Kentucky laws, are watched, worked, whipped, degraded and brutalized, precisely as in the old days when the other name of the system was legal. In many cases, the parents of the children reside in the adjacent counties of Indiana, not daring to venture across.

Senator Morrill, of Vermont, in debate the other day, likened Kentucky in her present relations to slavery, to "the old silly goose having a nest in the bank of a river, who when a freshest came and washed the eggs out of it still remained upon the top of the water padding over the nest, though the eggs had disappeared a long time before."

An Ohio housekeeper recently set arsenic for rats who tracked it all over the food and poisoned the whole family. Three persons died.

Gen. Sherman has received as a present the silver ball's eye watch carried by Roger Sherman who signed the Declaration of Independence.

In Russia a woman professing to be the Virgin Mary, ordered the people not to pay their taxes. They obeyed her until the government officers sent the virgin to Siberia.