

From the Provincial Grand Master.

ANTIEN T AND ACCEPTED ORDER OF FREEMASONS.

THE ORATION

DELIVERED BY W. BRO. THE REV. V. P. WYATT, P.M.,
P. PROV. GRAND CHAPLAIN OF BUCKS.,

AT THE

Consecration of S. Martin's Lodge,

No. 2872,

FENNY STRATFORD,

ON

SATURDAY, JULY 21, 1900,

BY

THE R.W. BRO.

THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD ADDINGTON,

PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER OF BUCKS.

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Consecration of S. Martin's Lodge, No. 2812.

Our greatest Poet made a pointed shaft of wit fly deftly home, as amid a contest of words he asked a question difficult to solve, perhaps unanswerable. "Who builds stronger than a Mason?"

And to-day the question recurs as a "winged word" as we join in a work of Masonry, of our own peculiar craft. And again the question rests, as we think, unanswered, for we are conscious of the strength of our edifice founded on the rock- firm principles of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth.

To all true and loyal Masons it must be of more than passing interest as each new Shrine of Freemasonry arises endued with graces which shine brightly in the world as they point to our great bond of union and proclaim the Sovereignty and Fatherhood of the G. A. O. T. U.

We hail our new Brethren of the S. Martin's Lodge—or rather our old Brethren—who are thus lengthening the cords and strengthening the stakes of Masonic habitation, and spreading abroad the tenets of Freemasonry, and gathering to themselves others of like mind bent on developing those principles of Brotherhood which we hold so dear.

May we venture to remind them of the duties and privileges of thus enlarging the circle of the Brotherhood?

It is often said "A good Mason must be a good man." May we express the hope that the very highest principles of our Order may flourish and abound in our new Lodge?

We are proud of our Province, and are glad to see our Provincial Grand Master so well supported by many distinguished Brethren of the Craft, and we welcome this new addition to the roll of our Lodges.

We are glad to think that the grand old Ritual of our Order will so soon be heard in this part of the Province, teaching those sublime truths which never fail to awaken new resolutions and to confirm those good ones which we have striven to embody in our lives.

The good Mason always regards his Lodge as a haven of rest, a society of Brethren bound together by no common ties, but associated in a mystic bond of holy friendship, and surrounded by the atmosphere of peace and the beauty of holiness.

The pillars of Wisdom, Strength and Beauty rise heavenwards, and point to the Grand Lodge above, where the Brethren shall meet to celebrate the goodness and perfection of the Great Architect Himself, when the square and compasses of life's measurement shall have done their work, and the symbols of holiness shall be merged in holiness itself.

May no intruders to Masonry ever enter our Lodge, or those to whom Masonry is other than a noble science leading to higher things!

The rough ashlar of our life must be cut and squared and fitted for its place in that higher structure of which our earthly Temple is a type and figure.

When we are conscious of this in ourselves we shall best be able to help other Brethren onward in the true beauties and graces of Freemasonry, and adorn the Lodge of which we are members.

Let us be operative Masons as well as speculative—doers as well as hearers of the sublime precepts of our Order.

There is much to bring out in our own as well as in the lives of the Brethren of the mystic tie and the secret bond—secret only as belonging to those who are pledged and sworn to uphold the divine Order, and encompassing love, and constructive beauty of the Grand Designer of Life.

It is said of Michael Angelo that one day, walking in the streets of Florence, he suddenly threw himself on the ground, regardless of the mud which stained his garments, and with his hands, dug into the ground and tried to draw something forth. After much labour and toil, he accomplished his task, when it was seen that he had rescued from the earth nothing but a huge, shapeless mass of stone. "What are you going to do with that?" they said. Quietly regarding it, he replied, "There is an Angel in this stone, and I am going to let it out."

He knew that by care and art a few strokes of the chisel would convert this rough piece of marble into a work of symmetry and grace, fit to adorn a niche in some Temple of the Great Author of Harmony and Beauty Himself.

So is there many an Angel of Grace to bring out of our Craftsmanship; and in no sphere of labour can this better be accomplished, as we think, than in our Order, and by the well regulated and highly refined processes of Ancient Free and Accepted Masonry, which is based on the purest principles of piety and virtue.

We note, too, the name by which this Lodge (No. 2812, and the twenty-second Lodge of our Province) shall be designated—the Lodge of S. Martin; and we augur well, thereby, that it will be a Lodge distinguished by Charity.

Was S. Martin a Mason? History is silent on this point; but at least he possessed, in strongest measure, the splendid characteristic of Brotherly Love, for which he is so widely renowned.

One winter, as the Roman army was quartered at Amiens, Martin saw crouching at the gate of the city a poor emaciated beggar, half-starved, half-clad, and ready to die from exposure to the cold. Having nothing else to give him, he drew his sword and cut his military cloke in two pieces, and with the one half covered the shrinking body of the poor sufferer. And in his night dreams Martin saw one of the Heavenly Ones clothed in a torn garment. And as God's retinue looked in wonderment at such a robe the Divine One said "This hath Martin, the Soldier, given Me."

So may we learn the issue of good deeds done with a heart of love, and realize that we have Heaven's benediction on those acts of charity done with single-mindedness and for the sake of the poor and penniless who have no power of recompense save that of God Himself.

May S. Martin's Lodge be actuated by a spirit like that of the patron Saint: love Mercy, practise Charity, and live in harmony and brotherly love. It will receive a welcome in a Province long since known for its adherence to these principles, and especially of late for its splendid contribution to the Benevolent Fund of our Order.

We congratulate, therefore the Founders and promoters of this S. Martin's Lodge, and wish them "God Speed" upon their way! And as we join with them on this joyous occasion, and rejoice in this addition to the forces of our Craft, our prayer is — "May brotherly love continue" until the true spirit of Masonry shall spread and be diffused through all quarters of the universe founded by our Great Architect, and His "praises shall resound with the fervent love of all His creatures from pole to pole, and rebound from the vaulted canopy of heaven through universal space."