



A MEMENTO OF THE
JUBILEE CONVOCATION

GODSON CHAPTER No. 2385

♦
20TH JULY, 1897 — 17TH OCTOBER, 1947

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OLDBURY

(A photograph of the Tracing Board then presented)



17th October, 1947.

THE TRACING BOARD.

IN handing over this tracing board and asking for the acceptance of it, may I direct attention to the importance of the truth that life consists of an endless series of fights. At times, the fight is fairly straightforward, perhaps merely for our daily bread, and just now that truth is very obvious. We fight to live from the date of our birth until old Father Time calls for us. We fight to gain a job, to hold it, and to maintain our position in the world. We fight diseases, for our rights (real and imaginary), for our way of life, for our creed or religion, for our household, our village, our town, and for our country.

In all those fights we must have a real or an imaginary standard; because otherwise what is there to fight for?

On the floor of the Chapter will be found our "Ensigns," our "guide," and our "tools." THE WORD is there: the V.S.L. lies open before us; there lie the tools to enable us to clear the ground of rubbish (i.e., our faults and errors of the past), before we can commence to build afresh a new way of life which can be started only after we have seen and admitted these faults and errors; and there lies the trowel, that emblem of building construction; and alongside it is the sword to enable us to defend our work against all attacks from outsiders.

And finally we have twelve ensigns, each one of which is typical of a phase in the make-up of most men, although originally each had relation to a so-called blessing given by the patriarch Jacob (or Israel) to one of his sons or grandsons. On careful self-examination we shall find in ourselves (at times) something of the instability of Reuben, of the easy and idle contentment of Issachar, of the wolfishness of Benjamin, of the plodding Ephraim, of the sneakish Dan, and so on. But let us hope that we may find at least a trace of the royal nobility of Judah. These ensigns being on the floor are for our every day use, guidance, and regulation (or avoidance where appropriate), and under these ensigns we have to fight our way.

Our progress through life is typified by the journey of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. Their most precious possession (the ark of the covenant) was guarded by *all* the twelve tribes. The royal Judah was the leader; and in an elevated position before us is the royal standard. Alongside it we see the standard of Reuben—now a real man—, of Ephraim, and of Dan—now represented by an eagle. Each of the four controlled two other tribes who had their own ensigns, but who worked under the standard of one of the leaders.

There is in each one of us a spiritual principle, and no matter under which ensign we may journey through life, let us not forget that we are fighting spiritually directly under the four standards charged with MAN, LION, OX, and EAGLE.

For these reasons my belief is that the tracing board should be available to us for meditation; that the ensigns and the tools should be the guide of our everyday actions; and that the standards should uplift our minds and our thoughts towards the contemplation of heavenly things.

C. T. BARLOW, P.P.G.Soj.,

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