

Provincial Grand Lodge, Warwickshire.



# Oration

DELIVERED AT

## The Consecration

... OF ...

The Integrity Lodge, No. 4563,

IN THE

MASONIC HALL, ERDINGTON,

... ON ...

Monday, February 18th, 1924,

... BY ...

WOR. BRO. REV. DR. A. COHEN,

Past Prov. Grand Chaplain

## THE ORATION.

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The inauguration of a new Masonic body is preceded by a ceremony of Consecration. That significant term "Consecration" marks the importance which attaches to the occasion, and indicates the serious light in which the event must be regarded. It impresses upon the Founders of the Lodge the sacred nature of the task they have undertaken, the holiness of the aims they must keep constantly before them in the upbuilding of the edifice, the foundations of which are now being laid.

Every Masonic Lodge ought to be a Temple erected to the glory of God and the welfare of man. It should reproduce in spirit the sublime character of the magnificent monument raised by the Royal Solomon to the honour of the Most High. Brethren, we learn from the account of the construction of the Temple as contained in the Sacred Volume that not everybody who so willed was allowed the privilege of participating in the erection of a Sanctuary to God. When King David expressed that desire, he was told that he was not fitted for the task since his hands had been stained by human blood. We are further informed that no tools of iron were employed in the work, since iron symbolised the sword of strife. And there was no noisy hammering in the construction of the edifice; all the materials had to be prepared, cut to shape and measure, before they were brought to the site of building. The Temple thus grew to its full and completed height quietly, sedately, in a dignified manner, befitting the holiness and graciousness of God, to Whom it was dedicated.

Founders of the Lodge of Integrity, here is the example you have to follow. In the development of your new Lodge, in the creation of its traditions, see to it that you select the right men for the work, men whose character will stand close scrutiny. Let your Entered Apprentices, who are to become later your Master Masons, be only such as will help to make your Lodge worthy of the Craft. Not large numbers, but a carefully selected membership—character, and character alone, being always the criterion—be that your guiding principle. Exclude every one who will not add dignity to your Lodge; refuse entrance to anyone of whom it can be doubted whether he will bring credit upon the Order; but keep not out for private and personal motives a Candidate whose qualifications are those a Mason should possess. Set a high standard, the highest possible standard, which is that every member of your Lodge shall be one whose personality is such that you will be glad to see him in due time occupying the Master's Chair.

And do not forget the second feature which distinguished the building of the Temple—the quietness and dignity with which the work was carried out. Apply that principle in all the proceedings of the Lodge. The Ritual must be regarded by the Officers, and by the Brethren assembled too, as a solemn rite. During the rendering of the ceremonies there should be the same decorum, the same devout frame of mind, that one is expected to have in a place of worship. In each of the degrees, the Candidate is introduced into the Lodge-room with an invocation to God for His blessing. In that prayer the keynote of seriousness and sanctification is struck which should persist throughout the ceremony. There should be no levity, no conversation, while a Candidate is being initiated, passed or raised; for, if there is, the effect which Masonry aims at producing upon him is at once shattered.

May I add this also: as every piece of material was brought to the holy city fully prepared, so that it fitted exactly into its appointed place, similarly must each Officer leave nothing undone to perfect

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himself in the part he has to play in the work of the Lodge. The Officer has a responsibility towards the Candidate; and when he has clearly not taken the trouble to make himself familiar with his part in the Ritual, he is not merely faithless to the trust reposed in him, but he lowers the dignity of Freemasonry, and mars its beauty, in the eyes of the new-comer. First impressions are the lasting impressions; so it must be the concern of all who have the government of the Lodge in their charge to leave no effort undone for the purpose of impressing deeply and favourably those who enter the Order through their auspices.

Finally, Brethren, let me commend as your constant watchword the beautiful name you are attaching to your Lodge. "Integrity"—there is a wealth of meaning in that word. It denotes, etymologically, the quality of not having been touched, the attribute of perfection, spotlessness, purity. May that sublime virtue be yours in your relationship with the Craft, and also with God and your fellowmen. Practise it in your Lodge; spread it outside in the circles where your influence can be brought to bear. "Integrity"—that is one of the pillars upon which a better and happier world can alone be supported. May your Lodge be one of the many forces which will bring that hope nearer and help towards its consummation.