

Toast to "The Initiate"

O. and B.

After due enquiry and examination we have elected a new addition to our ranks and this afternoon with all the beautiful ritual of the craft, initiate him as a brother. In this less formal atmosphere we give him the grip of a Mason and hail him as a brother among us. Whatever may have been his previous relationship to some of us, whether it be of kinship or friendship he is now bound to us by close bonds that age cannot wither or time destroy.

The thoughts of all of us on such an occasion naturally revert to the time when we first thrilled with pride at being called "brother"; when we sat where he now sits and experienced the same conflicting emotions that now surge in his breast. Amid all our demonstrations of affection there is a deep sympathy with him in his pride and in the unspoken resolutions he is making that he will endeavour to be worthy of so high honour and of so generous and hearty a welcome.

Brother Initiate, it is hardly to be expected that you can remember all that you have been taught today, much less the meaning and significance of all that you have seen and heard. But you must realize that you

have joined something more than a merely social or beneficial society and that henceforth your life and conduct should be regulated by the Masonic life and rule.

Frankly, you will either be a source of strength or of weakness to the lodge. We have admitted you in the hope that by your example you will be an inspiration to all of us. Do not be content with what you have learnt as an Entered Apprentice or what you will learn as you progress further to be a Master Mason. Take no brother, however exalted, as your infallible guide. The real secret of Freemasonry can only be learnt by personal application of its lessons and study of the inner meaning of its mysteries.

Your initiation is an episode in the history of the lodge. In your own life it marks an epoch, the beginning of a new influence that will permeate your future life until the darkening shadows come and at the last illuminate the valley that leads to the beyond.

We welcome you with joyful hope and confidence and it is in that spirit, brethren, that I ask you to charge your glasses, be upstanding and join with me in the toast which I now propose

The Initiate.