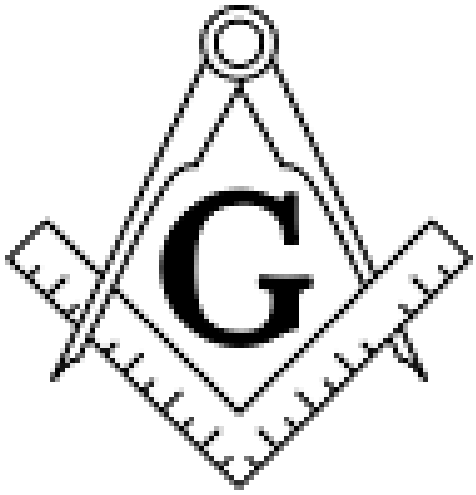
The

Fellow Craft

Degree



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THE FELLOW CRAFT DEGREE

The Fellow Craft Degree stands sharply contrasted to the Entered Apprentice and Master Mason Degrees. In the First Degree, the candidate is moved by the sense of novelty, for it is his first experience in Freemasonry. An experience, moreover, that is full of rapid action; the Third Degree he has long heard about, he knows it will bring his initiation to its climax in a drama of peculiarly moving power; also, it marks the end of his journey and empowers him to consummate his membership. Set between the two, the Second Degree seems to suffer by comparison. It does not grip the emotions like the Third, nor does it stir with the freshness and novelty of the First; it is likely to become a mere half-way station, a necessary but somewhat dull bridge from an exciting point of departure to a thrilling destination.

Much in the Degree itself appears to bear out this impression. One portion of it carries the candidate back to certain unexciting happenings of four thousand years ago; another has for its background the uninspiring school curriculum of the early Middle Ages; a third, its most prominent feature, sounds like a dry, academic lecture delivered by an eighteenth-century school master of rationalistic leanings. Since it gives this impression it is not surprising to discover that fewer Lodge members attend conferrals of it than of the First, far fewer than of the Third; or that some Lodges themselves tend to confer it in a careless manner with shabby and inadequate equipment.

The words "appear," "seem," etc., in the preceding paragraphs were used advisedly, because we shall herein not agree with the characterization of the Fellow Craft Degree as there sketched. As regards its intrinsic value, its dignity, its place in the whole system of the Craft, it stands on a level with the other two. Certainly, it is not a half-way station or a bridge, a necessary device to get a candidate advanced from one Degree to another. And certainly there is nothing dull or dry about it when it is properly understood; indeed, there is a sense in which it stands above anything else in Masonry, both in value and in appeal. And again, it assuredly is not something to be passed through once and then forgotten, because—as is also the case with the First Degree—its obligation in certain important respects remains binding forever, and its teachings are as necessary and as integral a part of Freemasonry as those of the Third, and remain always in force in the mind of a Mason.

To show that these statements are true is one of the principal aims of this booklet. Another of its principal aims will be to serve as an introduction of the Degree to the candidate, to furnish him with such hints and suggestions as will enable him to secure its riches for himself. Hints and suggestions are all that can be given in print, especially in a limited space—but a hint of it, if properly given and followed to the end, may lead one far. Similar booklets have been published on the Entered Apprentice and Master Mason Degrees; the candidate who may chance to read the present booklet is recommended to read the others. He will find in them much that bears on the Fellow Craft Degree not here given in order to avoid repetition.

There is a Masonry of good fellowship, to satisfy our needs for companionship, friendship, and entertainment. There is a Masonry of the conscience, one that moves in and finds satisfaction for our moral nature. There is a Masonry of goodwill and benevolence, quick to extend relief, inspiring to charity and benevolence. There is also a Masonry of the mind. Our need for truth is equal to our need for friends or companionship, for entertainment or for fellowship, or for relief in times of misfortune. Had it not from the beginning possessed its appeal to the mind, its ability to give light, its power to move upon the intellect, Freemasonry would have perished at the end of its first day.

This Masonry of the mind is embodied in the Second Degree. It stands revealed there in the forms appropriate to its ritualistic and symbolic method of teaching, expressed and incarnated in act or symbol, and the dignity of the Degree is exactly equal to the dignity of Masonry as a possession of the intelligence. Where does the mind stand among the powers and attributes of a man? The Second Degree stands in the same place. If we think of Freemasonry as having a triangular nature, one of its three sides will be its appeal to our spiritual nature (Third Degree), one will appeal to our moral nature (First Degree), and one will appeal to our mental nature. To be an expression of this third side is the purpose and function of the Second Degree.

In the nature of the case, therefore, it cannot be a stop-gap between two other Degrees, a mere bridge, as mentioned in our introductory paragraphs, leading from the candidate's point of departure to his place of destination; thus to describe it is to falsify the place occupied by the mind—and truth, which is the mind's satisfaction—in the nature of Freemasonry as a whole. The demands of our intelligence are of an urgency equal to the demands of our conscience or of our feelings; if Masonry's satisfaction of those demands is slurred over, belittled, or ignored, its whole system collapses, and a Mason becomes only a half-Mason.

This interpretation of the place and dignity of the Degree is not in contradiction of the traditional interpretation of it as an allegory of middle life. It is rather a confirmation of that interpretation. Truly enough the candidate is representative of a man in maturity. But what is it that a man in maturity most needs? It is to *know* life, is it not? To understand it? He must earn a livelihood for himself and his family, that requires him to know a trade or a calling; he must exercise the responsibilities of citizenship, that requires him to understand his community and to know its laws; he must carry the load of his dependents; must toil in the quarries through the heat and burden of the day, that requires of him an understanding of life sufficient to enable him to know how to meet its difficulties. Why is youth deemed a period of preparation and education if not because the full-grown man will need all the truth, and knowledge, and training, and enlightened ability that he can obtain? If it be true that youth is sustained by its aspiring enthusiasm, and the aged by their wisdom, it is equally true that the foundation of a satisfying maturity is a well-trained and richly furnished mind.

The Fellow Craft Degree states and enforces this truth by every device of art or persuasion. It is because it exists for such a purpose that it is cast in the form of a Drama of Education. Education! Unfortunate word! Education means schooling; schooling is for boys; boys must sit at desks with text books in front of them doing lessons at the behest of a teacher; we are full-grown men, through with schooling; our education is a thing completed, over and done with; therefore talk not to us

about education! What a tragedy it is that so many should stand convinced of such a meager conception of all that is meant by the word! Schooling is but the beginning of education, even though it be in high school or college, a drill in the barest rudiments by means of which we are to learn in future life a fuller and more satisfying knowledge. The last day of school is not the beginning of the end of education, but the end of its beginning. To suppose otherwise is to falsify or forget the imperious needs of the mind in the midst of adult life; is to make the absurd blunder that boys may need intelligence but not full grown men.

While this, like almost all else in the teaching of the Craft, is for life outside the Lodge-room as well as in it, Masonry has its own peculiar method of setting it forth. The truth we may say, is for life as a whole; the method is Masonry's own, and is unlike the method employed elsewhere. We should not be surprised, therefore, to discover that the Second Degree has peculiarities in form or appeal. Everything in it is symbolical, even in such prosaic—and even pedantic—portions of it as the passages about the Five Senses and about the Liberal Arts, a fact of great importance, for that which is symbolized by such portions is among the most inspiring, and even thrilling, of its contents. A part of this symbolism is architectural in form, borrowed directly from the arts and practices of the Operative Masons; another part inherits from educational customs of the Middle Ages; yet another part, and an important one, is cast in a form inherited from certain ideas common during the mid-eighteenth century in England.

The last mentioned part requires more elaborate discussion. It will be remembered that free public schools did not come into existence in England until a hundred years or so ago, and then were, for many years, few and far between. There were private schools for children of the well-to-do; charity schools here and there for a few children of the poor; such private families as could afford them employed their own tutors; but for the most part a growing boy had few opportunities for any kind of adequate schooling, and to many of them this was one of life's most painful privations—for the world presses cruelly on the unequipped. How to obtain schooling was a general prepossession, even among adults.

The Masonic Lodge existed in the midst of that condition. The idea very naturally arose that, just as churches and other societies were doing what they could to offer opportunities for schooling, the Lodge might also well do so. A few zealous Masons, of whom the famous William Preston was one, seized upon this idea, championed it, and took the leadership in developing a series of educational lectures to accompany the Ritual. Here and there, these lectures were adopted; after a few years, they spread rapidly; in the course of time, they won official recognition and grew to be a permanent part of the Work. Afterward they were revised, recast, worked over, portions were dropped, other portions were shortened and changed, but some of the portions were permanently retained. This was the origin of many things in the Middle Chamber Lecture.

In our day, we can better find such instruction elsewhere, in more modern and complete form, and with proper equipment. Shall we therefore consider the educational portions of the Second Degree obsolete, to be reverenced for their age, or cherished as relics? Our fathers in Masonry of seventy-five years ago did not believe so; when they then adopted the present official Florida Work, they retained the old Prestonian lectures. Why? Because they saw clearly that while the eighteenth-century English form of them is now outmoded, the idea itself is immortal, eternally true, eternally of the highest importance, and belongs necessarily and integrally to the very soul of Masonry. The motto of our Fraternity is, "Let there be light;" is it conceivable that Masonry could stand faithful to

that motto if it ignored the light required by the intellect? If it is to say "Let there be light in the soul;" "Let there be light in the heart;" it must also say, and for the same reasons, "Let there be light in the mind."

All this may be stated in another form, and from another point of view. The early Freemasons built into the Fraternity what may be described as three great traditions; that is, they established three lines of action for the Fraternity to follow, three local points of interest and attention, gave it three sides, and devoted it to three great ideas. One of these was the religious tradition, including morality; they learned through their own experience how necessary this was to a fraternalism devoted to brotherhood. Masons ever since have been loyal to that tradition. A second was the cultural tradition. Masons were artists, creating things of beauty, men of skill and exquisite taste, men who enjoyed the fellowship of the craftsmanship. This tradition has also been always at the center of Craft life. The third was the scientific tradition. Operative Masons were experts in the one great science of their period; they called it Geometry, but in reality, it included all of mathematics as then known, and in addition much that we should now call physics, chemistry, and engineering. Geometry being the intellectual core of their art, they gave it so much reverence and devotion that often, even then, they described it as "Speculative (or Theoretical) Masonry" and out of respect for it, hung in the East the letter "G" its symbol. All three of these great traditions appear in the Second Degree, necessarily so because they belong to the essence of Masonry; but it is the scientific tradition, the glorification and exemplification of trained ability, exact knowledge, and an enlightened mind, that is the most important.

Already certain of the historical backgrounds of the Degree have been sketched in, but there remains yet another chapter of its history to be told. In a companion booklet on "The Entered Apprentice Degree" a sketch was given of the history of the Operative Masonry; it is hoped that the reader will here recall it, more especially its account of the apprenticeship system practiced by the early Lodges. The lad who came for admission into the Craft was required to have certain necessary physical, mental, and moral qualifications; these proved, and after the ballot, he was then bound (or indentured) to a Master Mason (intender) who thereby became obligated to teach him the art of building, how to make or read plans, how to judge and handle materials, how to use his tools, how to behave as a Craftsman, etc. This was the boy's "apprenticeship," an old custom after which the First Degree is named.

At the end of a period of years, usually seven, the boy, now a young man, was called back into the Lodge, there to have report made concerning his skill and conduct, and to undergo an examination. As a part of this examination, he was required to do a piece of work before the Lodge! This was called his "Master's Piece." If all this met with the approval of the Brethren, as expressed by the ballot, he was then elected to full membership of the Craft as a Fellow, or Master Mason.

This last point is a confusing one and calls for explanation. In our speculative system, "Fellow Craft" is a degree below "Master Mason," the two titles standing for two quite different grades. In Operative Masonry this was not so; the terms were then applied to the same man and at the same time. In the sense that he was now out of his indentures, a free workman in his own right, a member

of the Lodge, entitled to earn wages, to hold office, to accept any responsible task, to have apprentices of his own, he was a "Fellow"—that is, of an equal standing as regards rights, duties, and privileges with all others; in the sense that he had learned his art as a builder, was proved proficient in it, could satisfactorily turn out any kind of skilled work required of him, he was a "Master"—that is, master of his calling, perfected in his art, no longer a mere learner.

It is supposed that in its Operative Period the Craft employed only two Degrees. Apprentice and Fellow of the Craft *or* Master Mason, and this remained the case throughout the Transition Period from the beginning of the decline of Operative Masonry during the Reformation to the beginning of the eighteenth century in England. When, in 1717, in London, a Grand Lodge was organized and the Craft became transformed into a wholly speculative Fraternity, the Ritual, necessary enough under the circumstances, became more or less fluid for a few years, perhaps for twenty or thirty.

As the old Time Immemorial Lodges came into the new Grand Lodge they brought along, many of them, their own ritualistic traditions. This resulted at last in such an accumulation of ritualistic material, all of it time-honored and used here and there by various Lodges for many generations, that the ceremonies became too long for only two evenings and were therefore rearranged into three Degrees. What had been the old First Degree was, with the addition, divided into two, the original First and the new Second, and what had been the old Second was made the Third. For some reason now difficult to understand the name "Fellow Craft" was given to the Second. In this manner arose the distinction we now make between "Fellow Craft" and "Master Mason," one that would have been unintelligible to Brethren in the Operative period.

Much in the Degree can be interpreted only in the light of such historical facts as these; on the other hand, a candidate should not fall into the error of taking the Degree itself to be a chapter out of history. It is not history but Ritual, and the two things are in their nature as widely sundered as the poles. The same is true of the other two Degrees. There has never been any intention, in the beginning or at any other time, that anything in any part of the Ritual should be taken as a record of the past, to be judged or treated as history. This was unfortunately not understood by some Brethren from fifty to a hundred years ago who jumped to the conclusion that since some of the materials referred to in the Degrees made use of historical facts in a certain way, therefore the Degrees themselves had been designed to body forth the history of Masonry. The mistake led them into serious difficulties, as for example: the account of the Middle Chamber in Solomon's Temple does not square with the account in the Old Testament; if each account is to be taken as history then one or the other must be untrue.

There is no need to fall into such difficulties. History exists to give us certain needed facts about the past. A Ritual exists to teach certain truths in a certain way. It is not just interested in historical facts as such, just as a dramatist, a novelist, a painter, a poet is not; if it picks up something out of history it is not for the sake of being historical but rather to make use of it as so much plastic material for its own purposes. It is perfectly justified in doing so—just as an imaginative artist is justified—and if in reshaping the material to its own purposes it ignores purely historical fact no difficulty is occasioned. History is the slave of time; ritual is timeless. History must at any cost

establish the time and the place; ritual is not interested in time or place. It moves in the region of the spirit where time and place mean nothing. It gives us the truth, not through facts but through imagination.

If, therefore, in the Second Degree (or in the Third) the candidate encounters what sounds like a statement about the past, and if that statement is incredible if taken as history, let not his mind be troubled; it is not intended to be history. Solomon's Temple, for example, as it stands recorded and described in the books of Kings and Chronicles, is one thing; Solomon's Temple as it stands in the Second and Third Degree is quite another. And this is equally true of the history of Masonry itself; the Degrees are not intended to give any such history (never were), and wherever they need to reshape the facts of Masonry history for their own proper purpose, they do not hesitate to do so. If a Mason is seeking the truths and inspirations of the Masonic life, let him go to the Ritual; if he is seeking an accurate record of the past, let him go to the history.

The progress made by the candidate from the First Degree to the Second, and from the Second to the Third, is, as a whole, called in the nomenclature of the Craft "advancement;" the step by which a candidate is advanced from the First Degree to the Second is called "passing." This act of passing is itself a symbol, and represents that law in human nature by virtue of which no man can advance to the highest until he has passed through the lower; cannot learn the more difficult tasks until he has mastered the easier. The Masonic life is like Solomon's Temple, into which a man could make his way only after he had passed through an outer court and an inner, and across a porch, only those in every way prepared being permitted access to its inner chambers. A man may in outward form and in name "take" as many Degrees as he pleases, and remain all the while a profane (outside) in his heart; except he does Masonic work on his inner nature, translating Masonry out of the terms of theory into the terms of life, *be* Masonry as well as profess it, he will never in reality pass out of the First Degree, never in reality will possess the "password" of Fellow Craft at all, will remain an Apprentice all his days.

The same idea is differently set forth in that particular symbolism know as "an oblong square." How can a "square" be "oblong?" In an older day it was the custom to call any rectangle having four right sides a square; if two parallel sides were longer than the other opposite pair it was an "oblong square," if all its sides as well as all of its angles were equal it was called a "perfect square." This usage is preserved in the Ritual. The oblong square belongs to the Second Degree; the perfect square to make the Third. The meaning is plain. As he makes progress from the beginning toward the end, a candidate is expected to more toward perfection. But perfection! Can any man attain perfection? Yes, many do, unless the word is given an absurd and impossible meaning. "Perfect" means "complete," nothing omitted, nothing lacking. Any candidate may become a complete Mason—and should!

By virtue of this "passing" from one Degree to another, of this movement from the misshapen four-sided figure of the Apprentice to the oblong square of the Fellow Craft, and from that to the perfect square of the Master Mason, Freemasonry is said to be a "progressive science," that is, a Mason does not become a complete Mason all at once, but must first make a beginning, and then, after a toilsome

journey up one step after another, must press on toward the goal. There is a beginning; it is represented by the petition; there is a goal: It is represented by the raising; progress is from the one to the other. This is said to be a "progressive science." The original meaning of "science" was "knowledge," and that is what is here meant; a candidate's progress keeps step with the increase of his knowledge in Masonry.

If a man starts out to make something of himself he will need the means to do it with, as much so as if he starts out to build a house; nobody has any Aladdin's lamp to rub with powers of immediate magic. The fact is represented in the Ritual by the Working Tools, in the Second Degree by the Plumb, Square, and Level. By the Plumb is clearly meant the form of uprightness that is called rectitude. Rectitude itself derives from a Latin root meaning "straight, undeviating, free from error and mistakes," and is the name for such habits and principles of conduct as truthfulness, honor and honesty. The Level, as all Masons know, means to stand on a plane of equality with others, not being above them as the haughty and the snobbish try to be, or below them as the criminal is; by a happy coincidence, as we have already seen, this is also the meaning of "fellow" in the name of the Degree. The Level therefore represents that in conduct by virtue of which we are enabled to continue in harmonious relations with others: fellowship, companionship, friendship, cooperation, goodwill, mutual aid. The Square, the tool by which the Operative Mason tested his right angles, is by an equally obvious symbolism the representation of righteousness. The righteous man is he who can be depended upon always to do the right thing, more particularly in the sense that he will be faithful to his obligations and will loyally give others their due. Together the three Working Tools mean that if a candidate will faithfully strive to live in rectitude, equality, and righteousness he will succeed in fashioning himself into a man who is the master of himself and a master of the art of living with others—that is, a Master Mason.

In using the term "Working Tools," as much emphasis must be placed on "Working" as on "Tools." The task of self-transformation is not an easy one. Lusts and appetites interfere with our resolutions; passions distort our visions, the senses, as Plato long ago observed, often behaved like wild horses and must be tamed. In this respect our Ritual, using an example of a different type from Plato's, likens our human nature to an Imperfect Ashlar, which was a piece of crude stone as it came from the quarries. Just as the Operative Mason had to use his measuring rod and gavel to put it roughly in shape and then to employ his plumb, square and level to true it and to finish off its sides in order to make a Perfect Ashlar out of it, so we must work on our natures until we have fashioned them into a fit and satisfactory character. This kind of education, a kind the grown man must devote himself to, is infinitely more difficult than learning rudiments at school, but it is also infinitely more valuable.

The Middle Chamber, the outstanding symbol of the Degree, is a striking example of the freedom with which the Ritual recasts or transforms historical material to serve its own needs. When Solomon's Temple was built the walls were made very thick and hollow at the base in order to support the height of the building; tiny rooms were fashioned within these lower walls to serve as convenient closets for the priests' paraphernalia; in the Second Degree these have become transformed into an Inner Chamber in which (still symbolically) the Fellow Crafts went to receive their wages. This is the clue to the meaning of the symbolism; the Middle Chamber represents the results of that work which a man may do on himself as described in the paragraphs immediately above. For all the work he did on a building the Operative Mason earned for himself a rich reward, his wages and the satisfaction he felt in seeing the completion of a building that would stand for generations as a monument to his skill. It has been observed that the unrighteous man is a fool, for

he sells his life for a mess of very poor pottage; it is only in a right life that the enduring satisfactions are to be found; those satisfactions are the wages paid in the Middle Chamber of Masonic life.

The Degree makes much of the distinction between Operative Masonry and the Speculative Masonry, and rightly so. At this juncture of symbolism it is plain that the distinction here is not merely a historical one, belaboring the point that as a matter of fact Operative Masonry preceded Speculative in time—a point with small value to the moral and spiritual life—but is a distinction that goes much deeper. The Operative Mason, after all is said and done, and after all allowance is made for his zeal in matters of the mind, of morality, and of religion, was chiefly concerned with doing work on external things, things other than and outside of himself; whereas the Speculative Mason is chiefly concerned to work on his own self, on things inside him, on his own nature. The one worked to build a building; the other works to build a man.

The historical origins of the two Great Pillars stood at either side of the entrance to Solomon's Temple, one on the right hand, the other on the left, not to support the roof, but independently, and to serve as symbols. It is believed that when a king was crowned he stood before one of them, for which reason it was called the "King's Pillar;" when a high priest was consecrated he stood before the other, or "Priest's Pillar." For this reason, the two pillars represented the two foundations of a nation's life, the state and the church, government, and religion. God and the King. But while this may very well be, it is certain that as used in the Second Degree they have a profounder and more important meaning: they are the symbol of the last step taken in Passing, the step taken between the hard and honest work a man does on his own nature to shape it into the character it ought to have and the reward of that work in honor, peace of mind, power, and self-respect. It is for this reason that a candidate must pass between them on his passage toward the Middle Chamber.

If any man, Mason or outsider, is ever tempted to consider Masonry as in any sense a fanatical type of life, a one-sided exaggerated kind of thing, he need only pause to reflect upon the significance of the two Globes on top of the Pillars. Nothing in the whole system of Masonry is a clearer indication of the sane, clear, well-balanced, and profound wisdom of its founders. The Celestial Globe is clearly a symbol of the life of the spirit, of the mind, the conscience, of all that which appears in religion, philosophy, ethics, science, and art; the Terrestrial Globe is as clearly the symbol of the physical, the material, and the earthy. At bottom there are two kinds of fanaticism: one is an exaggerated over-emphasis on the spiritual at the expense of the physical, which results in contempt or hatred for the body and all that belongs to it; the other is the exact reverse, an over-emphasis on the physical at the expense of the spiritual, resulting in a carnal type of life that despises or belittles the thing of the soul and of the mind. One is as ignorant and debasing as the other, and one is as fatal as the other to that life of fruition in wisdom, peace, and joy which is represented by the Middle Chamber.

When worked out in practice this balance of the spiritual and physical means that as a man makes his ascent toward perfection he must climb by means of helps and values of many kinds, some material and physical, some moral and spiritual. His ascent is like a kind of winding stair, of Three, Five, and Seven Steps.

In beginning his journey toward the Middle Chamber, reference is made to the structure of Masonry, which is organized or divided into Three Degrees represented by the first three steps in the Winding Stair, and its system of government explained. These Three Degrees, with all of their teaching, their

symbols, modes of recognition and obligations are the whole of Masonry in all of its aspects and phases. To be in such a Brotherhood, having about one all its influences, is itself a mighty assistance to a man making his life's ascent. He doesn't go alone, is not a solitary point, but is surrounded by a circle of friends and fellows.

By the Five Senses is not meant, of course, the bare fact that we are able to see, hear, touch, taste, and smell (there are many other senses as a matter of fact, such as the sense of pressure, the sense by which we feel vibrations, etc.), for in themselves these are facts only and not meanings; what is intended is the right use and completest development of the senses. From birth we are able to see; *what* to see, *how* to see, how to observe accurately, what and how to hear, how to cultivate taste, etc., these are abilities that must be learned, and the learning of them belongs to wisdom. If wrongly used the senses involve us in pain, or misery, or suffering; if rightly used they bring us an abounding satisfaction. The Degree, therefore, lays its emphasis not on the use of the senses, but on the *right* use of them.

In the Middle Ages, the period of Operative Masonry, the seven Liberal Arts and Sciences comprised the whole curriculum of the school. They were divided into two groups, the trivium ("where three roads meet"), consisting of grammar, rhetoric and logic; and the quadrivium ("where four roads meet"), consisting of arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. It is not to be supposed that our Degrees require of a man that he take a course in these particular studies; here again we have symbolism, not history; the point rather is that a man needs education, that Masonry belongs to the mind, that a trained intelligence is as necessary as a clear conscience—a fact already sufficiently emphasized in our opening pages.

The Letter G is another symbol to the same effect, except rather that it lays its emphasis less on the education of the mind and more on the education of the soul. To an Operative Mason geometry was the most important subject to which he could devote his mind, and that inevitably, because the whole theoretical and intellectual side of the art of building was geometry; indeed, the Gothic style was principally an embodiment of geometry—Goethe remarked of it that it was "frozen music;" it would have been truer to say, "frozen geometry." Geometry represented the means by which the builder's mind triumphed over the material difficulties of his art. Small wonder, then, that he set up its symbol, the letter "G," in the very sanctuary of his Lodge! Small wonder also that as time passed the meaning of that symbol should be enlarged, growing above geometry into a symbol of the Grand Geometrician of the Universe!

All this is but a beginning of the study of the many symbols of the Fellow Craft Degree, but space forbids further elaboration and these reflections may possibly serve the candidate as an introduction to all the others. In the companion booklet on the Entered Apprentice Degree, the Apprentice was said to be himself a symbol; the same may be said of the Fellow Craft. He is the man who does the hard work of the world, carries its heaviest loads, and meets its most exacting responsibilities. Who so much as he needs the fullest knowledge, the ripest experience, the finest skill, the completest education? Without such equipment he is foredoomed to failure; with it he will succeed, and when he carries his life forward into the latter years of age he will carry with him neither the sting of

defeat nor the bitterness of failure, but will enter the final rewards of contentment, of mellowed wisdom, and of peace of soul.

In this, as well as in its companion booklets, the reader will note how often it is necessary to bring in facts from remote sources in order to explain the Ritual. It is not expected that the candidate, freshly arrived on the scene, will come already possessed of those facts; he must learn them afterwards, and he has a natural right to expect some assistance in learning them. And even where such out-of-the-way facts are not called for, where the idea represented by a symbol is obvious to see, the idea (or truth) itself is not always easy to understand, especially as it is interpreted by Masonry. Furthermore, underneath all the teaching of the Ritual, lying there like a hidden foundation, or like deeply-buried tap-roots, giving the law to the Ritual in all its details, shaping and determining Masonry as a whole, are certain fundamental principles, certain all-controlling and all-determining ideals, and Landmarks; to uncover these, to obtain a clear comprehension of them, and to relate them properly one to another is also a task not easy to perform—a true "Master's Piece" that Speculative Masonry sets every newly-made Mason to produce in "open Lodge"—yea, in the open Fraternity.

If a candidate, shrinking from such tasks, and content to pass on by the other side, decides that as for him, he will bury himself in Masonic *activities* rather than in Masonic truths and ideals, he will be disillusioned if he expects the practical path to lie any smoother or straighter for his feet than the theoretical. In its practices, Freemasonry is as richly complex as in its teachings—for that matter it is impossible to separate the two! A Lodge is not a free-for-all arena in which a member may strike out in his own direction; it is an exquisitely organized thing with each part fitting as accurately into every other part, and as dependent on it, as the parts in a Swiss watch. Nor are Masonic activities outside the Lodge room less rigidly organized. Masons as such are forbidden to do a surprising number of things; and that which they are bidden to do they must always do in a certain way like the workman on a Gothic cathedral, who was not free to do what he pleased but was required to work out each detail in accordance with the plans the Master had laid on his trestle board. At times, a zealous and enthusiastic Mason, intending on the best, finds himself in difficulties from going off the track. A Mason must know how to do it as well as what to do and that is a thing he must somehow learn.

Nor is this all. Masonry is a lawful and orderly Fraternity. To be loyal to its laws is a part of every candidate's obligation. What are those laws? Some of them are unwritten, existing in the form of landmarks, traditions, usages, and customs. Some of them are embodied in the Grand Lodge's Constitutions, and in its other laws, regulations, codes, rules, and edicts. Some of them are in Lodge By-Laws, and in Lodge action during its communications. Some of them are laid down in the Ritual in symbolical form, or in ceremonies outside the Ritual, or in Masonic etiquette. It is not necessary that every candidate should become a Masonic lawyer but it is necessary that he know and understand the law sufficiently to enable him to be happy in his Masonic obedience, and to take his proper place in the temple of Masonic activities.

There is yet another aspect to his needs. In becoming a Mason, a candidate does not join a Lodge merely, but a Fraternity. There are thousands of other Lodges; there are scores of other Grand Lodges; he is in a circle of more than ten and one-half million Brethren. These Lodges and their members are constantly active, each in its own community, and in most of the lands of the globe. Freemasonry is a worldwide society. Unless he is paralyzed by the narrowest kind of parochialism a member will desire to become *en rapport* with the Craft's far-flung life; he will want to feel the

inspiration that comes from the consciousness of being one in so powerful and universal a Brotherhood. How shall he learn what is going on, on the other side of the hill? If left to his own unaided resources it will prove a difficult thing to do.

All this may be summarized in one way or in another according to the point of view one may take. From one point of view it amounts to this, that Freemasonry is not a simple and obvious thing that a newly-made member can take in at a glance, but he must work at it, reflect upon it, experiment with it, study it. From another point of view, it means that since the task of becoming a Mason in the real sense of the term calls for an amount of knowledge no candidate can be expected to possess, the Lodge, or the Fraternity at large, should come to his assistance. Or again the matter may be yet otherwise stated: If a newly-made Mason is to make his Masonry a personal possession, if he is to own it in a realizing way, if he is to transform its many and rich possibilities into a treasure for himself, he must study it. If when receiving a new member a Lodge is desirous of something more than the addition of another name to its roster, if it wants a member who will become active, interested, efficient, it must be willing to give him training. The work and practice of the Craft calls for preparation on the part of the Craftsman, for the Craftsman to be able to carry on that work and practice efficiently calls for training by the Craft.

This preparation and training together, whether viewed as what the individual may do by himself or as what the Lodge should do for him, is what is meant by Masonic Education. The term itself may be neither accurate nor adequate but it is the best we have, and if a Mason knows what is meant by the term, little else matters. Masonic Education is not an effort made by the Craft to educate the outside world; it is the Craft's effort to train its own members for the Masonic life and to give its members the means to prepare themselves for that life; it is an education in Masonry by Masons. And while books, theories, history, etc., may be needed in that education at this point, it does not exist in order to persuade men to read books; books are merely incidental; it is a way of putting men in possession of their Masonry and of putting Masonry into possession of really well-qualified members; qualified not alone to gain admission to the Fraternity, but qualified also to remain in it and to carry on its work; it is also a way of properly engineering the powers and forces of the Fraternity to the end that it shall succeed in fulfilling its mission to the world and not to be pounded to pieces from within—like Brother Robert Fulton's first steamboat—by the ill-adjusted interplay of its own energies.

On this subject, a book could be written, but this is not a book but a booklet, and the fact demands that these reflections come to a close. These paragraphs on Masonic Education are not *malapropos* in the present setting. The Fellow Craft Degree is devoted, as we have found, to the great and satisfying life of the mind, and to the methods by which the intelligence is made adequate to the demands of life. If the candidate in that Degree is to carry out its teaching, what more appropriate first step could he make than by carrying it out in the Masonic life itself!