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EULOGY ON MASONRY.

By R. W. Bro. Hon. Geo. M. Carpenter, Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Rhode Island. Delivered at the Laying of the Foundation Stone of the Freemasons' Hall, Providence, R. I., June 7, 1884.

MOST WORSHIPFUL SIR AND BRETHREN,—For the first time in the history of this town a Masonic ceremony is performed on ground which belongs to our society and its members. For an hundred and twenty five years, the rites of the craft have been here celebrated; but our assemblies have been held, until this day, in the possessions of strangers. The occasion calls for serious forethought, no less than for profound congratulation. We have now given security to this community for our continued life and growth. It is not too much to say that we enter upon a new era in our history. Our plans are devised with the best skill we can command; but we stand only at the beginning of our work, and we are not yet ready to demand the award of praise for designs well and successfully completed. And although these walls may rise, in safety and in beauty, founded in peace and crowned with justice, it will still remain our anxious task so to us: this structure that it may be useful to our fellowmen, and that it may do honor to the work of our hands. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

In pronouncing the traditional eulogy on Masonry, I count it no part of my duty to boast of the past or to forecast the future. Our business is

with the labor, the privilege, and the responsibility of the present. If we shall deserve praise, we wish that it may come from the lips of others, and be founded not on our words, but on our works.

But we do not omit to praise the foundation on which we build. The stone we have this day laid is fashioned, as exactly as our skill can fashion it, so that the length and breadth, and the height of it are equal; and it thus becomes to us a rude and imperfect symbol of the Heavenly City—the Perfection of Truth—whose foundation is builded of all manner of precious stones. Those foundations are no less than truth and zeal and fidelity, and all most excellent virtues. As they shine from the Eternal City, so may the virtues which they represent ever shine in the hearts and lives of all who shall come under this roof.

Ladies and Gentlemen.—On behalf of the brethren, I return our sincere thanks to those, not of our membership, who honor us by their presence at this ceremonial. We bespeak your friendly interest in our undertaking, and we trust that none may have cause to regret the prosperity of our ancient society.

And now, brethren, standing with you at the parting of the ways, and fronting the new duty of the hour, I take leave, briefly, to recall to your