

WORSHIPFUL MASTER AND BRETHREN :

Truly it is my desire that another more experienced in the mysteries of our Order had been appointed for this duty. I have only consented to address you that it may be shown in practice what we assert in theory, that none may refuse the work appointed by the Masters.

The Dedication of the Lodge is one of the most solemn ordinances of our ancient order, and I am certain that as these holy symbols stood unveiled in their new resting place, and your thoughts wandered back through the corridor of ages to the scene of their first introduction, and forward to the rich associations that will be entwined around them in the future, thoughts deep and hallowed could not fail to well up from the springs of your heart. Be it simply mine, then, as one for all, to voice forth these your silent reflections.

The work completed to-day is called "The Dedication of the Lodge to the Holy Saint John," the patron of our order: But strictly speaking the work has a double purpose—both dedication and consecration. The Lodge is dedicated to virtue, in the name of the Great Jehovah, and consecrated, separated and set apart to the purpose of preserving the memory of these illustrious names.

It is dedicated to virtue. True masonry is the dutiful daughter of Heaven. The Lodge is the sacred shrine of Almighty Jehovah. By his law every mason must be a good and true man—true to himself, his fellows and to the Being before whom he has bent in adoring reverence. The "stupid Athiest or irreligious libertine" may make himself a false man, but never a good mason. The mason is pledged to pious virtue. Nor let be forgotten that virtue originally meant valor. Among the old Romans the most valorous man was esteemed the most virtuous; now while strength should not be all, it must still form an important element of goodness. The good man must ever be a strong man. Mere sentimentalism is silly; like the vapour it appeareth for a little while and then vanisheth away. In every "good and true man" there must be a healthy firmness. The feeling of desire must be yoked with the principle of right, and will must drive them both.

Rugged strength and radiant beauty,
These were one in nature's plan,
Humble toil and Heavenward duty,
These will form the perfect man.