

THE CANADIAN CRAFTSMAN,

AND

MASONIC RECORD.

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"The Queen and the Craft."

{ \$1.50 per annum
in advance.

VOL. XX.

PORT HOPE, ONT., DECEMBER 15, 1886.

No. 12.

THE SPIRIT OF MASONRY.

"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"—Job xi. 7.

There hangs in the writer's sanctum, the gift of a good brother many years ago, a picture of the ocean, in the midst of which is a rock, and on the top is an altar, surrounded with three candles. The altar contains a Bible, square and compasses. The scene represents a raging storm, but the "three great lights" are so secure that even the tempestuous waves do not reach them.

The lesson of this picture is easily discovered. It is a most appropriate symbol of the durability as well as the spirit of Masonry. The verse that I have selected from Job seems to explain the object of our Order. According to my view of this grand fraternity, the design for which it is intended is a much broader one than is at first supposed, and the searching of the scriptures is the first duty. Zophar named the spirit of Masonry of to-day when he said to Job, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" This fact should be prominent in all our deliberations.

The making of the Bible alone furnishes one of the most important histories extant. The various councils that have been in session, the books that have been rejected, and all the details, taken together, is a history of itself. The great object of life is to find out what is to follow at

the end. We look around us, and the very formation of the planet and surroundings surprise us. In ancient times men would fall down and worship. Not that they were more reverential in spirit than we are, but something prompted them that there must be a great august Being who controls this great system, and for fear that he would deprive them of the necessaries of life, they gave great homage and reverence. In our day we are more formal. The Arabian, at a certain hour of the day, falls on his knees and prays. We do not! We imagine that we can fathom all things, but the recent earthquake at Charleston, S. C., has demonstrated our weakness, and that we have as much reason to be reverent as our primitive fathers had. Over three thousand years ago was written this passage, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" To-day we are still searching. New creeds are being constantly devised, all tending to this point. Society and church-work is being conducted on a larger scale than ever before, simply to purify mankind, that we may see God. If we read history, we learn that church-work has been largely associated with blood. One time—about the third century—the monks burned a synagogue, and they were compelled to rebuild it. The priests, too, were held responsible for the fertility of the earth. This shows how strong the