

Chapter had its beginning, as they do to day. The same respect for the good and true, that came down from age to age, was as distinctive a characteristic of the Craft in 1798 as it is in 1886. Faith in God, hope of immortality, charity for all mankind—these steps in the mystic ladder the earnest Mason mounts to-day as did the Mason of that time. The winding stairway, with its steps, three, five and seven, taught Craftsmen when this Chapter was formed the lesson of human progress, which the Masonry of to day, through all its grades, endeavors to impress upon all those who enter its portals.

They learned, as the Mason of this generation learns, that at the start of a life-work, just after passing the porch which separates irresponsible childhood from active, thinking manhood, the young man finds at the first advance that his pathway is to be one of difficulty and danger, and that if he would accomplish anything he must, at the very outset, be obedient to law, respect order, and is bound to uphold and sustain government. Then, having learned "to subdue himself," he is prepared for the weightier concerns of life. From early manhood to the full maturity of his powers, he engages himself in the stern struggle to build the edifice of his fortunes. And if, at the outset he has learned well the lesson of the three steps, amid all discouragements, with senses keen, he will hear the word of encouragement from those who have climbed higher; he will see the sign of progress assured; he will feel the grasp of brotherly hands, even in the darkest moment of gloom, and the accomplished work will show something of the wisdom of the Doric, the strength of the Ionic, and the beautiful proportions of the Corinthian column. And so, on and on, in that day long ago, our brothers ascended the symbolic steps, finding at each succeeding step new light upon a progressive way.

Art and science, by their simple

emblems, were presented to them, and with them the lesson that they, too, with the experiences of life in full measure obtained, should, in their turn, become educators of their fellow-men. In the Craft-life they had insight, too, into the story of still further progression which the Master's degree unfolds to the "sons of light." In the legend of the Master Builder, and in the circumstances of his untimely taking-off, the dependence of the best human energy upon a power beyond itself was manifested to them. Manliness, fortitude, faithfulness even unto death in a righteous cause, were exemplified before them; and the end of all—the sublimity of man's progression—was accepted by "hearts prepared" and by minds imbued with noble thoughts, even man's resurrection from death, and the human soul destined to go from strength to strength, through stages of progression, "world without end."

They who gathered in this goodly city of Albany, at the first Convocation of our Grand Chapter, had learned, too, that the glory of the re-built Temple was greater than the glory of the former, and that in that place God brought peace.

So, Companions, looking back upon the past and forward to the future, we rejoice to-day that we have held fast to the strong guiding principles of our Masonic fathers. Let it be our best endeavor to hand over the noble trust unimpaired to those who shall come after us.—*New York Dispatch.*

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VACANT HOURS IN THE LODGE.—If, at meetings where no work is to be done, Masters would employ the time in reading aloud from the Constitution and proceedings of the Grand Lodge, and encourage friendly debate and exchange of views by the brethren, upon subjects thus brought to their attention, much good would result, and all be benefited.—*Graded Master Bankhead, of Alabama.*