

Lodge, when last heard from was its Worshipful Master, and had attained the Grade of Perfection in the Ancient Accepted Rite. Mr. and Mrs. Burton are still living, with two young Burtons (brother and sister) to cheer their pathway, and remind them of the romantic past.

This beautiful and touching narrative (the facts of which are within our personal knowledge) points a most instructive moral which will be readily appreciated, especially at this time, when (in the State of New York) the heaven-born charities of the fraternity are forbidden (by statute) to all save those whose fiscal responses assume the shape of business, and whose Masonic conduct is regulated by dollars and cents.

May we not hope for a speedy return to the good old customs of by-gone days, when the obligation made the Mason, and after which there could be no unmaking; no *ex post facto* decree, whereby the solemn relation assumed before God and man could be impaired?

God speed our righteous cause, and lend his kindly influence with the magnates of the order, to the end that its constitutions, statutes and regulations shall not retard the execution of its noble mission of

“Peace on earth, good-will toward men.”

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SPOILING THE MATERIAL.

By Wm. Rounseville.

GRAND MASTER GRISWOLD, of Minnesota, has some excellent and timely remarks in his annual address, concerning “spoiling the material” which is furnished for our moral and Masonic edifice. In operative Masonry an Apprentice is not allowed to attempt the better and more difficult parts of the work, and a Journeyman who attempts and fails—spoiling the material—is held responsible for damages. No one is allowed to perform a Master’s task unless he has been tried and found competent.

So it should be in speculative Masonry. As the building which we are erecting is of more importance to the well being of mankind than any made of stone, brick and mortar can be, and as the living stones of which it is composed are so much the more precious than those which are raised in the quarry, so ought the architects and master builders to be more careful that the valuable material is not spoiled by the hands of unskillful Craftsmen, that it cannot be made to fit any place in the temple. But are our architects and builders thus careful of the material given them for use? We fear not!

Not many months since a Mason gave us his experience in becoming one of the living stones in the moral and Masonic temple. He is a very conscientious, sedate person, who looks on the serious side of things, and lives more in the actual than in the imaginative, and would scarcely mingle mirth with a solemn duty. He was taken to the ante-room, where he was met by several brethren who began a conversation calculated to impress the candidate with the idea that the ceremonies to which he was about to submit himself were farcical and ridiculous, and that the object was to get up a laugh at his expense. Is it any wonder that he hesitated about being made game of as the conversation indicated he would be if he went forward? He had been assured that in Masonry great moral truths were elicited and enforced, and that high and honorable duties were made known and enjoined. But here, before he crossed the threshold of the institution, he found it, among its members, to be a theme for idle jest and silly ridicule.

He was ready to give his assent and allegiance to Masonry as it had been explained to him. With it, as thus far exhibited, he was disgusted. As a living stone in the great moral temple he was willing to be adjusted by the tools of the workmen, but to become a butt for ridicule when he expected instruction, and to be turned off with a jest where he expected to have science and morality suggested, was repugnant to his feelings, and his first thought was that he would proceed no farther. As a kind providence would have it, he still placed much confidence in his friends from whom he had received an explanation of the aims and designs as well as the character of the Masonic institution, and he concluded to go forward. But it required the whole evening to remove from his mind the unfavorable impressions which some foolish, if not wicked conversation in the vestibule of the lodge had given him. He took occasion when opportunity offered, to reprove the unskillful workmen who had so nearly in the most heedless and needless manner, spoiled this material which had been prepared for the moral temple.

This is one method of spoiling the material, and not seldom is this sad work performed in this manner. Most candidates consider that they are entering upon an important enterprise; but when they find jibe and jeer and jest assail them in the very sanctum of the lodge, they have little cause to retain that opinion, and by such