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ORIGIN AND BEAUTY OF MASONIC SYMBOLISM.

Oration delivered before the Grand Lodge of Colorado, by M. W. Bro. H. Bromwell,
Past Grand Master of Masons of Illinois.

BEHOLD, Most Worshipful Grand Master, the sun at high meridian when the noon-tide bathes the mountain heights, and floods valley and plain and forest, with all-renewing warmth and light and life.

How the eye seems to go out and expatiate in the boundless expanse, and dwells enchanted in the infinite distances, and amid the scenes of beauty which spread and mingle their charms both far and near!

Not beauty and splendor only flow from the presence of the regal sun—the life-giving beams, which fill all space, pervade also all forms and substances, however minute,—all agencies and operations however imperceptible,—the teeming earth grows warm, and the marvellous chemistry of nature puts forth its energies in countless and complicated modes; the mineral substances are alive with incessant change and transmutation; the waters, atmospheres, and vapors are quick with modulations and undulations of nascent life; the veins and arteries of all plants throb with the secret impulses of the universal soul, and the juices, life-blood of the vegetable world, flow and ebb in their invisible channel, preparing and furnishing substance to the bud, gloss and color to the leaf, tints and odors to the blossom, and energy and nutriment to the seed and fruit.

The oak towers, the pine burgeons, the elm spreads its sweeping drapery, the vine flings out its stars and bugles, the berries ripen and glow with auroral colors, the grasses wave their tiny swords and plumes, the flowers spread the tessellated carpet all abroad; the grape and olive prepare their wine and oil, and harvest-fields their corn, for the blessing and consecration of the Sabbath of the year.

All this and more upon the earth, but in the fields of air the life goes on; the cloudy canopy spreads its gold and silver and crimson banners with ever-changing magnificence; the winds go forth upon their circuits, the singing breezes, with their psalms and incense, and the walking storm with its awful hosts.

Well did they say in the olden time, that "the sun is the beauty and glory of the day," for without the sun, all would be still and cold and dumb and dead. Who wonders that men in all ages have hailed the sun as the fountain of all life, the author of nature, and the god of the universe; that those lacking the searching intelligence which penetrates beyond the outer veil which divides sensible from intellectual things, to explore hidden causes and more universal and primary life, worshipped the day star as the Lord of Heaven and Earth, and with incense and oblations sought to propitiate the favor or appease the wrath of the visible godhead, whose smile or frown sped the javelins of light or the bolt of the storm-cloud.

The less the knowledge of astronomical and terrestrial laws, the more absolute the empire of the senses, and the more astounding and awful the phenomena of the aerial and sidereal heavens. Hence, those who lived in the intellectual infancy of their race, peopled earth and heaven with imaginary deities, clothed with such attributes as natural forces would represent; and from the external war of the elements and the beneficent fruits of their interior harmony, came forth gods of good and evil. "Hosts