

IMPROVEMENT IN MASONRY.

There are some men who never try to learn anything that is useful or good. They pass from boyhood to old age with idle, listless, and vacant minds. Of such a man it is impossible to make a Mason.

Any person of good mother wit, ordinary memory, and active habits, by conversing with well-informed Masons, at leisure times, may learn the working actions of the blue degrees in three months, without any interference with his ordinary avocation; and with proper application he may learn the beautiful Lectures upon all three of the degrees in twelve months—and this regardless of his early education. Masonry educates a man. Some of the brightest Masons in our country—some of the most accurate and eloquent lecturers—are men who received but little or no early education. Masonry found them in the field and in the workshop, took them by the hand, led them into her temple, unfolded to them her sublime mysteries, imparted to them a new language, and clothed their tongues with an eloquence that is not to be found in books, or learned in colleges.

My brother, turn your mind back for a moment to the happy years of early boyhood. What thrilling scenes and pleasing reminiscences come rushing back to memory, shaded by the melancholy reflection that they are gone for ever! Do you not remember the log cabin in the beautiful grove; the spring that gushed up at the foot of the hill, and sent its bright waters leaping and laughing through the vale—the play-ground, the nimble feet that bounded after the flying ball, and the merry voices that mingled their shouts in the youthful sports—the pretty girl for whom you constructed the summer-house of the branches of the green trees, and embellished it with flowers, and whose sweet smile awakened the first tender emotions in your youthful heart!

But do you not also remember the old-fashioned schoolmaster, who, morning, noon and evening, with the rod in his hand and the glasses on his nose, drew up the whole school in a half circle, and drilled them in the art of spelling! How intently you studied the pages of Webster's Spelling-book to master the hard words—such as *Phibisic Michli-mackinack, Chevaux de frize*. How ambitious you were to stand at the head of the class, and how deeply mortified you were to find yourself at the foot on the close of the exercises!

My brother, why does that laudable ambition sleep now since you have grown up to be a man and a Mason! Why do you not strive to excel in Masonry as you did then in spelling? Why are you content to stand at the foot among your Brethren in the Lodge? The same industry and application that made you a good speller when a boy, will place you side by side with the brightest of your Brethren, if not at the head. The only distinction recognized among Masons is that of an excellence in virtue and intelligence. In all other respects they stand upon a level.—From the Cincinnati Masonic Review.

FREEMASONRY, like all other sciences, is a system of progression. Something more is required to constitute a bright Mason than a knowledge of the elements of the Craft. A carpenter may know the names of his tools, and have acquired some dexterity in their practical use; but this will not enable him to build a house, or to construct a common dressing-case.

If any one is desirous of being a Mason, in the strict sense of the word, he must make himself acquainted with something more than words, signs, and tokens. The three stages of initiation can no more convert a man into a Mason, than the indenture of an apprentice can make him a mechanic.

He must read and meditate, study with care and attention the history and doctrines of the Order, and attend his Lodge with the utmost regularity,

that he may become familiar with its discipline by actual personal observation.

There is no Royal road to Freemasonry.

It is in vain to hope to please all alike. Let a man stand with his face in what direction he will, he must necessarily turn his back upon half the world.

Take all sorrow out of life, and you take all richness, and depth, and tenderness. Sorrow is the furnace that melts selfish hearts together in love.

C. HILL,
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Montreal, May, 1860.

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